

particular sentiment of devotion. That mighty city, founded in the most auspicious period; the great Romulus, at once their monarch and their god; the capitol, esteemed as eternal as the city; and the city, reputed as eternal as its founder, had anciently struck such impressions on the minds of the Romans, as might well be wished to have been constantly retained.

The grandeur of the state, in general, constituted the greatness of its particular members; but as affluence consists in conduct, and not in riches; that wealth of the Romans, which had certain limitations, introduced a luxury and profusion which had no bounds. Those who had been at first corrupted by their opulence, received the same taint in their poverty, by aspiring after acquisitions, that no way comported with private life. It was difficult to be a good citizen, under the influence of strong desires and the regret of a large fortune that had been lost: people, in this situation, were prepared for any desperate attempt; and, as Sallust (*a*) says, there was, at that time, a generation of men, who, as they had no patrimony of their own, could not endure to see others less necessitous than themselves.

But as great soever as the corruption of Rome might then be, all its calamitous effects were not introduced among the people; for the efficacy of those institutions, by which they were originally established, was so extraordinary, that they always preserved an heroic fortitude, and devoted them-

(*a*) Ut merito dicatur genitos esse, qui nec ipsi habere possent vos familiares, nec alios pati. Fragment of Sallust cited by Augustin in his book *Of the city of God*, l. ii. c. 18.