

ciety, and submit to laws solely for their own advantage and safety. The sovereign authority is then established only for the common good of all the citizens, and it would be absurd to think that it could change its nature on its passing into the hands of a senate, or a monarch. Flattery therefore cannot disown, without rendering itself equally ridiculous and odious, that the sovereign is only established for the safety of the state, and the advantage of society.

“ A good prince, a wise conductor of society, ought to have his mind impressed with this great truth, that the sovereign power is solely entrusted with him for the safety of the state, and the happiness of all his people; that he is not permitted to seek himself in the administration of affairs, to propose his own satisfaction or his private advantage, but that he ought to direct all his views, all his steps, to the great advantage of the state and people who have submitted to him. How noble a sight is it to see a king of England acquaint his parliament with his principal operations; assure that body, the representative of the nation, that he proposes no other end but the glory of the state, and the happiness of his people, and affectionately thank all who concur with him in such salutary views! Certainly a monarch who makes use of this language, and proves his sincerity by his conduct, is, in the opinion of the wise, the only great man. But, for a long time, a base flattery has in most kingdoms caused these maxims to be forgotten. A croud of servile courtiers, without difficulty persuade a proud monarch, that the nation was made for him, and not he for the nation. He soon considers the kingdom as his patrimony and his people as a herd of cattle, from which he may obtain riches, and dispose of them so as best to answer his views, and gratify his passions. From thence arise these fatal wars, undertaken by ambition, restlessness, hatred, and pride. From thence those expensive taxes, dissipated by luxury, or squandered upon mistresses and favourites: from thence in fine, are important posts given by favour, while public merit is neglected, and every thing that does not immediately interest the prince, abandoned to ministers and subalterns. Who can observe, in this unhappy government, authority established for the publick welfare? A great prince will be on his guard, even against his virtues. Let us not say, with some writers,

that private virtues are not the virtues of kings: the maxim of superficial politicians, or of those who are very inaccurate in their expressions. Goodness, friendship, and gratitude are still virtues of the throne, and would to God they were to be always so! But a wise king does not, without discernment, give himself up to their impressions. He cherishes them, he cultivates them in his private life; but in state affairs he listens only to justice and sound politicks; and who, because he knows that the government was entrusted to him only for the happiness of society, and that therefore he ought not to consult his own pleasure in the use he makes of his power. He tempers his goodness with wisdom; he gives to friendship his domestic and private favours; he distributes posts and employments according to merit; publick rewards to services done to the state. In a word, he uses the publick power only with a view to the public welfare.”

“ A political society (continues the author) is a moral person, as it has an understanding and a will, of which it makes use for the conduct of its affairs, and is capable of its affairs, and is capable of observations and laws. When therefore a people confer the sovereignty on any one person, they invest him with their understanding and will; and make over to him their obligations and rights, so far as relates to the administration of the affairs of state, and the exercise of the public authority; thus the sovereign or conductor of the state becoming the subject, in which reside the obligations and rights relative to government, in him is found the moral person, who, without absolutely ceasing to exist in the nation, acts from henceforwards only in and by him. Such is the origin of the representative character attributed to the sovereign. He represents the nation in all the affairs it was capable of managing as sovereign. It does not debase the dignity of the greatest monarch, to attribute to him this representative character; on the contrary, nothing can make him shine with greater lustre; for by this means the monarch unites in his own person, all the majesty that belongs to the entire body of the nation.

“ The sovereign thus clothed with the public authority, with every thing that constitutes the moral personality of the nation, is under the obligations of that nation, and invested with its rights.

“ All the general duties of a nation towards itself,