

It has been the policy of government, such as it is, from the earliest times to keep distant provinces and colonies under the most severe restraints and subjection. Yet when those restraints have been removed, the mother-country has always been a great gainer by the advantages she has communicated to her subjects. Indeed it is a truth, not more important than it is evident and obvious, that the most sure and effectual method of receiving good from men is to do good to them; or, as St. Paul beautifully expresses it, "TO PROVOKE ONE ANOTHER TO GOOD WORKS." But the minds of men are not sufficiently prepared and enlightened by experience to adopt it in practice. A time, I doubt not, will come, in the progressive improvement of human affairs, when the checks and restraints we lay on the industry of our fellow-subjects, and the jealousies we conceive at their prosperity, will be considered as the effects of a mistaken policy, prejudicial to all parties, but chiefly to ourselves. It would be a noble effort of virtuous ambition to anticipate this discovery; to break through the prejudices and selfish spirit of the age; to find a better path to our true interest; and to make our country great, and powerful, and rich, not by force or fraud, but by justice, friendship and humanity.

I should

I should not have dwelt so long on so unusual a subject, had it not been for the great and almost infinite importance of it. The virtue of a private man assists and supports a few individuals; but this publick virtue does good to thousands and tens of thousands: The former relieves the distress of a friend, or of a family; the latter acts in a higher sphere; it founds states and kingdoms, or makes them prosperous and happy. Yet all this merit, which a nation can never sufficiently acknowledge, at least all that we presume to describe, consists in the right application of the plain good rules, which are so often repeated to us in scripture; "WHATSOEVER YE WOULD THAT MEN SHOULD DO UNTO YOU, DO YE EVEN SO UNTO THEM. FOLLOW THAT WHICH IS GOOD TO ALL MEN. LOOK NOT EVERY MAN ON HIS OWN THINGS, BUT EVERY MAN ALSO ON THE THINGS OF OTHERS. BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER'S BURTHENS, AND SO FULFIL THE LAW OF CHRIST." But these truths lie before the eyes of men, like medicinal herbs in the open field; and for want of applying them to their proper objects, they remain ignorant of their virtues. Yet we may say, with a pious confidence, that this has not been our own case. This Society has thought that we could not obey these divine precepts in a manner

more