

birth should take rank with either of these. Now, the President does think that it ought, and *therefore* it is proper to look out for one, who, with Sir Joseph Banks's merits, be those merits what they may, does not think so. No Fellow of the Society will insult the Society or himself so much, as to suppose for an instant, that such a President is not to be found, if we seriously seek for him. Perhaps, indeed, it would become such an one, *to offer himself to rescue us* : perhaps it would ultimately redound to his lasting honour, notwithstanding the clamour the *polished* part of the town might perhaps at first raise against him, if he did offer ; but if he does not, let once a hundred of us associate, and offer ourselves to be rescued, and no doubt twenty persons, will be glad to accept the honourable office.

To conclude, some gentlemen, for whose opinions we have real and great deference, seem to think, that, whatever side may be in the right, the dignity of the Society is committed by publications of the nature of the present. That the dignity of a body consisting of five hundred members, and dependant for its real dignity on the merit of its annual publication, and on that alone, should be committed by any thing which a few individuals, themselves responsible for what they publish, can write, is a doctrine in our eyes unphilosophical, and not to be maintained. However high some privileged beings amongst us may soar, or think they soar, Charles the Second gave no charter to exempt us all from the common frailties of humanity, nor does philosophy herself (one arrogant and impious philosophy alone excepted) affect to set her votaries so far above the ordinary condition of mankind, as to keep them ever exempt from the common feelings and common resentment of the species. But if it were so, the wrong rests not with us, who have only come forward to heal, or, if not to heal, at least to prevent the enlarging of wounds, which would, alas ! receive no gentler medicine. If *indeed* the dignity of the Society has been committed, and if our learned brethren of Europe, have *indeed* reason to lament, that we stand no longer on that high eminence where they loved to see us ; it was then committed, when, for the first time, and with a fatal example to literature, an example that has been but too much followed, we suffered our chair, which ever before had been offered to unassuming modesty, to be claimed and publicly canvassed for through this great town ; it was committed when we received into that chair, the chair of Newton, a gentleman who had not published a single line in our Transactions, nor given any sign of literary merit, but what might have been given by one of the humblest of the votaries of the humblest of the sciences ; it was committed when

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