

ated affection and write, to the whole population, with the exception of the two commercial towns, is not quite as one to five hundred ; and of this small proportion, very few, except the notaries have much intercourse with the common people. The notary makes all their contracts, marriage settlements and wills ; directs the distribution of property among successors ; and performs almost every act which requires to be committed to writing. In the discharge of his professional duties, he obtains an ascendancy over the common people, which has almost superseded or suspended every other. There are few appointments ; no places of profit or honor ; no points of distinction at which men of this profession can arrive in the government. They reach the height of their consequence when they are commissioned by the governor ; and would not be known beyond the precincts of their respective parishes, were it not for the facility which the house of assembly affords them, of uniting with others equally disaffected with themselves, and forming a party against the government.* These are the "tribe of vulgar politicians who are (says Burke) "the lowest of our species.— There is no trade so vile and mechanical as government in their hands. Virtue is not their habit.— They are out of themselves in any course of conduct recommended only by conscience and glory. A large, liberal, and prospective view of the interests of states, passes with them for romance : and the principles that recommend it, for the wanderings of a disordered imagination. Littleness in object and in

* I trust no man will consider me bound to enumerate all the exceptions to which this and all other GENERAL POSITIONS are liable. When I speak of any class of people, I only mean a large majority of them. I hope this explanation will silence the cavils of those who would find fault beyond the measure of transgression.