

more virtuous habitudes. The Romans carried this principle a great way. Even the holding of offices together, the disposition of which arose from chance not selection, gave rise to a relation which continued for life. It was called *necessitudo fortis*; and it was looked upon with a sacred reverence. Breaches of any of these kinds of civil relation were considered as acts of the most distinguished turpitude. The whole people was distributed into political societies, in which they acted in support of such interests in the State as they severally affected. For it was then thought no crime, to endeavour by every honest means to advance to superiority and power those of your own sentiments and opinions. This wise people was far from imagining that those connexions had no tie, and obliged to no duty; but that men might quit them without shame, upon every call of interest. They believed private honour to be the great foundation of public trust; that friendship was no mean step towards patriotism; that he who, in the common intercourse of life, shewed he regarded somebody besides himself, when he came to act in a public situation, might probably consult some other interest than his own. Never may we become *plus sages que les sages*, as the French comedian has happily expressed it, wiser than all the wise and good men who have lived before us. It was their wish, to see public and private virtues, not dissonant and jarring, and mutually destructive, but harmoniously combined, growing out of one another in a noble and orderly gradation,