

under the antient republics were much more numerous than the House of Commons will be, after any addition it can be supposed to receive. The truth is, very few of the members of these assemblies can be imagined to have understood the public business of which they pretended to judge. They had neither time nor capacity sufficient for that purpose. They were led by the oratory or influence of some individual, and they concluded their decisions to be right, because they were dictated by some partizan, in whose discernment and patriotism they reposed confidence. The people appeared to possess the power; but the demagogues really governed the state.

This mode of settlement resembles exactly, though on a less scale, the admission of all the allies and colonies of Italy to the freedom of Rome by the Julian law; and all the tumultuary and destructive consequences of the latter measure may be in part expected from the former. The admission of the allies and colonists appeared reasonable in itself, and seemed to improve the constitution of Rome; in fact, however, it destroyed that constitution. It appeared to introduce universal liberty, founded on the most reasonable and liberal principles; but it produced only anarchy and confusion. It appeared to provide full security for all the interests of all the allies and colonies of Italy; while it provided security only for the interests of faction. It appeared to exalt the authority of reason and justice in the government of Rome; but it banished forever both reason and justice from her assemblies. It appeared to establish peace and tranquillity in the state; but it gendered only convulsions,  
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