

but they are not often inflicted, as a wise regard is paid, rather to prevent crimes, than to make the criminals suffer.

As the emperor is considered as the father of the whole empire, so the greatest respect is paid to parental authority. There is no submission, no point of obedience which a father cannot claim from his children; in his private family he is absolute sovereign while he lives, and is honoured at his death with a respect bordering on adoration. He is not only absolute master of his estate, which he may leave to whom he pleases; but also of his concubines and children, whom he may sell, or otherwise dispose of according to his fancy.

If a son so far forgets his duty, as to deride his parents, or arrives at such a pitch of baseness as to lay violent hands on them, the whole province is alarmed; the emperor himself judges the criminal; all the mandarins in the vicinity are turned out of office; and even the neighbours are reprimanded, for neglecting, by early punishments, to stop the criminal from reaching such enormities.

To preserve peace and order, the utmost modesty and civility are inculcated. They have prescribed forms of salutation and address, and in paying visits, a great number of troublesome ceremonies are observed. Even their feasts are formal, to the most extravagant and ridiculous excess.

The solemn feasts in this country are celebrated with astonishing pomp. One of the principal is observed on the 15th of the first month, and is called the Feast of Lanthorns, from the multitude and grandeur of the lanthorns exhibited in the evening of that day. To such a pitch of expence is this festival carried, that it sometimes