

It may, perhaps, be said, Sir, that the Families of these hereditary Councillors may be supported in an independent Situation, by introducing the Laws of Primogeniture into the Constitution of that Country. I shall not attempt to discuss the Advantages or Disadvantages which that Law produces in this Kingdom; but I can, without any hesitation, assure this Honourable House that it would be extremely injurious to that Province. The French Law, as followed at present, is in that Respect much better calculated for a young Province; where it is of great benefit and advantage to Cultivation and Population that Landed property should be divided, and fluctuate, and change its owners; and more particularly as some Establishment is necessary for the younger branches of Families, in a Country where there are no Manufactures, and where a young Person without Fortune has few Opportunities of setting out in Life in a Respectable Line.

But suppose the Law of Primogeniture shall be Established, and the Estates of these new created hereditary Councillors thereby secured undivided to the eldest Son; suppose even, that the Estates now belonging to these new Councillors shall be entailed on their Heir at Law; all that would have very little effect, and those Estates would be far from sufficient to support the dignity of hereditary Councillors, which, probably, would be considered as the highest Rank in that Country. For poor as that Country really is, in consequence of its Oppressive System of Laws they have been kept under, there are now, among the Mercantile Gentlemen in the Province, those whose moveable fortunes are perhaps equal, if not superior to any of the Seignorial Estates; and who, from the Employment and Support they give to thousands of the People, have infinitely more influence in the Country than the Seigneurs. For, it would not be difficult to prove to this Honourable House that the Seigneurs are almost universally disliked by their Tenants; But this is a natural Consequence of Feudal Servitude, when its strong support, a slavish dependence on a great Chief, is removed.