

favourable to its own power. The English aristocracy, having first overcome its rival, the Church of Rome, and next the regal power, could not have adopted a better plan for promoting its own interests than preaching up a horror of democracy. Having likewise command of all the avenues to preferment, it brought forward to eminence only those whose fidelity to the "Order" could be depended upon. Arguments in its favour acquired new force from the profligacy and ignorance of the degraded classes, which are to be observed in all monarchical and aristocratical countries. Besides, there was no good example of a flourishing republic on a large scale to be seen. The ancient republics, too, were always triumphantly cited as examples of failure, and it was overlooked, that, since their time, the invention of the printing-press had removed the great obstacle to a system of equality, by putting a good education in political rights and duties within the reach of all.

Without any disparagement, then, of the great men of the Revolution, we may believe that they partook in a degree of the prejudices of their age and country, as, if they had lived two centuries earlier, they would most probably have believed in witchcraft and astrology. Whether they would retain the same opinion now, if they could be brought to life, and see how gloriously their great experiment has succeeded, is another thing.

But those who look further into human motives may fancy they perceive in these very misgivings and apprehensions the elements of success. The wealthier classes in a republic find that it will not do to neglect their poorer brethren, as they cannot