THOMAS HOBBES

Leviathan

with selected variants
from the Latin edition of 1668

Edited,
with Introduction and Notes by
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blood; and before it can do that, contenteth itself with the small refreshments of such things as cool for a time, till (if nature be strong enough) it break at last the constancy of the parts obstructed, and dissipate the venom into sweat, or (if nature be too weak) the patient dieth.

[19] Again, there is sometimes in a commonwealth a disease which resembleth the pleurisy; and that is when the treasure of the commonwealth, flowing out of its due course, is gathered together in too much abundance in one or a few private men, by monopolies or by farms of the public revenues, in the same manner as the blood in a pleurisy, getting into the membrane of the breast, breedeth there an inflammation, accompanied with a fever and painful stitches. [20] Also the popularity* of a potent subject (unless the commonwealth have very good caution* of his fidelity) is a dangerous disease, because the people (which should receive their motion from the authority of the sovereign), by the flattery and by the reputation of an ambitious man, are drawn away from their obedience to the laws, to follow a man of whose virtues and designs they have no knowledge. And this is commonly of more danger in a popular government than in a monarchy, because an army is of so great force and multitude as it may easily be made believe they are the people. By this means it was that Julius Caesar, who was set up by the people against the Senate, having won to himself the affections of his army, made himself master, both of Senate and people. And this proceeding of popular and ambitious men is plain rebellion, and may be resembled to the effects of witchcraft.

[21] Another infirmity of a commonwealth is the immoderate greatness of a town, when it is able to furnish out of its own circuit, the number and expense of a great army, as also the great number of corporations, which are as it were many lesser commonwealths in the bowels of a greater, like worms in the entrails of a natural man. To which may be added, the liberty of disputing against absolute power by pretenders to public policy, which, though bred for the most part in the lees* of the people, yet animated by false doctrines, are perpetually meddling with the fundamental laws, to the molestation of the commonwealth, like the worms, which physicians call ascarides.

[22] We may further add the insatiable appetite, or Bulimia, of enlarging dominion, with the incurable wounds thereby many times received from the enemy, and the venem* of unimitated conquests, which are many times a burden, and with less danger lost than kept, as also the lethargy of case, and consumption of riot and vain expense. [23] Lastly, when in a war (foreign or intestine) the enemies get a final victory, so as (the forces of the commonwealth keeping the field no longer), there is no farther protection of subjects in their loyalty, then is the commonwealth dissolved, and every man at liberty to protect himself by such course as his own discretion shall suggest unto him. For the sovereign is the public soul, giving life and motion to the commonwealth, which expiring, the members are governed by it no more than the carcasse of a man by his departed (though immortal) soul. For though the right of a sovereign monarch cannot be extingushed by the act of another, yet the obligation of the members may. For he that wants protection may seek it anywhere; and when he hath it, is obliged (without fraudulent pretence of having submitted himself out of fear) to protect his protection as long as he is able. But when the power of an assembly is once suppressed, the right of the same perisheth utterly, because the assembly itself is extinct; and consequently, there is no possibility for the sovereignty to re-enter.

CHAPTER XXX

Of the Office of the Sovereign Representative

[1] The office* of the sovereign (be it a monarch or an assembly) consisteth in the end for which he was trusted with the sovereign power, namely, the procuration of the safety of the people, to which he is obliged by the law of nature, and to render an account thereof to God, the author of that law, and to none but him. But by safety here is not meant a bare preservation, but also all other contents of life, which every man by lawful industry, without danger or hurt to the commonwealth, shall acquire to himself.

[2] And this is intended* should be done, not by care applied to individuals, further than their protection from injuries when they shall complain, but by a general providence, contained in public instruction, both of doctrine and example, and in the making and executing of good laws, to which individual persons may apply their own cases.

[3] And because, if the essential rights of sovereignty (specified before in the eighteenth chapter) be taken away, the commonwealth is thereby dissolved, and every man returneth into the condition and calamity of a war with every other man (which is the greatest evil that can happen in this life), it is the office of the sovereign to maintain those rights entire; and consequently, against his duty, first, to transfer to another or to lay from himself any of them. For he

12. Clarendon complained that this passage "the entire loss of one battle" would "put an end to the sovereignty of any prince in Europe." (Brief View, pp. 167–68).
of making war or peace by his own authority, or of judging of the necessities of the commonwealth, or of levying money and soldiers (when and as much as in his own conscience he shall judge necessary), or of making officers and ministers both of war and peace, or of appointing teachers and examining what doctrines are conformable or contrary to the defence, peace, and good of the people.

Secondly, it is against his duty to let the people be ignorant or misinformed of the grounds and reasons of those his essential rights, because thereby men are easy to be seduced and drawn to resist him, when the commonwealth shall require their use and exercise.

[4] *And the grounds of these rights have the rather* need to be diligently and truly taught, because they cannot be maintained by any civil law or terror of legal punishment. For a civil law that shall forbid rebellion (and such is all resistance to the essential rights of sovereignty) is not (as a civil law) any obligation but by virtue only of the law of nature that forbiddeth the violation of faith; which natural obligation, if men know not, they cannot know the right of any law the sovereign maketh. And for the punishment, they take it but for an act of hostility, which, when they think they have strength enough, they will endeavour by acts of hostility to avoid.

[5] As I have heard some say that justice is but a word, without substance, and that whatsoever a man can by force or art acquire to himself (not only in the condition of war, but also in a commonwealth) is his own, which I have already showed to be false; so there be also that maintain that there are no grounds, nor principles of reason, to sustain those essential rights which make sovereignty absolute. For if there were, they would have been found out in some place or other, whereas we see there has not hitherto been any commonwealth where those rights have been acknowledged or challenged. *Wherein they argue as ill as if the savage people of America should deny there were any grounds, or principles of reason, so to build a house as to last as long as the materials, because they never yet saw any so well built. Time and industry produce every day new knowledge.

*And as the art of well building is derived from principles of reason,* observed by industrious men that had long studied the nature of materials and the divers effects of figure and proportion, long after mankind began (though poorly) to build, so, long time after men have begun to constitute commonwealths, imperfect and apt to relapse into disorder, there may principles of reason be found out by industrious meditation, to make their constitution (excepting by external violence) everlasting. And such are those which I have in this discourse set forth, which, whether they come not into the sight of those that have power to make use of them, or be neglected by them or not, concerneth my particular interest, at this day, very little. But supposing that these of mine are not such principles of reason, yet I am sure they are principles from authority of Scripture, as I shall make it appear when I shall come to speak of the kingdom of God (administered by Moses) over the Jews, his peculiar people by covenant.

[6] But they say, again, that though the principles be right, yet common people are not of capacity enough to be made to understand them. I should be glad that the rich and potent subjects of a kingdom, or those that are accounted the most learned, were no less incapable than they. But all men know that the obstructions to this kind of doctrine proceed not so much from the difficulty of the matter, as from the interest of them that are to learn. Potent men digest hardly anything that setteth up a power to bridle their affections; and learned men, anything that discovereth their errors, and thereby lesseneth their authority; whereas the common people's minds, unless they be tainted with dependence on the potent, or scribbled over with the opinions of their doctors,* are like clean paper, fit to receive whatsoever by public authority shall be impressed in them.

*Shall whole nations be brought to acquiesce in the great mysteries of Christian religion (which are above reason), and millions of men be made believe that the same body may be in innumerable places at one and the same time (which is against reason), and shall not men be able, by their teaching and preaching (protected by the law), to make that received which is so consonant to reason that any unprejudiced*

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1. OL: "Moreover, the grounds of these rights ought the more to be taught because they are a matter of natural right, not civil right, and their transgression is not to be punished as a violation of the civil laws, but avenged as a hostile act. For [transgressions of these rights] involve rebellion, i.e., the transgression (or rather, repudiation) of all civil laws at once, and for that reason, they would be prohibited in vain by the civil law."
man needs no more to learn it than to hear it.  

I conclude, therefore, that in the instruction of the people in the essential rights (which are the natural and fundamental laws) of sovereignty, there is no difficulty (whilst a sovereign has his power entire) but what proceeds from his own fault, or the fault of those whom he trusteth in the administration of the commonwealth; and consequently, it is his duty to cause them so to be instructed; and not only his duty, but his benefit also, and security against the danger that may arrive to himself in his natural person from rebellion.

[7] And (to descend to particulars) the people are to be taught, first, that they ought not to be in love with any form of government they see in their neighbour nations, more than with their own, nor (whatsoever present prosperity they behold in nations that are otherwise governed than they) to desire change. For the prosperity of a people ruled by an aristocratical or democratical assembly come not from aristocracy, nor from democracy, but from the obedience and concord of the subjects; nor do the people flourish in a monarchy because one man has the right to rule them, but because they obey him. Take away, in any kind of state, the obedience (and consequently the concord of the people) and they shall not only not flourish, but in short time be dissolved. And they that go about by disobedience, to do no more than reform the commonwealth, shall find they do thereby destroy it, like the foolish daughters of Pelus (in the fable) which, desiring to renew the youth of their decrepit father, did by the counsel of Medea cut him in pieces and boil him, together with strange herbs, but made not of him a new man. This desire of change is like the breach of the first of God's commandments; for there God says Non habebis Deos alienos, Thou shalt not have the Gods of other nations, and in another place, concerning kings, that they are Gods.  

[8] Secondly, they are to be taught that they ought not to be led with admiration of the virtue of any of their fellow subjects, how high soever he stand, nor how conspicuously soever he shine in the commonwealth, nor of any assembly (except the sovereign assembly), so as to defer to them any obedience or honour appropriate to the sovereign only, whom (in their particular stations) they represent, nor to receive any influence from them but such as is conveyed by them from the sovereign authority. For that sovereign cannot be imagined to love his people as he ought that is not jealous of them, but suffers them by the flattery of popular men to be seduced from their loyalty, as they have often been (not only secretly, but openly), so as to proclaim marriage with them in facie Ecclesiae (in the presence of the Church) by preachers and by publishing the same in the open streets, which may fitly be compared to the violation of the second of the ten commandments.

[9] Thirdly, in consequence to this they ought to be informed how great a fault it is to speak evil of the sovereign representative (whether one man or an assembly of men), or to argue and dispute his power, or any way to use his name irreverently, whereby he may be brought into contempt with his people, and their obedience (in which the safety of the commonwealth consisteth) slackened. Which doctrine the third commandment by resemblance pinneth to.

[10] Fourthly, seeing people cannot be taught this, nor when it is taught remember it, nor after one generation past so much as know in whom the sovereign power is placed, without setting apart from their ordinary labour some certain times in which they may attend those that are appointed to instruct them, it is necessary that some such times be determined wherein they may assembly together and (after prayers and praises given to God, the sovereign of sovereigns) hear those their duties told them, and the positive laws, such as generally concern them all, read and expounded, and be put in mind of the authority that maketh them laws. To this end had the Jews every seventh day a sabbath, in which the law was read and expounded, and in the solemnity whereof they were put in mind that their king was God, that having created the world in six days he rested the seventh day, and by their resting on it from their labour, that God was their king, which redeemed them from their servile and painful labour in Egypt, and gave them a time, after they had rejoiced in God, to take joy also in themselves by lawful recreation. So that the first table of the commandments is spent all in setting down the sum of God's absolute power, not only as God, but as king by pact (in peculiar) of the Jews, and may therefore give light to those that have sovereign power conferred on them by the consent of men, to see what doctrine they ought to teach their subjects.

[11] And because the first instruction of children dependeth on the care of their parents, it is necessary that they should be obedient to them whilst they are under their tuition, and not only so, but that also afterwards (as gratitude required) they acknowledge the benefit of
their education by external signs of honour. To which end they are to be taught that originally the father of every man was also his sovereign lord, with power over him of life and death, and that the fathers of families, when by instituting a commonwealth they resigned that absolute power, yet it was never intended they should lose the honour due unto them for their education. *For to relinquish such right was not necessary to the institution of sovereign power, nor would there be any reason why any man should desire to have children, or take the care to nourish and instruct them, if they were afterwards to have no other benefit from them than from other men.* And this accordeth with the fifth commandment.

[12] *Again, every sovereign ought to cause justice to be taught, which (consisting in taking from no man what is his) is as much as to say, to cause men to be taught not to deprive their neighbours by violence or fraud of anything which by the sovereign authority is theirs. Of things held in propriety those that are dearest to him are his own life and limbs; and in the next degree (in most men) those that concern conjugal affection; and after them riches and means of living. Therefore, the people are to be taught to abstain from violence to one another's person by private revenge, from violation of conjugal honour, and from forcible rapine* and fraudulent surreptition of one another's goods. For which purpose also it is necessary they be shewed the evil consequences of false judgment by corruption either of judges or witnesses, whereby the distinction of propriety is taken away and justice becomes of no effect; all which things are intimated in the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth commandments. *And to avoid doing of Injury.*

[13] Lastly, they are to be taught that, not only the unjust facts, but the designs and intentions to do them (though by accident hindered) are injustice, which consisteth in the pravity* of the will as well as in the irregularity of the act. And this is the intention of the tenth commandment, and the sum of the second table, which is reduced all to

this one commandment of mutual charity: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, as the sum of the first table is reduced to the love of God, whom they had then newly received as their king.

[14] As for the means and conduits by which the people may receive this instruction, we are to search by what means so many opinions contrary to the peace of mankind, upon weak and false principles, have nevertheless been so deeply rooted in them. I mean those which I have in the precedent chapter specified: as, that men shall judge of what is lawful and unlawful, not by the law itself, but by their own consciences (that is to say, by their own private judgments); that subjects sin in obeying the commands of the commonwealth, unless they themselves have first judged them to be lawful; that their propriety in their riches is such as to exclude the dominion which the commonwealth hath over the same; that it is lawful for subjects to kill such as they call tyrants; that the sovereign power may be divided, and the like, which come to be instilled into the people by these means.

They whom necessity or covetousness keepeth in their trades and labour, and they, on the other side, whom superfluity* or sloth carrieth after their sensual pleasures (which two sorts of men take up the greatest part of mankind), being diverted from the deep meditation which the learning of truth, not only in the matter of natural justice, but also of all other sciences necessarily requireth, receive the notions of their duty chiefly from divines in the pulpit, and partly from such of their neighbours or familiar acquaintance as having the faculty ofdiscoursing readily and plausibly seem wiser, and better learned in cases of law and conscience, than themselves. And the divines, and such others as make show of learning, derive their knowledge from the universities and from the schools of law, or from the books which by men eminent in those schools and universities have been published. It is, therefore, manifest that the instruction of the people dependeth wholly on the right teaching of youth in the universities. and a man say) the universities of England learned

by the infamy of perjury, and someone who is provoked would have the most honorable pretext for declining combat.

"In addition, citizens are to be taught how serious an evil it is to take from a fellow citizen, either by force or by fraud, conjugal honor, or any other goods, and how great a harm it is to public justice and the common peace to corrupt witnesses and judges in trials. These matters are involved in the seventh, eighth and ninth commandments of the Decalogue."

[7] OL: "on the righteousness of the opinions which the universities teach. Therefore, before all else the universities are to be reformed."
enough already to do that? or is it you will undertake to teach the universities? Hard questions. Yet to the first, I doubt not to answer that till towards the latter end of Henry the Eighth, the power of the Pope was always upheld against the power of the Commonwealth principally by the universities; and that the doctrines maintained by so many preachers against the sovereign power of the king, and by so many lawyers and others that had their education there, is a sufficient argument that, though the universities were not authors of those false doctrines, yet they knew not how to plant the true. For in such a contradiction of opinions, it is most certain that they have not been sufficiently instructed; and it is no wonder if they yet retain a relish of that subtle liquor wherewith they were first seasoned against the civil authority.

But to the latter question, it is not fit, nor needful, for me to say either aye or no; for any man that sees what I am doing may easily perceive what I think.

The safety of the people requireth further, from him or them that have the sovereign power, that justice be equally administered to all degrees of people, that is, that as well the rich and mighty as poor and obscure persons may be righted of the injuries done them, so as the great may have no greater hope of impunity when they do violence, dishonour, or any injury to the meaner sort, than when one of these does the like to one of them. For in this consisteth equity, to which, as being a precept of the law of nature, a sovereign is as much subject as any of the meanest of his people. All breaches of the law are offences against the Commonwealth; but there be some that are also against private persons. Those that concern the Commonwealth only may without breach of equity be pardoned; for every man may pardon what is done against himself, according to his own discretion. But an offence against a private man cannot in equity be pardoned without the consent of him that is injured, or reasonable satisfaction.

The inequality of subjects proceedeth from the acts of sovereign power, and therefore has no more place in the presence of the sovereign (that is to say, in a court of justice) than the inequality between kings and their subjects, in the presence of the King of kings. The honour of great persons is to be valued for their beneficence and the aids they give to men of inferior rank, or not at all. And the violence, oppressions, and injuries they do are not extinguished, but aggravated by the greatness of their persons, because they have least need to commit them. The consequences of this partiality towards the great proceed in this manner. Impunity maketh insolence; insolence, hatred; and hatred, an endeavour to pull down all oppressing and contemptuous* greatness, though with the ruin of the Commonwealth.

[17] To equal justice appertaineth also the equal imposition of taxes, the equality whereof dependeth not on the equality of riches, but on the equality of the debt that every man oweth to the Commonwealth for his defence. It is not enough for a man to labour for the maintenance of his life, but also to fight (if need be) for the securing of his labour. They must either do as the Jews did after their return from captivity in re-ediifying the temple (build with one hand and hold the sword in the other), or else they must hire others to fight for them. For the impositions that are laid on the people by the sovereign power are nothing else but the wages due to them that hold the public sword, to defend private men in the exercise of their several trades and callings.

Seeing, then, the benefit that everyone receiveth thereby is the enjoyment of life, which is equally dear to poor and rich, the debt which a poor man oweth them that defend his life is the same which a rich man oweth for the defence of his, saving that the rich, who have the service of the poor, may be debtors not only for their own persons, but for many more. Which

9. OL: “It is, moreover, the duty of the sovereign to provide that punishments which the laws establish for all citizens who have transgressed them be exacted equally from all. Crimes against the sovereign, of course, can be pardoned by him without iniquity; for pardoning is a matter for him who has suffered the injury. But an injury done against a citizen, without his consent or fair compensation, cannot be pardoned by anyone else. Will not he who offers impunity to the murderer of my father or my son be called in some way a murderer also?

It is the duty of the sovereign also to see that ordinary citizens are not oppressed by the great, much more that he himself not oppress them because of the counsel of the great, considering the example of Rehoboam. [1 Kings 12:13–14] For the common people are the strongest element of the Commonwealth. It is also the sovereign’s duty to take care lest the great provoke those of modest means to hostile action by insults. The sovereign can, of course, rightly reproach a citizen of ill repute for his baseness, but to reproach someone for having a humble station is both inequitable and dangerous to the Commonwealth. If the great, because they are great, demand to be honored on account of their power, why are not the common people to be honored, because they are many and much more powerful. The sedition of those in Holland, called the Beggars, ought to serve as a warning how dangerous it is to the Commonwealth to scorn citizens of modest means.
considered, the equality of impostion consisteth rather in the equality of that which is consumed than of the riches of the persons that consume the same. For what reason is there that he which laboureth much, and spending the fruits of his labour, consumeth little, should be more charged than he that living idly, geteth little, and spendeth all he gets, seeing the one hath no more protection from the commonwealth than the other? But when the impositions are laid upon those things which men consume, every man payeth equally for what he useth, nor is the commonwealth defrauded by the luxurious waste of private men.

[18]*And whereas many men, by accident inevitable, become unable to maintain themselves by their labour, they ought not to be left to the charity of private persons, but to be provided for (as far as is necessary) by the laws of the commonwealth. For as it is uncharitableness in any man to neglect the impotent, so it is in the sovereign of a commonwealth to expose them to the hazard of such uncertain charity. 10

[19]*But for such as have strong bodies the case is otherwise; they are to be forced to work; and to avoid the excuse of not finding employment, there ought to be such laws as may encourage all manner of arts (as navigation, agriculture, fishing, and all manner of manufacture that requires labour). The multitude of poor (and yet strong) people still increasing, they are to be transplanted into countries not sufficiently inhabited, where, nevertheless, they are not to exterminate those

the inequality of the citizens has not proceeded from something special in them [i.e., the great], but from the will of the sovereign, i.e., the will of the commonwealth. So much the less, then, ought they to adopt an uncivil superiority. Kings, indeed, ought not to provoke the common people; much less should their fellow citizens do so; however powerful they are, lest when the common people desire vengeance against them, they attack at the same time the commonwealth, which did not prohibit [their insolence].” Hobbes seems to be under the misapprehension that the Beggars’ Revolt of 1566 was class warfare (in fact it was inspired by nationalism and religious differences, and led by members of the nobility). Clarendon complained of the English version of these paragraphs that it showed an “extreme malignity to the nobility, by whose bread he hath always been sustained.” He compares Hobbes’ language to that of the Levellers. (Brief View, p. 181)

10. OL: “And since there are some who, through no fault of their own, but because of accidents they could not have foreseen, fall into misfortunes, so that they cannot provide for their maintenance by their own industry, it is the duty of the sovereign to see that they do not lack the things necessary for life. For since the right of nature permits those who are in extreme necessity to steal, or even to take by force, the goods of others, they ought to be maintained by the commonwealth, and not left to the uncertainty of their own resources, lest they be troublesome to the commonwealth.” Cf. xv, 17.

they find there, but constrain them to inhabit closer together, and not range a great deal of ground to snatch what they find, but to court each little plot with art and labour, to give them their sustenance in this season. And when all the world is overcharged with inhabitants, then the last remedy of all is war, which provideth for every man, by victory or death.

[20]*To the care of the sovereign belongeth the making of good laws. But what is a good law? By a good law I mean not a just law, for no law can be unjust. The law is made by the sovereign power, and all that is done by such law is warranted* and owned by every one of the people; and that which every man will have so, no man can say is unjust. It is in the laws of a commonwealth as in the laws of gaming; whatsoever the gamblers all agree on is injustice to none of them. A good law is that which is needful for the good of the people, and withal perspicuous.

[21]*For the use of laws (which are but rules authorized) is not to bind the people from all voluntary actions, but to direct and keep them in such a motion as not to hurt themselves by their own impetuous desires, rashness, or indiscretion, as hedges are set, not to stop travellers, but to keep them in the way. 11 And therefore, a law that is not needful, having not the true end of a law, is not good. A law may be conceived to be good when it is for the benefit of the sovereign, though it be not necessary for the people; but it is not so. For the good of the sovereign and people cannot be separated. It is a weak sovereign that has weak subjects, and a weak people whose sovereign wanteth power to rule them at his will. Unnecessary laws are not good laws, but traps for money which, where the right of sovereign power is acknowledged, are superfluous (and where it is not acknowledged, insufficient to defend the people).

[22]*The perspicuity consisteth, not so much in the words of the law itself, as in a declaration of the causes and motives for which it was made. That is it that shows us the meaning of the legislator; and the meaning of the legislator known, the law is more easily understood by few than many words. For all words are subject to ambiguity; and therefore, multiplication of words in the body of the law is multiplication of ambiguity; besides, it seems to imply (by too much diligence) that whatsoever can evade the words is without the compass of the law. And this is a cause of many unnecessary processes. 12 For when I consider how short were the laws of ancient times, and how they grew by degrees still longer, methinks I see a contention between the penmen and pleaders of the law, the former

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seeking to circumscribe the latter, and the latter to evade their circumscriptions; and that the pleaders have got the victory. It belongeth therefore to the office of a legislator (such as is in all commonwealths the supreme representative, be it one man or an assembly) to make the reason perspicuous, why the law was made, and the body of the law itself as short, but in as proper and significant terms, as may be.

[23] It belongeth also to the office of the sovereign to make a right application of punishments and rewards. And seeing the end of punishing is not revenge and discharge of choler,* but correction, either of the offender or of others by his example, the severest punishments are to be inflicted for those crimes that are of most danger to the public, such as are those which proceed from malice to the government established, those that spring from contempt of justice, those that provoke indignation in the multitude, and those which, unpunished, seem authorized, as when they are committed by sons, servants, or favourites of men in authority. For indignation carrieth men, not only against the actors and authors of injustice, but against all power that is likely to protect them, as in the case of Tarquin, when for the insolent act of one of his sons he was driven out of Rome, and the monarchy itself dissolved.

But crimes of infamy (such as are those which proceed from great provocation, from great fear, great need, or from ignorance whether the fact be a great crime or not), there is place many times for lenity, without prejudice to the commonwealth: and lenity, when there is such place for it, is required by the law of nature. The punishment of the leaders and teachers in a commotion, not the poor seduced people, when they are punished, can profit the commonwealth by their example. To be severe to the people is to punish that ignorance which may in great part be imputed to the sovereign, whose fault it was they were no better instructed.

[24] In like manner it belongeth to the office and duty of the sovereign to apply his rewards always so as there may arise from them benefit to the commonwealth, wherein consisteth their use and end; and is then done, when they that have well served the commonwealth are, with as little expense of the common treasure as is possible, so well recompensed as others thereby may be encouraged, both to serve the same as faithfully as they can, and to study the arts by which they may be enabled to do it better.

To buy with money or preference from a popular ambitious subject, to be quiet and desist from making ill impressions in the minds of the people, has nothing of the nature of reward (which is ordained, not for disservice, but for service past), nor a sign of gratitude, but of fear; nor does it tend to the benefit, but to the damage of the public. It is a contention with ambition, like that of Hercules with the monster Hydra, which, having many heads, for every one that was vanquished there grew up three. For in like manner, when the stubbornness of one popular man is overcome with reward, there arise many more (by the example) that do the same mischief, in hope of like benefit; and as all sorts of manufacture, so also mance increaseth by being vendible.* And though sometimes a civil war may be deferred by such ways as that, yet the danger grows still the greater, and the public ruin more assured. It is, therefore, against the duty of the sovereign, to whom the public safety is committed, to reward those that aspire to greatness by disturbing the peace of their country, and not rather to oppose the beginnings of such men, with a little danger, than after a longer time, with greater.

[25] Another business of the sovereign is to choose good counsellors; I mean such, whose advice he is to take in the government of the commonwealth. For this word counsel, consilium, corrupted from consilium, is of a large signification, and comprehends all assemblies of men that sit together, not only to deliberate what is to be done hereafter, but also to judge of facts past and of law for the present. I take it here in the first sense only; and in this sense, there is no choice of counsel, neither in a democracy nor aristocracy, because the persons counselling are members of the person counselled. The choice of counsellors, therefore, is proper to monarchy, in which the sovereign that endeavoureth not to make choice of those that in every kind are the most able, dischargeth not his office as he ought to do. The most able counsellors are they that have least hope of benefit by giving evil counsel, and most knowledge of those things that conduce to the peace and defence of the commonwealth.

It is a hard matter to know who expecteth benefit from public troubles, but the signs that guide to a just suspicion is the soothing* of the people in their unreasonable or irreparable grievances, by men whose estates are not sufficient to discharge their accustomed expenses, and may easily be observed by anyone whom it concerns to know it. But to know who has most knowledge of the public affairs is yet harder; and they that know them need them a great deal the less. For to know who knows the rules almost of any art is a great degree of the knowledge of the same art, because no man can be assured of the truth of another’s rules but he that is first taught to understand them.

But the best signs of knowledge of any art are much conversing in it and constant good effects of it. Good counsel comes not by lot nor by inheritance; and therefore, there is no more reason to expect good advice from the rich or noble in matter of state, than in delineating the dimensions of a fortress (unless we shall think there needs no method in the study of the

12. O. L. adds in parentheses: "moreover, the commonwealth is king of the children of pride, and is so made that he ought not to fear," alluding to the passage from Job cited in xxviii. 27.
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politics, as there does in the study of geometry, but only to be lookers on, which is not so; for the politics is the harder study of the two. Whereas in these parts of Europe it hath been taken for a right of certain persons to have place in the highest council of state by inheritance, it is derived from the conquests of the ancient Germans, wherein many absolute lords, joining together to conquer other nations, would not enter into the confederacy without such privileges as might be marks of difference, in time following, between their posterity and the posterity of their subjects; which privileges, being inconsistent with the sovereign power, by the favour of the sovereign they may seem to keep; but contending for them as their right, they must needs by degrees let them go, and have at last no further honour than adhereth naturally to their abilities.

[26] And how able soever be the counsellors in any affair, the benefit of their counsel is greater when they give every one his advice, and the reasons of it, apart, than when they do it in an assembly by way of orations; and when they have premeditated, than when they speak on the sudden, both because they have more time to survey the consequences of action, and are less subject to be carried away to contradiction through envy, emulation, or other passions arising from the difference of opinion.

[27] The best counsel in those things that concern not other nations, but only the case and benefit the subjects may enjoy by laws that look only inward, is to be taken from the general informations and complaints of the people of each province, who are best acquainted with their own wants, and ought therefore, when they demand nothing in derogation of the essential rights of sovereignty, to be diligently taken notice of. For without those essential rights (as I have often before said) the Commonwealth cannot at all subsist.

[28] A commander of an army in chief, if he be not popular, shall not be beloved nor feared as he ought to be by his army; and consequently, cannot perform that office with good success. He must, therefore, be industrious, valiant, affable, liberal and fortunate, that he may gain an opinion both of sufficiency* and of loving his soldiers. This is popularity, and breeds in the soldiers both desire, and courage, to recommend themselves to his favour, and protects the severity of the general, in punishing (when need is) the mutinous or negligent soldiers. *But this love of soldiers (if caution be not given of the commander's fidelity) is a dangerous thing to sovereign power, especially when it is in the hands of an assembly not popular. It belongeth, therefore, to the safety of the people, both that they be good conductors, and faithful subjects, to whom the sovereign commits his armies.

[29] But when the sovereign himself is popular (that is, reverenced and beloved of his people), there is no danger at all from the popularity of a subject. For soldiers are never so generally unjust as to side with their captain, though they love him, against their sovereign, when they love not only his person but also his cause. And therefore, those who by violence have at any time suppressed the power of the lawful sovereign, before they could settle themselves in his place, have been always put to the trouble of contriving their titles, to save the people from the shame of receiving them. To have a known right to sovereign power is so popular a quality, as he that has it needs no more, for his own part, to turn the hearts of his subjects to him, but that they see him able absolutely to govern his own family; nor, on the part of his enemies, but a disbanding of their armies. For the greatest and most active part of mankind has never hitherto been well contented with the present.

[30] Concerning the offices of one sovereign to another, which are comprehended in that law which is commonly called the law of nations, I need not say anything in this place, because the law of nations and the law of nature is the same thing. And every sovereign hath the same right, in procuring the safety of his people, that any particular man can have, in procuring the safety of his own body. And the same law that dictates to men that have no civil government, what they ought to do, and what to avoid in regard of one another, dictates the same to commonwealths, that is, to the consciences of sovereign princes and sovereign assemblies, there being no court of natural justice but in the conscience only, where not man, but God reigneth, whose laws (such of them as oblige all mankind) in respect of God, as he is the author of nature, are natural, and in respect of the same God, as he is King of kings, are laws. But of the kingdom of God, as King of kings, and as King also of a peculiar people, I shall speak in the rest of this discourse.

CHAPTER XXXI

Of the Kingdom of God by Nature

[1] That the condition of mere nature (that is to say, of absolute liberty, such as is theirs that neither are sovereigns nor subjects) is anarchy, and the condition of war; that the precepts by

 Commands.

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13. OL: "But unless there is security for the commander's fidelity, he becomes dangerous to the commonwealth by the favor of his soldiers; and he is most dangerous to a democratic commonwealth."