

**CONSIDERATIONS ON THE CHOICE OF
PUBLIC RULERS; ON THE EXTENT OF
THEIR POWERS; AND ON
THE BEST MEANS OF SECURING THE
ADVANTAGES, AND REFORMING THE
ABUSES, OF POPULAR ELECTIONS**

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Considerations on the Choice of Public Rulers; On the Extent of Their Powers; And on the Best Means of Securing the Advantages, and Reforming the Abuses, of Popular Elections by Thomas S. Arden

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THOMAS S. ARDEN

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BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the twenty-eighth day of
(*L. s.*) June, in the twenty-ninth year of the Independence of the United States of America, Thomas S. Arden, of the said District, hath deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

“ CONSIDERATIONS ON the Choice of Public Rulers; on the extent
“ of their powers; and on the best means of securing the advantages and reforming the abuses of Popular Elections.”

IN conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, “ An act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned,” and also, to an act entitled, “ An act supplementary to an act entitled “ An act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching, historical and other prints.”

EDWARD DUNSCOMB,

Clerk of the District of New-York.

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CONTENTS.

	Page
SECT. I. A Cursory View of the Roman Constitution, from the building of Rome to the 385th year of the Republic,	1
II. On the Nature and Tendency of the Powers intrusted to Public Agents by the Romans, . .	11
III. On the Causes of the Ruin of the Roman Con- stitution,	31
IV. The Constitution of the American States, compared with the Constitution of the Ame- rican Bank,	49
V. A Sketch of a Constitution for an extensive Country, upon the Roman principles,	55
VI. A General View of the Sketch,	75
VII. On the Nature and Tendency of the Powers intrusted by the National Assembly, to the Public Agents in France,	89
VIII. On the Conduct of the French Legislators,	117
IX. Absolute Power is not the less pernicious, that it emanates from the Society,	131
X. Equality of Rights as advantageous to the highest Ranks, as to the lowest,	135

INTRODUCTION.

IMPRUDENT trust to agents and servants, in business or in private families, is found to corrupt their morals; producing speculation and disorder, in proportion to the extent of the trust; to the number employed; and to the temptations to which they are exposed: whereas, a proper control checks dishonesty, and encourages diligence, decent manners, and good morals. Hence, as the highest national agents are but men, we must conclude, that these causes will have similar effects upon them.

AND consequently there seems to be reason to suppose, that the virtue of the public agents of the ancient Romans, and the depravity of the public agents of the modern French, will be found to have been produced by the respective constitutions of these nations: That the Romans had been cautious in giving trust, and that

they had preserved a proper control over their agents ;
but that the French had given very imprudent trust to
theirs.

To ascertain whether these suppositions were, or
were not, well founded, was the object of an enquiry,
of which the following considerations were the result.

SECTION I.

*A Cursory View of the Roman Constitution,
from the building of Rome to the 385th year
of the Republic.*

FROM the building of Rome to the usurpation of Tarquin the Proud, a period of about 230 years, the first magistrate of the Romans was called King. But their historians have not given any account of the particular powers annexed to that office, nor of the power of the Senate, or of the society collectively, during that period. They seem, however, to have recorded every change which took place in these powers; at least they have given a very particular account of the new method of taking the votes of the people by centuries, which was, as they express themselves, established by Servius Tullius, the last legal King.