

10.2 | *The Realm of Politics*

The word “politics” is frequently used to designate a sphere of action in which men engage, vying with one another for power or position, scheming or planning to achieve certain objectives either in concert with their fellows or through control or domination of them. But the word is also used to name a learned discipline, a department of human thought or inquiry, an art or science. In the latter meaning, “politics” is short for political philosophy, political theory, political science, or the art of politics. The quotations collected here are concerned with the realm of politics in both senses of the term.

Those dealing with politics as a learned discipline or a department of thought and inquiry offer different answers to the question whether politics is a science or an art; and if a science, what type of science, appealing to what sort of principles, and offering what kind of evidence or arguments for its conclusions. Similar questions are asked about ethics or moral philosophy, as the reader will see by turning to Section 9.1; and by putting together quotations in that section and in this one, the reader will be reminded of some of the views that have been held about the relation of ethics and politics to one another. The main point at issue is whether politics is a normative discipline, one concerned with standards of justice, with such goods as liberty and equality, with what ought to be the ends and means of political action, not merely with what has

been or can be done. Considerations relevant to this issue will be found in Section 11.1 on PROPERTY, Section 11.2 on WEALTH AND POVERTY, Section 12.2 on JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE, Section 13.1 on FREEDOM IN SOCIETY, and Section 13.3 on EQUALITY.

The quotations dealing with politics as a sphere of action tend to concentrate on the maxims, rules, or policies that the individual should put into practice if the individual wishes to succeed in attaining one’s objectives, whatever they may be, good or bad. How far the person should be restrained by moral scruples, to what extent the person should let one’s striving for success justify the employment of any means that promise to achieve it, what compromises with honesty the person must make—these and similar questions run through or lie behind the advice offered by such men of practical experience as Machiavelli and Francis Bacon, as well as by such philosophers as Plato and Aristotle. Outstanding examples of political sagacity and political ineptitude, of genuine statesmanship and of successful chicanery, are provided by the historians and the poets.

The favorable and unfavorable connotations that are often attached to the terms “statesman” and “politician” derive from different evaluations placed on political virtue, skill, or technique. Antipolitical writers, such as Thoreau, tend to regard the realm of politics as one from which virtue, honesty, and conscience are totally excluded.

1 *Menelaus*. As with sailing,
so with politics: make your cloth too taut,
and your ship will dip and keel, but slacken off
and trim your sails, and things head up again.
The gods, you know, resent being importuned
too much; in the same way the people dislike

being pushed or hustled. Too much zeal offends
where indirection works.
Euripides, *Orestes*, 706

2 *Praxagora*. Ye are to blame for this, Athenian
people,

Ye draw your wages from the public purse,
 Yet each man seeks his private gain alone.
 So the State reels, like any Aesimus.
 Sill, if ye trust me, ye shall yet be saved.
 I move that now the womankind be asked
 To rule the State. In our own homes, ye know,
 They are the managers and rule the house.
1st Woman. O good, good, good! speak on, speak
 on, dear man!

Aristophanes, *Ecclesiazusae*, 205

- 3 *Cleon.* Ordinary men usually manage public affairs better than their more gifted fellows. The latter are always wanting to appear wiser than the laws, and to overrule every proposition brought forward, thinking that they cannot show their wit in more important matters, and by such behaviour too often ruin their country; while those who mistrust their own cleverness are content to be less learned than the laws, and less able to pick holes in the speech of a good speaker; and being fair judges rather than rival athletes, generally conduct affairs successfully.

Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, III, 37

- 4 *Socrates.* Do I understand you, . . . and is your meaning that you teach the art of politics, and that you promise to make men good citizens?

Protagoras. That, Soerates, is exactly the profession which I make.

Then, I said, you do indeed possess a noble art, if there is no mistake about this; for I will freely confess to you, Protagoras, that I have a doubt whether this art is capable of being taught, and yet I know not how to disbelieve your assertion. And I ought to tell you why I am of opinion that this art cannot be taught or communicated by man to man. I say that the Athenians are an understanding people, and indeed they are esteemed to be such by the other Hellenes. Now I observe that when we are met together in the assembly, and the matter in hand relates to building, the builders are summoned as advisers; when the question is one of shipbuilding, then the shipwrights; and the like of other arts which they think capable of being taught and learned. And if some person offers to give them advice who is not supposed by them to have any skill in the art, even though he be good-looking, and rich, and noble, they will not listen to him, but laugh and hoot at him, until either he is clamoured down and retires of himself; or if he persist, he is dragged away or put out by the constables at the command of the prytanes. This is their way of behaving about professors of the arts. But when the question is an affair of state, then everybody is free to have a say—carpenter, tinker, cobbler, sailor, passenger; rich and poor, high and low—any one who likes gets up, and no one reproaches him, as in the former case, with not having learned, and having no teacher, and yet giving

advice; evidently because they are under the impression that this sort of knowledge cannot be taught. And not only is this true of the state, but of individuals; the best and wisest of our citizens are unable to impart their political wisdom to others: as for example, Pericles, the father of these young men, who gave them excellent instruction in all that could be learned from masters, in his own department of politics neither taught them, nor gave them teachers; but they were allowed to wander at their own free will in a sort of hope that they would light upon virtue of their own accord.

Plato, *Protagoras*, 319A

- 5 *Socrates.* Some one may wonder why I go about in private giving advice and busying myself with the concerns of others, but do not venture to come forward in public and advise the state. I will tell you why. . . . I am certain, O men of Athens, that if I had engaged in politics, I should have perished long ago, and done no good either to you or to myself. And do not be offended at my telling you the truth: for the truth is, that no man who goes to war with you or any other multitude, honestly striving against the many lawless and unrighteous deeds which are done in a state, will save his life; he who will fight for the right, if he would live even for a brief space, must have a private station and not a public one.

Plato, *Apology*, 31B

- 6 *Socrates.* Good men do not wish to be openly demanding payment for governing and so to get the name of hirelings, nor by secretly helping themselves out of the public revenues to get the name of thieves. And not being ambitious they do not care about honour. Wherefore necessity must be laid upon them, and they must be induced to serve from the fear of punishment. And this, as I imagine, is the reason why the forwardness to take office, instead of waiting to be compelled, has been deemed dishonourable. Now the worst part of the punishment is that he who refuses to rule is liable to be ruled by one who is worse than himself. And the fear of this, as I conceive, induces the good to take office, not because they would, but because they cannot help—not under the idea that they are going to have any benefit or enjoyment themselves, but as a necessity, and because they are not able to commit the task of ruling to any one who is better than themselves, or indeed as good. For there is reason to think that if a city were composed entirely of good men, then to avoid office would be as much an object of contention as to obtain office is at present; then we should have plain proof that the true ruler is not meant by nature to regard his own interest, but that of his subjects; and every one who knew this would choose rather to receive a benefit from another than to have the trouble of conferring one.

Plato, *Republic*, I, 347A

7 *Eleatic Stranger*. Then the true and natural art of statesmanship will never allow any State to be formed by a combination of good and bad men, if this can be avoided; but will begin by testing human natures in play, and after testing them, will entrust them to proper teachers who are the ministers of her purposes—she will herself give orders, and maintain authority; just as the art of weaving continually gives orders and maintains authority over the carders and all the others who prepare the material for the work, commanding the subsidiary arts to execute the works which she deems necessary for making the web.

Young Socrates. Quite true.

Str. In like manner, the royal science appears to me to be the mistress of all lawful educators and instructors, and having this queenly power, will not permit them to train men in what will produce characters unsuited to the political constitution which she desires to create, but only in what will produce such as are suitable. Those which have no share of manliness and temperance, or any other virtuous inclination, and, from the necessity of an evil nature, are violently carried away to godlessness and insolence and injustice, she gets rid of by death and exile, and punishes them with the greatest of disgraces.

Y. Soc. That is commonly said.

Str. But those who are wallowing in ignorance and baseness she bows under the yoke of slavery.

Y. Soc. Quite right.

Str. The rest of the citizens, out of whom, if they have education, something noble may be made, and who are capable of being united by the Statesman, the kingly art blends and weaves together; taking on the one hand those whose natures tend rather to courage, which is the stronger element and may be regarded as the warp, and on the other hand those which incline to order and gentleness, and which are represented in the figure as spun thick and soft, after the manner of the woof—these, which are naturally opposed, she seeks to bind and weave together. . . . This then we declare to be the completion of the web of political action, which is created by a direct intertexture of the brave and temperate natures, whenever the royal science has drawn the two minds into communion with one another by unanimity and friendship, and having perfected the noblest and best of all the webs which political life admits, and enfolding therein all other inhabitants of cities, whether slaves or freemen, binds them in one fabric and governs and presides over them, and, in so far as to be happy is vouchsafed to a city, in no particular fails to secure their happiness.

Plato, *Statesman*, 308B

8 *Athenian Stranger*. There is a difficulty in apprehending that the true art of politics is concerned, not with private but with public good (for public

good binds together states, but private only distracts them); and that both the public and private good as well of individuals as of states is greater when the state and not the individual is first considered. In the second place, although a person knows in the abstract that this is true, yet if he be possessed of absolute and irresponsible power, he will never remain firm in his principles or persist in regarding the public good as primary in the state, and the private good as secondary. Human nature will be always drawing him into avarice and selfishness, avoiding pain and pursuing pleasure without any reason, and will bring these to the front, obscuring the juster and better; and so working darkness in his soul will at last fill with evils both him and the whole city.

Plato, *Laws*, IX, 875A

9 Every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and pursuit, is thought to aim at some good; and for this reason the good has rightly been declared to be that at which all things aim. . . .

If . . . there is some end of the things we do, which we desire for its own sake (everything else being desired for the sake of this), and if we do not choose everything for the sake of something else (for at that rate the process would go on to infinity, so that our desire would be empty and vain), clearly this must be the good and the chief good. Will not the knowledge of it, then, have a great influence on life? Shall we not, like archers who have a mark to aim at, be more likely to hit upon what is right? If so, we must try, in outline at least, to determine what it is, and of which of the sciences or capacities it is the object. It would seem to belong to the most authoritative art and that which is most truly the master art. And politics appears to be of this nature; for it is this that ordains which of the sciences should be studied in a state, and which each class of citizens should learn and up to what point they should learn them; and we see even the most highly esteemed of capacities to fall under this, for example, strategy, economics, rhetoric; now, since politics uses the rest of the sciences, and since, again, it legislates as to what we are to do and what we are to abstain from, the end of this science must include those of the others, so that this end must be the good for man. For even if the end is the same for a single man and for a state, that of the state seems at all events something greater and more complete whether to attain or to preserve; though it is worthwhile to attain the end merely for one man, it is finer and more godlike to attain it for a nation or for city-states.

Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1094^a1

10 Political science does not make men, but takes them from nature and uses them.

Aristotle, *Politics*, 1258^a21

11 It is obvious that government too is the subject of a single science, which has to consider what government is best and of what sort it must be, to be most in accordance with our aspirations, if there were no external impediment, and also what kind of government is adapted to particular states. For the best is often unattainable, and therefore the true legislator and statesman ought to be acquainted, not only with (1) that which is best in the abstract, but also with (2) that which is best relatively to circumstances. We should be able further to say how a state may be constituted under any given conditions (3); both how it is originally formed and, when formed, how it may be longest preserved; the supposed state being so far from having the best constitution that it is unprovided even with the conditions necessary for the best; neither is it the best under the circumstances, but of an inferior type.

He ought, moreover, to know (4) the form of government which is best suited to states in general; for political writers, although they have excellent ideas, are often unpractical. We should consider, not only what form of government is best, but also what is possible and what is easily attainable by all.

Aristotle, *Politics*, 1288b21

12 Above all every state should be so administered and so regulated by law that its magistrates cannot possibly make money. . . . For the people do not take any great offence at being kept out of the government—indeed they are rather pleased than otherwise at having leisure for their private business—but what irritates them is to think that their rulers are stealing the public money; then they are doubly annoyed; for they lose both honour and profit. If office brought no profit, then and then only could democracy and aristocracy be combined; for both notables and people might have their wishes gratified. All would be able to hold office, which is the aim of democracy, and the notables would be magistrates, which is the aim of aristocracy. And this result may be accomplished when there is no possibility of making money out of the offices; for the poor will not want to have them when there is nothing to be gained from them—they would rather be attending to their own concerns; and the rich, who do not want money from the public treasury, will be able to take them; and so the poor will keep to their work and grow rich, and the notables will not be governed by the lower class.

Aristotle, *Politics*, 1308b31

13 Let us now address those who, while they agree that the life of virtue is the most eligible, differ about the manner of practising it. For some renounce political power, and think that the life of the freeman is different from the life of the statesman and the best of all; but others think the life of

the statesman best. The argument of the latter is that he who does nothing cannot do well, and that virtuous activity is identical with happiness. To both we say: 'you are partly right and partly wrong.' The first class are right in affirming that the life of the freeman is better than the life of the despot; for there is nothing grand or noble in having the use of a slave, in so far as he is a slave; or in issuing commands about necessary things. But it is an error to suppose that every sort of rule is despotic like that of a master over slaves, for there is as great a difference between the rule over freemen and the rule over slaves as there is between slavery by nature and freedom by nature, about which I have said enough at the commencement of this treatise. And it is equally a mistake to place inactivity above action, for happiness is activity, and the actions of the just and wise are the realization of much that is noble.

But perhaps some one, accepting these premisses, may still maintain that supreme power is the best of all things, because the possessors of it are able to perform the greatest number of noble actions. If so, the man who is able to rule, instead of giving up anything to his neighbour, ought rather to take away his power; and the father should make no account of his son, nor the son of his father, nor friend of friend; they should not bestow a thought on one another in comparison with this higher object, for the best is the most eligible and 'doing well' is the best. There might be some truth in such a view if we assume that robbers and plunderers attain the chief good. But this can never be; their hypothesis is false. For the actions of a ruler cannot really be honourable, unless he is as much superior to other men as a husband is to a wife, or a father to his children, or a master to his slaves. And therefore he who violates the law can never recover by any success, however great, what he has already lost in departing from virtue. For equals the honourable and the just consist in sharing alike, as is just and equal. But that the unequal should be given to equals, and the unlike to those who are like, is contrary to nature, and nothing which is contrary to nature is good. If, therefore, there is any one superior in virtue and in the power of performing the best actions, him we ought to follow and obey, but he must have the capacity for action as well as virtue.

Aristotle, *Politics*, 1325a16

14 Far better it is to obey in peace and quiet than to wish to rule with power supreme and be the master of kingdoms.

Lucretius, *Nature of Things*, V

15 People who have a natural ability for administering public affairs should not hesitate to run for public office and take part in directing the government. In no other way can a government be run or greatness of spirit be demonstrated. States-

- men no less than philosophers (perhaps more so) should embody that quality of nobility and an indifference toward outward circumstances that I refer to so often. They also need a peaceful spirit and freedom from care, if they are to be rid of worries and lead a life of constancy. This is easier for philosophers to do, because their lives are less exposed to the exigencies of fortune. They also have fewer wants, so if misfortune does befall them, the blow is not so calamitous. With good reason, therefore, are stronger emotions aroused in those who deal in public affairs than in those who live in quietude. Greater too is the ambition of the former to succeed. So much more, then, do they require greatness of spirit and freedom from wearying cares.
- Cicero, *De Officiis*, I, 21
- 16 The magistrate ought definitely to bear in mind that he represents the state. It is his duty to uphold its honor and dignity, to enforce its laws, to dispense to everyone his constitutional rights, and to remember that all this has been committed to him as a sacred trust.
- Cicero, *De Officiis*, I, 34
- 17 They [the chief priests] send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Hērō-dī-āns, to catch him in his words.
- And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?
- Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it.
- And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's.
- And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.
- Mark* 12:13-17
- 18 A ruler's first aim is to maintain his office, which is done no less by avoiding what is unfit than by observing what is suitable. Whoever is either too remiss or too strict is no more a king or a governor, but either a demagogue or a despot, and so becomes either odious or contemptible to his subjects. . . . The one seems to be the fault of easiness and good-nature, the other of pride and severity.
- Plutarch, *Romulus and Theseus Compared*
- 19 People do not obey, unless rulers know how to command; obedience is a lesson taught by commanders. A true leader himself creates the obedience of his own followers; as it is the last attainment in the art of riding to make a horse gentle and tractable, so is it of the science of government,
- to inspire men with a willingness to obey.
- Plutarch, *Lycurgus*
- 20 The conduct of a wise politician is ever suited to the present posture of affairs; often by foregoing a part he saves the whole, and by yielding in a small matter secures a greater.
- Plutarch, *Poplicola and Solon Compared*
- 21 *Fabius*. It is no inglorious thing to have fear for the safety of our country, but to be turned from one's course by men's opinions, by blame, and by misrepresentation, shows a man unfit to hold an office such as this, which, by such conduct, he makes the slave of those whose errors it is his business to control.
- Plutarch, *Fabius*
- 22 If the motions of rulers be constantly opposite and cross to the tempers and inclinations of the people, they will be resented as arbitrary and harsh; as, on the other side, too much deference, or encouragement, as too often it has been, to popular faults and errors, is full of danger and ruinous consequences.
- Plutarch, *Phocion*
- 23 Ambitious men, whose minds, doting on glory, which is a mere image of virtue, produce nothing that is genuine or uniform, but only, as might be expected of such a conjunction, misshapen and unnatural actions. . . .
- For this is indeed the true condition of men in public life, who, to gain the vain title of being the people's leaders and governors, are content to make themselves the slaves and followers of all the people's humours and caprices. For as the lookout men at the ship's prow, though they see what is ahead before the men at the helm, yet constantly look back to the pilots there, and obey the orders they give; so these men, steered, as I may say, by popular applause, though they bear the name of governors, are in reality the mere underlings of the multitude.
- Plutarch, *Agis*
- 24 Fear and force . . . are not . . . the adamantine chains which secure . . . power, but the love, zeal, and affection inspired by clemency and justice, which, though they seem more pliant than the stiff and hard bonds of severity, are nevertheless the strongest and most durable ties to sustain a lasting government.
- Plutarch, *Dion*
- 25 Take care that thou art not made into a Cæsar, that thou art not dyed with this dye; for such things happen. Keep thyself then simple, good, pure, serious, free from affectation, a friend of justice, a worshipper of the gods, kind, affectionate, strenuous in all proper acts. Strive to continue to

- be such as philosophy wished to make thee. Reverence the gods, and help men. Short is life. There is only one fruit of this terrene life, a pious disposition and social acts. Do everything as a disciple of Antoninus. Remember his constancy in every act which was conformable to reason, and his evenness in all things, and his piety, and the serenity of his countenance, and his sweetness, and his disregard of empty fame, and his efforts to understand things; and how he would never let anything pass without having first most carefully examined it and clearly understood it; and how he bore with those who blamed him unjustly without blaming them in return; how he did nothing in a hurry; and how he listened not to calumnies, and how exact an examiner of manners and actions he was; and not given to reproach people, nor timid, nor suspicious, nor sophist; and with how little he was satisfied, such as lodging, bed, dress, food, servants; and how laborious and patient; and how he was able on account of his sparing diet to hold out to the evening, not even requiring to relieve himself by any evacuations except at the usual hour; and his firmness and uniformity in his friendships; and how he tolerated freedom of speech in those who opposed his opinions; and the pleasure that he had when any man showed him anything better; and how religious he was without superstition. Imitate all this that thou mayest have as good a conscience, when thy last hour comes, as he had.
- Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, VI, 30
- 26 Mastership has a twofold meaning. First, as opposed to slavery, in which sense a master means one to whom another is subject as a slave. In another sense mastership is referred in a general sense to any kind of subject, and in this sense even he who has the office of governing and directing free men can be called a master. In the state of innocence man could have been a master of men, not in the former but in the latter sense.
- Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, 96, 4
- 27 If . . . a multitude of free men is ordered by the ruler towards the common good of the multitude, that rulership will be right and just, as is suitable to free men. If, on the other hand, a rulership aims, not at the common good of the multitude, but at the private good of the ruler, it will be an unjust and perverted rulership.
- Aquinas, *On Kingship*, I, I
- 28 He who is the cause of another becoming powerful is ruined; because that predominancy has been brought about either by astuteness or else by force, and both are distrusted by him who has been raised to power.
- Machiavelli, *Prince*, III
- 29 In seizing a state, the usurper ought to examine

closely into all those injuries which it is necessary for him to inflict, and to do them all at one stroke so as not to have to repeat them daily; and thus by not unsettling men he will be able to reassure them, and win them to himself by benefits. He who does otherwise, either from timidity or evil advice, is always compelled to keep the knife in his hand; neither can he rely on his subjects, nor can they attach themselves to him, owing to their continued and repeated wrongs.

Machiavelli, *Prince*, VIII

- 30 A prince who does not understand the art of war . . . cannot be respected by his soldiers, nor can he rely on them. He ought never, therefore, to have out of his thoughts this subject of war, and in peace he should addict himself more to its exercise than in war; this he can do in two ways, the one by action, the other by study.
- Machiavelli, *Prince*, XIV
- 31 It would be well to be reputed liberal. Nevertheless, liberality exercised in a way that does not bring you the reputation for it, injures you; for if one exercises it honestly and as it should be exercised, it may not become known, and you will not avoid the reproach of its opposite. Therefore, any one wishing to maintain among men the name of liberal is obliged to avoid no attribute of magnificence; so that a prince thus inclined will consume in such acts all his property, and will be compelled in the end, if he wish to maintain the name of liberal, to unduly weigh down his people, and tax them, and do everything he can to get money. This will soon make him odious to his subjects, and becoming poor he will be little valued by any one; thus, with his liberality, having offended many and rewarded few, he is affected by the very first trouble and imperilled by whatever may be the first danger; recognizing this himself, and wishing to draw back from it, he runs at once into the reproach of being miserly.
- Therefore, a prince, not being able to exercise this virtue of liberality in such a way that it is recognized, except to his cost, if he is wise he ought not to fear the reputation of being mean, for in time he will come to be more considered than if liberal, seeing that with his economy his revenues are enough, that he can defend himself against all attacks, and is able to engage in enterprises without burdening his people; thus it comes to pass that he exercises liberality towards all from whom he does not take, who are numberless, and meanness towards those to whom he does not give, who are few.
- Machiavelli, *Prince*, XVI
- 32 A prince ought to inspire fear in such a way that, if he does not win love, he avoids hatred; because he can endure very well being feared whilst he is not hated, which will always be as long as he ab-

stains from the property of his citizens and subjects and from their women. But when it is necessary for him to proceed against the life of someone, he must do it on proper justification and for manifest cause, but above all things he must keep his hands off the property of others, because men more quickly forget the death of their father than the loss of their patrimony.

Machiavelli, *Prince*, XVII

- 33 Everyone admits how praiseworthy it is in a prince to keep faith, and to live with integrity and not with craft. Nevertheless our experience has been that those princes who have done great things have held good faith of little account, and have known how to circumvent the intellect of men by craft, and in the end have overcome those who have relied on their word. . . . A prince, therefore, being compelled knowingly to adopt the beast, ought to choose the fox and the lion; because the lion cannot defend himself against snares and the fox cannot defend himself against wolves. Therefore, it is necessary to be a fox to discover the snares and a lion to terrify the wolves. Those who rely simply on the lion do not understand what they are about. Therefore a wise lord cannot, nor ought he to, keep faith when such observance may be turned against him, and when the reasons that caused him to pledge it exist no longer. If men were entirely good this precept would not hold, but because they are bad, and will not keep faith with you, you too are not bound to observe it with them. Nor will there ever be wanting to a prince legitimate reasons to excuse this nonobservance. Of this endless modern examples could be given, showing how many treaties and engagements have been made void and of no effect through the faithlessness of princes; and he who has known best how to employ the fox has succeeded best.

But it is necessary to know well how to disguise this characteristic, and to be a great pretender and dissembler; and men are so simple, and so subject to present necessities, that he who seeks to deceive will always find someone who will allow himself to be deceived. One recent example I cannot pass over in silence. Alexander VI did nothing else but deceive men, nor ever thought of doing otherwise, and he always found victims; for there never was a man who had greater power in asserting, or who with greater oaths would affirm a thing, yet would observe it less; nevertheless his deceits always succeeded according to his wishes, because he well understood this side of mankind.

Therefore it is unnecessary for a prince to have all the good qualities I have enumerated, but it is very necessary to appear to have them. And I shall dare to say this also, that to have them and always to observe them is injurious, and that to appear to have them is useful, to appear merciful, faithful, humane, religious, upright, and to be so,

but with a mind so framed that should you require not to be so, you may be able and know how to change to the opposite.

Machiavelli, *Prince*, XVIII

- 34 The prince who has more to fear from the people than from foreigners ought to build fortresses, but he who has more to fear from foreigners than from the people ought to leave them alone. . . . For this reason the best possible fortress is—not to be hated by the people, because, although you may hold the fortresses, yet they will not save you if the people hate you, for there will never be wanting foreigners to assist a people who have taken arms against you.

Machiavelli, *Prince*, XX

- 35 The choice of servants is of no little importance to a prince, and they are good or not according to the discrimination of the prince. And the first opinion which one forms of a prince, and of his understanding, is by observing the men he has around him; and when they are capable and faithful he may always be considered wise, because he has known how to recognize the capable and to keep them faithful. But when they are otherwise one cannot form a good opinion of him, for the prime error which he made was in choosing them.

Machiavelli, *Prince*, XXII

- 36 A prince . . . ought always to take counsel, but only when he wishes and not when others wish; he ought rather to discourage every one from offering advice unless he asks it; but, however, he ought to be a constant inquirer, and afterwards a patient listener concerning the things of which he inquired; also, on learning that any one, on any consideration, has not told him the truth, he should let his anger be felt.

Machiavelli, *Prince*, XXIII

- 37 If there are some who think that a prince who conveys an impression of his wisdom is not so through his own ability, but through the good advisers that he has around him, beyond doubt they are deceived, because this is an axiom which never fails: that a prince who is not wise himself will never take good advice, unless by chance he has yielded his affairs entirely to one person who happens to be a very prudent man. In this case indeed he may be well governed, but it would not be for long, because such a governor would in a short time take away his state from him.

But if a prince who is not experienced should take counsel from more than one he will never get united counsels, nor will he know how to unite them. Each of the counsellors will think of his own interests, and the prince will not know how to control them or to see through them. And they are not to be found otherwise, because men will al-

- ways prove untrue to you unless they are kept honest by constraint. Therefore it must be inferred that good counsels, whencesoever they come, are born of the wisdom of the prince, and not the wisdom of the prince from good counsels.
Machiavelli, *Prince*, XXIII
- 38 Government consists mainly in so keeping your subjects that they shall be neither able nor disposed to injure you; and this is done by depriving them of all means of injuring you, or by bestowing such benefits upon them that it would not be reasonable for them to desire any change of fortune.
Machiavelli, *Discourses*, II, 23
- 39 We owe subjection and obedience equally to all kings, for that concerns their office; but we do not owe esteem, any more than affection, except to their virtue. Let us make this concession to the political order: to suffer them patiently if they are unworthy, to conceal their vices, to abet them by commending their indifferent actions if their authority needs our support. But, our dealings over, it is not right to deny to justice and to our liberty the expression of our true feelings, and especially to deny good subjects the glory of having reverently and faithfully served a master whose imperfections were so well known to them, and thus to deprive posterity of such a useful example.
Montaigne, *Essays*, I, 3, Our Feelings Reach Out
- 40 Truly it is no small thing to have to rule others, since in ruling ourselves so many difficulties occur. As for commanding, which seems to be so sweet: considering the imbecility of human judgment and the difficulty of choice in new and doubtful things, I am strongly of this opinion, that it is much easier and pleasanter to follow than to guide, and that it is a great rest for the mind to have only to hold to a mapped-out path and to be answerable only for oneself.
Montaigne, *Essays*, I, 42, Of the Inequality
- 41 It may be said, on the one hand, that to give factions a loose rein to entertain their own opinions is to scatter and sow division; it is almost lending a hand to augment it, there being no barrier or coercion of the laws to check or hinder its course. But on the other hand, one could also say that to give factions a loose rein to entertain their own opinions is to soften and relax them through facility and ease, and to dull the point, which is sharpened by rarity, novelty, and difficulty. And yet I prefer to think, for the reputation of our kings' piety, that having been unable to do what they would, they have pretended to will what they could.
Montaigne, *Essays*, II, 19, Of Freedom of Conscience
- 42 Liberality itself is not in its proper light in the hands of a sovereign; private people have more right to exercise it. For, to be precise about it, a king has nothing that is properly his own; he owes his very self to others.
The authority to judge is not given for the sake of the judge, but for the sake of the person judged. A superior is never appointed for his own benefit, but for the benefit of the inferior, and a doctor for the sick, not for himself. All authority, like all art, has its end outside of itself. . . .
Wherefore the tutors of young princes who make it a point to impress on them this virtue of liberality and preach to them not to know how to refuse anything, and to think nothing so well spent as what they give away (a lesson that I have seen in great favor in my time), either look more to their own profit than to their master's, or do not well understand to whom they speak. It is all too easy to impress liberality on a man who has the means to practice it all he wants at the expense of others. And since its value is reckoned not by the measure of the gift, but by the measure of the giver's means, it amounts to nothing in such powerful hands. They find themselves prodigal before they are liberal. Therefore liberality is little to be commended compared with other royal virtues, and it is the only one, as the tyrant Dionysius said, that goes with tyranny itself.
Montaigne, *Essays*, III, 6, Of Coaches
- 43 *King Henry*. Ah, what a life were this! how sweet! how lovely!
Gives not the hawthorn-bush a sweeter shade
To shepherds looking on their silly sheep
Than doth a rich embroider'd canopy
To kings that fear their subjects' treachery?
O, yes it doth; a thousand-fold it doth.
And to conclude, the shepherd's homely curds,
His cold thin drink out of his leather bottle,
His wonted sleep under a fresh tree's shade,
All which secure and sweetly he enjoys,
Is far beyond a prince's delicates,
His viands sparkling in a golden cup,
His body conched in a curious bed,
When care, mistrust, and treason waits on him.
Shakespeare, *III Henry VI*, II, v, 41
- 44 *Ulysses*. O, when degree is shaken,
Which is the ladder to all high designs,
The enterprise is sick! How could communities,
Degrees in schools and brotherhoods in cities,
Peaceful commerce from dividable shores,
The primogenitive and due of birth,
Prerogative of age, crowns, sceptres, laurels,
But by degree, stand in authentic place?
Take but degree away, untune that string,
And, hark, what discord follows! Each thing meets
In mere oppugnancy. The bounded waters
Should lift their bosoms higher than the shores

And make a sop of all this solid globe.
 Strength should be lord of imbecility,
 And the rude son should strike his father dead.
 Force should be right; or rather, right and wrong,
 Between whose endless jar justice resides,
 Should lose their names, and so should justice too.
 Then everything includes itself in power,
 Power into will, will into appetite;
 And appetite, an universal wolf,
 So doubly seconded with will and power,
 Must make perforce an universal prey,
 And last eat up himself. Great Agamemnon,
 This chaos, when degree is suffocate,
 Follows the choking.
 And this neglect of degree it is
 That by a pace goes backward, with a purpose
 It hath to climb. The general's disdain'd
 By him one step below, he by the next,
 That next by him beneath; so every step,
 Exemplified by the first pace that is sick
 Of his superior, grows to an envious fever
 Of pale and bloodless emulation.

Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, I, iii, 101

- 45 *1st Officer*. Come, come, they are almost here. How many stand for consulships?

2nd Officer. Three, they say; but 'tis thought of every one Coriolanus will carry it.

1st Off. That's a brave fellow; but he's vengeance proud, and loves not the common people.

2nd Off. Faith, there have been many great men that have flattered the people, who ne'er loved them; and there be many that they have loved, they know not wherefore; so that, if they love they know not why, they hate upon no better a ground; therefore, for Coriolanus neither to care whether they love or hate him manifests the true knowledge he has in their disposition.

Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, II, ii, 1

- 46 Well then, quoth *Sancho*, let me have this Island, and I'll do my best to be such a Governor, that, in spite of Rogues, I shan't want a small Nook in Heaven one Day or other. 'Tis not out of Covetousness neither, that I'd leave my little Cott, and set up for somebody, but meerly to know what Kind of Thing it is to be a Governor. Oh! *Sancho*, said the Duke, when once you've had a Taste of it, you'll never leave licking your Fingers, 'tis so sweet and bewitching a Thing to command and be obey'd. I am confident, when your Master comes to be an Emperor (as he cannot fail to be, according to the Course of his Affairs) he will never by any Consideration be persuaded to Abdicate; his only Grief will be, that he was one too sooner.

Troth, Sir, reply'd *Sancho*, I am of your Mind; 'tis a dainty Thing to command, though 'twere but a Flock of Sheep. Oh! *Sancho*, cry'd the Duke, let me live and die with thee; for thou hast an Insight into every Thing. I hope thou'lt prove as

good a Governor as thy Wisdom bespeaks thee. But no more at this Time,—to Morrow, without further Delay, you set forward to your Island, and shall be furnish'd this Afternoon with Equipage and Dress answerable to your Post, and all other Necessaries for your Journey.

Let 'em dress me as they will, quoth *Sancho*, I shall be the same *Sancho Pança* still.

Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, II, 42

- 47 Being come to himself, he [*Sancho*] ask'd what 'twas a Clock? They answer'd, 'twas now break of Day. He said nothing, but, without any Words, began to put on his Clothes. While this was doing, and he continu'd seriously silent, all the Eyes of the Company were fix'd upon him, wondring what could be the meaning of his being in such haste to put on his Clothes. At last he made an End of dressing himself, and creeping along softly, (for he was too much bruis'd to go along very fast) he got to the Stable, follow'd by all the Company, and coming to *Dapple*, he embrac'd the quiet Animal, gave him a loving Kiss on the Forehead, and, with Tears in his Eyes, Come hither, said he, my Friend, thou faithful Companion, and Fellow-sharer in my Travels and Miseries; when thee and I consorted together, and all my Cares were but to mend thy Furniture, and feed thy little Carcase, then happy were my Days, my Months, and Years. But since I forsook Thee, and clamber'd up the Towers of Ambition and Pride, a thousand Woes, a thousand Torments, and four thousand Tribulations have haunted and worry'd my Soul. While he was talking thus, he fitted on his Pack-Saddle, no Body offering to say any thing to him. This done, with a great deal of Difficulty he mounted his Ass, and then addressing himself to the Steward, the Secretary, the Gentleman-waiter, and Doctor *Pedro Rezio*, and many others that stood by; Make Way, Gentlemen, said he, and let me return to my former Liberty. Let me go that I may seek my old Course of Life, and rise again from that Death that buries me here alive. I was not born to be a Governor, nor to defend Islands nor Cities from Enemies that break in upon 'em. I know better what belongs to Ploughing, Delving, Pruning and Planting of Vineyards, than how to make Laws, and defend Countries and Kingdoms. *St Peter* is very well at *Rome*: Which is as much as to say, let every one stick to the Calling he was born to. A Spade does better in My Hand than a Governor's Truncheon; and I had rather fill my Belly with a Mess of plain Porridge, than lie at the Mercy of a Coxcomby Physick-monger that starves me to Death. I had rather solace my self under the Shade of an Oak in Summer, and wrap my Corps up in a double Sheep-skin in the Winter at my Liberty, than lay me down with the Slavery of a Government in fine Holland Sheets, and case my Hide in Furs and richest Sables. Heaven be with you, Gentlefolks, and pray tell

my Lord Duke from me, that naked I was born, and naked I am at present. I have neither won nor lost, which is as much as to say, Without a Penny I came to this Government, and without a Penny I leave it, quite contrary to what other Governors of Islands use to do, when they leave 'em. Clear the Way then, I beseech you, and let me pass.

Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, II, 53

- 48 The wisdom of a lawmaker consisteth not only in a platform of justice, but in the application thereof; taking into consideration by what means laws may be made certain, and what are the causes and remedies of the doubtfulness and uncertainty of law; by what means laws may be made apt and easy to be executed, and what are the impediments and remedies in the execution of laws; what influence laws touching private right of *meum* and *tuum* have into the public state, and how they may be made apt and agreeable; how laws are to be penned and delivered, whether in texts or in acts, brief or large, with preambles, or without; how they are to be pruned and reformed from time to time, and what is the best means to keep them from being too vast in volumes, or too full of multiplicity and crossness; how they are to be expounded, when upon causes emergent and judicially discussed, and when upon responses and conferences touching general points or questions; how they are to be pressed, rigorously or tenderly; how they are to be mitigated by equity and good conscience, and whether discretion and strict law are to be mingled in the same courts, or kept apart in several courts; again, how the practice, profession, and erudition of law is to be censured and governed; and many other points touching the administration, and (as I may term it) animation of laws.

Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*,
Bk. II, XXIII, 49

- 49 The great advantages of simulation and dissimulation are three. First, to lay asleep opposition, and to surprise. For where a man's intentions are published, it is an alarm to call up all that are against them. The second is, to reserve to a man's self a fair retreat. For if a man engage himself by a manifest declaration, he must go through, or take a fall. The third is, the better to discover the mind of another. For to him that opens himself men will hardly shew themselves adverse; but will (fair) let him go on, and turn their freedom of speech to freedom of thought. And therefore it is a good shrewd proverb of the Spaniard, *Tell a lie and find a truth*; as if there were no way of discovery but by simulation. There be also three disadvantages, to set it even. The first, that simulation and dissimulation commonly carry with them a shew of fearfulness, which in any business doth spoil the feathers of round flying up to the mark. The sec-

ond, that it puzzleth and perplexeth the conceits of many that perhaps would otherwise co-operate with him, and makes a man walk almost alone to his own ends. The third and greatest is, that it depriveth a man of one of the most principal instruments for action, which is trust and belief. The best composition and temperature is to have openness in fame and opinion; secrecy in habit; dissimulation in seasonable use; and a power to feign, if there be no remedy.

Bacon, *Of Simulation and Dissimulation*

- 50 All rising to great place is by a winding stair; and if there be factions, it is good to side a man's self whilst he is in the rising, and to balance himself when he is placed. Use the memory of thy predecessor fairly and tenderly; for if thou dost not, it is a debt will sure be paid when thou art gone. If thou have colleagues, respect them, and rather call them when they look not for it, than exclude them when they have reason to look to be called. Be not too sensible or too remembering of thy place in conversation and private answers to suitors; but let it rather be said, *When he sits in place he is another man*.

Bacon, *Of Great Place*

- 51 Above all things, good policy is to be used, that the treasure and moneys in a state be not gathered into few hands. For otherwise a state may have a great stock, and yet starve. And money is like muck, not good except it be spread. This is done chiefly by suppressing, or at the least keeping a strait hand upon the devouring trades of usury, engrossing, great pasturages, and the like.

Bacon, *Of Seditions and Troubles*

- 52 To give moderate liberty for griefs and discontentments to evaporate (so it be without too great insolency or bravery) is a safe way. For he that turneth the humours back, and maketh the wound bleed inwards, endangereth malign ulcers and pernicious impostumations.

Bacon, *Of Seditions and Troubles*

- 53 Let princes, against all events, nor be without some great person, one or rather more, of military valour, near unto them, for the repressing of seditions in their beginnings. For without that, there useth to be more trepidation in court upon the first breaking out of troubles than were fit. . . . But let such military persons be assured, and well reputed of, rather than factious and popular; holding also good correspondence with the other great men in the state; or else the remedy is worse than the disease.

Bacon, *Of Seditions and Troubles*

- 54 The wisest princes need not think it any diminution to their greatness, or derogation to their sufficiency, to rely upon counsel. God himself is not

without, but hath made it one of the great names of his blessed Son; *The Counsellor*.

Bacon, *Of Counsel*

- 55 A king, when he presides in counsel, let him beware how he opens his own inclination too much in that which he propoundeth; for else counsellors will but take the wind of him, and instead of giving free counsel, sing him a song of *placebo*.

Bacon, *Of Counsel*

- 56 He that is to govern a whole nation must read in himself, not this or that particular man; but mankind.

Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Intro.

- 57 The power of a man, to take it universally, is his present means to obtain some future apparent good. . . . The greatest of human powers is that which is compounded of the powers of most men, united by consent, in one person, natural or civil, that has the use of all their powers depending on his will; such as is the power of a Commonwealth: or depending on the wills of each particular; such as is the power of a faction, or of diverse factions leagued. Therefore to have servants is power; to have friends is power: for they are strengths united.

Hobbes, *Leviathan*, I, 10

- 58 If the essential rights of sovereignty . . . 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 that deserteth the means deserteth the ends; and he deserteth the means that, being the sovereign, acknowledgeth himself subject to the civil laws, and renounceth the power of supreme judicature; or 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.

Hobbes, *Leviathan*, II, 30

- 59 He that is minded to obey all the commonwealth's orders, whether through fear of its power or through love of quiet, certainly consults after his own heart his own safety and interest.

Spinoza, *Political Treatise*, III, 3

- 60 It is easy to understand to what end the legislative power ought to be directed and by what measures

regulated; and that is the temporal good and outward prosperity of the society; which is the sole reason of men's entering into society, and the only thing they seek and aim at in it. And it is also evident what liberty remains to men in reference to their eternal salvation, and that is that every one should do what he in his conscience is persuaded to be acceptable to the Almighty, on whose good pleasure and acceptance depends their eternal happiness. For obedience is due, in the first place, to God and, afterwards to the laws.

But some may ask: "What if the magistrate should enjoin anything by his authority that appears unlawful to the conscience of a private person?" I answer that, if government be faithfully administered and the counsels of the magistrates be indeed directed to the public good, this will seldom happen. But if, perhaps, it do so fall out, I say, that such a private person is to abstain from the action that he judges unlawful, and he is to undergo the punishment which it is not unlawful for him to bear. For the private judgement of any person concerning a law enacted in political matters, for the public good, does not take away the obligation of that law, nor deserve a dispensation. But if the law, indeed, be concerning things that lie not within the verge of the magistrate's authority (as, for example, that the people, or any party amongst them, should be compelled to embrace a strange religion, and join in the worship and ceremonies of another Church), men are not in these cases obliged by that law, against their consciences. For the political society is instituted for no other end, but only to secure every man's possession of the things of this life. The care of each man's soul and of the things of heaven, which neither does belong to the commonwealth nor can be subjected to it, is left entirely to every man's self.

Locke, *Letter Concerning Toleration*

- 61 I think it may not be amiss to set down what I take to be political power. That the power of a magistrate over a subject may be distinguished from that of a father over his children, a master over his servant, a husband over his wife, and a lord over his slave. All which distinct powers happening sometimes together in the same man, if he be considered under these different relations, it may help us to distinguish these powers one from another, and show the difference betwixt a ruler of a commonwealth, a father of a family, and a captain of a galley.

Political power, then, I take to be a right of making laws, with penalties of death, and consequently all less penalties for the regulating and preserving of property, and of employing the force of the community in the execution of such laws, and in the defence of the commonwealth from foreign injury, and all this only for the public good.

Locke, *II Civil Government*, I, 2-3

- 62 But these two powers, political and paternal, are so perfectly distinct and separate, and built upon so different foundations. and given to so different ends, that every subject that is a father has as much a paternal power over his children as the prince has over his. And every prince that has parents owes them as much filial duty and obedience as the meanest of his subjects do to theirs, and can therefore contain not any part or degree of that kind of dominion which a prince or magistrate has over his subject.
Locke, *II Civil Government*, VI, 71
- 63 Since a rational creature cannot be supposed, when free, to put himself into subjection to another for his own harm . . . prerogative can be nothing but the people's permitting their rulers to do several things of their own free choice where the law was silent, and sometimes too against the direct letter of the law, for the public good and their acquiescing in it when so done. For as a good prince, who is mindful of the trust put into his hands and careful of the good of his people, cannot have too much prerogative—that is, power to do good, so a weak and ill prince, who would claim that power his predecessors exercised, without the direction of the law, as a prerogative belonging to him by right of his office, which he may exercise at his pleasure to make or promote an interest distinct from that of the public, gives the people an occasion to claim their right and limit that power, which, whilst it was exercised for their good, they were content should be tacitly allowed.
Locke, *II Civil Government*, XIV, 164
- 64 In chusing persons for all employments, they [the Lilliputians] have more regard to good morals than to great abilities: for, since government is necessary to mankind, they believe that the common size of human understandings, is fitted to some station or other; and that Providence never intended to make the management of publick affairs a mystery, to be comprehended only by a few persons of sublime genius, of which there seldom are three born in an age: but, they suppose truth, justice, temperance, and the like, to be in every man's power; the practice of which virtues, assisted by experience and a good intention, would qualify any man for the service of his country, except where a course of study is required. But they thought the want of moral virtues was so far from being supplied by superior endowments of the mind, that employments could never be put into such dangerous hands as those of persons so qualified; and at least, that the mistakes committed by ignorance in a virtuous disposition, would never be of such fatal consequence to the publick weal, as the practices of a man whose inclinations led him to be corrupt, and had great abilities to manage, to multiply, and defend his corruptions.
Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, I, 6
- 65 The king [of Brobdingnag] was struck with horror at the description I had given of those terrible engines, and the proposal I had made [to show him how to make gun powder and cannon]. He was amazed how so impotent and grovelling an insect as I (these were his expressions) could entertain such inhuman ideas, and in so familiar a manner as to appear wholly unmoved at all the scenes of blood and desolation, which I had painted as the common effects of those destructive machines; whereof he said, some evil genius, enemy to mankind, must have been the first contriver. As for himself, he protested, that although few things delighted him so much as new discoveries in art or in nature; yet he would rather lose half his kingdom, than be privy to such a secret; which he commanded me, as I valued my life, never to mention any more.
A strange effect of narrow principles and short views! that a prince possessed of every quality which procures veneration, love and esteem; of strong parts, great wisdom and profound learning; endued with admirable talents for government, and almost adored by his subjects; should from a nice unnecessary scruple, whereof in Europe we can have no conception, let slip an opportunity put into his hands, that would have made him absolute master of the lives, the liberties, and the fortunes of his people.
Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, II, 7
- 66 I take this defect among them [the Brobdingnagians] to have risen from their ignorance; by not having hitherto reduced *politicks* into a science, as the more acute wits of Europe have done. For, I remember very well, in a discourse one day with the king, when I happened to say, there were several thousand books among us, written upon the *art of government*, it gave him (directly contrary to my intention) a very mean opinion of our understandings. He professed both to abominate and despise all *mystery*, *refinement*, and *intrigue*, either in a prince or a minister. He could not tell what I meant by *secrets of State*, where an enemy or some rival nation were not in the case. He confined the knowledge of governing within very narrow bounds; to common sense and reason, to justice and lenity, to the speedy determination of civil and criminal causes; with some other obvious topicks which are not worth considering. And, he gave it for his opinion, that whoever could make two ears of eorn, or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country, than the whole race of politicians put together.
Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, II, 7
- 67 Politicks, as the Word is commonly understood, are nothing but Corruptions, and consequently of no Use to a good King, or a good Ministry, for

- which Reason Courts are so over-run with Politics.
- Swift, *Thoughts on Various Subjects*
- 68 So many are the advantages which monarchs gain by clemency, so greatly does it raise their fame, and endear them to their subjects, that it is generally happy for them to have an opportunity of displaying it.
- Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*, VI, 21
- 69 Constant experience shows us that every man invested with power is apt to abuse it, and to carry his authority as far as it will go. . . . To prevent this abuse, it is necessary from the very nature of things that power should be a check to power.
- Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*, XI, 4
- 70 The manners of a prince contribute as much as the laws themselves to liberty; like these he may transform men into brutes, and brutes into men. If he prefers free and generous spirits, he will have subjects; if he likes base, dastardly souls, he will have slaves. Would he know the great art of ruling, let him call honour and virtue to attend his person; and let him encourage personal merit. He may even sometimes cast an eye on talents and abilities. Let him not be afraid of those rivals who are called men of merit; he is their equal when once he loves them. Let him gain the hearts of his people, without subduing their spirits. Let him render himself popular; he ought to be pleased with the affections of the lowest of his subjects, for they too are men. The common people require so very little condescension, that it is fit they should be humoured; the infinite distance between the sovereign and them will surely prevent them from giving him any uneasiness. Let him be exorable to supplication, and resolute against demands; let him be sensible, in fine, that his people have his refusals, while his courtiers enjoy his favours.
- Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*, XII, 27
- 71 Politics is a smooth file, which cuts gradually, and attains its end by a slow progression.
- Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*, XIV, 13
- 72 The only precaution necessary for the father of a family is to guard himself against depravity, and prevent his natural inclinations from being corrupted; whereas it is these themselves which corrupt the Magistrate. In order to act aright, the first has only to consult his heart; the other becomes a traitor the moment he listens to his. Even his own reason should be suspect to him, nor should he follow any rule other than the public reason, which is the law. Thus nature has made a multitude of good fathers of families; but it is doubtful whether, from the very beginning of the world, human wisdom has made ten men capable of governing their peers.
- Rousseau, *Political Economy*
- 73 The most pressing interest of the ruler, and even his most indispensable duty . . . is to watch over the observation of the laws of which he is the minister, and on which his whole authority is founded. At the same time, if he exacts the observance of them from others, he is the more strongly bound to observe them himself, since he enjoys all their favour. For his example is of such force, that even if the people were willing to permit him to release himself from the yoke of the law, he ought to be cautious in availing himself of so dangerous a prerogative, which others might soon claim to usurp in their turn, and often use to his prejudice. At bottom, as all social engagements are mutual in nature, it is impossible for any one to set himself above the law, without renouncing its advantages.
- Rousseau, *Political Economy*
- 74 A fool, if he be obeyed, may punish crimes as well as another: but the true statesman is he who knows how to prevent them.
- Rousseau, *Political Economy*
- 75 That government which confines itself to mere obedience will find difficulty in getting itself obeyed. If it is good to know how to deal with men as they are, it is much better to make them what there is need that they should be. The most absolute authority is that which penetrates into a man's inmost being, and concerns itself no less with his will than with his actions. It is certain that all peoples become in the long run what the government makes them; warriors, citizens, men, when it so pleases: or merely populace and rabble, when it chooses to make them so. Hence every prince who despises his subjects, dishonours himself, in confessing that he does not know how to make them worthy of respect. Make men, therefore, if you would command men: if you would have them obedient to the laws, make them love the laws, and then they will need only to know what is their duty to do it.
- Rousseau, *Political Economy*
- 76 A careful and well-intentioned government, vigilant incessantly to maintain or restore patriotism and morality among the people, provides beforehand against the evils which sooner or later result from the indifference of the citizens to the fate of the Republic, keeping within narrow bounds that personal interest which so isolates the individual that the State is enfeebled by his power, and has nothing to hope from his good-will. Wherever men love their country, respect the laws, and live simply, little remains to be done in order to make them happy; and in public administration, where chance has less influence than in the lot of individuals, wisdom is so nearly allied to happiness,

that the two objects are confounded.

Rousseau, *Political Economy*

- 77 It is not enough to have citizens and to protect them, it is also necessary to consider their subsistence. Provision for the public wants is an obvious inference from the general will, and the third essential duty of government. This duty is not, we should feel, to fill the granaries of individuals and thereby to grant them a dispensation from labour, but to keep plenty so within their reach that labour is always necessary and never useless for its acquisition.

Rousseau, *Political Economy*

- 78 We know for ourselves that we must put up with a bad government when it is there; the question is how to find a good one.

Rousseau, *Social Contract*, III, 6

- 79 You say with pride, "My people are my subjects." Granted, but what are you? The subject of your ministers. And your ministers, what are they? The subjects of their clerks, their mistresses, the servants of their servants. Grasp all, usurp all, and then pour out your silver with both hands; set up your batteries, raise the gallows and the wheel; make laws, issue proclamations, multiply your spies, your soldiers, your hangmen, your prisons, and your chains. Poor little men, what good does it do you? You will be no better served, you will be none the less robbed and deceived, you will be no nearer absolute power. You will say continually, "It is our will," and you will continually do the will of others.

Rousseau, *Emile*, II

- 80 *Dr. Johnson.* Let us . . . now consider what the people would really gain by a general abolition of the right of patronage. What is most to be desired by such a change is, that the country should be supplied with better ministers. But why should we suppose that the parish will make a wiser choice than the patron? . . . It may be urged, that though the parish might not choose better ministers, they would at least choose ministers whom they like better, and who would therefore officiate with greater efficacy. That ignorance and perverseness should always obtain what they like, was never considered as the end of government; of which it is the great and standing benefit, that the wise see for the simple, and the regular act for the capricious. But that this argument supposes the people capable of judging, and resolute to act according to their best judgements, though this be sufficiently absurd, it is not all its absurdity. It supposes not only wisdom, but unanimity in those, who upon no other occasions are unanimous or wise.

Boswell, *Life of Johnson* (May 1, 1773)

- 81 Like the modesty affected by Augustus, the state maintained by Diocletian was a theatrical representation; but it must be confessed that, of the two comedies, the former was of a much more liberal and manly character than the latter. It was the aim of the one to disguise, and the object of the other to display, the unbounded power which the emperors possessed over the Roman world.

Ostentation was the first principle of the new system instituted by Diocletian. The second was division. He divided the empire, the provinces, and every branch of the civil as well as military administration. He multiplied the wheels of the machine of government, and rendered its operations less rapid but more secure. Whatever advantages and whatever defects might attend these innovations, they must be ascribed in a very great degree to the first inventor.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, XIII

- 82 Julian recollected with terror the observation of his master Plato, that the government of our flocks and herds is always committed to beings of a superior species; and that the conduct of nations requires and deserves the celestial powers of the Gods or of the Genii. From this principle he justly concluded that the man who presumes to reign should aspire to the perfection of the divine nature; that he should purify his soul from her mortal and terrestrial part; that he should extinguish his appetites, enlighten his understanding, regulate his passions, and subdue the wild beast which, according to the lively metaphor of Aristotle, seldom fails to ascend the throne of a despot. The throne of Julian, which the death of Constantius fixed on an independent basis, was the seat of reason, of virtue, and perhaps of vanity. He despised the honours, renounced the pleasures, and discharged with incessant diligence the duties of his exalted station: and there were few among his subjects who would have consented to relieve him from the weight of the diadem, had they been obliged to submit their time and their actions to the rigorous laws which their philosophic emperor imposed on himself.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, XXII

- 83 To secure any degree of sobriety in the propositions made by the leaders in any public assembly, they ought to respect, in some degree perhaps to fear, those whom they conduct. To be led any otherwise than blindly, the followers must be qualified, if not for actors, at least for judges; they must also be judges of natural weight and authority. Nothing can secure a steady and moderate conduct in such assemblies, but that the body of them should be respectably composed, in point of condition in life, of permanent property, of education, and of such habits as enlarge and liberalize

- the understanding.
Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*
- 84 All persons possessing any portion of power ought to be strongly and awfully impressed with an idea that they act in trust: and that they are to account for their conduct in that trust to the one great Master, Author, and Founder of society.
Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*
- 85 Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom; and a great empire and little minds go ill together.
Burke, *Speech on Conciliation with the Colonies (Mar. 22, 1775)*
- 86 True politics can never take a step, without having previously rendered homage to morality; united with this, it is no longer a difficult or complicated art; morality cuts the knot which politics is incapable of untying, whenever they are in opposition to each other. The rights of man ought to be religiously respected, should sovereigns in rendering it make the greatest sacrifices. One cannot compromise here between right and utility; politics must bend the knee before morality; but by this means it may also expect insensibly to attain to an eminence, where it will shine with an immortal glory.
Kant, *Perpetual Peace*, Appendix, 1
- 87 In politics, as in religion, it is equally absurd to aim at making proselytes by fire and sword. Heresies in either can rarely be cured by persecution.
Hamilton, *Federalist 1*
- 88 The science of politics . . . like most other sciences, has received great improvement. The efficacy of various principles is now well understood, which were either not known at all, or imperfectly known to the ancients. The regular distribution of power into distinct departments; the introduction of legislative balances and checks; the institution of courts composed of judges holding their offices during good behaviour; the representation of the people in the legislature by deputies of their own election: these are wholly new discoveries, or have made their principal progress towards perfection in modern times. They are means, and powerful means, by which the excellences of republican government may be retained and its imperfections lessened or avoided. To this catalogue of circumstances that tend to the amelioration of popular systems of civil government, I shall venture, however novel it may appear to some, to add one more, on a principle which has been made the foundation of an objection to the new Constitution; I mean the *enlargement* of the *orbit* within which such systems are to revolve, either in respect to the dimensions of a single State, or to the consolidation of several smaller States into one great Confederacy.
Hamilton, *Federalist 9*
- 89 Experience has instructed us that no skill in the science of government has yet been able to discriminate and define, with sufficient certainty, its three great provinces—the legislative, executive, and judiciary; or even the privileges and powers of the different legislative branches. Questions daily occur in the course of practice which prove the obscurity which reigns in these subjects, and which puzzle the greatest adepts in political science.
Madison, *Federalist 37*
- 90 There is nothing so apt to agitate the passions of mankind as personal considerations, whether they relate to ourselves or to others, who are to be the objects of our choice or preference. Hence, in every exercise of the power of appointing to offices by an assembly of men, we must expect to see a full display of all the private and party likings and dislikes, partialities and antipathies, attachments and animosities, which are felt by those who compose the assembly. The choice which may at any time happen to be made under such circumstances will of course be the result either of a victory gained by one party over the other or of a compromise between the parties. In either case, the intrinsic merit of the candidate will be too often out of sight. In the first, the qualifications best adapted to uniting the suffrages of the party will be more considered than those which fit the person for the station. In the last, the coalition will commonly turn upon some interested equivalent: “Give us the man we wish for this office, and you shall have the one you wish for that.” This will be the usual condition of the bargain. And it will rarely happen that the advancement of the public service will be the primary object either of party victories or of party negotiations.
Hamilton, *Federalist 76*
- 91 The three ends which a statesman ought to propose to himself in the government of a nation, are — 1. Security to possessors; 2. Facility to acquirers; and 3. Hope to all.
Coleridge, *Table-Talk (June 25, 1831)*
- 92 Only that will which obeys law is free; for it obeys itself—it is independent and so free. When the state or our country constitutes a community of existence; when the subjective will of man submits to laws—the contradiction between liberty and necessity vanishes.
Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, Introduction, 3
- 93 Men are not corrupted by the exercise of power or debased by the habit of obedience, but by the exercise of a power which they believe to be illegitimate, and by obedience to a rule which they con-

sider to be usurped and oppressive.

Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Intro.

- 94 Government has come to be a trade, and is managed solely on commercial principles. A man plunges into politics to make his fortune, and only cares that the world shall last his days.

Emerson, *Letter to Thomas Carlyle*
(Oct. 7, 1835)

- 95 Head winds are far more prevalent than winds from astern. . . . For the most part the commodore on the quarterdeck gets his atmosphere at secondhand from the sailors on the forecastle. He thinks he breathes it first; but not so. In much the same way do the commonalty lead their leaders in many other things, at the same time that the leaders little suspect it.

Melville, *Moby Dick*, I

- 96 Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavor to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once? Men generally, under such a government as this, think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy is worse than the evil. *It makes it worse.*

Thorcau, *Civil Disobedience*

- 97 The government does not concern me much, and I shall bestow the fewest possible thoughts on it. It is not many moments that I live under a government, even in this world. If a man is thought-free, fancy-free, imagination-free, that which *is not* never for a long time appearing *to be* to him, unwise rulers or reformers cannot fatally interrupt him.

Thoreau, *Civil Disobedience*

- 98 Politics is, as it were, the gizzard of society, full of grit and gravel, and the two political parties are its two opposite halves—sometimes split into quarters, it may be, which grind on each other. Not only individuals, but states, have thus a confirmed dyspepsia.

Thoreau, *Life Without Principle*

- 99 I do not allow myself to suppose that either the convention or the League have concluded to decide that I am either the greatest or best man in America, but rather they have concluded that it is not best to swap horses while crossing the river, and have further concluded that I am not so poor a horse that they might not make a botch of it in trying to swap.

Lincoln, *Speech to the National Union League Delegation* (June 9, 1864)

- 100 While, in the morality of the best Pagan nations,

duty to the State holds even a disproportionate place, infringing on the just liberty of the individual; in purely Christian ethics, that grand department of duty is scarcely noticed or acknowledged. It is in the Koran, not the New Testament, that we read the maxim—"A ruler who appoints any man to an office, when there is in his dominions another man better qualified for it, sins against God and against the State." What little recognition the idea of obligation to the public obtains in modern morality is derived from Greek and Roman sources, not from Christian; as, even in the morality of private life, whatever exists of magnanimity, highmindedness, personal dignity, even the sense of honour, is derived from the purely human, not the religious part of our education, and never could have grown out of a standard of ethics in which the only worth, professedly recognised, is that of obedience.

Mill, *On Liberty*, II

- 101 To determine the point at which evils, so formidable to human freedom and advancement, begin, or rather at which they begin to predominate over the benefits attending the collective application of the force of society, under its recognised chiefs, for the removal of the obstacles which stand in the way of its well-being; to secure as much of the advantages of centralised power and intelligence as can be had without turning into governmental channels too great a proportion of the general activity—is one of the most difficult and complicated questions in the art of government. It is, in a great measure, a question of detail, in which many and various considerations must be kept in view, and no absolute rule can be laid down. But I believe that the practical principle in which safety resides, the ideal to be kept in view, the standard by which to test all arrangements intended for overcoming the difficulty, may be conveyed in these words: the greatest dissemination of power consistent with efficiency; but the greatest possible centralisation of information, and diffusion of it from the centre.

Mill, *On Liberty*, V

- 102 The power in society which has any tendency to convert itself into political power is not power quiescent, power merely passive, but active power; in other words, power actually exerted; that is to say, a very small portion of all the power in existence. Politically speaking, a great part of all power consists in will. How is it possible, then, to compute the elements of political power, while we omit from the computation anything which acts on the will? To think that because those who wield the power in society wield in the end that of government, therefore it is of no use to attempt to influence the constitution of the government by acting on opinion, is to forget that opinion is itself one of the greatest active social forces. One person

with a belief is a social power equal to ninety-nine who have only interests. They who can succeed in creating a general persuasion that a certain form of government, or social fact of any kind, deserves to be preferred, have made nearly the most important step which can possibly be taken towards ranging the powers of society on its side.

Mill, *Representative Government*, I

103 In quiet and untroubled times it seems to every administrator that it is only by his efforts that the whole population under his rule is kept going, and in this consciousness of being indispensable every administrator finds the chief reward of his labor and efforts. While the sea of history remains calm the ruler-administrator in his frail bark, holding

on with a boat hook to the ship of the people and himself moving, naturally imagines that his efforts move the ship he is holding on to. But as soon as a storm arises and the sea begins to heave and the ship to move, such a delusion is no longer possible. The ship moves independently with its own enormous motion, the boat hook no longer reaches the moving vessel, and suddenly the administrator, instead of appearing a ruler and a source of power, becomes an insignificant, useless, feeble man.

Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, XI, 25

104 Politics is largely governed by sententious platitudes which are devoid of truth.

Russell, *Unpopular Essays*, VII

10.3 | Government

ITS NATURE, NECESSITY, AND FORMS

The distinction made by certain writers between a state of nature and a civil society or commonwealth (discussed in quotations in Section 10.1) turns on the absence or presence of government and its institutions, mainly the enactment and enforcement of laws and the adjudication of disputes by judicial tribunals or courts. The absence of government is anarchy. It would, therefore, appear to be the case that the presence of government is essential or indispensable to the existence of the state or commonwealth, and to the civil peace that is identical with civil society.

That is the view which predominates in the passages assembled here. The opposing view, advanced by the proponents of anarchy, is not well represented, though some indications of it will be found in quotations from Thoreau and Emerson. For other indications of it, and for considerations relevant

to this fundamental issue about government, the reader should turn to Section 13.1 on FREEDOM IN SOCIETY and Section 14.3 on THE CONDITIONS OF PEACE.

A large number of quotations name and classify diverse forms of government. In an early instance of this type of discussion reported by Herodotus, the principal differentiation is made in terms of whether government is by the one, the few, or the many; and it is in such terms that Plato and Aristotle, and others after them, distinguish such forms of government as monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, or propose a mixed regime that combines government by the one, the few, and the many. When a further criterion is introduced—whether government is for the private benefit of the ruler or for the public good of the ruled—differentiation is made between good and bad government by the one (monarchy vs. tyranny),