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An Old American

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Mr. OSWALD, The admirers of the new constitution are continually blazing away on the *great names* which are said to be in favor of the system; but it is hoped that the good sense of the people of these states are not to be deceived by such flimsy arguments. If *great names* were to be the test of truth, it would frequently make sad work in religion, philosophy and politics. The Divine Oracles assert that great men are not always wise, and the history of the world demonstrates, there is no perfection in human beings. What so delusive and fascinating in its nature as power? Nothing more apt to prejudice and mislead our minds, and to render our conduct and temper inconsistent. Where *ambition* may be concerned, an *Archangel* is not to be trusted.

As these premises are true, I could wish there would be no more attempts to delude the people with the authority of names; for, if the favorers of the new leviathan persist in such a mode of reasoning, it will become necessary to investigate the characters of those who are thus held up as the greatest *patriarchs*, to the admiration of the public. It has been observed too that those paragraphists do not always adhere to truth, as may be seen in some of our late prints, where it is said, that “*the same characters which took the lead in each of the states, in the struggle for liberty, in the glorious years of 1775 and 1776, now take the lead in their exertions to establish the federal government.*”

Amongst the *great names*, *Few*, *Telfair* and *Baldwin*, are mentioned as leading characters, at this early period in Georgia. Now it is well known that Mr. Few was originally a bricklayer in North-Carolina, removed to Georgia, and but lately of any consideration in public life. As to Telfair, he with Doctor Zubly and many others, was taken up and put in confinement by order of the governor of that state, in the year 1776, being deemed as inimical to the American cause. Mr. Baldwin’s political existence is of much later date. On Sunday 24th December, 1780, I happened to be at Nassau Hall, Princeton, and heard Mr. Baldwin pray and read a sermon there, for want of a parson, the Reverend Mr. S— being at Philadelphia. At that time he was unknown in the great world, and acted as college steward. There are some others among the *great names* that have been given us, who are not to be met with in the annals of 1775 and 1776, and who have no pretensions to be considered as *leaders* at this or any other period; neither did they endure any more “cold, hunger and nakedness” than ten thousands besides of their fellow citizens. It has long been an expensive folly of America to admire *great names*, and to make *great men*; hence it is that we have been sending commissioners, ambassadors, agents, &c. &c. to London, Paris, Madrid, Petersburg, Amsterdam, and even to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, *to borrow money, and*

to spend it; and we want to repeat the same follies; though it is evident as the meridian glory of the sun, that nothing can save America, but the weaning ourselves from European attachments.

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