As a mark of gratitude they were bound at least to support his character, who gave them support to gain theirs. Not only the library, but every class of civilized society is ready to admit him to be virtuous, who patronizes literature.

Tell the peasant that these was a pattern of library men, & he will assent to him; every other virtue, leads to a panegyric on the same; a hero will be his example for every excellence.

A single line of a folio lost is sufficient with many people to form their opinions of men. Thus Bacon and Cromwell are condemned in the gross, merely because Pope has said, Of parts all men are, in how Bacon shined.

The most illustrious sages of mankind, or enriched with the weight of a name, the Cromwell damned to everlasting fame. These men no doubt had their faults, & great ones too, but still publick indulgence & eminence are apt to absolve too much to such encumbering centers as if couched in striking language, trust satisfied without searching any further into the matter. Were a deep search to be made, it would be with the view to be more confounded in the belief already formed, & consequently, though virtuous actions might be invented to the eyes of the inquiring, his heart would be shut to their reception.

Not only do we find characters not very remarkable for virtue, deprived of what little they profess, but the most illustrious on the list of benefactors of mankind, ranked among the residue of men. To this fate the Patriots have assigned the character of Utopia. But what life could believe the character, though as it stood as the newly fallen snow, which has been handled by the fitting hands of prejudice & common-place? It is impossible for a young man brought up in a patriotic community to form any thing like a correct opinion of Utopia, for all the ceremonies which are held for information are completely procured by prejudice & bigotry. It is of the utmost importance a:)

But in making history, or in forming our views of persons, we should take into consideration the character, situations, opportunities of the writer, whether he was under the influence of prejudice or what party he was likely to favor. We should never fail also to examine his authorities, compare them with others of the same sentiments & opinions. How much depends on these circumstances as may be judged from the state of feeling now present in this country. Whatever account should be written, accepting the present atomism as testimony, the present critical state of public feeling could not be safely assayed by it. It would be almost certain to be illegible or delusory.