

When any prince had gained such a conquest as often had exhausted him, immediately a Roman ambassador came and wrested it out of his hands; among a multitude of examples, we may remember how they, with a single word, drove Antiochus out of Egypt.

Fully sensible how well the European nations were turned for war, they established as a law, that no (a) Asiatic monarch should be suffered to come into Europe, and there invade any people whatsoever. The chief motive of their declaring war against Mithridates (b) was, for his having subdued some barbarians contrary to this prohibition.

When they saw two nations engaged in war, although they were not in alliance, nor had any contest with either of them, they nevertheless appeared upon the stage of action, and like our knights-errants, always sided with the weakest: it was an (c) antient custom, says Dionysius Halicarnassensis, for the Romans to grant succour to all who came to implore it.

These customs of the Romans were not certain particular incidents, which happened by chance, but were so many invariable principles; and this is easy to perceive; for the maxims they put in practice against the greatest monarchs were exactly the same with those they had employed in their infant state, against the little cities which stood round them.

(a) The order sent to Antiochus, even before the war, for him not to cross into Europe, was made general with regard to all other kings.

(b) Appian. *de Bello Mithridat.*

(c) A fragment of Dionysius, copied from the extract of embassies, made by Constantine Porphyrogenneta.