

the senate and his veneration for the republic. He was solicitous therefore to establish such a form of government as should be most satisfactory, without incommoding his particular interest, and changing it into an aristocracy with relation to the civil, and into a monarchy with respect to the military administration; rendering it, by these means, an ambiguous system of government, which, being unsupported by its own power, could subsist no longer than the sovereign pleased, and consequently was a monarchy in all its circumstances.

A question has been started, whether Augustus had a real inclination to divest himself of the empire. But is it not apparent, that, had he been in earnest, he might easily have effected his design? but his whole proceeding, in that affair, was a mere artifice; because, though he expressed a desire every ten years, to be eased of the mighty load that encumbered him, yet he always thought fit to bear it. These were little refinements of low cunning, calculated to induce the people to give him what, in his opinion, he had not sufficiently acquired. I form my thoughts in this particular, by the whole life of Augustus; and though mankind are frequently fanciful and inconsistent, they are seldom known to renounce, in one moment, any enjoyment that has engaged the attention of all their life. Every action of Augustus, and each of his various regulations, visibly tended to the establishment of monarchy. Sylla resigned the dictatorship, but amidst all his violent proceedings, a republican spirit is apparent in every part of his conduct; all his regulations, though executed with a tyrannical air, had an aspect to some certain form of a common-