

ty of a weak man. Surprizing event, indeed, of a dispute which had set the world in flames!

When the reign of a prince succeeds the dissolution of a republic, no authority can be more absolute than his own, for he then possesses all that power which before was distributed among the people, who exercised it without any limitations; and for this reason the kings of Denmark are the most despotic sovereigns in Europe.

The people were altogether as abject and unmanly as the senate, though they once were animated with such a martial spirit, that, when armies were levied in the city, before the time of the emperors, they gained the military discipline upon the spot, and immediately marched to the enemy. In the civil wars of Vitellius and Vespasian, Rome became a prey to the ambitious, and was full of timorous citizens, who were struck with consternation by any party of soldiers, who could first approach them.

The emperors themselves were in no better a situation; for as the right of electing a sovereign was not appropriated to any single army, it generally happened, that, when an emperor was chosen by one body of soldiers, that circumstance alone was sufficient to discredit him with the others, who immediately set up a competitor to oppose him.

As the grandeur therefore of the republic proved fatal to that form of government, so the mighty extent of the empire was altogether as pernicious to the monarchs. If the territories they were to defend had been confined to moderate limits, those sovereigns might have been effectually served by