

drive him entirely out of the field: and as he succeeded in his blow, and Darius died soon after, he remained in quiet possession of that State, from the reasons before assigned. And if his Successors had continued united, they might likewise have enjoyed it in peace; since no other tumults afterwards happened there, but such as were altogether owing to themselves. But of Kingdoms constituted like that of France, it is impossible to keep possession at so easy a rate: witness the frequent defections of Spain, France and Greece from the Romans; all which were occasioned by the number of little principalities that were in a manner interwoven with those States: for whilst they subsisted, the power which the Romans usurped there was always disturbed and precarious: but when they were extinguished at last by length of time and duration of Empire, the Romans met with nothing further to molest them in the possession of those acquisitions. Nay their power was so well established there in the end, that when the Civil wars broke out and the Lieutenants of the several Provinces began to quarrel amongst themselves, every one of them had his party and found means to secure some of those Provinces to himself, according to the authority he had acquired amongst the Natives, who no longer acknowledged any other masters than the Romans, after the race of their former Princes was extinct. These circumstances therefore being duly considered, it is no great wonder that Alexander should find it so easy a matter to keep possession of Asia; nor on the contrary, that Pyrrhus and several others should meet with so many difficulties in securing the conquests they had made: for the difference of their Success is not to be attributed either to the good or bad conduct of the Conquerors, but to the dissimilitude of the conquered [f].

[f] Of this, Machiavel gives a good instance in his *Political Discourses*, Book iii. ch. 12. where he speaks of the different circumstances of the Venetians and Florentines.

EXAMEN.