

## EXAMEN. CHAP. IV.

I N order to form a true judgment of the Spirit and genius of different Nations, it is necessary to compare them with each other. Machiavel in this Chapter draws a parallel betwixt the Turks and the French, two people very different in their Customs, Manners, and Opinions: he gives reasons why it would be a difficult matter to make a conquest of Turkey, but an easy one to keep possession of it when conquered: on the other hand, he pretends to shew what would contribute to an easy and speedy reduction of France; and what would afterwards excite continual commotions there, and prevent the Usurper from enjoying it in quiet and security. But the Author only considers things in one point of view, and dwells merely upon the constitution of Governments: he seems to think that the Strength of the Turkish and Persian Empires is founded solely upon the general State of Slavery which prevails in those Nations, and upon the despotic rule of one man alone; and that an absolute Government firmly established, is the only one that can effectually enable a Prince to reign in peace and make head against his enemies.

In Machiavel's time the Barons and Grandees of France were still regarded as petty Princes who had some share in the Government with their Sovereign: and this gave occasion to continual divisions and frequent revolts. I can't tell however whether the Grand Signior is not as liable to be dethroned as a King of France. The chief difference betwixt them is, that a Turkish Emperor is generally Strangled by the Janizaries, and a King of France has more than once been assassinated by the hands of a Fanatic [g]. But Machiavel in this Chapter, it must be owned, speaks rather of general revolutions than particular cases: and though indeed he has laid open some of the Springs of a very complicated Machine; yet he does not seem, as far as I can judge, to have discovered the principal movements. The diversity of climates, of aliment, and education, make a wide difference in mankind, as to their manner of living and thinking. Hence it comes to pass, that an Italian Monk and a Chinese Bonze hardly seem to be animals of the same Species: the temperament of a thoughtful but hypochondriac Englishman, is quite of another cast from that of a haughty and disdainful Spaniard; and there is as little resemblance betwixt a Frenchman and a Hollander, as betwixt the vivacity of an

[g] The first edition runs thus, "Ont ete assassinez par des moines, ou par des monstres que les moines avoient formez."