

of his imitation: so that if he cannot equal, he may at least in some measure resemble them; like skilful Archers, who being rather at too great a distance from their mark, and knowing that their Bow will not carry point blank so far, commonly take aim above it; not out of any expectation that their arrow will fly directly to such a height, but by making that allowance for the distance of the object, to come as near it as they can.

I say then, that the possession of a Principality newly acquired by one who was not a Prince before, is more or less difficult to be maintained, in proportion to the abilities of the person that acquires it. Now as it argues a great share of valour and conduct, or of good fortune at least, to raise one's self from a private condition to the rank of a Prince; either that valour and conduct, or that good fortune, in all probability, will enable the same person to surmount many other ensuing difficulties. But it has been observed, that such as have trusted the least to fortune, have supported themselves the longest in their acquisitions: and this is more easily done by such as having no dominions of their own, are obliged to reside personally upon their conquests.

The most eminent of those that have made themselves Princes by dint of their own Virtues are Moses, Cyrus, Romulus, Theseus, and some others of that class. And though Moses might have been excepted, as he was the immediate Minister of God's commands, yet he certainly deserves to be admired on account of the grace that made him worthy of communing with God. But if we consider the actions of Cyrus and other such Conquerors and Founders of Monarchies, we shall find them very extraordinary indeed: and if we examine their lives and particular institutions, they will appear not altogether unlike those of Moses, though he was under the guidance of an Almighty Master: for they don't seem to have been obliged to fortune for any thing more than opportunity, which enabled them to introduce and establish such kinds of Government as they thought fit: and as their virtue could never have distinguished itself without opportunity; so without virtue the opportunity would have happened in vain. It was necessary therefore that Moses should find the Children of Israel in a State of Slavery and oppression amongst the Egyptians; that so in order to shake off that yoke, they might be the more readily disposed to follow him. It was fortunate for Romulus that he was thrown out of Alba and exposed to wild beasts in his infancy; otherwise he had never thought of making himself the Founder and King of Rome. It happened luckily for Cyrus that he found the Persians dis-

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