

himself: and any favour that he shall shew them will then do him but little service; as they will look upon it as extorted by necessity, and consequently not worth their thanks [d].

## EXAMEN. CHAP. VIII.

**I**F other proofs were still wanting to convict Machiavel of inculcating pernicious principles, we might have sufficient from his own mouth. For what heavier charge can be brought against any man than that of laying down *rules for the conduct of those that arrive at dominion by wicked and unjustifiable means?* such is the Title of this Chapter.

If he had only professed to read lectures of Villainy to a private combination of traitors and other abandoned wretches, it would not have seemed at all wonderful that he should make choice of such Subjects for the instruction of his Pupils: but he speaks to the whole World, and addresses himself in a particular manner to those that ought to be the most virtuous of mankind, as they are appointed to govern others. What can be more infamous or horrible than to instruct such personages in the arts of perfidy and assassination? It is certainly much to be wished, that, for the good of the World, such examples as those of Agathocles and Oliverotto da Fermo, which Machiavel seems to take so much pleasure in citing, had never been recorded in history. They only serve to call out those dangerous qualities into action, that are rooted in the hearts of men naturally inclined to evil, and of which, perhaps, they themselves were not conscious before. How many young people have corrupted their understandings to such a degree by reading Romances, that they affect to think and act no longer like any one else but a Gandalin or a Medor [e]? Without

[d] Which was the case with our King James II. with regard to granting liberty of Conscience. On the other hand, we see in the first book of Tacitus's History, Otho tells his nephew, that Vitellius could not be so wicked and ungrateful either to kill or spoil the nephew of an Emperor who had preserved his whole family, and quitted the Empire to him voluntarily, though he might have supported himself in it a long time, if he had pleased, as his army was eager to engage that of Vitellius. "An Vitellium tam immitis animi fore, ut pro incolumi totâ domo, ne hanc quidem sibi gratiam redderet. Non enim ultimâ desperatione, sed poscente prælium exercitu remississè Reipublicæ ultimam casum." After he had told his Soldiers, "Quanto plus spei ostenditis, si vivere placeret, tanto pulchrior mors erit." The more zeal you shew to serve me, and lay down your lives for me, the more glorious and honourable it will be for me to die; that so I may not expose so many brave men to any further dangers.

[e] The Heroes of some Romance, we may suppose.