

C H A P. IX.

Of civil Principality.

I shall now say something of the other way of ascending to dominion from a private condition; that is, when a principal Citizen is advanced to Sovereignty over his own Countrymen, not by wicked and violent means, but by their favour and co-operation; which may be called *a civil Principality*, and is not to be acquired either by virtue or fortune alone, but by a lucky sort of craft. Such a person, I say, is lifted up to Sovereign power either by the favour of the Commonalty, or the Nobility: for in every State there is a contrariety of disposition in the constituents, the people being always jealous of their liberty, and afraid of being oppressed by the Grandees; and the Grandees ambitious to rule and domineer over the people [m]. This diversity of inclinations is the occasion of contests, which must always end either in a Principality, or a free Government, or in downright licentiousness [n]. A Principality is introduced either by the people or the Grandees, according as either one or the other of them have an opportunity and find their account in it: for when the Grandees perceive themselves too weak to cope with the people, they sometimes confer their whole authority upon one person, and make him their Prince, in order to gratify their animosity more effectually under the shelter of his power [o]. The people likewise do the same thing, but from different motives: when they can no longer make head against the oppression of the Grandees, they throw all their power into the hands of one person alone, and appoint him their Prince to defend and protect them. But a Prince who is raised by the favour

[m] Rapacity and violence being vices that are commonly incident to the great and powerful. "Avaritiam & arrogantiam præcipua validiorum vitia." *Tacit. Hist. i.* "Naturalem nobilitatis superbiam." *Patere. Hist. ii.*

[n] "Postquam exui æqualitas, & pro modestiâ ac pudore ambitio & vis incedebat, provenere dominationes." Here behold the rise of Principality. "Postquam regum pertæsum, leges maluerunt." *Annal. iii.* Here we see the origin of Liberty, or free Government. "Tribunis reddita licentia quoquo vellent agitandi." . . . Exin continua per viginti annos discordia, non mos, non jus, deterrima quæque impune." Here sprung up licentiousness, which always produces confusion. "Inter Patres plebemque certamina exarsere; modo turbulenti Tribuni, modo Consules prævalidi." *Hist. ii.*

[o] As the Heracleans did, who to revenge themselves upon the Commonalty, which was too strong for them, recalled Clearchus from banishment, and made him their Prince in spite of them. See *Machiavel's Political Discourses*. Book i. Chap. xvi.