

CHAP. X.

In what Manner the strength of all Principalities is to be computed.

IN examining the nature of all Principalities, another circumstance is also to be considered; and that is, whether a prince is strong enough upon occasion to stand upon his own bottom; or whether he depends for his support upon the assistance of others. For the clearer discussion of this matter, I say, that in my opinion, a Prince may very well support himself who has either men or money enough to raise an army sufficient to oppose any one that shall venture to invade him: and on the other hand, I think such Princes as are not able to keep the field against an Enemy, but obliged to retire into strong places and defend themselves there as well as they can, must always be dependent upon others. Of the former we have already spoken, and shall still say something further as occasion occurs. As to the second, it is sufficient only to advise Princes in such circumstances to fortify the place of their residence in the most effectual manner they can, and not to trouble themselves about the rest of the Country. For whoever does this, and has taken care to be upon such terms with his Subjects, as we have already recommended, and shall say something more of hereafter, will always find his Enemies very shy of attacking him [*w*]; as men are naturally cautious of engaging in difficult enterprizes [*x*]: and certainly it cannot be judged a very easy one to reduce a town that is in a good posture of defence, and where the Prince and the people are united.

Many of the towns in Germany are absolutely free: and though their territories are small, they pay no further obedience to the Emperor than just what they think fit, neither do they stand in the least awe either of him or of any other powerful neighbour. But then they are so well fortified, that every one must be sensible it must be an exceeding tedious and difficult piece of work to reduce them: for they are all surrounded with deep ditches and strong walls with plenty of cannon, and have always provisions of every sort laid up in their pub-

[*w*] Tacitus therefore blames Bardanes for embarrassing himself with the siege of a strong town, well furnished with all manner of provisions and ammunition, being governed rather by passion and revenge, than by common prudence. "Solis seleucien-sibus dominationem ejus abnuentibus, in quos, ut patris sui quoque defectores, ira magis, quam ex usu præsentis, accensus, implicatur obsidione urbis validæ, muroque & com meatibus firmatæ." *Annal.* ii.

[*x*] "Omnes qui magnarum rerum consilia suscipiunt æstimare debent an quod inchoatur promptum effectu, aut certe non arduum sit." *Hist.* ii.