

take little or no care to defend them; Subjects, and give themselves no trouble about the government of them: and yet they are never stripped of their dominions, nor forfeit the affections of their Subjects; who, notwithstanding these failures, neither can, nor desire to transfer them to any other power. So that such Princes are the happiest and most secure in the World. But as they are under the immediate superintendance and direction of an Almighty Being, who both raised and supports them, and whose operations are far above the comprehension of our weak understanding, it would be rash and presumptuous in any mortal man that should pretend to account for these things: and therefore I may very well be excused from entering into any Solution of that kind [d]. Nevertheless, as it may seem won-

[d] Some people find nothing wonderful in the rise, progress, and establishment of the papal Power, which Machiavel must mean here: on the contrary, they think it more surprising, that it has not been greater, than that it has been so great. "To speak humanly (says the author of *L'Esprit des Cours de l'Europe*, for Nov. 1699. p. 665.) I do not find any thing so very strange in the exaltation of the Roman Pontifs. By the help of some passages in the scripture, they have persuaded mankind of their Divinity: but is this a new thing? Do not men run the most extravagant lengths in matters of Religion? Above all, they are fond of deifying their fellow-creatures, as is manifest from the heathen System. Now, if it be once admitted, that the Roman Pontifs could easily establish the divine privileges of their office, was it not natural that men should declare in their favour against all other powers? As for myself, so far from being surprized at their exaltation, I wonder how it was possible for them to fail of universal Monarchy. When I consider how many Princes have shook off the Papal Yoke, I am quite confounded: when I enquire into the reasons of it, I can ascribe it to nothing but the two following general and known causes, viz. That men do not always act agreeably to their principles; and that the present life makes a stronger impression upon their minds than that to come."

Others, on the contrary, look upon this matter as the greatest of all prodigies. "Armies, books, sermons, libels, and prophecies, says Mr. Bayle, have all been employed against the Popes: in short, every engine has been set at work to put a stop to their conquests; but all to no purpose. The reason of this is, because they have used all manner of possible arts and means to succeed in their designs. The thunder of their Anathemas has been enforced by arms, councils, crusades, and the tribunal of the inquisition; whilst craft, violence, courage, and artifice, have conspired to protect them. Their acquisitions have cost the lives of as many men as those of the Roman Commonwealth, and many writers apply to new Rome what Virgil says of the old.

Multa quoque & bello passus, dum conderet urbem  
Inferretque Deos Latio.

*Æn. i. 5.*

Tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem.

*Ibid. 33.*

Zipporah said to Moses, Exod. iv. 25. "Surely a bloody husband art thou to me:" but if the Church were the wife of Jesus Christ, her husband might say to her with more reason, "surely a bloody wife art thou to me." The exalted power therefore, to which the Popes raised themselves, still seems one of the greatest wonders in