

so that things were reduced to such a pass, that in an army of twenty thousand Soldiers there were seldom above two thousand foot. Besides this, the several Commanders of these forces found means to secure both themselves and their men from all manner of fatigue and apprehension of danger, by introducing the custom of not killing any one in battle, but only of taking prisoners, and afterwards releasing them without ransom. When they laid Siege to a town they never assaulted it in the night, nor did the townsmen make any Sallies upon them in that season: they never fortified their camp with ditches or any other kind of works, nor ever kept the field in the Winter: a Discipline invented and agreed upon amongst those Commanders, as I said before, to avoid danger and trouble; and which has brought Italy into Slavery and contempt.

EXAMEN. CHAP. XII.

EVERY thing in this world is changed from what it was: the very temperament of mankind is altered: and nature seems to have established the same tendency to variation in the temperament of nations, if I may be allowed that expression. By the *temperament* of a nation, I mean in general, its situation, its extent, the number and genius of the people, its commerce, customs, and laws, its strength and weakness, its riches and resources. This difference in governments is sufficiently manifest, and indeed would appear infinite if we were to enter into a detail of particulars. But as Physicians have no *Nos-trum* that will agree with every constitution and cure all distempers; so Politicians cannot prescribe general rules that will suit every form of government. This reflexion leads me to consider what Machiavel says concerning foreign troops and mercenaries. He absolutely condemns the persons that employ them upon any account whatsoever; and argues from examples, in which he pretends that they have been much more dangerous and prejudicial than serviceable to such States as have taken them into their pay. It is certain indeed, and experience has fully evinced, that the best forces a State can employ are national troops: and this might be proved beyond all possibility of contradiction by the noble stand which Leonidas made at the Straits of Thermopylæ [*w*]; but above all, from the surprizing progress of the Roman and Arabian arms [*x*].

[*w*] With three hundred men only, against Xerxes's whole army, which consisted of a million. They all died fighting to the last man, and had the following Epitaph made upon them.

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