

in a while, will make him become odious to his own Subjects, and despised by every one else, when they see he is reduced to poverty and distress: and as he has injured many, and benefitted but few by his Liberality, he must be exposed to great inconveniences, and in danger of being ruined by the first reverse of fortune [d]. But what is still worse, when he begins to be sensible of his error, and endeavours to correct it, he is thought guilty of the other extreme, and reproached with avarice.

A Prince, therefore, who cannot shew his Liberality, without prejudicing his state, ought not, if he be wise, to trouble himself about the imputation of being covetous: for he will come to be esteem'd liberal in time, when people see that he has improved his revenue in such a manner by parsimony, that he is not only able to defend himself against any one that shall dare to attack him, but even to invade others, without distressing his own Subjects; since all those in fact will think him liberal from whom he has taken nothing [e], who are many; and those only will look upon him as covetous, to whom he has not given so much as they expected, who will be but few in number in comparison of the others. We have seen no great things performed in our times, except by such as have been accounted frugal: all others have failed in their attempts, and been undone. Pope Julius II. having availed himself of a shew of Liberality to get into the Papal chair, presently dropped it after he had succeeded in that design, that he might be the better able to make war upon the King of France: his long and continual parsimony, furnished him with such resources, that he supported several expensive wars, without laying any extraordinary tax, or imposition, upon his Subjects. The present King of Spain [f] could never have succeeded in so many great enterprizes, if he had affected to be thought liberal.

[d] Tully says, that a liberal Prince loses more hearts than he gains, and that the resentment of those that he takes away from, is much stronger than the gratitude of such as he gives to. "Nec tanta studia assequuntur eorum, quibus ademerunt, quanta odia eorum, quibus dederunt." *De offic. lib. 2.* "A Prince will be excused who gives nothing to his Subjects, provided he takes nothing away from them." "Nihil largiatur Princeps, dum nihil auferat." *Plin. Jun. in Panegy.* Tacitus, speaking of Otho, says, "perdere iste sciet, donare nesciet." He knew how to dissipate and squander away, but not to give." *Hist. 1.* and adds "falluntur quibus luxuria specie liberalitatis imponit." "They are deceived that take luxury and prodigality for liberality." Pliny the younger will not allow those to be called liberal, that take away from one to give to another; and says, that instead of liberality, it is downright avarice, "Qui quod hunc dabant, auferunt illi, famam liberalitatis avaritiâ petunt." *Ep. 30. lib. IX.*

[e] "Thou art my God, says David, my goods are nothing unto thee." "Dominus meus est tu, quoniam bonorum meorum non eges." *Psal. xvi. 2.* Most Subjects are of the same mind with regard to Princes, who let them enjoy their properties in peace. "They will always be well affected towards them, says Mezeray, in his *life of Charles VI.* whilst they are well treated;" that is, whilst they are not plundered of their goods and estates.

[f] Ferdinand V. King of Arragon and Castile.