

France as a model. The avowed Patron and Advocate of despotism, usurpation, and high-handed authority, here condescends to approve of that moderating power, with which the Parliaments of France were formerly vested.—For my own part, I think, if there is any Government, in our times, worthy of being proposed as a model of wisdom, it is that of England, where the Parliament is Arbitrator betwixt the King and the people; and where the King has power to do as much good as he pleases, but no evil. This, however, is spoken without any design to disparage the constitution of other States.

After this, our Politician runs out into a long digression, concerning the conduct of several Roman Emperors, from the time of Marcus Aurelius to that of the two Gordians, and imputes the frequent revolutions, that happened in their reigns, to the venality of the Empire. But that was not the sole cause: for Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, all came to miserable ends; and yet none of them bought the Empire as Didius Julianus did. Venality, indeed, was an additional cause: but the true reason of the misfortunes of those Emperors, was the form of that Government. The Pretorian guards, at that time, were what the Mamelucs in Egypt, the Janizaries in Turkey, and the Strelites [c] in Muscovy were afterwards. Constantine, however, who was a Prince of great abilities, found means to break those guards: but still the distracted condition of the Empire exposed succeeding Princes to be poisoned and assassinated, as others had been before them. I shall only observe, that bad Emperors, for the most part, died a violent death: but Theodosius I. [d] died quietly in his bed, and Justinian I. lived happily to the age of eighty-four [e]. Few bad Princes have been happy: Augustus Cæsar himself could not live in peace till he became virtuous. The Tyrant Commodus, who succeeded the Divine Marcus Aurelius, was put to death, notwithstanding the reverence in which his father was held by every one. Caracalla, was ruined by his cruelty. Alexander Severus was treacherously killed by Maximin of Thrace [f]: and Maximin, having made himself odious to the whole

[c] Or Strelitzes. See the *Life of Peter I. Czar of Muscovy*, by Mottley. Vol. I. p. 6. & seq.

[d] See the History of Florence. Book I. at the beginning.

[e] Not to mention the rest of this Emperor's great actions, he collected all the Roman Laws into one body, and gave it the name of *Codex Justinianus*. The Laws of the Judges and Magistrates dispersed in near two thousand books, were reduced to the number of fifty, and called the *Digests* and *Pandects*. He likewise composed four books of *Institutes*, which are an abridgment of the text of all the Laws; and collected the Laws made by himself, into one Volume, called *Novella*. It was he that built the Church of St. Sophia, at Constantinople, which is reckoned one of the finest pieces of Architecture in the world.

[f] But Alexander Severus was a very good Prince.