

C H A P. XX.

Whether Fortresses, and some other things, are of Service or disservice to a Prince.

SOME Princes, in order to secure themselves effectually in the possession of their dominions, have disarmed their Subjects; others have fomented jealousies and factions in their Cities: some have designedly made themselves enemies amongst them; others have endeavoured to gain those whom they suspected in the beginning of their reign: some again have built fortresses, and others have demolished them. And though no certain or determinate rule can be laid down, with regard to such expedients, except one had a thorough knowledge of the respective States where they are to be put in practice; yet I shall say something of them in general, as far as the nature of the thing will admit.

It was never known then, that a new Prince disarmed his Subjects: on the contrary, when he has found them disarmed, he has always put arms into their hands. For by so doing, he makes them so many Soldiers entirely at his Service; those that were suspected, become faithful to him; those that were faithful before, are confirmed in their attachment; and his Subjects become his partisans. It is true he cannot arm them all; but if he is kind and obliging to those whom he does arm, he may make the bolder with the rest. Besides, those that are employed by him, will think themselves honoured by that preference [p]: and those that are not, will excuse it, as they must think them more worthy of reward, who are most exposed to danger. But if he disarms them, he presently forfeits their affections; because it gives them reason to think he has but a mean opinion, either of their courage or fidelity: which will certainly make them hate him. And as he cannot possibly support himself without an army, he will then be under a necessity of taking Mercenaries into his Service; the inconvenience of which I have already sufficiently shewn. But supposing Mercenaries to be ever so good troops; they would not be able to defend him, both against a powerful foreign enemy, and disaffected Subjects. New Princes, there-

[p] As in the case of the fourteenth Legion, which always continued faithful to Nero, and respected his memory, out of gratitude for the honour which he had done it in making choice of it, as the most valiant in his Service, to reduce Britain which had revolted. "Addiderat (quarta decumanis) gloriam Nero, eligendo eos ut potissimos: unde longa illis erga Neronem fides, and erecta in Othonem Studia;" because Otho was like Nero in his temper." *Tacit. Hist. 2.*