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P O L I T I C A L  
D I S C O U R S E S

UPON THE FIRST DECAD OF

L I V Y.

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B O O K II.

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C H A P. I.

*Whether the grandeur of the Roman Empire may be ascribed to the Virtue,  
or good Fortune of that people.*

**P**LUTARCH, a very grave author, and many others, are of opinion, that the Romans were more indebted to their good Fortune than their Virtue for the largeness of their Empire: and amongst other reasons which he assigns to confirm the truth of this, he says they plainly acknowledge it themselves, in having erected more Temples to Fortune than to any other of their Deities. Livy himself seems to incline to this way of thinking: since he very seldom introduces any Roman speaking of virtue, but he makes him say something of Fortune also. But I confess I am not of that opinion myself; nor do I think it can be properly supported by any one else: because if no other Commonwealth ever made so great a progress as the Roman, it is well known that no other Commonwealth was so well constituted for that purpose: for as the valour and excellent discipline of their Soldiery were the chief causes of their acquiring so extensive a dominion; so their wise conduct and the institutions established by their first Lawgivers, were means of preserving what they got, as we shall shew more at large

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