

BOOK
III.
Chap. 3.

be possessed of the sovereign power : of a monarchy, that the prince should have this sovereign power, but in the execution of it should be directed by established laws : of a despotic government, that a single person should rule according to his own will and caprice. No more do I want to enable me to discover their three principles ; these are from thence most naturally derived. I shall begin with a republican government, and in particular with that of democracy.

CHAP. III.

Of the Principle of Democracy.

THERE is no great share of probity necessary to support a monarchical or despotic government. The force of laws in one, and the prince's arm in the other, are sufficient to direct and maintain the whole. But in a popular state, one spring more is necessary, namely *virtue*.

What I have here advanced, is confirmed by the unanimous testimony of historians, and is extremely agreeable to the nature of things. For it is clear that in a monarchy, where he who commands the execution of the laws generally thinks himself above them, there is less need of virtue than in a popular government, where the person intrusted with the execution of the laws, is sensible of his being subject to their direction, and that he must submit to their authority.

Clear it is also that a monarch, who through bad council or indolence ceases to enforce the execution of the laws, may easily repair the evil ; he has only to change his council ; or to shake
off

