

in the first place; and in the next, out of fear of being stripped like their neighbours, if they should offer to stir. It must be added, that Colonies, though nothing like so expensive as a standing military force, are yet more to be depended upon by their Prince, and much less disgustful to others: and those few who have suffered by them, being poor and separated, cannot do them any harm, as I said before. For it should be remembered, that one ought either to keep upon good terms with others, or to crush them utterly if they are once provoked: because if the injury that is done them be but a slight one, they are left in a capacity to return it; but if it is done to the purpose, it will not be in their power: so that when a man resolves to injure another, he should do it in such a manner as to cut off all possibility of revenge [s].

But if instead of Colonies an armed force is sent thither, the charge will be very great, and the whole revenue of the Province swallowed up in supporting it; which will make the acquisition a loss rather than a gain, and occasion much more discontent: for the frequent removal of a camp from one place to another, and harrassing the whole country in that manner, is a grievance which will be felt and resented by the inhabitants who are still left in the enjoyment of their possessions, and have it in their power to be dangerous enemies; because though vanquished and oppressed, they are not utterly dispersed or extinguished. Such a force therefore will be in every respect as prejudicial, as Colonies are serviceable.

A Prince who has got possession of a Province, the manners and constitution of which are different from those of his own, ought likewise to defend and protect such of his neighbours as are in a low and feeble condition, and endeavour to weaken those that are more potent than he is; and above all, to take particular care that no foreign Prince of equal strength with himself shall, upon any account, gain footing in that Province: for it almost always happens that the discontented party call in somebody or other, either out of ambition or fear. Of which, we have an example in the Etolians, who introduced the Romans into Greece: and in every other Province where they gained admittance, it was at first by the favour and co-operation of the natives. It commonly happens in such cases, that as soon as any powerful foreigner

[s] When Rinaldo degli Albizi found the Signiory had only sentenced Cosimo de' Medici to banishment, and not to death, as he would have had them, he told them, "it would have been much better for them to have remained content in their former circumstances, than to suffer Cosimo to escape with life, and leave so many of his friends in Florence; as people, especially great men, ought either never to be provoked, or if they are, to be entirely crushed." *Hist. Flor.* Book iv.