

marched into Italy at the invitation of the Venetians, and with the consent of the Pope: and he was no sooner arrived at Milan but he sent a body of forces to assist his Holiness in his designs upon Romagna, which was presently surrendered to him upon the reputation of his alliance with the King of France. After this acquisition, the Duke found means to depress the power of the Colonna: but there were two obstacles which prevented him not only from making any further progress, but even from maintaining what he had got: for in the first place, he could not put any great confidence either in the forces of the Ursini or the King of France, which he had chiefly employed; being apprehensive they both would fail him in time of need, and be so far from assisting him in making any future conquests, that they would combine to deprive him of what he had already acquired. Indeed he had just reason to suspect the Ursini: for after the reduction of Faenza, he laid siege to Bologna, but found their troops very cold and backward in an assault which he made upon that place; and as to the King, he had pretty well discovered how he stood affected to him: for when he had conquered the Duchy of Urbino, and was going to invade Tuscany, his Majesty obliged him to desist from that enterprize: upon which account, he determined to trust no longer to the arms and fortune of others.

The first step he took after this resolution, was to lower the power and authority of the Ursini and Colonna in Rome: for which purpose, he corrupted all such of their adherents as were men of any distinction or interest, by taking them into his own service, and giving them honourable pensions and Governments and commands, according to their respective qualities: so that in the space of a few months, their attachment to that faction was wholly extinguished, and they all came over to the Duke. When he had thus humbled the Colonna, he resolved to take the first opportunity of ruining the Ursini: and it was not long before one offered, which he did not fail to make use of. For the Ursini being aware that the rising greatness of the Duke and the Church must be established upon their ruin, called a Council of their friends together at Magione in the territories of Perugia, to consider of proper means to prevent it. In consequence of these deliberations, Urbino revolted from the Duke, and great commotions ensued in Romagna, which seemed to threaten him with destruction on every side: but he happily over-came all those difficulties by the assistance of the French. However, after he had established his reputation, he grew weary of foreign allies in whom he could not thoroughly confide; and therefore had recourse to artifice and dissimulation,