

lation, in which he succeeded so well, that he reconciled the Urfini to him by the mediation of Signior Paolo, one of that family, whom he had so effectually gained over to his interests by all manner of friendly offices and making him very rich presents, that being deceived himself, he so far prevailed upon the credulity of the rest, that they attended him to an interview which the Duke had appointed at Sinigaglia, where they were all put to death [n]. By thus ridding himself of the Heads of these families, and making their partizans his friends, the Duke laid a good foundation for future greatness; as he thereby made himself master of all Romagna, the Duchy of Urbino, and afterwards gained the affections of the people there by giving them some foretastes of the happiness they might expect under his government. And since the part he acted in these circumstances is highly worthy not only of notice, but imitation, I shall give some account of it.

After the Duke had got possession of Romagna and found it had been governed in such a manner by those petty Lords, who had rather pillaged their Subjects than contributed to their felicity, and given them sufficient occasion to rebel, instead of living quietly and contentedly under their administration; and that there was nothing to be seen throughout the whole Province but daily tumults, factions, robberies, and all other kinds of outrages and enormities, he thought it absolutely necessary to establish good order and a regular government amongst them; that so he might induce them to live peaceably and

[n] There is a particular Narrative of these murders, immediately after *the Life of Castruccio Castracani*, towards the end of this Volume.

The States which these unfortunate Lords possessed, had formerly belonged to the Church; but in the quarrels betwixt Benedict XII. and the Emperor, Lewis of Bavaria, the latter took upon him to give them away to the Vicars of the Church that were then in possession of them, as the Pope had given away some of the Emperor's States in Italy before.

“The Emperor, therefore, (says Machiavel, in his *History of Florence*, Book i.) observing how liberally the Pope had disposed of the States that belonged to the Empire, that he might not be behind hand with him, in such sort of generosity, likewise gave away all the States which had been usurped from the Church, to be held of the Empire by the present possessors. By which donation, Galeotto Malatesta, and his Brothers became Lords of Rimini, Pesaro, and Fano; Antonio da Montefeltro, of la Marca and Urbino; Gentile da Varano, of Camerino; Guido di Polenta, of Ravenna; Sinebaldo Ordelaffi, of Furli and Cefena; Giovanni Manfredi, of Faenza; Ludovico Alidosi, of Imola; and many more of other places; so that of all the lands belonging to the Church, there were hardly any left without a new Master; which reduced the Church to the low condition it was in in the days of Alexander VI. who, in our times, drove the posterity of those intruders out of their possessions, to their utter ruin, and restored it to its former splendour and authority.”