

the next Pope would be his enemy and endeavour to resume what Alexander had given him) he designed to have made four different provisions: in the first place, by utterly extinguishing the families of those Lords whom he had deprived of their States [q], that so it might not be in the power of the succeeding Pope to re-establish them: in the next, by drawing the Nobility of Rome over to his party: in the third, by securing a majority in the College of Cardinals: and lastly, by establishing his power so firmly before his father died, that he should be able of himself to make head against the first attack of any enemy.

Three of these expedients he succeeded in, and had almost accomplished the fourth before the death of his father. For he put all the disseized Lords to death that fell into his hands; and very few of them escaped him: he had entirely gained the Nobility of Rome; and secured a very considerable party amongst the Cardinals: and for a further augmentation of his power, he designed to have made himself Master of Tuscany, having already got possession of Perugia and Piombino, and taken Pisa under his protection; which he soon after boldly seized upon, as he had no longer any occasion to stand in awe of the French, who were driven out of the Kingdom of Naples by the Spaniards; and the Spaniards themselves were obliged to court his friendship. After this, Lucca and Siena presently submitted to him, either out of fear, or envy to the Florentines, who were not able by any means to prevent it. So that if these events had happened before (as they happened only in the very same year that Alexander VI. died) the Duke's power and reputation would have been so great that he might have been able to stand firm upon his own bottom, without any dependance upon the fortune or forces of others.

But Alexander died within five years after he had unsheathed his Sword, and left him nothing certain and thoroughly established but Romagna; for the rest of his dominions were little better than Castles in the air: besides, he was at that time not only sick to death himself [r], but straitly enclosed betwixt two hostile and very powerful armies. Yet so great were his spirit and abilities, so perfectly was he acquainted with the arts either of gaining or ruining others as it best suited his

[q] Thus Mucian, Prime Minister to Vespasian, put Vitellius's son to death, in order to extinguish all seeds of future war. "Mucianus Vitellii filium interfici jubet, mansuram discordiam obtendens, ni semina belli restinxisset." *Hist.* iv. Such Ministers think it dangerous to leave those alive whom they have deprived of their rights. "Periculum ex misericordiâ Ubi Vespasianus imperium invaserit, non amicis ejus, non exercitibus securitatem, nisi extincto æmulatu redituram." *Hist.* iii.

[r] Of poison, which he had taken himself, but designed for others.

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