

had long prevailed in that Electorate a convicted Adulterer was condemned to die: but I shall not stop here to examine the reasonableness of an institution which seems better suited to the jealousy of an Italian, than the patience of a German Husband. A transgressor of this Law was actually condemned, and Augustus was obliged to sign his death Warrant. He did so: but as he was a Prince of an amorous disposition, and naturally inclined to mercy, he pardoned the criminal and repealed a Law by which he himself was tacitly condemned to suffer the same punishment. In this he acted like a sensible and humane Prince. Cæsar Borgia, on the contrary, punished offenders of every kind with the inclemency of a merciless Tyrant. He caused Remiro d' Orco, whom he had sent on purpose into Romagna to execute his commands with the utmost rigour, to be cut in two, in order to appease the people and ingratiate himself with them by sacrificing the instrument of his barbarities. The bitterness of tyranny is never so sensibly felt, as when the Tyrant avails himself of a shew of justice, and acts under the shelter and protection of established Laws.

Borgia foreseeing what might happen to him after his father's death, began to guard against it by exterminating all such as he had forcibly deprived of their States or other possessions, in order to prevent the succeeding Pope from availing himself of their enmity to him. What a concatenation of crimes! to support his enormities, he must have money; to get money, he must use violence; and to enjoy it in security, he must murder the persons whom he robs. What can a Highwayman do more!

Borgia caused some of the Cardinals to be invited to sup at the Vatican with a design to poison them: but both he and the Pope were poisoned themselves by mistake. Alexander died; Borgia with much difficulty escaped, to lead a wretched life indeed, as a reward for his poisonings and assassinations [a].

[a] "Alexander omnium qui unquam fuerunt perfidiâ, libidine, sævitiâ, sceleratissimus. Cujus filius Cæsar Borgia, perfectum præbuit Machiavello callidi, sed nefarii Principis exemplar." *Perizon. Hist. Sect. xvi. p. 7.* See Jortin's *Life of Erasmus*, part. i. p. 20. note *t.* One may truly apply to these two monsters, what Virgil says of the Harpies.

Tristius haud illis monstrum, nec sævior ulla
Pestis et ira Deum Stygiis sese extulit undis.

Æneid. iii. 215.

Monsters more fierce offended Heav'n ne'er sent
From Hell's abyss for human punishment.

Dryden.

Such