

deavoured to depress likewise in their turn, but to no purpose. To these causes it was owing that the Popes had then so little temporal power in Italy.

But afterwards, when Alexander VI. succeeded to the Pontificate, he exerted himself in such a manner as none of his Predecessors had ever done, and shewed the World what a Pope was capable of doing when he had money and troops at command: for an account of which, and in what manner he availed himself of such a Minister as Duke Valentine and the French forces whilst they were in Italy, I must refer the Reader to what I have said before concerning the conduct and actions of that Duke. And though his intention was not so much to aggrandize the Church as his Son, yet what he did for one turned to the advantage of the other: for after he was dead and the Duke deprived of that support, the fruits of their labours were seized upon by the Church.

After him came Julius II. [e] who found the Church in a flourishing condition. Romagna was wholly in its possession, the Barons of Rome greatly depressed, and the factions almost extinguished by the rigour of his Predecessor. Besides which, he found a way opened and means already invented to raise money in such a manner as had never been practised nor thought of before the Pontificate of Alexander: which advantages he still improved, and resolved not only to make himself Master of Bologna, but to pull down the power of the Venetians, and drive the French entirely out of Italy: and succeeding in all these enterprizes, he gained so much the more reputation, as he laboured solely to advance the interests of the Church, and not for the aggrandizement of his own family or friends. He left the factions of the Colonna and Ursini in the same condition that he found them: and if they had been inclinable to raise fresh disturbances, yet there were two circumstances that would have prevented it. In the first place the Church was grown so powerful, that they began to stand in great awe of it: and in the next, there were then no Cardinals in the Consistory of each family [f]. For all the quarrels that had happened betwixt them were originally excited by such Cardinals: and whenever they have any again, their animosities will certainly break out afresh; as they never fail to promote party and faction

[e] Julius II. was not his immediate Successor. Pius III. was the next Pope to Alexander VI. but he reigned only a few days.

[f] The factions of the Ursini and the Colonna were still further depressed in the time of Sixtus V. by the creation of several Dukes and Princes, who, becoming their equals by these new Titles, likewise soon became their enemies, and quarrelled with them about precedence.