

The king-
dome of
Naples af-
faulted by
Giouanni
de Angio.

King Ferran-
do defeated.

Giouanni
de Angio
vanquished
in battell.

Giouanni to set vpon the Kingdome: and in October 1459. with a mightie nauie he departed from *Genoua*. And landing at *Baiá*, marched from thence to *Sessa*, where he was by the Duke of that countrey receiued. Then came vnto *Giouanni* the Prince of *Tarranto*, the Cittizens of *Aquila*, with many other townes and Princes, in so much as that Kingdome was almost ruined. *Ferrando* seeing that, desired aide of the Pope and the Duke. Also to haue the fewer foes, made peace with *Gismondo Malatesti*, wherewith *Giacopo Piccinino* (being naturall enemy to *Gismondo*) became so much displeased, as he discharged himselfe from the seruice of *Ferrando*, and ioyned with *Giouanni*. *Ferrando* also sent money to enterteine *Federigo* Lord of *Vrbino*, and within short space he assembled (according vnto that time) a great army. Then marched he to the riuer of *Sarni*, where he found the enemy, and fought with him: in which conflict, the forces of King *Ferrando* were ouerthrowne, and many of his principall Captaines taken. But notwithstanding this ouerthrow, the Cittie of *Naples*, with a fewe other townes, and some Princes, continued faithfull to *Ferrando*, though all the rest of the Realme, and Nobilitie, yeilded their obedience to *Giouanni*. *Giacopo Piccinino* perswaded *Giouanni* to follow the victorie, and presently to marche to *Naples*, thereby to possesse himselfe of the chiefe Cittie of the Kingdome; which *Giouanni* refused to do, saying he would first spoile all the countrey, and then it would be more easie to surprize the Cittie, which was the cause, he failed to performe that enterprise: for he knew not, that the parts do more willingly follow the head, then the head doth follow them. After this ouerthrow, the King *Ferrando* being fled into *Naples*, thither resorted vnto him diuerse of his subiects, who were driuen from their countreys: then by all curteous meanes he leuied men and money to make a new Camp, sending againe for aide to the Pope and Duke. From the one and the other of whome he was aided more speedily and abundantly then before time he had bene, bicause they greatly feared, he should otherwise lose his Kingdome. King *Ferrando* in this sort growne strong, marched out of *Naples*, and hauing gotten some reputation, recouered also part of his lost townes. During these warres in the Kingdome, a chance happened, that vtterly deprived *Giouanni de Angio* of reputation and meane to haue victorie in that enterprise. The *Genouesi* being wearie of the French insolent and couetous gouernment, tooke armes against the Kings Gouernour there, and forced him to flee to the little Castle of *Genoua*. The *Fregosi* and the *Adorni* were content to ioyne in that action, and by the Duke of *Milan* they became furnished of money and men, both for the winning, and keeping the Cittie. So that the King *Rinato* with his nauie came to the succour of his sonne, and hoping to recouer *Genoua*, by meane of the small Castle, in landing his souldiers, was ouerthrowne; and forced with shame to returne vnto *Prouenza*. These newes being carried to the Kingdome of *Naples*, greatly dismaied *Giouanni de Angio*: notwithstanding, he still followed his enterprise, and continued the warre, being serued by those Barons who were rebelled, and could not looke for fauour of *Ferrando*. In the end, after many accidents, those two royall armies ioyned battell, wherein, neare vnto the Cittie of *Troia*, *Giouanni* was vanquished, the yeare 1463. This ouerthrow did not so much hinder the successe of the King *Giouanni*, as did the reuolt of *Giacopo Piccinino*, who left him, and ioyned with King *Ferrando*: whereby being spoiled of his forces, he retired into *Histria*, and from thence to *Fraunce*. This warre continued foure yeares, and was in the end lost by his owne negligence, for it was many times in good way of victorie by the vertue of his souldiers. Therein the *Florentines* intermedled not apparantly, yet were they desired by Embassadors of the King *Giouanni* of *Arragon* (newly come to that Kingdome by the death of *Alfonso*) to assit the enterprise of *Ferrando* his nephew, as they had bound

bound themselves by the league lately made with *Alfonso* his father. To whome by the *Florentines* it was answered, that they were not by any obligation bound to aide the sonne in that warre, which was begun by the father: for as the same had bene without their counsell or knowledge taken in hand, so without their assitance it should be performed and ended. The Embassadors being thus to the request of their King answered, protested the execution of their band, and the Kings preiudice, so in great displeasure with that Cittie, departed. The *Florentines* during these warres, continued in peace abroad, but within they rested not, as in the next Booke shall be particulerly declared.

The ende of the sixt Booke.



THE SEVENTH BOOKE.



O those that haue read the former Booke, it may seeme in writing of *Florence*, and the proceedings of the *Florentines*, we haue ouermuch spoken of such accidents as hapned in *Lombardy* and the Kingdome. Neuerthelesse, as heretofore I haue, so am I hereafter to continue with the like discourles. For albeit I did not promise to write of matters concerning *Italy*, yet haue I thought good to speake of those, that were in that countrey most notable. For if I should not make mention of them, our historie would be with more difficultie vnderstood, and to the Readers lesse pleasing. Chiefely, bicause the actions of other people and Princes of *Italy*, did occasion the warres, wherein the *Florentines* were forced to intermeddle, as of the warre of *Giouanni de Angio*, and King *Ferrando* great enimitie grew, which was after betwixt *Ferrando* and the *Florentines*, and particulerly with the house of *Medici* continued. For the King complained, that the *Florentines* did not onely leaue him in that warre vnaided, but also that his enemies were by them fauoured: which anger, was the occasion of exceeding many inconuenients, as shall be hereafter declared. And for as much as I haue written at large those matters which happened without the Cittie, till the yeare 1463. it behoueth me for the declaration of such troubles as happened in those daies within, to looke back many yeares passed. Yet first by way of discourle (as is my custome) I say, that whosoever doth thinke, that any Common-weale can continue vnited, he greatlie deceiueth himselfe. But true it is, that some diuisions be preiudiciall to Common-weales, and some others be profitable. Those be preiudiciall, which are with factions and followers accompanied. And those are profitable, which without factions and followers bee maintained. Seeing then, it is a thing impossable, for that man who frameth a Common-weale, to provide that no enimitie shall therein arise, he ought (at the least) foresee, that no factions

factions be permitted. It is then to be considered, that the Citizens in euerie state do win reputation, either by publike or priuate meanes. Publike reputation is gotten by victorie in the field, by surprizing of townes, by wise and discreet performing of Embassages, or by counsailling the State grauely and fortunately. By priuate meanes men attain to reputatiō, by pleasuring particuler citizēs, by sauing them frō punishments, by relieuing them with money, by aduancing thē vnworthily to honors and offices, and by entreteining the common people with sports & publike gifts. From these causes, faction, following, and partaking do proceed. And as reputation thus gotten is hurtful, so the other not being intermedled with faction, is the occasion of great good, bicause it is grounded vpon no priuate, but common commoditie. And albeit among such Citizens, so great displeasures wil grow, as the wisdome of man is not able to preuēt, yet wāting partakers to follow thē for proper profit, they cannot by any way hinder the common-weale, but shal rather help it: for in aspiring to that they would come vnto, it behoueth them to indeuor the aduancement of the state, and particularly one to respect the other, so much, as the lawes & ciuil orders be not infringed. The enimities of *Florēce* were alwaies followed with factions, and therefore hurtfull to the state, neither was any victorious faction longer vnited, then the contrary part continued in force: for so soone as the enemies were extinguished, the faction remaining no more in awe of the enemy, nor hauing order to bridle it selfe, became diuided. The faction of *Cosimo de Medici* in the yeare 1434. remained with victorie. Neuerthelesse, bicause the partie oppressed was stil great, and full of mightie men, it continued vnited and tollerable, so long, as among those of the factiō, no error was cōmitted, and the people for no euill desert did hate thē: and whensoever that government had need of the people to reestablish their authoritie, they found them readie to giue vnto the chiefe of the faction the *Balia*, and whatsoever else they desired. Thus frō the 1434. till the 55. being 21. yeares, they were cōfirmed in office 6. times, ordinarily elected by the Councels. There were in *Florence* (as we haue diuerse times said) two most mightie Citizens, *Cosimo de Medici*, and *Neri Capponi*, of whome, *Neri* had gained his reputation by publike meanes: by reason whereof, he had many friends, but few followers. *Cosimo* on the other side being aspired both by publike and priuate waies, had not onely many friends, but also many followers. These two men continuing vnited, during their liues, easily obtined of the people whatsoever they desired, bicause they had loue mixed with authoritie. But the yere 1455. being come, *Neri* dead, & the aduerse part extinguished, *Cosimo* found no small difficultie to be cōfirmed, and his own friends being most mightie in the state, were cause therof: bicause they feared no more the cōtrary faction put downe, & desired to decrease the power of *Cosimo*; which was the beginning of those diuisions which followed after in the yeare 1466. So as they vnto whome the offices appertained, in their councels, where the publike government of that state was debated, did alleage it was not conueniēt that the authoritie of *Balia* should be resumed, but that the order of election ought proceed, as it was wont, by lots, and not according to the former *Squittini*. *Cosimo*, to quallifie this humor, had to determine vpon one of these two remedies, either by force with the aide of his friends and followers to possesse himselfe of the State, and therewith to compell the contrarie faction, or else to suffer the matter proceed, and in time let his friends know, that not his honor, but their reputation was by the enemy taken away. Of these two remedies, he made choise of the last: for hee knew well, that the *Squittini* being fullest of his friends, himselfe could not incurre any perill, and might also at his pleasure resume the State. The Cittie then determined to create the Magistrates by lot: the greatest number thought the libertie recouered, and that the offices should not after be allotted,

according

Cosimo
de Medici.
Neri Cap-
poni.

according to the will of the most mightie men, but as seemed best to themselves. Whereupon, the followers of the great Cittizens began to be disesteemed, and by the people were in sundrie places beaten downe and oppressed. So as they who were wont to haue their houses full of suiters and presents, were now become emptie, and without any resort at all. They also sawe themselves made equall with those who were before time farre vnder them, and their equals were become their superiors. They were not regarded nor honored, but rather many times mocked and derided. Also in the streets, the people without respect, spake their pleasures both of them, and of the Common-weale. Whereof was conceiued, that they, and not *Cosimo*, had lost the gouernment. All which things *Cosimo* dissimuled, and whensoever any thing plausible to the people was propounded, he was euer the first that allowed thereof. But that which most terrified the great men, and made *Cosimo* to looke about him, was the reuiving of the *Catasto* the yeare 1427. Whereby was ordeined, the Imposition should proceed by the order of lawe, and not the pleasure of men. This lawe made, and Magistrates for execution thereof chosen, occasioned the great Cittizens to assemble, goe vnto *Cosimo*, and desire him be pleased to concurre with them in their, and his owne deliury from the people: whereby he should recouer reputation to the State, make himselfe mightie, and then honored. Thereunto *Cosimo* answered, he was content, so that the lawe were made orderly with consent of the people, and without force; otherwise no speech to be thereof. Then went they about in the Councels to make a new *Balia*, whereby they might create new Officers, but that intention preuailed not: then the great Cittizens returned to *Cosimo*, desiring him most humblely to consent to the Parliament, which *Cosimo* vtterly refused to do: meaning thereby to bring to passe, that they should finde the error they committed. And bicause *Donato Cochi*, being *Gonfaloniere di Giustitia*, would in any wise without his consent call the Parliament, *Cosimo* procured him by the rest of the *Senators*, (who sate with him in office) to be so mocked and disdeined, as thereby he became mad, and was as a man sencelesse, sent home to his house. Notwithstanding, bicause he thought it not fit to suffer matters to runne further out of order, then that they might be at his pleasure reformed: *Lucca Pitti* become *Gonfaloniere di Giustitia* (a stout and selfe-willed man) *Cosimo* thought good to leaue the gouernment to his discretion, to the end, that if any thing were misdone, the fault might be to *Lucca* and not to himselfe imputed. *Lucca* then in the beginning of his Magistracie, propounded many things to the people, touching reformation of the *Balia*, but not obtaining his desire, with iniurious words full of pride, he threatned those of the councels: Which threatnings, shortly after he performed in deed. For in August vpon the eue of *S. Lorenzo*, the yeare 1458. he assembled secretly within the Pallace many armed men, called the people thither, and forbade thē to consent to that, which voluntarily they had before denied. By this means being againe in possession of the State, the *Balia* was created, and the chiefe Magistrates according to the pleasure of a fewe, were appointed. Then to begin that gouernment with terror, which was gotten by force, they confined *Girolamo Machiavelli*, with some others, and depriued many from their offices, which *Girolamo* hauing afterwards passed the bounds of prescription, was proclaimed a Rebell. Then went he from place to place in *Italy*, to perswade the Princes against his countrey, till at length in *Lunigiana*, through the treason of one of that *Senate*, he was taken, brought to *Florence*, and there in prison died. This forme of gouernmēt continuing eight yeares, was violent and insupportable. For *Cosimo* being old, weake, vnhealthie, and vnable to be present as he was wont, at the affaires of the Common-weale, a fewe Cittizens at their pleasures did rob and spoyle the Cittie. *Lucca Pitti* for his

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good

Girolamo
Machiaulli.

Lucca Pitti.

Ordinances
by Lucca
Pitti.

good service was made Knight, and he to declare himselfe no lesse thankfull to the State, then the State had bene to him, caused that the Officers called *Priori delli Arti*, hauing passed their authoritie, should be called *Priori della Liberta*. He ordeined also, that whereas the *Gonfaloniere* was wont to sit on the right hand of the *Rettori*, that after he should be placed in the middest of them. Moreouer, to the end that God might seeme partaker of this action, they made publique procesions and prayers, thanking him for the restauration of their honors. *Lucca* was by the *Senate*, and by *Cosimo* richly presented. To him also euerie other Cittizen resorted, and gaue somewhat, so that it was supposed that the summe of his presents amounted vnto twentie thousand ducckers. In conclusion, he aspired to such greatnesse of reputation, as *Lucca*, and not *Cosimo*, seemed to gouerne the Cittie. Thereupon he conceiued so great confidence, that he began to build two houses, the one in *Florence*, the other in *Rucciano*, a mile distant from the Cittie, both stately and kingly buildings. But that in *Florence* was much larger then by any priuate Cittizen had euer bene builded. For performance thereof, he spared not to vse all extraordinarie meanes. For not onely priuate Cittizens and particuler men did present him, and help him with things necessarie for his building, but the whole comminaltie and people did put their hands to his works. Moreouer, all banished men, and euerie other person hauing committed murther, theft, or other offence, whereof he feared publique punishment (if he were abled to his seruice any way) might without all danger resort thither. The other Cittizens, although they builded not like vnto him, yet were they no lesse violent, and inclined to oppressio: so as, albeit *Florence* had no warre abroad to hinder it, yet was it by the Cittizens within oppressed. In those dayes (as is before sayd) happened the warre in the Kingdome: and some warres were also made against the house of *Malatesti*, by the Pope, being desirous to take from them *Rimino* and *Cesena*: so that in this enterprise, and his studie to moue the warre against the Turke, Pope *Pio* consumed his Papacie. But *Florence* continued still in diuisions and troubles. For then began the faction of *Cosimo* to be diuided within it selfe, the yeare 1455. which happened by the occasions before said. Yet were they (for that time) by his wisdom appeased. But the yeare 64. being come, *Cosimo* fell againe sick, and dyed. At his death, both friends and foes lamented: for they, who in respect of the State loued him not, seeing what extortion was vsed by the Cittizens in his life, doubted (least *Cosimo* being dead whome all men reuerenced) they should be vtterly ruined, and of his sonne *Piero* they hoped not much. For albeit he were of disposition a good man, yet being sickly, and new in the gouernmēt, they thought he should be forced to respect others, who without any bridle, would become strong and incorrigible. Euerie man therefore feared to find great want of *Cosimo*. This *Cosimo* was the most esteemed, and most famous Cittizen (being no man of warre) that euer had bene in the memorie of man, either in *Florence*, or any other Cittie, bicause he did not onely excell all others (of his time) in authoritie and riches, but also in liberalitie and wisdom. For amongst other qualities which aduanced him to be chiefe of his Countrey, he was more then other men, liberall and magnificent. Which liberalitie appeared much more after his death then before. For his sonne *Piero* found by his fathers Records, that there was not any Cittizen of estimation, to whome *Cosimo* had not lent great summes of money: and many times also vnrequired he did lend to those Gentlemen, whome he knewe to haue need. His magnificence likewise appeared by diuerse his buildings. For within *Florence*, he builded the Abbaies and Temples of *S. Marco*, *S. Lorenzo*, and the Monasterie of *S. Verdiana*. And in the Mountaines of *Fiesole*, *S. Gerolamo*, with the Abbey thereunto belonging. Also in *Mugello*, he did not onely

repaire

repaire the Church for the Friers, but tooke it downe, and builded it anew. Besides those magnificent buildings in *S. Croce*, in *S. Agnoli*, and *S. Miniato*, he made Altars, and sumptuous Chappels: All which Temples and Chappels, besides the buildings of them, were by him paued, and throughlie furnished with all things necessarie. With these publique buildings, we may number his priuate houses, whereof one within the Cittie meete for so great a personage, and foure other without at *Carriaggi*, at *Fiesole*, at *Casagginolo*, and at *Trebio*, all Pallaces fitter for Princes then priuate persons. And bicause his magnificent houses in *Italy* did not in his opinion make him famous ynough, he builded in *Ierusalem* an Hospitall to recieue poore and diseased Pilgrims. In which worke, he consumed great summes of money. And albeit these buildings, and euerie other his actions were princely, and that in *Florence* he liued like a Prince, yet so gouerned by wisdom, as he neuer exceeded the bounds of ciuill modestie. For in his conuersation, in riding, in marrying his children and kinfolk, he was like vnto all other discreet and modest Cittizens: bicause he well knew, that extraordinarie things which are of all men with admiration beholled, do win more enuie, then those which without ostentatiō be honestlie couered. Whensoever therefore he married his sonnes, he neuer sought to match them with the daughters of Princes, but wedded his sonne *Giouanni*, to *Cornelia Alessandri*, and *Piero*, to *Lucretia Tornabuoni*. Also of his graund children begotten of *Piero*, he married *Bianca* to *Guglielmo de Pazi*, and *Nannina* to *Barnardo Russellai*. These his proceedings caused, that in so great change of fortune, and in so variable a Cittie, among so inconstant Cittizens, he continued a Magistrate 31. yeares. For being a wise man, he discouered all inconuenients a farre, and therefore might in time preuent them, or if they did grow, be so prepared, as they could not offend him. Whereby he did not onely suppress all domesticall and ciuill ambition, but also bridled the insolencie of many Princes with so great happinesse and wisdom, that whosoever ioyned in league with him and his countrey, became either equall or superior to his enemies. And whosoever opposed themselves against them, either they lost time, money, or state. Whereof the *Venetians* can beare witness, who being ioyned with him against the Duke *Philippo*, were alwayes victorious: and being disioyned, were first by *Philippo*, and after by *Francesco* victored and oppressed. Also when they ioyned with *Alfonso* against the state of *Florence*, *Cosimo* with his credit, made both *Naples* and *Venice* so scarce of money, as they were constrained to take what peace himselfe was pleased with. Whatsoever difficultie or contradiction was moued against *Cosimo*, either within or without the Cittie, the end thereof was to his glorie, and the disadvantage of his enemies. Therefore all ciuill discords increased his authoritie in *Florence*, and forraine warres augmented his power abroad. He annexed to the dominion of his Countrey *Borgo* at *S. Sepolcro*, *Monteuoglio*, *Casentino*, and the Vale of *Bagno*. Thus his vertue and fortune, oppressed all enemies, and aduanced his friends. He was borne in the yeare 1389. on the feast day of *S. Cosimo* and *Damiano*. The first part of his life was full of troubles, as appeareth by his exile, his imprisonment, and his dangers of death. Also at the Councell of *Constanza* (whither he went with the Pope *Giouanni*) after the Popes oppressio, he was forced to disguise himselfe, and flee. But hauing passed the fortie yeare of his age, hee liued most happily: in so much, as not onely they which ioyned with him in publique actions, but all other men also that maneged his treasure in euerie place of *Europe*, did partecipate of his felicitie. Also many excelsiue rich houses in *Florence* had their beginning from him, as *Tornabuoni*, *Benchi*, *Portinari*, and *Sassetri*. Besides all these, euerie man depending vpon his counsell, and fortune, became wealthie. And albeit that his building of Temples, and giuing

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of almes, was knowne throughout the world, yet would he to his friends many times lament, that he had not spent and bestowed so much to the honor of God, but that he found himselfe still in his booke a debtor. He was of meane stature, in complexion browne, and of presence venerable: vnlearned, yet eloquent, and full of naturall wisdom; friendlie to his friends, and pittifull to the poore. In conversation he was frugall, in counsell aduised, in execution speedie, in speech and answering, wittie, and graue. *Rinaldo de li Albizi* in the beginning of his exile sent him a message, saying that the hen did sit: whereunto *Cosimo* answered, that she could neuer hatch, being farre from her nest. To other Rebels who sent him word they slept not: he answered, that he beleued the same, because there, sleepe was taken from them. Vnto the Pope *Pio*, perswading Princes to take Armes against the Turke, *Cosimo* said, An old man taketh in hand a yong enterprise. To the Embassadors of *Venice*, who came with the messengers of *Alfonso*, to complaine of the *Florentines*, he shewed his head bare, and asked of what colour it was? they answered white. Then he replying, said, that ere it belong, your *Senators* will also haue white heads like vnto mine. His wife, a few houres before his death, seeing him shut his eyes, asked him for what cause he so did? He answered, to bring them in vse. Some Citizens saying vnto him after his returne from exile, that he hindered the Cittie, and offended God, in banishing so many honest men? To them hee answered, It was better to haue a Cittie hindered, then lost; and that the State was not defended with beades in mens hands. Which words, gaue his enemyes matter to speake euill of him, as a man that loued himselfe more then his Countrey, and that esteemed more this world, then the world to come. Many other sayings, as things not necessarie, I omit. *Cosimo* was also a louer and preferrer of learned men, for he brought vnto *Florence* *Angiropolo*, a Grecian borne, and in that time of singuler learning, to the end that the youth of *Florence* might be by him instructed in the Greeke toong, and other his good learnings. He enterteyned in his house *Marfilio Ficino*, a second father of the Philosophie of *Plato*, and him he entirely loued. Also, to the end he might with commoditie exercise the studie of learning, and more aptly vse his help therein, he gaue him certaine land neare vnto his house of *Careggi*. This his wisdom, these his riches, this manner of life, and this fortune, were the causes, that in *Florence* he was both feared and loued, and of the Princes not onely of *Italy*, but also of all *Europe* esteemed: so as he left vnto his posteritie such a foundation, as they might with vertue equall him, and in fortune farre excell him. Whatsoeuer authoritie *Cosimo* had either in *Florence*, or elsewhere in Christendome, he deserued the same: notwithstanding, in the end of his life, he had great sorrowes. For of two onely sonnes, *Pietro*, and *Giouanni*, the one (of whome he most hoped) did dye: the other was continually sick, and therefore vnable either for publique or priuate function. In so much as his sonne being dead, he caused him to be carried about the house, and he following the Coarse, sighed, and saide, this house is ouergreat for so small a familie. It also offended the greatnesse of his minde, that he had not (in his owne opinion) enlarged the *Florentine* dominion with some honorable conquest. And it grieved him the more, knowing that *Francesco Sforza* had deceiued him, who being but Earle, promised, that so soone as hee was possessed of *Milan*, hee would winne the Cittie of *Lucca* for the *Florentines*. Which was not performed, because the Earle with his fortune changed his minde, and being become Duke, determined to enioy that state with peace, which he had gotten by warre. Therefore he would neither keepe touch with *Cosimo* nor any other, neither would he after he was Duke, make anie more warres then those that for his owne defence hee

was

was enforced vnto. Which grieved *Cosimo* greatly, finding that he had endured great paines, and spent much, to aduance a man vnthankfull and perfidious. Moreouer by the weaknesse of his bodie, he found himselfe vnfit to follow either priuate or publique affaires, whereby the one, and the other, miscarried. Because the Cittie was destroyed by the Citizens, and his owne substance by his ministers and children was consumed. All these things in the last end of his age, did greatly disquiet his minde: Notwithstanding he died with glorie. And all the principall Citizens, and all the Christian Princes did condole his death with *Pietro* his sonne, and accompanied his coarse to the Temple of *S. Lorenzo*, where with great pompe it was buried: and by publique consent was written vpon his Tombe, *Pater Patrie*. If in this discourse of *Cosimo*, I haue imitated those, which haue written the liues of Princes, and not those which write vniuersall histories: let no man maruell thereat. For hee being a rare man in our Cittie, deserued I should afford him extraordinary commendation. In those dayes, that *Florence* and *Italy* stood in the conditions aforelaide, *Luigi* King of *France*, was with greuous warres assaulted. For the Lords of his owne Countrey, assisted by the Dukes of *Bretagna* and *Burgogna*, made the war so great vpon the King, that he had no meane to aide the Duke *Giouanni de Angio*, in his enterprise of *Genoua* and the kingdome. But iudging that he had neede of ayd whatsoeuer, he gaue the Cittie of *Sauona* (then in his hand and kept by French men) to *Francesco* Duke of *Milan*: letting him vnderstand, that (if he so pleased) he might also with his fauour, assault *Genoua*. Which offer was accepted by *Francesco*, and either through the reputation of the Kings friendship, or the fauour of the *Adorni*, he became Lord of *Genoua*. Then to declare himselfe thankfull for the benefite receiued of the King, he sent into *France* to the Kings aide, a thousand fise hundredth horse, conducted by *Gializzo* his eldest sonne. Thus *Ferrando* of *Aragon*, and *Francesco Sforza*, were become, the one Duke of *Lombardy* and Prince of *Genoua*: the other, King of all the kingdome of *Naples*. And hauing married their children, the one, to the other, they deuised by what meanes they might, during their liues, maintaine their countries with securitie: and after their deaths, so leaue the same to their heires. For which purpose, they thought it necessarie, that the King should assure himselfe of those Barons, which in the war of *Giouanni de Angio*, had disobeyed him: and that the Duke should endeouour himselfe to extinguish those that had bene brought vp in the warres by the *Bracci*, naturall enemies to his house, and growne vp in great reputation vnder *Giacopo Piccinino*, who was the chiefe Captaine in all *Italy*; and such a one as euerie Prince ought to beware of: chiefly the Duke who could not account his dominion assured, nor leaue the same to his sonnes, if *Giacopo* did still liue. The King therefore by all meanes sought to make peace with his Barons, handling the matter cunningly to assure himselfe of them, which fell out very happily. Because the Barons did thinke, that in continuing the warre against their King, the same would be in the end their vndoubted ruine: and yeelding to the peace, they should stand at the kings discretion. But because men do most willingly eschue that euill which is most certaine, it commeth to passe, that Princes may easily deceiue others of lesse power: and so these Lords gaue credit to the King. For they seeing the manifest danger of the warre, yeilded themselves into his hands, and were vpon sundrie occasions by him oppressed: which greatly dismaied *Giacopo Piccinino*, at that time remaining with his forces at *Salmona*. And to remoue occasion whereby the King might oppresse him, he practised by his friends, to be reconciled to the Duke *Francesco*, who hauing made him great and honourable offers, *Giacopo* resolved to put himselfe into his hands: and being accompanied with one hundredth horse, went to *Milan* to present himselfe vnto the Duke. *Giacopo* had long serued his father, and with his brother; first for the Duke

The Duke of
Milan, Lord of
Genoua.

Philippo,

Philippo, and after for the people of *Milan*. Whereby he gained great acquaintance in that Citie, and the good will of the multitude, which was encreased by the present condition of the Citie. For the good fortune, and great power of the house of *Sforza*, had kindled great envie: And *Giacopo* for his aduertitie and long absence, was greatly by the people pitied, who desired much to see him. All which things appeared at his comming. For weleare all the Nobilitie went to meet him, and the streets were full of those which desired to see him. Besides that, great honour was spoken of him and his souldiers. All which things, did hasten his destruction, becaule they encreased suspicion, and the Dukes desire to oppresse him. For the more couert performance thereof, the Duke deuised, that the marriage with his daughter *Drusiana*, who had bene long before contracted vnto him, should now be solemnized. Then he practised with *Ferrando*, to entertaine him, for Generall of his Army, and promised him a handreth thousand Florins in prest. After this conclusion, *Giacopo*, accompanied with the Dukes Embassador, and *Drusiana* his wife, went vnto *Naples*, where he was ioyfully and honourably receiued: and for diuerse dayes entertained with all sorts of triumph and feasting. But at length desiring to go vnto his Campe (which he left at *Salmona*) he was by the King conuited to dinner in the Castle. The dinner being ended, both he and his sonne were imprisoned, and shortly after put to death. Whereby may be perceiued, that our *Italian* Princes haue feared that vertue in others, which was not to be found in themselves: and did smother the same so long, as no vertue at all being left, our country became shortly after, afflicted and ruined. In these dayes the Pope *Pio* hauing settled all things in *Romagna*, thought the time serued well, in respect of the vniuersall peace, to moue the Christians to make warre against the Turke: according to the plot set downe by his predecessors. To the performance of this exployt, all Princes did contribute mony or men. And in particuler *Mathia* King of *Hungary*, and *Carlo* Duke of *Borgogna*, promising to go in person, were by the Pope made Captaines generall of that iourney. The Pope had so great hope of proceeding in this enterprife, that he went from *Rome* to *Ancona*, where all the Armie were appointed to assemble: and the *Venetians* did promise to send vessels to passe the souldiers into *Schiauonia*. After the Popes arrual in that Citie, the concourse of people there was so great, that within fewe dayes all the victuall of that citie, and that could be brought thither from other places thereabouts, did not suffice. In so much as euerie man began to taste of famine. Moreouer, there wanted mony to furnish the souldiers of things needfull, and arme those that were disarmed. *Mathia* and *Carlo* appeared not, and the *Venetians* sent thither one onely Captaine with a fewe Gallies, rather to shewe their pompe, and seeme to haue kept promise, then to passe the Armie. So as the Pope being old and sicke, in the middest of these businesses and disorders, died. After whose death, euerie man returned home. This Pope being dead, the yeare 1465. *Paulo secundo*, borne in the Citie of *Venice*, aspired to the Papacie. About that time, many other states of *Italy* chaunged their government. For the same yeare following, died *Francesco Sforza*, Duke of *Milan*, hauing vsurped that Dukedome sixtene yeares. And *Galiazzo* his sonne, was proclaimed Duke. The death of this Prince, was the occasion that the diuisions of *Florence*, became of more force, and wrought their effects with the more speed. After the death of *Cosimo di Medici*, *Piero* his sonne being left in possession of the goods and lands of his father, called vnto him, *Diotisalui Neroni*, a man of great authoritie, among the other citizens of most reputation: and one in whom *Cosimo* reposed so great trust, as at his death he willed *Piero* both in his substance & state, to be by his counsel governed. *Piero* accordingly declared vnto *Diotisalui* the trust which *Cosimo* had in him: And becaule he would shewe himselfe as obedient to his father after death, as

Giacopo Piccinino, succeeded to the Duke.

Giacopo Piccinino, murdered.

The death of the Duke Francesco.

Piero di Medici.

Piero di Medici.

he was in his life: he desired *Diotisalui* to assit him with his counsell, both for the order of his patrimonie, and the government of the Citie; and to begin with his own priuate businesse, he commaunded all his Officers to resort vnto him with their accounts, and leaue the same with *Diotisalui*, to the end that he might finde out the order and disorder of their doings, and so counsell him what was best afterwards to be done. *Diotisalui* promised to vse diligence, and performe the trust in him reposed. The Officers being come and examined, were found to haue committed many disorders. And thereupon (as a man that more respected his owne ambition, then the loue he bare to *Piero*, or the benefits he had receiued of *Cosimo*) imagined it was ealie to deceiue *Piero* of the reputation, and liuings left him by his father. *Diotisalui* came vnto *Piero* offering him counsaile, which seemed verie honest and reasonable, yet vnder the same laie hidden the destruction of *Piero*. Hee told him what disorder he found in his affaires, and how it behoued him to prouide great summes of mony for the holding of his credit, and reputation in the state; and therefore said, he could not more honestly repaire his disorders and losses, then by calling in those debtes which many straungers and Citizens did owe vnto his father. For *Cosimo* to gaine himselfe followers in *Florence*, and friends abroad, was exceeding liberall of his substance; and had for that occasion lent out summes of great importance. This counsaile to *Piero* seemed good, and honest, supposing he should by execution thereof, without perill, repaire himselfe with his owne. Notwithstanding so soone as hee called for these debtes, the Citizens grew no lesse offended, then if hee should haue desired their owne goods, and without respect they spake euill of him, slaundering him to be a man vnthankfull and couetous. *Diotisalui* seeing this common and populer disgrace, which *Piero* had gotten by his counsaile, ioyned himselfe with *Lucca Pitti*, *Agnolo Acciaiuoli*, and *Nicholo Soderini*, determining to take from *Piero*, reputation and government. These men were moued thereunto for diuerse respects. *Lucca* desired to succeed in the place of *Cosimo*, for hee was aspired to such greatnesse, as hee disdained to await vpon *Piero*. *Diotisalui*, knowing that *Lucca* was not fit to be chiefe of the government, thought if *Piero* had lost his reputation, it would in short time fall vpon himselfe. *Nicholo Soderini*, desired that the Citie might liue more at libertie, and that the Magistrates might gouerne at their discretion. Also betwixt *Agnolo* and the house of *Medici*, remained particuler displeasures. The occasion whereof was this. *Rafaello* his sonne, had long before, taken to wife *Alessandra de Bardi*, and receiued with her a great dowrie. She, either through her owne default, or the mallice of others, was by her father in lawe and her husband, euill handled. Whereupon *Brenzo de Illarione* her kinsman, being moued with compassion, went in the night accompanied with many armed men, and tooke her out of the house of *Agnolo*. *Agnolo* and the rest of the *Acciaiuoli*, complained of this iniurie done them, by the *Bardi*. The matter was committed to the hearing of *Cosimo*, who iudged that the *Acciaiuoli* should restore the marriage money receiued with *Alessandra*, and thee after to return to her husband, or not, as her selfe was disposed. *Agnolo* thought himselfe in this iudgement not friendly handled by *Cosimo*, of whom, becaule hee could not be reuenged, he thought to execute the reuenge vpon his sonne. These conspirators notwithstanding the diuersitie of their humors, pretended all one occasion, saying they would haue the Citie gouerned by the magistrates, and not by the counsaile of a fewe. The displeasure towards *Piero*, and the euill speech of him was encreased by many marchants, who at that time became bankerout, and laide the fault thereof vpon *Piero*, for that he calling home his money hastily, had hindered their credit, and forced them with the preiudice of the Citie to be vndone. Besides that, they did surmise, that he practised to marry his sonne with *Clarise Orsini*. Whereof

Disimulation of Diotisalui Neroni.

A practise against Piero di Medici.

Offence between the Acciaiuoli and the Medici.

the Citizens conceiued that he did disdain to make alliance with any Citizen: therefore prepared to vsurpe the state, and make himselfe Prince. For whosoever disdaineth his owne Citizens to be of his kindred, desireth to haue them his subiects. In these respects they had no reason to be his friends. The leaders of this sedition, persuaded themselues to haue the victorie in their own hands, because the greater number of the Citizens (deceiued with the name of libertie, whereby they vsed to make their enterprises, seeme more honest) followed them. These humours then boyling in the breasts of the Cittizens, it was thought good to them, whome ciuill disorder displeas'd, to assaie, if by some new found mirth or feast, the mindes of men might be settled. For most commonly the idle people be instruments for those that desire alteration. Then to remoue this idlenesse, and giue some occasion to alienate the minds of men from consideration of the state, the yeare of *Cosimo* his death being passed, they tooke occasion to make the Citie some mirth, ordeining two tryumphs more solemne then was the custome. The one made representation how the three *Magi* came from the East, following the starre that ledde them to the place where Christ was borne: which was performed with so great solemnitie, as entertained the Citie diuerse moneths. The other was a torneament, wherein the principall yoong Gentlemen of the Citie exercised Armes against all the chiefe men of Armes in *Italy*. And of the *Florentine* youth, *Lorenzo* the eldest sonne of *Piero* gained most honor: for not by fauour, but in deed by his owne valour, he wanne the best prize. These triumphs being ended, the Citizens returned to thinke of the state, and euerie man with more care then before, studied to maintaine his owne opinion, whereof great diuersitie of conceits, and troubles ensued. The one was, that the authoritie of *Balia* tooke no effect. The other, by the death of *Francesco* Duke of *Milan*. Whereupon the newe Duke *Galiuzzo* sent Embassadors to *Florence*, to confirme the capitulations made by *Francesco* his father: wherein among other things it was concluded, that yearely the Duke should receiue from them certaine summes of money. Vpon this Article, the Governours of the state, tooke occasion to hold opinion contrarieto the House of *Medici*, publiquely in these Councils, inueying against that payment, alleaging that pencion to be promised, not to *Galiuzzo*, but vnto *Francesco*. For *Francesco* being dead, there was no cause to continue it. Because in *Galiuzzo* there was not that vertue, which was in *Francesco*: and so consequently, that good was not, nor could not be looked for at his hand, which was found at his fathers. And although of *Francesco* they receiued not much, yet were they to looke for lesse of *Galiuzzo*: and if any Citizen would entertaine him, to maintaine his owne priuate power, that were a thing contrarie to ciuill life, and the libertie of the Citie. *Piero* on the contrary, alleaged, that it were not well done, through couetousnesse, to lose a friendship so necessarie: and that there was nothing so meete, for the Common-weale, and all *Italy*, as to continue in league with the Duke. To the ende that the *Venetians* seeing them vnited, might not hope either by fained friendship or by open warre, to oppresse the Dukedome. For if they should perceiue, the *Florentines* to haue forsaken the Duke, they would presently take Armes, and the rather, knowing he was yoong, newly come to the gouernment, and without friends. Wherof they might hope either by fraud or force to win his country, which would be also the viter ruine of the *Florentine* Common-weale. These reasons were not allowed, and secret hatred began openly to shewe it selfe. For the same night, either partie, in diuerse companies assembled. The friends of the *Medici*, met at *Crocetta*, and their aduersaries in *La Pieta*, who studying to oppresse *Piero*, had gotten their enterprise subscribed with the hands of many Citizens. Also, being among many other times, one night assembled, they held a particuler Councell for the maner of their proceeding; when euerie man consented

League betweene the Duke *Galiuzzo* and the *Florentines*.

Consultation to oppresse the *Medici*.

to diminish the power of the *Medici*: yet in the order how to bring the matter to passe, they concurred not. Some, that were of most modest nature, thought that the authoritie of the *Balia* being ended, it were best to finde meanes, that the same might not be reuiued: for if the Councils and Magistrates did gouerne the Citie, the authoritie of *Piero* would be in short space extinguished; and with losse of his reputation in the state, he should also lose his credit in merchandize. For being no more in place, where he might imploy the publique treasure, he should of necessitie grow weake; which being brought to passe, there would not be after any cause to feare him: and all this practise might bee performed without banishment of anie man, and the libertie without blood recouered, which euerie good Cittizen ought to desire. But if they proceeded by force, many perils might be incurred: for whosoever is readie to fall alone, if he be forced by others, will labour to staie himself vp. Moreover, when nothing is done extraordinarily against him, he shall not haue any occasion to Arme himselfe, or seeke friends; or if he should, the same would turne to his great reproach, and breede suspicion in euerie man: so as his ouerthrow shall be the more easie, and others take occasion the rather to oppresse him. Many others of that assembly liked not this delaie: affirming the time fauoured him, & not them. For if they were contented with ordinary proceedings, *Piero* was in no danger at all, and they in great perill: Because the Magistrates (notwithstanding they were his enemies,) would suffer him in the Citie, and his friends, with their ruine (as it happened in the yeare 58.) would make him Prince; and as the former counsell proceeded from good men, so this was the opinion of wise men. It was therefore necessary, that while men be displeas'd, to make him sure. The meaneto bring the same to effect, was to be armed both within and without, and also to entertaine the *Marquesse* of *Farrara*, to be the better defended. Which done, when a *Senate* happened to be for the purpose, then to make all assured. In this resolution they staid till the next *Senate*, and proceeded according to the quallitie thereof. Among the conspirators, was *Nicholo Fedini*, whom they imployed as Chauncellor, he perswaded with a hope more certaine, reuealed to *Piero*, all the practise agreed vpon by his enemies, and deliuered him a note of all their names; which *Piero* perused, and seeing the number and quallitie of the Citizens who had conspired against him, tooke count of his friends, and made a note likewise of them. Then he committed this rolle of friends to be made by one whom he most trusted, who considering therof, found so great varietie, and instabilitie, in the mindes of the Citizens, that many who had bene written for his enemies, were also inrolled among the rest, who were accounted his friends. During the space that these matters, with these alterations were handled, the time was come to chuse two supream Officers, and *Nicholo Soderini* was elected *Gonfaloniere de Giustitia*. It was a maruellous thing to see, with what course not onely of honourable Citizens, but of all sorts of people, he was accompanied to the Pallace, and passing vpon the waie, they set on his head a garland of Oliffe, to shewe that of him depended the welfare and libertie of the Countrey. By this and many like experiences, it is proued, that men should not take vpon them any Office or principalltie with extraordinarie opinion. For not being able to performe such expectation (men desiring more then can be) doth in time breed his own dishonour and infamie. *Thomaso* and *Nicholo Soderini* were brethren: *Nicholo* was the bolder and more couragious, but *Thomaso*, the wiser, and friend to *Piero*. Who knowing his brothers humour, that he desired onely the libertie of the Citie, and that the state might be settled without harme of any, perswaded *Nicholo* to make new *Squittini*, whereby the *Borzi* might be filled with such Cittizens as loued to liue in libertie. By doing whereof, the state should be at his will settled without tumult or injury

iniury to anie. *Nicholo* gaue credit to the counsell of his brother, and in these vaine imaginations consumed the time of his office, till by the chiefe of the conspirators his friends, he was suffered to sincke: as they that would not for enuie, that the gouernment should be with the authoritie of *Nicholo* renewed, and hoping euer they might in time, vnder some other *Gonfaloniere* worke the same effect. The end of the magistracie of *Nicholo* come, and many things by him begun, but nothing ended, he yeilded vp his authoritie with more dishonour, then with honour, he had entered the same. This matter made the faction of *Piero* glad, and confirmed his friendes in the hope they had of his good successe. And those that before stood neutrall, ioyned with *Piero*, and matters being thus in a readinesse, for diuerse months without other tumult, they temporized. Notwithstanding the part of *Piero* stil increased in strength, wherof the enemies tooke knowledge and ioyned themselues together, to performe that by force, which by meane of the Magistrates they might easily haue done before; and so concluded to kill *Piero* lying sicke at *Careggi*: for which purpose, they sent to the Marquesse of *Farrara*, to come vnto the Citie with his forces, and *Piero* being slaine, they determined to march armed into the Market place, and cause the *Senate* to settle the gouernment according to their will. For albeit all the Citizens were not their friends, yet they that were their enemies would for feare giue place. *Diotisalui* (the rather to cloake his intent) oftentimes visited *Piero*, and reasoned with him of the vnitng of the Citie. All these practises had bene revealed to *Piero*, and *Domenico Martegli* also gaue him intelligence, that *Francesco Neroni*, brother to *Diotisalui*, had perswaded him, to be of his conspiracie: alleaging the victorie was certain, and assured. Thereupon *Piero* determined to be the first that should take armes, and fained an occasion vpon the practises of his enemies, with the Marquesse of *Farrara*. He pretended therefore to haue receiued a Letter from *Giouanni Bentiuogli*, Prince in *Bologna*, whereby he was aduertised, that the Marquesse of *Farrara* was with his forces marched to the River of *Albo*, and (as was commonly thought) intended to come to *Florence*. Vpon these aduertisements *Piero* tooke armes, and with a great multitude of men armed, came to *Florence*, where all others that followed him armed themselues. The contrary partie did the like: but *Piero* his followers were the better prepared, because the others had not so great warning therof. *Diotisalui* dwelling neare vnto *Piero*, thought not himselfe assured at home, but sometimes he went to the Pallace, to perswade the *Senate* to cause *Piero* to laie downe his armes, & sometimes he resorted to *Lucca*, to intreate him to stand firme to his faction. But of all others, *Nicholo Soderini* shewed himself of most courage; for he presently tooke arms, and being followed of all the common people of his quarter, went vnto the house of *Lucca*, desiring him to mount on horsebacke, and come to the Market place in fauour of the *Senate*, which fauoured them, and therefore might hope of victorie certaine. But if he remained in his house, hee should be either by the armed men oppressed, or by those that were disarmed shamefully deceiued. Or if he should after repent that he did not take armes, that repentance were too late. But if he wold with the warre oppresse *Piero*, he might easily do it: and after if he liked to make peace, it was better for him to giue, then to receiue the conditions therof. These words moued not *Lucca*, hauing already settled his mind, and promised to *Piero* new alliances, and new conditions. For he had already married vnto *Giouanni Tornabuoni*, one of his neeces, and therefore perswaded *Nicholo* to laie downe armes, and returne to his house. For it ought to suffice him, that the Citie should be gouerned by the Magistrates, and it would come to passe, that euerie man would laie downe armes: and the *Senators* being the stronger partie, should be Iudge of the controuersie. *Nicholo* then seeing he could not otherwise perswade him, returned home. But first said vnto

Perswasions
of Nicholo
Soderini a-
gainst the
Medici.

Lucca,

Lucca, I cannot alone worke the well doing of our Citie, but I alone can prognosticate the euil whereinto it is falling. This resolution you haue made, will breed losse of libertie to our country, your deprivation of gouernment and wealth, and my banishment. The *Senate* in this tumult shut vp the Pallace, and the Magistrates kept themselues therein, not seeming to fauour any part. The Citizens (and chiefly those who had followed *Lucca*) seeing *Piero* armed, and his aduersaries disarmed, began to deuise, not how to offend *Piero*, but how to become his friends. Whereupon the chief citizens & leaders of the factions, went to the Pallace, & in the presence of the *Senate*, debated many things touching the state of the Citie, and pacification thereof. And for that, *Piero* by reason of his infirmitie could not comethither, they determined by consent to go all vnto him, (*Nicholo Soderini* except) who hauing first recommended his children & familie to *Tomaso*, went to his owne house in the country, aspecting there the euent of these matters, accounting himselfe vnhappy, and for his countrey infortunate. The other Citizens being come to the presence of *Piero*, one of them appointed to speake, complained of the tumults in the Citie, declaring that they, who first tooke armes were most too blame: they not knowing what *Piero*, (who indeed did first take armes) would doo. They were come therefore to vnderstand what was his intent, which (being for good of the Citie) they would follow the same. Whereunto *Piero* answered, that hee who taketh armes first, is not euer the cause of disorder, but he that giueth first occasion: and if they would consider what their behauiours had bene towards him, they should maruaile lesse at that he had done for his own safetie. For therby they should see, that their assemblies in the night, their subscriptions, & their practises to take from him his gouernment & life, were the occasions why he tooke armes: which not vsed but in the defence of his owne house, and not the offence of them, sufficiently proued his intent was to defend himselfe, and not to harme others. Neither would he any thing, or desire more then his own securitie & quiet, nor had giue cause, that they should think he sought for other. For the authoritie of *Balia* discontinued, he neuer laboured by extraordinary meane to reuiue it; and was well content that the Magistrates should gouern the citie if they so pleased: assuring them, that *Cosimo* and his children could liue in *Florence* honorably both with and without the *Balia*; and that the yeare 58. the same had bene, not by his house, but by them renewed; and if now they wold no more haue it, he should also be so contented. But this sufficed not for them: for he found that his aduersaries beleued, they could not dwell in *Florence*, if he also there dwelled. A thing which he neuer thought that the friends of his father & him wold feare to liue in *Florence* with him, hauing euer born himselfe among them, as a quiet and peaceable man. Then (turning his speech to *Diotisalui* & his brethren there present) he reproued them with words of much grauitie & offence: putting the in mind what benefits they had receiued of *Cosimo*, how much he had trusted the, & how vnthankfully they had vsed him. Which words wrought such effect in some that were present, that if *Piero* had not staied them, they sodenly wold haue striken *Diotisalui*. In conclusion, *Piero* said he wold maintein euery thing, that they & the *Senate* had determined. And that he desired nothing, but to liue quiet & assured. After this speech was ended, many matters were comoned of, yet nothing don: but in general was concluded, that it was necessary to reunite the citie & reform the state. At that time *Barnardo Lotti* was *Gonfaloniere d'Giustitia*, a man not trusted by *Piero*, wherefore thought not good to attempt any thing during his Magistracy: but the end of his authority drawing neare, election was made by the *Senators* of a *Gonfaloniere* to sit in September and October 1466. And they elected *Roberto Lioni*: who was no sooner in office, (all other things beeing prepared) but hee assembled the people in

The speech of
the Citizens
to Piero di
Medici.

The answers
of Piero.

R

The enemies
of the Medici
vanquished.

The fall of
Lucca Pitti.

The letter of
Agnolo Acciaiuoli, to
Piero di Medici.

The answer
of Piero.

the Market place, and made a new *Balia*, all of the faction of *Piero*; which shortly created the Magistrates, according to the will of the new government, which terrified the heads of the enemies, and *Agnolo Acciaiuoli* fled to *Naples*, *Diotisalvi Neroni*, and *Nicholo Soderini* to *Venice*, and *Lucca Pitti* remained in *Florence*: trusting to the promises of *Piero*, and the new alliance with his house. All the fugitives were proclaimed Rebels, and all the familie of *Neroni* dispersed. Also *Giouanni Neroni* then Bishop of *Florence*, to auoide a worse mischiefe, voluntarily confined himselfe to *Rome*. Many other likewise banished themselves to diuers places, neither did this suffice: but a publike procesion was ordeined to giue God thanks for the preservation, and vniing the state. In the solemnization wherof, some citizens were apprehended & tormented. Afterwards part of them put to death, & the rest confined. In this variation of fortune, there was nothing so notable, as the example of *Lucca Pitti*: who sodeinly saw the difference of victorie, and losse of honor, and dishonor. For his house, whereunto was wont be great repaire, became vnfrequented; himself that had bin accustomed to passe the streets folowed with many friends & kinsfolks, could neither be accompanied, nor scarcely saluted: because some of them had lost their offices, some their goods, & al the rest threatned. His stately houses in building, were by the workmen abandoned. Those that were wont to present him, did now offer him iniury & despise. Some who had giue him presents of great value, did now demand them again as things lent. Others that were wont with praises to extoll him to the skies, did as a person vngratefull and violent, blame him. So that ouerlate he repented his not giuing credit to *Nicholo Soderini*, and that he did not with sword in hand rather die honourably, then among his victorious enemies, liue dishonored. These that were banished, sought by sundrie meanes to recouer the Citie, they had lost. Yet *Agnolo Acciaiuoli* being at *Naples*, before hee attempted any thing, thought good to feele the disposition of *Piero*, and what hope remained of reconciliation: writing vnto him, as followeth. I smile to see, what sports fortune doth make her self, and how at her pleasure she frameth of foes friends, and of friends foes. You can remember that at the banishment of your father (esteeming more his iniury then mine own danger) I lost my country, & was like to haue also lost my life. Neither (in all this time) did I euer omit, to honor and fauour your house, nor after his death haue had any intent to offend you. True it is, that your own vnhealthie disposition, & the tender yeares of your children, brought me into such feare, as I thought it behoued me to take order, that after your death, our countrey should not be ruined. For which consideration I haue done diuers things, not against you, but for the good of my country. Wherein, if I haue committed error, the same ought be, for my good intent, and passed seruice, pardoned. Neither can I beleuee other, but that (in respect of ancient loue to your house) I shal at this occasion find mercy, & my manifold merits, shal not be, by one onely fault cancelled. *Piero* hauing perused this letter, answered thus. Your laughing there you are, is the occasion that I weep not here where I am: for if you had laughed at *Florence*, I should haue wept at *Naples*. I denie not your well deseruing of my father, sith your self wil confesse to haue tasted his liberalitie: and by how much that deedes be esteemed aboue words, by so much your obligation is more the ours. You then recompenced for your good, may not maruell, though for your euil, you receiue deserued punishment. Let not the loue of your country excuse you: sith there is no man beleueeth, that this citie hath bin lesse loued & profitted by the *Medici*, then the *Acciaiuoli*. I do therefore wish you with dishonor to remain there, sith here in honor you knew not how to lead your life. *Agnolo* thus despairing of pardon, went to *Rome*, & there conferred with the Archbishop, & other banished men, of the mean wherby they might take reputation frō the house of *Medici*: which *Piero* with

with difficultie (notwithstanding the aide of his friendes) could prevent. *Diotisalvi* and *Nicholo Soderini*, likewise practised to make the *Senate* of *Venice* enemy to their countrey: thinking thereby, that if with anie new warre the *Florentines* were assailed, the government being new and hated, they should not be able to defend themselves. In those daies *Giouan Francesco* the sonne of *Palla Strozzi* liued in *Ferrara*, and had bene together with his father, banished in the alteration of the state, the yeare 34. This *Giouanni* had great credit, and was holden amongst other merchants a man of great riches. The newe Rebelles declared vnto him, the great facilitie they found to recouer their countrey, if the *Venetians* would take the enterprize in hand: which he thought they would be easily perswaded vnto, if part of their charges might be borne. *Giouan Francesco*, who desired to reuenge himselfe of the iniuries receiued, easily gaue credite to their counsaile: and promised with all his wealth, to furnish the enterprize. Then went they all together vnto the Duke, complaining of the exile whereinto they saide themselves were fallen, not for anie other fault, but because they desired that their countrey might be gouerned with the lawes thereof: and that the Magistrates and not a fewe others should be honoured. For *Piero de Medici* with others his followers, accustomed to liue tyrannically, had by deceit taken armes, and by deceit caused them to disarm themselves, and afterwards by deceit expelled them out of their Citie. Neither were they so content, but they would also therein pretend deuotion to God, and by that colour oppresse others. For at the assemblie of the Citizens, and at publike and sacred ceremonies (to the intent God should be partaker of their treasons) they apprehended, imprisoned, and slewe manie Citizens: which was an example of great impietie and wickednesse. For reuenge wherof, they knew not whither to resort with more hope, then to that *Senate* which hauing euer liued free, could not but take compassion of those, who had lost their liberties. Then they perswaded all men that loued libertie to detest tirants: & those that were godly, to abhorre impious people. Putting them in mind, that the house of *Medici* had taken from them, the dominion of *Lombardy*, at such time as *Cosimo* (without consent of the other citizens, & the *Senate*) fauoured & aided *Francesco*. So that though they had no compassion of the *Florentines*, yet the reuenge of the iniuries done to the *Venetians*, ought to moue them. These last words moued all the *Senat* to determine that *Bartolomeo Cogliano* their General, should assault the dominion of *Florence*. He with all speed possible assembled the army, & with him ioyned *Hercole Este*, sent by *Borso* Marquesse of *Ferrara*. They at the first entrie (the *Florentines* not being prepared) burnt the Towne of *Dauadola*, and spoyled some other places in the countrey thereabout. But the *Florentines* (hauing driuen out all the enemies to *Piero*) made league with *Galiazzo* Duke of *Milan*, and with the King *Ferrando*. Then they entertained *Federigo* Earle of *Vrbino*, for their General; and founde themselves so friended, as they feared little the force of their enemies. For *Ferrando* sent thither *Alfonso* his eldest sonne, and Duke *Galiazzo* came in person: either of them leading a conuenient number, and they altogether made head at *Castracaro*, a Castle belonging to the *Florentines*: builded at the foot of those Alpes, wherby men passe from *Toscana* to *Romagna*. In the meane time the enemies were retired towards *Imola*, and so between the one and the other army (according to the custome of those daies,) some light skirmishes happened, but no townes by either of them besieged, nor any disposition in either of them to fight with their enemy, but euerie man remaining within his Tent, continued the wars with great cowardice. This maner of proceedings, greatly offended the Gouernors in *Florence*, finding themselves charged by a warre, wherein they spent much, and could hope for little. And the Magistrates complained of those Citizens who were made

Complaint of
the banished
Florentines
to the Senate
of Venice.

The Florentines
assaulted
by the Venetians
& Marquesse of
Ferrara.

Commissaries in that enterprise. They answered, that Duke *Galiazzo* was occasion thereof, for hee hauing most authoritie and least experience, knewe not what was profitable, nor would not beleue others of more skill: and that it was impossible, so long as hee remained in the armie, that anie thing should be done with honour and commoditie. Wherefore the *Florentines* saide vnto the Duke, albeit for their profit it was best he should be personally in their aide, because the reputation of his presence was the fittest meane to terrifie the enemye; notwithstanding for that they esteemed more his safetie, then their state, or proper commoditie, they thought not fit he should remaine long from *Milan*, being newly come to his gouernment, and hauing there diuerse strong enemies to be suspected: so that, if any of them should practise against him, they might easily in his absence, do it. For which respects they perswaded him to returne home, and leaue part of his forces for their defence. This counsell contented *Galiazzo*, and without further consideration, returned to *Milan*. The *Florentine* Captaines disburthened of this let, to declare the same was the true occasion of their slow proceeding, drew so neare to the enemye, that they ioyned battle: which continued one half day, neither partie yeelding to other. Notwithstanding there was not anie man therein slaine, but some horses hurt, and a fewe prisoners on either part taken. The winter now being come, and the season of the yeare no longer seruing for the fielde, they retired to their lodgings. *Bartolomeo* went to *Rauenna*, the *Florentines* into *Toscana*: the Kings souldiers and the Dukes, resorted home to their maisters Countries. But so soone as this assault beganne to be forgotten, and no disorder made in *Florence*, as the *Florentine* Rebels promised, and the other souldiers wanting paie, were content to entreate of peace, which with small difficultie was concluded. The Rebels then despairing of all hope, to diuerse places disperfed themselves. *Diotisalui* went to *Farrara*, where he was by the Marquesse *Borso*, receiued, and relieued. *Nicholo Soderini* fledde to *Rauenna*, where liuing long vpon a poore pencion giuen him by the *Venetians*, in the ende there died. This *Nicholo* was accounted a man iust and couragious, yet vncertaine and slowe of his resolution: which was the cause that the *Gonfaloniere* lost that opportunitie, which being out of office, hee would haue taken, but could not. The peace concluded, the Citizens who remained in *Florence* with victorie, thinking themselves not assured, vnlesse they did as well oppresse those they suspected, as their apparant enemies, perswaded *Bardo Altomiti*, then *Gonfaloniere d'Giustitia*, to remoue more Cittizens from their offices, and to banish many others. Which thing greatly encreased the power of that faction, and terrified the contrarie part: which power they vsed without respect, and proceeded so much at their pleasure, as it seemed, that God and fortune had consented to giue that Cittie into their hands. Of which doings, *Piero* knew little, and that litle, he could not (being afflicted with sickness) remedie. For his diseases were so great as he could not vse any member saue only his tongue: wherwith he exhorted them, and praied them to liue ciuilly, and enioy their natie country, rather entire then broken. And for the comfort of the Cittie, he determined with magnificence to celebrate the marriage of *Lorenzo* his sonne, who was already contracted to *Clarice*, descended of the house of *Orsini*: which marriage was performed with great pompe, as to so magnificent a feast appertained. For performance of these triumphs, diuers daies were consumed in feasting, dancing, & publike shews. Wherunto was also ioined (for more apparance of greatnes of the *Medici*) 2. marshal exercises; the one represented a battle fought in the field; the other, of a towne besieged: which things were deuised in good order, & performed with so much vertue as might be. While these matters were doing in *Florence*, the rest of *Italy* liued quiet, but yet in great suspitiō

Peace betweene the Florentines and Venetians.

of the Turke, who proceeded still in his enterprise against the Christians, and had wonne *Negroponti*, to the great infamie and dishonour of the Christian name. Then died *Borso* Marquesse of *Farrara*, to whom succeeded his brother *Hercule*. Euen then died also *Gismondo da Rimino*, a perpetuall enemye to the Church: who left to inherit that state, *Roberto* his naturall sonne; afterwards accounted the most excellent Captaine of *Italy*. Then likewise died the Pope *Pagolo*: in whose place was created *Sisto* Pope Sisto.
quarto, called before his creation *Francesco da Sauona*, a man of base and vile condition: yet for his vertue made Generall of the order of *S. Francesco*, and afterwards Cardinall. This Pope was the first that beganne to shewe of what great force the Papacie was, and that manie things before time accounted faults, might be by Papall authoritie, couered. This Pope had amongst many others in his house, two men, the one called *Piero*, and the other *Gerolamo*: who (as euerie man thought) were his vnlawfull sonnes: notwithstanding men called them by other names more honest. *Piero* being made a Frier, was preferred to the dignitie of Cardinall, and called Cardinall of *S. Sisto*. To *Gerolamo* he gaue the Cittie of *Furli*, and tooke it by force from *Antonio Ordelaissi*, whose auncestors had bene long time Princes there. This ambitious manner of proceeding, made him the more esteemed by the Princes of *Italy*, and euery of them sought which way to be accounted his friend. The Duke of *Milan* gaue his daughter *Catterina* in marriage to *Gerolamo*, and with her the Cittie of *Imola*, which by force he had taken fro *Taddeo Alidosimo*, and betwixt this Duke, and the King *Ferrando*, was also made new alliance. For *Elizabetha* daughter to *Alfonso*, eldest sonne of the King, was married to *Ciouan Galiazzo*, eldest sonne to the Duke. Thus *Italy* continued quiet, and the greatest care of the Princes was, one to honor the other: and with new alliances, friendships, & leagues, one to assure himselfe of the other. But notwithstanding so great a peace, *Florence* was by the Citizens thereof greatly afflicted. And *Piero* being troubled with ambition of the Citizens, and his own diseases, could not procure remedie: yet to discharge his conscience, and laie before them their misdemeanor, he called to his presence the chiefe *Florentines*, and said vnto them as followeth. I neuer thought that anie time could come, when the maner & behavior of friends would proue such, as to make meloue & desire my enemies: or that I might wish victory to be conuerted to losse. Because I thought my selfe accompanied with men, whose appetites were confined to measure; & that it sufficed them to liue in their country assured & honoured, and (that which is more) vpon their enemies reuenged. But now I know my self far deceiued, as he that knew little the ambition of men, and least of all yours. For it contenteth you not to be Princes of so great a Cittie, and among you a fewe to haue the honors, offices, and commodities, wherewith many Citizens were wont to be honored. It contenteth you not to haue the goods of your enemies among you diuided. It contenteth you not, to burthen others with publike charges, & you free from all payments, to take the publike profit: but you wil also with euery kind of iniury molest them. You cease not to rob your neighbors; you feare not to sell iustice; you flie ciuill iudgement; you oppresse peaceable men, and aduance those that be insolent. Neither do I beleue that there is in all *Italy*, so many examples of violence & couetousnes, as be in this cittie. But sith it hath giuen you life, why do you take life from it? If it hath made you victorious, why should we destroy it? If it hath honored vs, why haue we disdained it? I promise you by that faith, which ought to be giue and receiued amōg good mē, that if you behaue your selues so, as I shal repent me of my victory, I wil so do, as you shal also repēt that you haue abused it. Those citizens according to the time answered resonably. Notwithstanding they continued still in their insolēt doings. In so much as *Piero* sent secretly to *Agnolo Acciaiuoli* (who came vnto him The Oration of P. di Medici to the Florentines.)

him at *Cafaggiuolo*, and there they reasoned at length touching the estate of the Citie. And surely had he not bene by death prevented, he would haue called home all the banished men, to bridle the insolencie and oppresion of those that liued in the Citie. But death suffered him not to performe so honest an intent: for diseases of bodie and trouble of minde, so greuously handled him, that hee died the fiftie and three yeare of his age. His vertue and bountie, could not be to his Countrey so well knowne, as they deserued: partly because his father liued (welneare as long) and partly, for that those fewe yeares hee ouerliued him, were in ciuill contentions and sicknesse consumed. This *Piero* was buried in the Church of *S. Lorenzo*, neare vnto his father: and his funerall performed with honour and pompe, worthie so great a Citizen. Of him there remained two sonnes, *Lorenzo* and *Giuliano*, of whome there was good hope, that they would prooue men fit for the state: yet their youth was such as made all men doubt thereof. Amongst other chiefe Citizens in the gouernment of *Florence*, there was one farre excelling the rest, called *Tomaso Soderini*: whose wisdome and authoritie, not onely to *Florence*, but also to all the Princes in *Italy* was knowne. Hee, after the death of *Piero*, was of all the Cittie reuerenced: and manie Cittizens did daile visite him, as chiefe man of the state. Also diuerse Princes did write vnto him. Neuerthelesse being wise, and knowing what fortune followed him and his house, hee would neuer answere the Princes Letters: and perswaded the Cittizens they should not resort to his house, but to the houses of the *Medici*. Also to shewe in deedes, that which by words was by him perswaded, hee assembled all the chiefe Gentlemen of euerie family, at the Monastery of *S. Antonio*; whether hee procured that *Lorenzo* and *Giuliano di Medici* should come: and there after a long and graue Oration by him made, they disputed the estate both of that Citie, of all *Italy*, and of the humours of the Princes. Therein concluding, that to continue *Florence* vnited in peace, assured from diuision within, and from warre without, it behooued them to honor those two yoong men, and mainteine the reputation of their house: Because men do not repine to do such things as they haue bene accustomed vnto, but new houses, as they are easily honored, so are they quickly abandoned. For it hath bene euer more easie to maintaine that reputation, where length of time hath extingnished enuy, then to raise a new estimation, which by many occasiōs may be oppressed. After him spake *Lorenzo*, who notwithstanding his youth, vttered words with so great grauitie & modestie, as gaue euery man hope he would become such a one, as indeed afterwards he proued. And before they departed that place, the Citizens praied the brethren, to receiue them as children, they offering to honor them as fathers. This conclusion set downe, *Giuliano* and *Lorenzo* were honoured as Princes of the Citie, and those that were of counsell with *Tomaso*, did not intermeddle. Thus the *Florentines* liued both within & without so peaceably, as nothing disturbed the Common quiet, till a trouble not looked for arose, which did prognosticate future mischief. Among other families (which *Lucca Pitti* ruined) was that of *Nardi*. For *Saluestro* and his brethren being heads of that house, were first sent into exile, and after by the warre which *Bartolomeo Cogliome* moued, made Rebels. Of these *Barnardo* brother of *Saluestro*, was a yoong man of great spirit and courage. Hee being poore could not endure banishment: and finding that the peace made had not provided for his returne, determined to make prooue of somewhat, whereby might grow occasion of warre. For many times of a small beginning, great effects doe followe. Because men bee more willing to prosecute, then beginne anie enterprise. This *Barnardo* had much acquaintance in *Prato*, and much more in the Countrey about *Pistoia*: chiefly with the house

Death of Piero di Medici.

Tomaso Soderini.

Giuliano and Lorenzo di Medici.

Conspiracy of the Nardi.

the house of *Palandra*: who albeit they were but countrey people, yet was their number great, and the men (according to the manner of that countrey) practised in armes, and much vsed to bloud. He knew likewise they liued discontented, and by reason that some of their enemies were Magistrates in *Florence*, they had bene euill handled. He knew moreouer the humor of the *Pratesi*, who accounted themselues proudly and hardly gouerned, and had particuler knowledge of the euill disposition of some towards the State. All which things brought him in hope to kindle fire in *Toscana*, by making *Prato* to rebell, whereto so many would put hands, as they that would quench it, should not be able. Then he imparted this matter to *Diotisalui Neroni*, and asked of him, what aide might be by his meanes procured among the Princes, if he should happen to surprize *Prato*. *Diotisalui* thought the enterprise dangerous, and as impossible to take effect: notwithstanding, considering he might thereby with the perill of others make new prooue of fortune, perswaded him to proceed, and promised to bring him assured aide from *Bologna*, and *Ferrara*, so that he were able to defend *Prato* at the least fiftene dayes. *Barnardo* then encouraged with this promise, and conceiuing great hope of happie proceeding, went to *Prato*, and there communicating the matter to diuerse, found them verie willing. The like disposition he perceiued in the familie of *Palandra*, and hauing agreed togithers of the time and manner of the enterprise, *Barnardo* imparted all to *Diotisalui*. At that time, was *Cesare Petrucci*, *Podesta* of *Prato*, for the *Florentines*. The custome was, that the *Podesta* should haue the keies of the towne brought vnto him: And whensoever any of the towne (chiefely in times of no suspition) desired to goe out or come in by night, that fauour was graunted. *Barnardo* knowing this custome, being accompanied with those of the house of *Palandra*, and 100. others armed men, in the morning when the gate towards *Pistoia* should open, presented himselfe: and those whome he had made priuie within, did likewise arme. One of them went to the *Podesta*, saying, a friend of his desired to come into the towne. The *Podesta* not doubting any such accident, sent with him a seruant of his to carrie the keies: from whome, (being a little on the way) the keies were taken, the gates opened, and *Barnardo* with his followers came in. Then they diuided themselues in two parts. The one led by *Saluestro* of *Prato*, tooke possession of the *Cittadell*. The other following *Barnardo*, surprized the Pallace, and committed the *Podesta* with all his familie, to the custodie of one of his companie. Which done, they walked the streets, proclaiming the name of libertie. By that time it was day, and many people by meane of the noise, came to the market place, where vnderstanding that the *Cittadell* and Pallace were taken, the Gouernor also with his familie imprisoned, they meruailed much. The eight Cittizens (chiefe Officers of the towne) assembled in their Pallace, to consult what was to be done. But *Barnardo* and his men, hearing awhile walked the towne, and finding himselfe not well followed, hearing where the eight were, went vnto them, declaring that the occasion of his enterprise was to deliuer them and their countrey from bondage: and that they should gaine great glorie to take armes, and accompanie him in that glorious action, whereby they should win perpetuall quiet, and eternall fame. He also said before them the memorie of their auncient libertie, comparing it with their present condition. He likewise told them what aide they should be assured to haue of others, if they would but for a fewe daies defend themselues from the *Florentine* forces. He informed them moreouer, that he had intelligence in *Florence*, whereby he was aduertised that Citie would wholie follow him. The eight not moued with these perswasions, answered, that they knew not whether *Florence* liued in libertie or bondage, as a thing they desired not to vnderstand. But well they knew their owne desire was

was not to enjoy other libertie, then to obey those Magistrates that governed in *Florence*: of whome, they had not receiued any such iniurie, as might moue to take armes against them. Wherefore they perswaded him to restore the *Podesta* to his libertie, send his men out of the towne, and saue himselfe speedily from that danger, whereinto he was vnadvisedly fallen. These speeches dismaied not *Barnardo*, for he intēded to see if feare might moue the *Pratesi*, to that which with intreaty could not. Therefore to terrifie the Cittizens, and determining to put the *Podesta* to death, he tooke him out of prison, and commanded him to be hanged at the Pallace window. The *Podesta* being brought to the window, the halter vpon his neck, and seeing *Barnardo* to sollicit his death, turned himselfe towards him, and said. *Barnardo*, thou puttest me to death, hoping the rather to be followed of the *Pratesi*, but the contrarie will come to passe. For the reuerence which this people doth beare to the Governours sent by the *Florentines* is so great, that so soone as they shall see this iniurie done to me, they will hate thee, so much, as the same will prooue thy ruine: wherefore not my death, but my life, may be the occasion of thy victorie. For if I commaund them that which thou wouldst haue done, they will more willinglie obey me, then thee. Thus I following thy direction, thou mayst become owner of thy desire. This counsell seemed to *Barnardo* (being a man irresolute) verie reasonable, and therefore willed him at a window to commaund the people to yeeld their obedience to *Barnardo*. Which being done, the *Podesta* was lead back to prison. By this time, the weakenesse of the conspirators was discouered, and many *Florentines* inhabiting that towne, were assembled: among whome, was *Georgio Ginori*, a Knight of *Ierusalem*. He being the first that tooke armes against the Rebels, assaulted *Barnardo* in the streets, sometimes intreating, and sometimes threatening the people to follow him, till at length by *Georgio*, and many others (who tooke armes) *Barnardo* was hurt and taken. Which done, it was no hard matter to deliuer the *Podesta*, and vanquish the rest. For they being fewe, and diuided into sundrie parts of the towne, were welneare all taken or slaine. In the meane space, the fame of this accident was come to *Florence*, and reported to be much greater then it was. For the aduertisements were, that *Prato* was surprized, the *Podesta* with his household put to death, *Pistoia* in armes, and many of the Cittizens of the conspiracie, in so much as many Cittizens sodeinly came to the Pallace to consult with the *Senate*. At that time, *Roberto Sansfuerino* happened to be in *Florence*, who being a man of great experience in warre, was sent with certaine forces to *Prato*, commaunded, that he should approach the towne, and send back particuler aduertisements in what state the same stood; and do there, what by his wisdom should be thought good. *Roberto* marching on his way, and passing the Castle of *Campi*, a messenger came vnto him from *Cesare Petrucci*, declaring, that *Barnardo* was taken, his companions fled, or slaine, and all the tumult pacified. Whereupon *Roberto* returned to *Florence*, and shortly after *Barnardo* being brought thither a prisoner, and demaunded why he tooke that enterprise in hand, answered, bicause he determined rather to die in *Florence*, then liue in exile: and thought good to accompanie his death with some memorable action. This tumult begun and ended (as it were in one instant) the Cittizens of *Florence* returned to their wonted order of life, thinking to enjoy that state without suspition, which they had lately established, and serled: whereof insued those inconueniences, which many times be ingendred by peace, for the youth became more prodigall then they were wont, spending their money in apparrell, feasting, and other like vanities, and (being idle) consumed their substance in play, and women. Their whole studie was to be brauely apparrelled, and to seeme wittie, or subtil: for he that could most cunninglie mock and deride others, was holden the wisest

The enter-
prise of Bar-
nardo de-
feated.

wisest and most esteemed. These and such like disorders, were by the Courtiers of *Milan* increased. For at that time, thither came the Duke, with his wife, and Court, to performe (as he said) a certaine vowe, and was there receiued with pompe, The Duke of Milan in Florence.
to meete for so great a Prince, and friend to the *Florentines*. In that time also, was seene a thing in *Florence*, netier before vsed, which was, that the Courtiers of *Milan*, notwithstanding the time of Lent, did without respect of the Ecclesiasticall order, eate almost none other meate, but flesh. Albeit the Duke found the Cittie of *Florence* full of courtlie delicacie, and customes contrarie to all well ordered ciuilitie, yet his comming increased the same. Wherefore the good Cittizens thought fit and necessarie to bridle the excesse with new lawes, for apparrell, for funerals, and feasting. In the midst of this great peace, there happened in *Toscana* a new and vnlooked for tumult. In the Prouince of *Volterra*, certaine Cittizens happened to finde a Mine of Allum, whereof, knowing the commoditie, to be helped with money, and defended with authoritie, they ioyned with them some Cittizens of *Florence*, making them partakers of such profit as should thereof arise. This matter at the beginning (as it happeneth for the most part in all new actions) was by the people of *Volterra* little esteemed. But the commoditie thereof afterwards knowne, they desired too late, and without effect, that which at the first they might easilie haue obtained. Then began they to propound the matter in their counsels, saying, it was not conuenient that a commoditie found in the common lands, should be conuerted to a priuate vse. Thereupon, they sent vnto *Florence* certaine Embassadors. The cause was committed to a few Cittizens, who either bicause they were corrupted, or for that they so thought best, gaue sentence, that the request of the people of *Volterra* was not reasonable, bicause they desired to deprive the Cittizens of their labour and industrie, and therefore iudged, that those Alums appertained to priuate men, and not to the Citie. Yet was it conuenient, that those priuate persons should giue yearly vnto the people certaine money, in signe they acknowledged them for superiors. This answer did nothing diminish, but augment the tumults and displeasures in *Volterra*, so that nothing was spoken of so much in their counsels, and in euerie other place in the Cittie, as the request of the multitude, which was, to recouer that which they thought lost. The priuate men on the other side, still laboured to continue that which they had gotten, and had bene confirmed by iudgement of the *Florentines*. This matter remained so long in disputation, that one Cittizen, a man of estimation in that Cittie, called *Pacorino*, with diuerse others that tooke part with him, was slaine, their houses spoiled and burnt. In that furie also, the *Rettori* for the *Florentines* with difficultie escaped. This first tumult being passed, they determined in all haste to send Embassadors to *Florence*, who informed the *Senators*, that if they would obserue their auncient conditions, they would also continue in their auncient obedience. The answer of these messengers was long disputed. *Tomaso Soderini* was of opinion, that it behoued to receiue the *Volterani* with what condition so euer, thinking the time serued not, to kindle a fire so neare hand, that might burne their owne house: for he feared the disposition of the Pope, the power of the King, and mistrusted the *Venetians* friendship and the Dukes, not knowing what fidelitie was in the one, nor what vertue in the other, alleaging that prouerb which saith, Better a leane peace, then a fat victorie. Of a contrarie minde was *Lorenzo de Medici*, thinking he had now occasion to make shew of his wisdom and counsell, and the rather being thereto perswaded by those that eniued the authoritie of *Tomaso*. And therefore determined by armes to punish the insolencie of the *Volterani*, affirming, that if they were not corrected, as a memorable example, all others (vpon euerie light occasion) without reuerence or respect, would dare to do the like. This resolution

Tumults in
Volterra.

advertisements
of the Duke
and Court

lution made, the *Volterani* were answered, that they could not require the keeping of those conditions, which they themselves had broken, and therefore either they should referre themselves to the discretion of the *Senate*, or presently looke for warre. The *Volterani* returned with this answer, prepared for the defence of their towne, and sent to all Princes of *Italy* for aide, but were aided by fewe: for onely the *Sanesi*, and the Lord of *Piombino* did promise to helpe them. The *Florentines* on the other side, iudging that the victorie would be gotten by making of speed, assembled tenne thousand footemen, and two thousand horse, whome vnder the conduct of *Federigo*, Lord of *Vrbino*, they sent into the countrey of *Volterra*: all which, they easily possessed. Then they brought their Camp before the Cittie, which being builded vpon an hill, could not be assaulted, but on that side, where the Church of *S. Alisandro* standeth. The *Volterani* had for their defence entertained a thousand souldiers, or thereabouts, who seeing how brauely the *Florentines* assailed them, fearing they could not defend the towne, were in the seruice slowe, but in doing iniurie to the *Volterani* readie ynough: so that those poore Cittizens were by the enemies assaulted without, and by friends oppressed within. In so much as (dispaireing to be saued) thought good to make peace, and for want of better meane, yeelded themselves to the *Florentines* Commissaries: who caused them to open the gates, and the greater part of the armie being entred, they went vnto the Pallace wherethe *Priori* were, whome they commanded to returne to their houses, and by the way, one of them was by a souldier reuiled and robbed. Of this beginning (for men be more readie to euill then good) grew the destruction and sack of this Cittie, which continued one whole day. The houses were robbed, and the people spoiled, neither did the women and Churches escape, but all souldiers, aswell they that had cowardlie defended the towne, as the others that fought, were partakers of the spoiles. The newes of this victorie, was with much reioycing receiued at *Florence*, for the same was wholie the enterprize of *Lorenzo*, who thereby gained great reputation. And thereupon one of his dearest friends reprooued *Tomaso Soderini* for his counsell, saying vnto him, What say you now, that *Volterra* is taken? To whome, *Tomaso* answered, me thinks it is lost: for if you had taken it by composition, you might haue made profit and suretie thereof; but hauing it by force, in time of warre it will weaken and trouble you, and in time of peace, it will charge and hinder you. In those dayes, the Pope desiring to hold in obedience the townes belonging to the Church, caused *Spoletto* to be sacked: which by meane of inward faction, was rebelled. After, for the like offence, he besieged the Cittie of *Castello*. In that towne, *Nicholo Vitelli* was Prince. He being in great friendship with *Lorenzo de Medici*, refused not in that necessitie to aide him: yet was that aide not sufficient to defend *Nicholo*, but ynough to sowe the first seeds of enimitie betwixt *Sisto* and the *Medici*, which afterwards brought forth fruite of much mischief: and the same should quickly haue shewed it selfe, had not the death of Frier *Piero*, Cardinall of *Sisto*, happened. For this Cardinall, hauing trauelled about all *Italy*, went also to *Venice* and *Milan* (pretending to honor the marriage of *Hercole*, Marquesse of *Farrara*) to practise with the Princes, and found their disposition towards the *Florentines*. But being returned to *Rome*, he died: not without suspicion to haue bene poisoned by the *Venetians*, who feared the greatnesse of *Sisto*, so long as he might be counselled and encouraged by Frier *Piero*. For albeit nature had made this Frier of base blood, and was also bred vp basely in a Monasterie, yet so soone as he had aspired to be Cardinall, there appeared in him so great pride and ambition, as might not onely become a Cardinall, but also seeme fit ynough for any Pope. For he feared not to make a feast in *Rome* with so great charge, as seemed superfluous for any King: for therein

Volterra
sacked.

Castello be-
sieged by
Pope Sisto.

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he spent more then twentie thousand Florins. Pope *Sisto* bereft of this agent, prosecuted his enterprizes more coldly. Notwithstanding, the league being renewed betweene the *Florentines*, the Duke, and *Venetians*, and place left for Pope *Sisto*, and the King, who made an other contract; therein also, leauing places for other Princes to enter, if they would. By this meane, *Italy* became diuided in two factions: Italy diuided into factions. for daily betwixt these two leagues, there grew displeasure, as it happened, touching the Ile of *Cipres*, which the King *Ferrando* challenged, and the *Venetians* vsurped, whereupon, the Pope and the King became more willing one of the others friendship. In those daies, *Federigo* Prince of *Vrbino*, was accounted the most excellent Captaine of *Italy*, and had long serued for the *Florentines*. The King and the Pope (to the end our league should not haue the seruice of such a leader) determined to win the good will of *Federigo*. To that end both the Pope and the King desired him to come vnto *Naples*. *Federigo* performed their desire, to the great admiration and displeasure of the *Florentines*, beleueing it would become of him, as it did to *Giacopo Piccinino*. Yet the contrarie came to passe: for *Federigo* returned from *Naples* and *Romagna* with great honor, and still Generall for their league. Neuertheless, the King and Pope ceased not, to sound the disposition of the Lords in *Romagna*, and the *Sanesi*, hoping to make them his friends, and by their meanes, be able to offend the *Florentines*, whome they perceiued by all conuenient waies armed, to incounter their ambition: and hauing lost *Federigo* of *Vrbino*, they entertained *Roberto* of *Rimini*. They also renewed the league with the *Perugini*, and drew thereunto the Lord of *Faenza*. The Pope and King alleaged, that their displeasure to the *Florentines* was, because they sought to drawe the *Venetians* from them: and the Pope thought that the Church could not mainteine the reputation thereof, nor the Earle *Girolamo* his state in *Romagna*, if the *Florentines* and *Venetians* were vnited. On the other side, the *Florentines* feared they would be enemies to the *Venetians*, not to win their friendship, but the rather thereby to iniurie them: so as *Italy* liued two yeares in these suspicions, and diuersities of humors, before any tumults were moued. But the first (although but small) happened in *Toscana*. *Braccio* of *Perugia*, a man (as hath heretofore bene often said) of great reputation in the warre, had two sonnes, called *Oddo*, and *Carlo*. This *Carlo* was a child, and *Oddo* was by the inhabitants of the Vale of *Lamona* slaine, as hath bene declared. *Carlo* being attained to age, and able for armes, was for the memorie of his father, and the good hope of himselfe entertained by the *Venetians*, and made among others, a leader for that state. The time of his conduct ended, he refused to serue longer, determining to make prooffe, if with his owne fame, and the reputation of his father, he could recouer his owne countrey of *Perugia*. Whereto the *Venetians* easily consented, as they that were wont in alterations to increase their dominion. *Carlo* then came into *Toscana*, and found the enterprize of *Perugia* hard, by reason that the *Perugini* were in league with the *Florentines*, yet desirous that this motion might take some effect worthie memorie, he assaulted the *Sanesi*, alleaging they were debtors of money, due to his father, for seruice done to that state, whereof he required satisfaction: and vpon that demaund, assaulted them with so great furie, as that dominion became disordered. The Cittizens of *Siena*, seeing themselves so furiously charged (being readie to suspect the worst of the *Florentines*) thought all was done by their consent. They also complained much to the Pope and the King; and sent Embassadors vnto *Florence*, to expostulate the iniurie, and couertlie alleaged, that without assistance, *Carlo* could not with so great securitie haue offended them. The *Florentines* excused themselves, promising in what sort the Embassadors thought good, they would commaund *Carlo*, no more to offend the *Sanesi*. Whereof *Carlo* complained, that

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that they by not aiding him, should lose a great conquest, and he misse the meane, to aspire to much glorie. For in short space he promised them possession of that Cittie, where he found so great cowardice and disorder, as with possibilitie it could not be defended. Then *Carlo* departed from thence, and returned to his old enterreinment of the *Venetians*. Albeit the *Sanesi* were by the *Florentines* deliuered from so great danger, yet remained they towards them offended, and iudged their obligation not to be any thing, hauing saued them from an euill, whereof they had bene the occasion. During that these matters betwixt the King and Pope were handled in *Toscana*, there happened in *Lombardy* an accident of much more moment, and did prognosticate greater euils. There was in *Milan* a Scholemaister, called *Cola of Mantoua*, a man well learned, but ambitious, and such a one, as instructed the chiefe children of the Cittie. This *Cola*, either bicause he hated the life and manners of the Duke, or for some other occasion, in all his speeches seemed to disdain those men that liued vnder an euill prince, calling others glorious and happie, whome nature and fortune graunted to be borne, and liue in common-weales. Declaring how all famous men had bene brought vp in common-weales, and not vnder Princes. For the common-weales (said he) did nourish vertuous men, but Princes did oppresse them: for the one doth cherish vertue, the other doth feare it. The yong men with whome he had gained most familiaritie, were *Giouandrea Lampugnano*, *Carlo Visconti*, and *Girolamo Olgeato*, with them he oftentimes reasoned of the euill nature of the Duke, and their owne misfortune, being gouerned vnder such a one: and at length hee began to be in so great confidence of these yong men, that hee brought them to swear, that so soone as they attained to mans estate, they would deliuer their countrey from the tirannie of that Prince. These youths perswaded to performe what they had promised, waying therewith all the Dukes behauiour, and the particuler iniuries he had done, did hasten their intent to put the matter in execution. The Duke *Galiazzo* was in his disposition lasciuious and cruell, which two things had made him odious: for it sufficed him not to entice Ladies to dishonor, but he would also take pleasure in publishing the same. Neither was he content to put men to death, but he would also execute them with some cruell manner of torment. He was moreouer slandered, or truely suspected, to haue murdered his owne mother: for hee perswading himselfe not to be Prince (she being present) found meanes to remoue her to *Cremona*, which was the place of her dowrie, and in that iourney she became sodeinly sick, and died: and many men iudged her sonne was cause of her death. This Duke, had in matter touching women, dishonored *Carlo*, and *Gerolamo*, and denied *Giouandrea* to haue the possession of the Abbey of *Miramondo*, being graunted vnto him by the Pope, vpon resignation of a kinsman of his. These priuate iniuries increased the desire of the yong men, by reuenge to deliuer their countrey of so great mischiefes: hoping, that if they might murder the Duke, they should be not onely esteemed of the nobilitie, but also of the people followed. Thus determined of the enterprise, they oftentimes met together, and by reason of their auncient familiaritie, no meruaile made of their meeting. Being togithers (to make their minds more prepared for that action) they alwaies talked thereof, and with the sheathes of daggers made for that purpose, one of them in the breast and belly strake the other. Then they deuised of the time and place. In the Castle they thought it not fit to be performed. In hunting they feared it would proue incertaine & perilous. When the Duke walked in the streets for pleasure, they imagined it would be hard, and vnlikely to be done. And at feasts, they doubted the places would not serue. Wherefore they resolved, at some publique pompe and triumph, where they were certaine of his being, to kill him, for thither they might vnder

vnder diuerse coulours assemble their friends. They concluded also, that if any of them vpon occasion were by the officers apprehended, the rest should with their swords in the middest of his enemies sley him. This happened in the yeare 1476. The feast of Christmas then being at hand (at which time, on *S. Stephens* day, the Duke was wont with great pomp to visit the Church of that holie Martir) they resolved that place and time would best serue for the execution of their intent. The morning of *S. Stephens* day being come, they caused certaine of their most assured friends and seruants to arme themselues, saying, they would go to aide *Giouandrea*, who contrarie to the mind of some his euill willers, would make a conduct for water in a certaine ground of his. They being thus armed, went to the Church, pretending, that they would before their departure, take leaue of the Prince. They procured also diuerse other their friends and kinsfolks, for sundrie considerations to comethither, hoping, that the deed being done, euery one would follow them to performe the rest of the enterprise. And their intent was, (the Duke being slaine) to ioyne with those armed, and goe to that place of the Cittie, where they might more easily raise the people, and perswade them to arme themselues against the Duchesse, and Princes of the State; supposing the people by meanes of the famine wherewith they were then grieued, would easily fauour the enterprise: and vnto the people they determined to giue leaue to spoile the houses of *Ceco Simonetta*, *Giouanni Botti*, and *Francesco Lucini*, all Magistrates of the gouernment, whereby they should be assured of them, and giue the people libertie. This resolution was set downe, and the execution thereof firmly agreed vpon in their minds. *Giouandrea* with the rest met earely in the Church, and there altogether heard Masse; which being ended, *Giouandrea* turning towards the image of *S. Ambrose*, sayd, O *Ambrose*, Lord of our Cittie, thou knowest our intention, and the end wherefore we will aduenture our selues to so many perils: Be fauourable to this our enterprise, and by fauouring of iustice, shew how greatly iniustice doth displeas thee. To the Duke on the other side, before he came to the Church, many signes happened, to prognosticate his death at hand. For the day being come, he put on his priuie armour (as euerie other day for the most part he did) yet sodeinly before he went from his house, either bicause he thought it not lightly, or that it did hurt his bodie, he tooke it off. Then thought he to haue heard Masse in the Castle, but his Chapleine was gone to *S. Steffano*. Then commaunded hee that the Bishop of *Como* should say the Masse, but he alleaged certaine reasonable lets, so the Duke was (as it were by necessitie) occasioned to goe to the Church. But first, he called for his two sonnes, *Giouangaliazzo*, and *Hermes*, whome he embraced, and kissed often, as though he had no power to depart from them: yet in the end, he determined to goe; and coming out of the Castle, betwixt the Embassadors of *Farrara* and *Mantoua*, rode to the Temple. The conspirators in the meane while, to giue the lesse suspicion, and keepe them from the cold, were retired into a chamber belonging to the chiefe Priest of the Church, their friend, and vnderstanding that the Duke did come, they came from the chamber into the Church. *Giouandrea* and *Girolamo* placed themselues on the right hand of the Church doore; and *Carlo* on the left hand. Then those that went before the Duke, entered the Church doore, and after the Duke himselfe, inuironed with a greate multitude of people, as it alwaies happeneth, in time of such a princelie pompe. The firste of the Conspirators that went towards him, were *Lampugnano*, and *Girolamo*. They pretending to make place and roome for the Prince, came hard vnto his person, and assaulted him with short and sharpe daggers, which they had hidden in their sleeues. *Lampugnano* gaue him two woundes, the

one in the bellie, the other in the throate. *Girolamo* likewise in the throate, and in the brest strake him. *Carlo Visconti* standing neare vnto the doore, and the Duke past him, at such time as his companions gaue the assault, could not hurt him before, but gaue him two other wounds, one on the shoulder, the other in the back: and these six wounds were all so sodeinly and speedily giuen, that the Duke was fallen to the ground before any man knewe what the matter meant. Neither could he do, or say any thing that was knowne, but in falling, one onely time he cried, O Ladie helpe me. The Duke thus laid on the ground, the rumor grew great, many swords were drawne out, and (as it hapned in like cases vnlooked for) some fled out of the Church, and some rannethither, without any certaine knowledge, or occasion of the matter. But those who were next vnto the Duke, seeing him slaine, and knowing the murtherers, pursued them. Of the conspirators, *Giouandrea* intending to get out of the Church, went amongst the women, who being many, and according to their custome set on the ground, was so troubled and staied with their garments, that he was by a Moore (one of the Dukes footmen) ouertaken, and slaine. *Carlo* was likewise by those that were present, killed. But *Girolamo Olgiato* escaped out of the Church, seeing his companions slaine, and not knowing whither to flee, went home, where he could be neither by his father nor brothers receiued. But his mother onely, hauing compasion of her sonne, did recommend him to a Priest, an auncient friend of that house, who put him in Priestlike garments, and remooued him to his house, where he remained two daies, hoping that some tumult in *Milan* would arise, and thereby he might be saued. But that not comming to passe, and fearing to be found there, he assaied to flee disguised; yet being knowne, was brought before the Magistrates, and there he confessed all the order of the conspiracie. This *Girolamo* was twentie three yeares of age, and died with no lesse courage, then he had executed the enterprise. For being brought to his death, stript naked, and prepared for the hangman, who with his knife in hand, stood readie to cut him in pieces, he spake these Laten words, *Mors acerba, fama perpetua, stabit vetus memoria facti*. This enterprise was by these vnhappie yoong men secretly practised, and resolutely executed. The cause of their destruction was, that they were not followed and defended of them, to whome they trusted. Let Princes therefore learne to make themselues so much honored and loued, as no man can hope to hurt them, and saue himselfe. And let all priuate persons know, how vaine it is to thinke, that the multitude (notwithstanding it be discontented) will in their perils follow or accompanie them. This accident amazed all *Italy*, but much more trouble proceeded of other chances, that shortly after happened in *Florence*. For thereby the peace which had continued in *Italy* the space of twelue yeares, was broken, as in the Booke following shall be declared. Which Booke, as it beginneth with bloud and terror, so doth it end with sorrow and miserie.

The ende of the seuenth Booke.

THE



THE EIGHT BOOKE.



THE beginning of this Booke, placed amidst two conspiracies, the one in *Milan* already declared, the other happened in *Florence*, and to be spoken of; it may be thought fit, that (according to my custome) I should somewhat saie, touching the qualitie of conspiracies, and of what importance they are. Which willingly I would do, had I not in other places discoursed thereof, or that such a matter might be briefely passed ouer. But seeing it requireth great consideration, and is already spoken of, we will proceed, and tell how the *Medici*, hauing overcome all enemies, that openly opposed themselves, being desirous their house alone might haue authoritie in the Cittie, it behoued them to oppresse all others that secretly practised against them. For so long as they contended against other families but with equall authoritie, the Citizens enuying their greatnesse, might openly and without feare affront them. Bicause, the Magistrates being free, neither partie before losse of victorie, had any occasion to feare it selfe. But after the victorie, in the yeare 66. the State became so much in the hand and power of the *Medici*, as all men discontented, were enforced, either patiently to abide the condition wherein they liued, or else by way of conspiracie, and secretly practise, to amend their fortune. But sith cōspiracies are with difficultie performed, for the most part, they procure the ruine of the conspirators, and the greatnes of him against whome they be conspired. So that, a Prince by conspiracie assaulted, if he be not therein slaine, as was the Duke of *Milan* (which seldome hapneth) becommeth thereby the stronger, and being before good, becommeth euill. Bicause conspiracies do giue him occasion to feare, feare counsaileth him to seeke assurance, and in seeking assurance, he doth iniure others, whereby he gaineth hatred, and many times procureth his own destruction. So as in cōclusion, treasons do sodeinly overthrow those who attempt them, and trouble him many times against whome they be attempted. *Italy* was (as hath bene before declared) diuided into two factions, the Pope and the King on the one side, and the *Venerians*, the Duke, and *Florentines* on the other side. And albeit there was not betwixt them any warre moued, yet was there daillie occasion giuen thereof, and the Pope chiefly in all his actions studied to offend the state of *Florence*. *Philippo de Medici* Archbishop of *Pisa*, then dying, the Pope, (contrarie to the will of the Senate of *Florence*) gaue that Bishopprick to *Francesco Saluati*, whome hee knewe to bee enemy to the house of *Medici*. But the Senate denying to deliuer possession thereof, there followed great displeasure betwixt the Pope and the *Medici*. Besides that, the Pope did great fauours in *Rome* to the familie of *Pazzi*, and in euerie acte,