The Prince (On Principalities)

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DEDICATORY LETTER

Niccolò Machiavelli to the Magnificent Lorenzo de’Medici the Younger: greetings.

It is customary in most instances for those who desire to acquire favor with a prince to come before him with those things from among their possessions that they hold most dear, or in which they see him delight the most. Hence one sees many times that princes are presented with horses, arms, cloth of gold, precious stones and similar adornments worthy of their greatness. Therefore, since I desire to offer myself to your magnificence with some evidence of my devotion to you, and since I have not found among my valuables anything that I hold more dear or estimate so highly as the understanding of the deeds of great men, which I have learned through long experience of modern things and constant reading about ancient things, these I have with great diligence over a long time thought out and examined, and now, reduced into a small volume, I send them to your magnificence.

And, although I judge this work unworthy of presentation to you, nonetheless I very much trust that on account of your humanity it may be accepted, considering how no greater gift could be given by me to you than to give you the ability, in a very short time, to understand all that I, in so many years and through so many hardships and perils to myself, have come to know and understand. I have not embellished this work, nor stuffed it with fulsome clauses or with pompous and magnificent words or with any of the other pandering or outward adornment with which many are accustomed to describe and embellish their material. For I wanted either that it be honored on no account whatsoever, or that only the variety of the material and the weightiness of the subject should make it welcome. Nor do I want it to be imputed presumption if a man of low and basest state

should dare to discourse on and give rules for the conduct of princes. For just as those who sketch landscapes place themselves low in the plain to consider the nature of mountains and of high places, and to consider the nature of low places they place themselves high atop the mountains, similarly, to understand well the nature of peoples it is necessary to be a prince, and to understand well the nature of princes it is necessary to be of the people.

May your magnificence therefore take up this small gift in the spirit with which I send it. And if it will be diligently considered and read by you, you will recognize in it my extreme desire that you should arrive at that greatness that fortune and your other qualities promise you. And if your magnificence, from the peak of your magnificence's height, sometimes will cast your eyes on these low places, you will recognize how undeservedly I endure a great and continuous malignity of fortune.

CHAPTER 1: How many kinds of principalities there are, and in what manner they are acquired

All states, all dominions that have had and do have command over men, have been and are either republics or principalities. Principalities are either hereditary, in which the lineage of their lord has been prince for a long time, or they are new. The new ones are either completely new, as was Milan for Francesco Sforza, or they are like limbs added to the hereditary state of the prince who acquires them, as is the Kingdom of Naples for the king of Spain. Dominions that are thus acquired are either accustomed to living under a prince or used to being free, and they are acquired either with the arms of others or with one's own, either by fortune or by virtue.

CHAPTER 2: On hereditary principalities

I shall leave out reasoning on republics because on another occasion l have discussed them at length. I shall apply myself only to the principality; I shall weave full cloth around the guiding threads stated above; and I shall debate how these principalities may be governed and maintained.

I say therefore that in states that are hereditary and accustomed to the lineage of their prince there are many fewer difficulties in maintaining them than in new ones. For it suffices only not to break with the orders of one's ancestors and then to manage according to circumstances. So that if such a prince is of ordinary industry he will always maintain himself in his state, unless an extraordinary and excessive force deprives him of it. And even should he be so deprived, whenever the occupier experiences some mishap, he reacquires it.

We have in Italy, among our examples, the duke of Ferrara, who survived the attacks of the Venetians in 1484 and those of Pope Julius in 1510 for no other reason than that he had grown old in that dominion. For the prince by birth has fewer reasons and less need to offend, from which it proceeds that he is more loved; and, if extraordinary vices do not make him hated, it is reasonable that his own subjects naturally should wish him well. And in the antiquity and continuity of his dominion the memories of revolutions and the reasons for them are extinguished, because each succession always leaves indentations for the construction of the one that follows.

CHAPTER 3: On mixed principalities

But the difficulties are in the new principality. And first, if it is not wholly new, but like a limb (so that in its entirety it may be called almost "mixed"), its troubles arise at once from a natural difficulty that exists in all new principalities, which is that men willingly exchange their lord if they believe they will be better off, and this belief makes them take up arms against him. In this, however, they deceive themselves, because they then see by experience that they have become worse off. This follows from another natural and ordinary necessity that stipulates that one always has to offend those of whom one becomes a new prince, with soldiering, and with the other infinite injuries that come with a new acquisition. The result is that you have as enemies all those you have offended in occupying that principality; and you cannot maintain as friends those who have put you there, because you cannot satisfy them in that manner that they had earlier supposed, and also because you cannot use strong medicines against them, since you are obligated to them. For always, even though a prince is very strong when it comes to armies, he needs the favor of the provincials to enter into a province. For these reasons Louis XII, king of France, occupied Milan quickly, and quickly lost it. And to take it back from Louis the first time all that was needed were Ludovico's own forces, for those same people who had opened the gates to the king, once they found themselves deceived in their opinion, and in the future good they had supposed, could no longer endure the vexations imposed by the new prince.

It is indeed true that when lands that have rebelled once are regained, they are lost for a second time with greater difficulty. For their lord, having seized the occasion of their rebellion, is less hesitant to secure himself by punishing the criminals, identifying possible enemies and reinforcing his weakest points. Thus, if the first time all that was needed to make France lose Milan was for a Duke Ludovico to make noise at her borders, for France to lose Milan the second time he had to have all the world against him, and his armies either had to have been eliminated or to have been chased from Italy, and this proceeds from the causes stated above. Nonetheless both the first and the second time it was taken from him. The universal reasons for the first loss have been gone over. It remains now to tell of the causes of the second loss, and to see what remedies he had

there, and which ones may be available to whoever is in his circumstances so that he may be able to maintain himself better in his acquisition than did France.

I say, therefore, regarding these states that are added to the old state of the acquiring prince, that when they are acquired they are either of the same province and the same language, or not. When they are, it is very easy to keep them, especially when they are not used to living in freedom, and to possess them securely it is enough to have eliminated the line of the prince who was ruling thein. For if their former conditions are maintained for them in other matters, and there is no disparity of customs, men live quietly, as it has been seen that Burgundy; Brittany, Gascony and Normandy, which have been with France for so much time, have done; and although there is some disparity of language, nonetheless their customs are similar and they are easily compatible with one another. Whoever acquires such provinces, if he wants to keep them, must have two concerns: one is that the bloodline of their former prince be eliminated; the other is to alter neither their laws nor their taxes, so that in a very brief time the old principality becomes, together with the acquired state, a single body.

But when one acquires states in a province that differs in its language, customs and orders, here the difficulties are, and here one needs great fortune and great industry to hold them. One of the best and quickest remedies would be that whoever acquires the state should go there in person to live. This would make the possession more secure and lasting, as the Turk has done in Greece. Despite all of the other orders observed by the Turk to hold that state, if he had not gone there to live, it would not be possible for him to keep it. For when you stay there, disorders are seen as they arise and you may quickly remedy them. When you are not there, they become known after they have grown, when there is no longer remedy. Beyond this, the province is not despoiled by your officers, and the subjects are satisfied by their close recourse to the prince, for which, if they wish to be good, they have more reason to love him, and, if they wish to be otherwise, they have more reason to fear him. And if any outsider wishes to attack that state, he is more hesitant; so that only with very great difficulty can the lord lose it if he lives there.

The other best remedy is to send colonies to one or two places, that they may be like shackles on that state. For it is necessary either to do this or to keep many men at arms and footsoldiers there. On colonies not much is spent, and the lord sends and keeps them there at little or no expense, and he offends only the persons from whom he takes their fields and their homes to give them to the new inhabitants, and those are only a very small part of that state. And the persons he offends, since they remain dispersed and poor, are never able to harm him; and all the others remain, on the one hand, unharmed, and for this they should not complain, and, on the other hand, fearful of making a mistake, lest what happened to those who were despoiled of their property also happen to them. I conclude that such colonies do not cost much, are more faithful, and offend less; and, as is

said, the persons offended are not able to do harm, being poor and dispersed. In this regard one should note that men ought either to be coddled or eliminated: for, since they avenge light injuries, but are unable to avenge heavy ones, the injury that one inflicts on a man should be in a manner such that one does not fear his revenge.

But if, instead of colonies, the prince keeps men at arms there, he spends a great deal more, since he has to consume the revenues of that state in guarding it, so that the acquisition becomes a loss for him. And he is much more injurious, since he harms that whole state by moving about his army and its lodgings, the unease of which everyone feels, so that all become his enemy, and these are enemies who are able to do him harm, since, although defeated, they remain in their own homeland. From every perspective, therefore, this stratagem is as useless as the one with colonies is useful.

Whoever is in a foreign province should also, as is said, make himself the leader and defender of its less powerful neighbors, and contrive to weaken the powers in the province, and be on guard lest through some accident an outsider as powerful as himself should enter the province. And it will always be the case that the outsider will be brought there by those in the province who are discontent, whether from excessive ambition or from fear, as was once seen when the Aetolians brought the Romans into Greece. And in every other province that the Romans entered they were brought in by the provincials. The order of things is that immediately after a powerful outsider enters a province, all the inhabitants who are less powerful ally themselves with him, since they are moved by an envy they have against whoever has been powerful over them. Thus, with respect to these who are less powerful, he suffers no trouble whatsoever in winning them over to himself, because immediately all of them together make a compact with the state he has acquired in that province. The outsider has to see to it only that they not gain too much power and too much authority, while with his own power and with their favor he can easily cut down those who are powerful, so that he remains in everything the arbiter of that province. And whoever does not manage this point well will quickly lose whatever he acquired, and for as long as he retains it he will have in it infinite difficulties and annoyances.

The Romans observed these points well in the provinces they seized. They sent colonies, they dealt with the less powerful without increasing their power, they reduced the powerful, and they did not permit powerful outsiders to gain reputation there. And I want the province of Greece to suffice as my single example. The Romans dealt with the Achaeans and the Aetolians while the kingdom of the Macedonians was diminished and Antiochus was chased out. But the benefits received from the Achaeans and the Aetolians never induced the Romans to allow them to increase their state in any manner. Nor did the persuasions of Philip ever induce them to become his friends without diminishing him. Nor could the might of Antiochus make them consent to his retaining any state in that province. For the Romans did in these circumstances what all wise princes should do.

Such princes have not only to beware of present disorders, but also of future ones, and to make every effort to obviate these, for if one sees them earlier from a distance, one can easily remedy them, but if you wait for them to come near to you, the medicine will not be in time because the sickness has become incurable. And from this it comes about that, as the doctors of a consumptive will say, at the beginning his illness is easy to cure but difficult to recognize; however, with the passage of time, if no one recognizes or medicates it early on, it becomes easy to recognize and difficult to cure. So it happens in matters of state: for if a prince recognizes them at a distance, which is something given only to a prudent man, the evils that are born in a state are quickly cured; but when, because he does not recognize them, they are allowed to grow such that everyone recognizes them, then there is no longer a cure.

For this reason the Romans, who saw problems at a distance, always remedied them. And they never allowed them to continue in order to avoid a war, since they knew that war is not averted, but only postponed to the advantage of others. For this reason they wanted to make war against Philip and Antiochus in Greece in order not to have to fight them in Italy. And they could, for the time being, have avoided both the one and the other war, but they did not want that. Nor did it ever please them “to enjoy the benefit of time” -- the phrase always in the mouths of the wise men of our times. The Romans liked better to enjoy the benefit of their own virtue and prudence. For time pushes everything forward, and it can bring with it good as well as evil, and evil as well as good.

But let us return to France and examine whether, of the things that have been said, he has done any of them. And I shall speak of Louis, and not of Charles, since, on account of his having held territory in Italy longer, Louis is the one whose steps have been better seen. And you will see how he has done the contrary of those things that should be done to hold a state in a foreign province. King Louis was brought into Italy by the ambition of the Venetians, who wanted to gain half of the state of Lombardy through his coming. I do not want to blame this decision taken by the king, for, when he wanted to get a foothold in Italy, because he had no friends in this province, and on the contrary, all of its gates were locked against him on account of the behavior of King Charles, he was forced to accept whatever friendships he could have. And it would have resulted in a decision well taken for him if, in his other actions, he had not made any errors. Thus when the king had acquired Lombardy he immediately regained for the crown the reputation of which Charles had deprived it. Genoa surrendered; the Florentines became his friends; the marchese of Mantua, the duke of Ferrara, the Bentivoglio, my lady of Forli, the lords of Faenza, of Rimini, of Pesaro, of Camerino, of Piombino, the Lucchese, the Pisans, and the Sienese -- all presented themselves before him in order to be his friend. And the Venetians could only ponder the recklessness of the decision they had made, since to acquire a couple of towns in Lombardy, they had made the king the lord of two-thirds of Italy.

Let anyone now consider with how little difficulty the king could have maintained his reputation in Italy if only he had observed the rules set out above, and kept safe and defended all of those friends of his, who, because they were numerous and weak and fearful (some fearful of the Church and some of the Venetians), would always of necessity have stuck with him, and by their means he easily could have assured himself of whoever in Italy remained great. But no sooner was he in Milan than he did the contrary, when he gave aid to Pope Alexander to occupy the Romagna. Nor did he realize that with this decision he was making himself weak, both by shedding his friends and those who had thrown themselves in his lap and by making the Church strong through adding to its spiritual power (which gives it so much authority) so much temporal power. And having made a first mistake, he was constrained to follow through until, in order to place a limit on the ambition of Alexander and to prevent him from becoming lord of Tuscany, the king was constrained to come into Italy.

Nor was it enough for the king to have made the Church great and to have shed his friends. For out of his desire for the Kingdom of Naples he partitioned it with the king of Spain, and where he was once the supreme arbiter of Italy, he brought in a partner, with the result that the ambitious men of that province, and those who were discontent with him had someone else to turn to. And where he could have allowed a king to remain in that kingdom as his tributary, he removed him in order to install one who was capable of expelling himself. It is a thing truly very natural and ordinary to desire to acquire. When men do it who are capable, they always will be praised or not criticized. But when they are not capable and want to do it anyway, here is the error and the blame. Thus, if France had been able with his own forces to attack Naples, he should have done it; if he could not do it, he should not have partitioned it. And if the partition that he made of Lombardy with the Venetians merited excuse, since with that he got his foothold in Italy, this partition deserves blame because it was not excused by the same necessity.

Thus Louis made these five errors: he eliminated the lesser powers; he enhanced the power of someone who was powerful in Italy; he brought into Italy an outsider who was very powerful; he did not come to live there; he did not put colonies there. These errors, so long as he was alive, still could not have harmed him, if he had not committed the sixth, which was to take their state away from the Venetians. For if he had not made the Church great nor brought Spain into Italy, it would have been very reasonable and necessary to cut down the Venetians. But after he made those first two decisions he should never have consented to the ruin of the Venetians, for, since they were powerful, they would always have prevented the other powers from attacking Lombardy. On the one hand, the Venetians would not have consented to an invasion by the other powers unless they themselves were to become the lords of Lombardy; on the other hand, the other powers would not have wanted to take Lombardy away from France to give it to the Venetians, and to go and cast out both of them was beyond their daring.

And if anyone should say that King Louis surrendered the Romagna to Alexander and the Kingdom of Naples to Spain in order to avoid a war, I reply with the reasons stated above, that one should never tolerate a disturbance in order to avoid a war, because the war is not avoided but it is deferred to your disadvantage. And if anyone else should invoke the promise that the king had given to the pope, to undertake that invasion for him in exchange for the annulment of his marriage and the cardinal's hat for Rouen, I reply with what will be said by me below concerning the promises of princes arid how they ought to be observed.

Thus King Louis lost Lombardy because he did not observe any of those rules that have been observed by the others who have taken provinces and wanted to keep them. Nor is any of this a miracle: rather it is very ordinary and rational. And on this subject I spoke with Rouen at Nantes when Valentino (since this was how Cesare Borgia, the son of Pope Alexander, was commonly called) occupied the Romagna. For when the Cardinal of Rouen told me that the Italians did not understand war, I replied to him that the French did not understand the state, since, if they understood it, they would not allow the Church to come into such greatness. And by experience it is seen that the greatness of the Church and of Spain in Italy was caused by France, and that her own ruin was caused by them. From this one draws a general rule that never or rarely fails, that whoever causes someone else to become powerful is ruined: for he confers this power either through ability or through force, and both of these qualities are suspect to whoever has become powerful.

CHAPTER 4: Why Darius' kingdom, which Alexander had occupied, did not rebel from Alexander's successors after his death

When the difficulties that exist in holding a newly acquired state are considered, anyone might marvel at how it happened that, after Alexander the Great became within a few years lord of Asia, and when he had barely occupied it he died, so that it seemed reasonable that all of that state should have rebelled, nonetheless, Alexander's successors maintained it, and in keeping it they had no difficulty other than what arose among themselves because of their own ambition. I reply that the principalities of which there is memory are found to be governed in two different manners: either by a prince, with everyone else as his servants, who, as ministers, by his grace and leave, assist in governing that kingdom; or by a prince and by barons, who hold that rank not by the grace of their lord but by the antiquity of their bloodlines. Barons such as these have states and subjects of their own, who recognize them as lords and have a natural affection toward them. Those states that are governed by a prince and by servants hold their prince in more authority, because, in all his province, there is no one who recognizes anyone but the prince as his superior, and, if they obey anyone else, they obey him as a minister and officer but bear him no particular love.

In our times the examples of these two different kinds of government are the Turk and the king of France. The whole monarchy of the Turk is governed by one lord; the others are his servants. And since his kingdom is divided into sanjaks, he sends various administrators to them, and he substitutes and transfers them as he pleases. But the king of France is placed in the middle of an ancient multitude of lords in that state who are recognized by their subjects and loved by them. They have their own hereditary privileges: the king cannot take these away from them without danger to himself. Thus whoever considers the one and the other of these states will find difficulty in acquiring the state of the Turk, but great ease in keeping it once he is defeated. Conversely, he will find more ease in some respects in occupying the Kingdom of France, but great difficulty in holding it.

The reasons for the difficulty in being able to occupy the kingdom of the Turk lie in not being able to be called in by the princes of that kingdom, nor to hope, through the rebellion of those the Turk has around him, to facilitate your enterprise. This arises from the reasons stated above, for, since they are all slaves and obligated to him, it is more difficult to corrupt them, and, even if they should be corrupted, one can hope for little that is useful from it, since they cannot bring their people along with them for the reasons noted. Hence it is necessary for whoever attacks the Turk to plan that he will find him wholly united, and his hopes must rest in his own forces rather than in the disorders of others. But if the Turk were defeated and routed in open battle, in such a manner that he could not raise armies again, his opponent need not worry about anything save the bloodline of the prince, since once this is eliminated there remains no one he need fear, since the other Turks have no credit with their kingdom's peoples and just as the victor could place no hope in them before his victory, so he should not fear them after it.

The contrary happens in kingdoms governed like that of France. With ease you may enter there by winning to yourself some baron of the kingdom, for always one finds some malcontents and some who want to revolt. Those people, for the reasons stated, can open the way for you to that state and they can ease your victory. But afterward, if you want to maintain yourself, this brings with it infinite difficulties, both with those who helped you and with those whom you defeated. Nor is it sufficient for you to eliminate the bloodline of the prince, because there remain those lords, who make themselves the leaders in new troubles; and, since you can neither satisfy them nor eliminate them, you lose that state whenever the opportunity arises.

Now, if you will consider what was the nature of Darius' government, you will find it similar to the kingdom of the Turk. And for this reason it was necessary for Alexander first to cast him down completely and take the field from him. After this victory, once Darius was killed, that state remained secure for Alexander for the reasons set forth above. And his successors, had they been united, could have enjoyed it for themselves at their leisure.

Nor did tumults arise in that kingdom other than those that they themselves incited. But as for states ordered like that of France, it is impossible to possess them in such tranquility. From this fact arose the frequent rebellions against the Romans by Spain, by France, and by Greece. On account of the many principalities that had existed in those states, so long as their memory endured, the Romans were always uncertain of their possession. But once the memory of those principalities was eliminated through the power and longevity of their Empire, the Romans became their secure possessors. Later, when the Romans were fighting among themselves, each was able to bring along a portion of those provinces according to the authority he had assumed in them; and these provinces, since the bloodlines of their former lords had been eliminated, recognized only Romans. Thus, when all of these things are considered, no one will marvel at Alexander's ease in keeping his state in Asia, nor at the difficulties that Pyrrhus and many others have had in keeping what they acquired. This is something that arises not from the greater or lesser virtue of the victor, but from the difference in their situations.

CHAPTER 5: In what manner cities or provinces are to be administered which, before they were occupied, lived by their own laws

When those states that are acquired are accustomed, as is stated, to live with their own laws and in liberty, if one wants to hold onto them, there are three manners for doing so. The first is to destroy them. The second is to go there in person to live. The third is to allow them to live with their own laws, while extracting tribute from them, and creating inside a state of the few who will keep it friendly to you: for, since this state is created by the occupying prince, it knows that it cannot exist without his friendship and power, and it has to do everything to support him; and, if one wants to preserve it, it is easier than in any other manner to hold a city used to living in freedom by means of its own citizens.

As examples there are the Spartans and the Romans. The Spartans held Athens and Thebes by creating states of the few, although they lost them again. The Romans, in order to hold Capua, Carthage and Numantia, destroyed them, but they did not lose them. They wanted to hold Greece almost as the Spartans did, by making it free and leaving it to its own laws, and this did not succeed for them, so that they were forced to destroy many cities of that province in order to hold it. For in truth there is no secure manner for possessing them other than with their destruction. And whoever becomes master of a city accustomed to living in freedom, and does not undo it, may expect to be undone by it, because in rebellion it always cloaks itself in the name of liberty and its former institutions, which, notwithstanding the passage of time and material comforts, are never forgotten. And whatever is done or provided, if the inhabitants are not divided or scattered, they do not forget the name of liberty or those institutions, and immediately, in

every accident, they run back to them, as Pisa did one hundred years after it had been put in servitude by the Florentines.

But when the cities or the provinces are used to living under a prince, and his bloodline is extinguished, they do not know how to live in freedom, because on the one hand they are used to obeying, and on the other hand, not having the old prince, they are not able to agree to make one of their own a new prince. The result is that they are slower to take up arms, and a prince may with more facility win them and secure them for himself. But in republics there is greater life, greater hatred, more desire for revenge. Nor does the memory of their ancient liberty ever allow them to rest, nor can it, so that the most secure manner is to eliminate them or live there.

CHAPTER 6: On new principalities that are acquired by one's own arms and by virtue

Let no one marvel if, in the speech I shall make concerning principalities that are wholly new, both in their prince and in their state, I introduce the very greatest examples. For, since men always walk in paths beaten by others, and they proceed by means of imitation in their actions, and since one cannot completely hold to the paths of others, nor attain completely the virtue of those whom you imitate, a prudent man should always enter by paths beaten by great men, and imitate those who have been the most excellent, so that if his virtue does not arrive there, at least it gives off some scent of it. He should do as the prudent archers do when the place they wish to strike appears to them too far off. Since the archers know just how far the virtue of their bow reaches, they place their aim much higher than the intended place, not in order to reach so high a place with their arrow, but to be able, with the help of so high an aim, to achieve their goal.

Thus I say that in wholly new principalities, where the prince is new, greater or lesser difficulty is found in maintaining them depending on whether he who acquires them is more or less virtuous. And because this event -- becoming a prince from being a private man -- presupposes either virtue or fortune, it appears that the one or the other of these two things in part mitigates many difficulties. Nonetheless, whoever relied less on fortune better maintained himself. And it makes it even easier if, since he has no other states, the prince is constrained to come live there in person.

But to come to those who by their own virtue and not by fortune became princes, I say that the most excellent are Moses, Cyrus, Romulus, Theseus and similar persons. Although one ought not to reason about Moses, since he was a mere executor of the things that were ordered of him by God, yet he should be admired, if only for that grace that made him worthy of speaking with God. But let us consider Cyrus, and the others who have acquired and founded kingdoms. You will find them all admirable, and if their

particular actions and orders are considered they will appear no different from those of Moses, who had so great a teacher. And if their actions and life are examined, it is not seen that they got anything from fortune other than opportunity, which gave them the material so as to be able to introduce into it whatever form they chose. And without that opportunity, the virtue of their spirit would have been wasted; and without that virtue, the opportunity would have come in vain.

It was therefore necessary for Moses to find the people of Israel in Egypt, enslaved and oppressed by the Egyptians, so that in order to escape servitude they were disposed to follow him. It was suitable that Romulus not settle in Alba Longa, and that he should have been exposed at his birth, if he was to become the king of Rome and the founder of that fatherland. It was necessary that Cyrus find the Persians discontented under the empire of the Medes, and the Medes soft and effeminate because of their long peace. Theseus would not have been able to demonstrate his virtue if he had not found the Athenians dispersed. Thus these opportunities made these men happy, and their own excellent virtue caused the opportunities to be revealed whence their fatherlands were ennobled and became very happy. Those who, like these men, become princes in virtuous ways, acquire their principalities with difficulty, but hold them with ease. And the difficulties they have in acquiring the principality arise in part from the new orders and manners they are forced to introduce in order to establish their state and their security. One has to appreciate that there is nothing more difficult to realize, nor more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage, than to take the lead in introducing new orders. For the one who introduces them has as enemies all those who are doing well under the old orders, while his defenders, namely all those who would do well under the new orders, are lukewarm. This lukewarmness arises in part out of fear of their adversaries, who have the laws on their side, and in part from the incredulity of men, who do not truly believe in new things until they have seen them with solid experience. Whence it arises that whenever those who are hostile have the opportunity to attack, they do it like partisans, while those others defend the new orders lukewarmly, in such a manner that, along with the orders, the one who introduces them is imperiled.

It is necessary, therefore, if one wants to discuss this part well, to examine whether these innovators stand by themselves, or if they depend on others. That is, whether to carry out their work they need to beg, or whether instead they can use force. In the first case they always come to ill and do not accomplish anything. But when they rely on themselves, and they are able to use force, then rarely is it that they are imperiled. From this it arose that all the armed prophets were victorious and the unarmed ones were ruined. For beyond the things already said, the nature of peoples is changeable, and it is easy to persuade them of a thing, but it is difficult to keep them in that persuasion. For this reason it is suitable for them to be ordered in such a manner that when they no longer believe, one can make them believe by force. Moses, Cyrus, Theseus and Romulus

would not have been able to make their peoples observe their constitutions for long if they had been unarmed, as in our times happened to Brother Girolamo Savonarola. He was ruined in his new orders when the multitude began not to believe him and he had no manner for holding firm those who had believed, nor to make the unbelieving believe. Men such as these face great difficulty in their conduct on this score, and all of their dangers are along the way, and it is best that they overcome them with virtue. But once they have overcome them, and once they begin to be held in veneration since they have eliminated those who used to envy them their quality, they remain powerful, secure, honored and happy.

To such lofty examples I want to add an example that is lesser, but that still has some similarity with those men, and I want it to suffice for all such similar cases, and this is Hiero the Syracusan. That man, from being a private citizen, became the prince of Syracuse, nor did he get anything from fortune other than the opportunity. For, when the Syracusans were oppressed, they elected him as their captain: hence he was worthy of being made their prince. And he was of such great virtue, even in his fortune as a private man, that he who writes about him says "that he lacked nothing appropriate to kingship save a kingdom." Hiero eliminated the former military force and established a new one; he abandoned former alliances and took up new ones; and, since he had alliances and soldiers that were his own, he was able on such a foundation to build any structures whatsoever, so that he endured much labor in acquiring and little in maintaining.

CHAPTER 7: On new principalities that are acquired with the arms and fortune of others

Those who, through fortune alone, pass from being private persons to being princes, do so with little trouble; but they maintain themselves with a great deal of trouble. And along the way they have no difficulty, because they fly into princeship; but their difficulties all arise once they are in place. Cases such as these are when a state is granted to someone for money; or by the grace of whoever concedes it, as happened to many persons in Greece, in the cities of Ionia and the Hellespont, where they were made princes by Darius so that they would hold their cities for his security and glory; and as was done also to those emperors who, from being private persons, attained the Empire by corrupting the soldiers. These persons rely simply on the will and fortune of whoever has granted the principality to them, and those are two things that are very volatile and unstable. Such men neither know how nor are able to maintain that rank. They do not know how, because, unless he be a man of great genius and virtue, it is not reasonable that, after always having lived in private fortune, he should know how to command. They are not able, because they do not have troops that could be friendly and faithful to them. States that come about suddenly, furthermore, like all other things of nature that are born and grow quickly, cannot develop roots and branches, with the result that the first adverse

weather would eliminate them, unless, as was stated, these men, who have so unexpectedly become princes, are of such virtue that they know right away how to prepare themselves to keep what fortune has placed in their laps, and they are able to lay afterward the foundations that others lay in advance of becoming princes.

Concerning the first and the second of the said manners of becoming a prince, by virtue or by fortune, I want to adduce two examples that arose during days that are within our memory, and these are Francesco Sforza and Cesare Borgia. Francesco was a private man who became duke of Milan by the means that were called for, and with great virtue of his own, and what he acquired with a thousand pains he maintained with little effort. On the other hand, Cesare Borgia, who was called Duke Valentino by the people, acquired his state through his father's fortune, and on the same account he lost it, even though he took every care, and did all those things that ought to have been done by a prudent and virtuous man to put down roots in the states that the arms and fortune of others had granted him. For, as was said above, he who does not lay his foundations in advance may, with great virtue, lay them afterward, although they be laid with pain for the builder and with peril for the building. Thus, if one will consider all the steps of the duke, one will see that he lay great foundations for his future power. These I do not judge superfluous to discuss, for I would not know what better precepts to give to a new prince than the example of his actions. And if he did not profit by his orders it was not his fault, because this arose from an extraordinary and extreme malignity of fortune.

Alexander VI, when he wanted to make a great man of the duke, his son, faced many difficulties, both present and future. First, he could not see a way to make him the lord of any state that was not a state of the Church. And if he decided to take it from the Church, he knew that the duke of Milan and the Venetians would not concede it to him (for by then Faenza and Rimini were under the protection of the Venetians). He saw, beyond this, that the arms of Italy, and especially those of which he might have made use, were in the hands of those who necessarily feared the greatness of the pope, and for that reason he could not trust them, since they were all with the Orsini or the Colonna and were their accomplices. It was necessary, therefore, in order securely to become lord of a portion of those states, to upset those orders and to bring disorder to the states of Italy. This was easy for him, since he found that the Venetians, moved by other reasons, had decided to bring the French again into Italy, which not only did he not prohibit, but instead facilitated by the annulment of King Louis' first marriage.

Thus the king came into Italy with the help of the Venetians and the consent of Alexander. No sooner was the king in Milan than the pope had troops from him for the invasion of the Romagna, which was permitted by the Venetians on account of the king's reputation. When, therefore, the duke had acquired the Romagna and defeated the Colonnesi, and when he wanted to maintain this and proceed farther ahead, two things

impeded him. One was his own army, which to him did not seem trustworthy, the other was the will of France. That is, he feared that the Orsini arms of which he had availed himself might fail beneath him, and not only impede his acquisition, but take away what he had acquired; and that the king might also do the same to him. He had some proof of the Orsini when, after the capture of Faenza, he attacked Bologna, since he saw them go cold in that attack. And, as for the king, he learned his spirit when, after taking the duchy of Urbino, Valentino attacked Tuscany and the king made him desist from the campaign.

Whence it was that the duke decided no longer to depend on the arms and fortune of others. And the first thing he did was weaken the Orsini and Colonna factions in Rome, for he won to himself all of their adherents who were noblemen, making those noblemen his own and giving them great stipends, and he honored them according to their qualities with mercenary contracts and commands in such a manner that, within a few months, the affection for the factions was eliminated and their spirits were turned completely to the duke. After this, he waited for the opportunity to eliminate the Orsini leaders, having dispersed those of the Colonna house. It came well to him, and he used it better. For when the Orsini realized, late, that the greatness of the duke and of the Church was their ruin, they held a meeting at Magione, in Perugian territory. From this there arose the rebellion of Urbino and the tumults of the Romagna and infinite dangers for the duke, all of which he overcame with the help of the French. And, once his reputation was restored, since he did not trust France or any other external forces, because he did not want to have to risk using them, he turned to deceit. He knew so well how to dissimulate his spirit that the Orsini themselves, through Signor Paolo, were reconciled with him. And, in order to secure him, the duke did not fail Signor Paolo in any manner of obligation, giving him money, clothing and horses, so that the Orsini's own simplicity led them into the duke's hands at Senigallia.

Thus, once these leaders were eliminated, and their partisans had become his friends, the duke had thrown down very good foundations for his power, since he possessed all of the Romagna and the duchy of Urbino, and it appeared to him that he had especially acquired the friendship of the Romagna and won its peoples wholly to himself because they had begun to savor their own well-being. And because the following point is worthy of notice and should be imitated by others, I do not want to leave it out. After the duke had taken the Romagna, since he found it commanded by impotent lords who preferred to despoil their subjects rather than correct them, and who had given them motive for disunion not unity, so that the province was completely full of robberies, feuds and every other kind of insolence, he judged it necessary, since he wanted to render it peaceful and obedient to the ruling power, to give them good government. For this reason he appointed there Messer Remirro de Orco, a cruel and expeditious man, to whom he gave the fullest power. This man rendered the Romagna peaceful and unified in a short time, to the duke's very great reputation. But then the duke decided that such excessive authority was not

necessary, because he worried that it would become hateful. He appointed there a civil tribunal, in the middle of the province, with a most excellent presiding judge, in which each city had its own advocate. And because Valentino knew that the past rigors had generated some hatred toward him, to purge the spirits of those peoples and to win them wholly to himself, he wanted to show that if any cruelty had taken place, it arose not from himself, but from the harsh nature of his minister. And seizing an opportunity for this, in Cesena one morning, he had Remirro placed in two pieces in the town-square, with a piece of wood and a bloody knife at the man's side. The ferocity of that spectacle left those peoples at once satisfied and stupefied.

But let us return to where we left off. I say that when the duke found himself very powerful, and in part secure against present dangers, since he was armed in his own manner, and had eliminated any neighboring forces that might have harmed him, there remained for him, if he wanted to proceed in his acquisitions, his doubt concerning the king of France. For he knew that the king, who had been late to recognize his error, would not tolerate it. For this reason the duke began to look for new alliances, and to vacillate with France about the passage the French were making toward the Kingdom of Naples against the Spanish who were besieging Gaeta. His intention was to secure himself against the French, which he would have succeeded quickly in doing if Alexander had lived. And such was the duke's conduct as regarded present things.

But as regarded future things, he had to worry, first, that a new successor to the Church might not be his friend, and might try to take away what Alexander had given him. Against this he thought to defend himself in four ways: first, by eliminating all the bloodlines of those lords he had despoiled, in order to take away from a pope the opportunity they offered; second, by winning to himself all of the noblemen of Rome, as stated, so as to be able through them to hold the pope in check; third, by making the College of Cardinals as much his own as he could; and fourth, by acquiring so much of an empire before the pope died that all by himself he could resist a first assault. Of these four things he had accomplished three at the death of Alexander; the fourth he had almost accomplished. For of the lords he had despoiled he killed as many as he could reach, and very few saved themselves; the Roman noblemen he had won over to himself; and in the College of Cardinals he had a very large faction. As for a new acquisition, he was planning to become lord of Tuscany. He already controlled Perugia and Piombino, and he had taken up the protection of Pisa. And as soon as he had no doubts concerning France (although he did not have to fear France any longer, since the French had already been despoiled by Spain of the Kingdom of Naples, with the result that both kings had to purchase his friendship), he would have jumped to Pisa. After this, Lucca and Siena would have surrendered immediately, partly out of ill will toward the Florentines, and partly out of fear; and for the Florentines there would have been no remedy. If this had succeeded for him (it would have happened in the same year that Alexander died), he would have

acquired so many forces and such a reputation that he would have been able to stand alone, and he would have depended no longer on the fortune and forces of others, but on his own power and virtue. But Alexander died five years after Valentino had started to draw his sword. He left the duke with only his state in the Romagna consolidated. All of the others were up in the air, between two very powerful enemy armies, and the duke himself was sick nearly to death. Yet there were such a great ferocity and so much virtue in the duke, and so well did he understand how men are won or lost, and so strong were the foundations that had been established in so little time, that, if he had not had those armies on top of him, or if he had been healthy, he would have stood through every difficulty.

And that his foundations were good was seen, since for more than a month the Romagna waited for him. In Rome, although he was half alive, he was safe. And although the Baglioni, Vitelli and Orsini entered Rome, they could raise no followers against him. And if he could not make whomever he wanted pope, at least he could ensure that the pope was not someone he did not want. But if, on the death of Alexander, he had been healthy, everything would have been easy for him. And he told me, in the days when Julius II was created pope, that he had thought through what might happen if his father died, and for everything he had found a remedy, except that he never thought that at his father's death he too would be close to death.

Thus, having summarized all of the actions of the duke, I would not know how to reproach him. On the contrary, I would like to put him forward, as I have done, to be imitated by all who through fortune and the arms of others have risen to rule. For, since he had a great spirit, and his aim was high, he could not have conducted himself better. And only the brevity of Alexander's life and his own sickness opposed his designs. Whoever in his new principality judges it necessary to secure himself against enemies, to gain friends for himself, to win whether by force or by fraud, to make himself loved and feared by his peoples, and followed and revered by his soldiers, to eliminate those who are able or ought to harm you, to renew ancient orders with new manners, to be severe and pleasing, magnanimous and liberal, to eliminate an unfaithful military and create a new one, to maintain the friendships of kings and princes in such a manner that they have either to benefit you with their favor, or, if they harm you, to do it with caution, can find no fresher examples than the actions of that man.

Only in the creation of Julius as pontiff, since he made a poor choice, may the duke be criticized. For, as stated, although he was not able to make a pope after his own manner, he was able to keep anyone from being pope, and he should never have allowed in the papacy any of the cardinals he had offended, or any of those cardinals who, if they became pope, would have to fear him. For men offend out of either fear or hatred. Among all the cardinals, those whom he had offended were St. Peter in. Chains, Colonna, St. George and

Ascanio Sforza. All of the rest, if they became pope, had reason to fear him, except for Rouen and the Spaniards: these last out of kinship and obligation; the former, because of his own power, since he was connected to the Kingdom of France. Therefore the duke, before anyone else, should have created as pope a Spaniard. And if he could not, he should have consented to Rouen and not St Peter in Chains. And whoever believes, in dealing with great personalities, that new benefits cause old injuries to be forgotten, deceives himself. Thus the duke erred in this choice, and it was the cause of his final ruin.

CHAPTER 8: On those who have achieved principalities through wicked deeds

But because a private man may become a prince in two further manners that cannot be attributed wholly to fortune or to virtue, I do not wish to leave them out, although one may be reasoned about more extensively where republics are treated. These are either when, by some wicked and nefarious way, a man ascends to the principality, or when a private citizen with the favor of his fellow citizens becomes prince of his fatherland. And when I speak of the first manner, it will be demonstrated with two examples, one ancient and the other modern, without entering otherwise into the merits of this point, because I judge these examples sufficient for whoever needs to imitate them.

Agathocles the Sicilian, whose fortune was not only that of a private man but of one that was most low and abject, became king of Syracuse. This man, who was born of a potter, led ever a wicked life at each step of his career. Nonetheless, he accompanied his wicked deeds with such great virtue of spirit and of body that, once he devoted himself to the military, he rose through its ranks to be governor of Syracuse. When he was established in that rank, he decided to become prince, and to hold with violence and without obligation to others what had been granted to him by consent. Having an agreement to this plan of his with Hamilcar the Carthaginian, who was then with his armies fighting in Sicily, Agathocles assembled the people and the senate of Syracuse one morning, as though he had to decide things pertinent to the republic. And at an arranged signal, he had all of the senators and the richest of the people killed by his soldiers. Once these persons were dead, he occupied and held the principate of that city without any internal opposition. Although Agathocles was twice defeated by the Carthaginians and finally besieged, not only was he able to defend his city, but, having left part of his troops in defense against the siege, with the rest he attacked Africa. And in a short time he freed Syracuse from the siege, and he brought the Carthaginians to extreme deprivation, so that they were forced to come to terms with him, to be content with their possession of Africa, and to leave Sicily to him.

Thus whoever considers the actions and life of this man will not see things that he could attribute to fortune, or he will see only a few of them, since it is the case, as stated above, that Agathocles attained the principate not through anyone's favor, but through the ranks of the military, which he had climbed through a thousand sacrifices and perils, and he maintained the principate with so many spirited and very risky decisions. And yet one cannot call it virtue to kill one's fellow citizens, to betray one's friends, to be without faith, without compassion, without religion. Such manners may be used to acquire rule but not glory. For if one were to consider Agathocles' virtue in entering into and escaping dangers, and the greatness of his spirit in enduring and overcoming adverse things, one does not see why he should be judged inferior to any most excellent captain; nonetheless, his bestial cruelty and inhumanity, with infinite wicked deeds, do not admit that he should be celebrated among the most excellent men. One cannot, therefore, attribute to fortune or to virtue what was accomplished by him without either one.

In our times, while Alexander VI was reigning, Liverotto the Fermano, who had lost his father as a small boy several years before, was raised by a maternal uncle of his called Giovanni Fogliani. And in the first years of his youth he was sent to fight under Paolo Vitelli, so that having received that training he might achieve some excellent military rank. After Paolo was killed, Liverotto fought under Paolo's brother, Vitellozzo, and in a very short time, because he was clever and gallant in both his person and his spirit, he became the highest ranking man in Vitellozzo's army. However, since it seemed to him a servile thing to follow others, he decided, with the help of some citizens of Fermo, to whom serving him was more dear than the liberty of their fatherland, and with the support of Vitellozzo, to occupy Fermo. And he wrote to Giovanni Fogliani that, since he had been many years away from home, he wished to come to see him and his city, and to inspect some part of his patrimony. And, since he had been working hard for no other reason than to acquire honor, in order that his fellow citizens might see that he had not spent his time in vain, he wished to come in a way that was honorable, accompanied by one hundred of his friends and servants on horseback. And he begged Giovanni to please give the order that he should be received honorably by the Fermani, since this would confer honor not only on him, but also on Giovanni, since Liverotto was his ward.

And so Giovanni. neglected no appropriate ceremonies toward his nephew, and he had him welcomed honorably by the Fermani. Liverotto lodged in his own houses, where, having stayed a few days, and taken care secretly to arrange what was necessary for his wicked deed to come, he held a most impressive banquet to which he invited Giovanni Fogliani and all the most prominent men of Fermo. And once the food courses, and all of the other entertainments that are usual at banquets like these, were finished, Liverotto artfully made certain sensitive statements, speaking of the greatness of Pope Alexander, and of Cesare, his son, and of their undertakings. When Giovanni and the others replied to these statements, Liverotto stood up all at once, telling them that those were matters to

speak about in a more secret place, and he withdrew to a room where Giovanni and all the other citizens followed him. No sooner were they seated, when, from the secret places of the room, there came out soldiers who killed Giovanni and the others. After this homicide Liverotto mounted on horseback, rode through the town, and besieged the highest magistracy in its palace, so that the magistrates were forced out of fear to establish a government of which he made himself the prince. And now that all those who could have harmed him if they were malcontent were dead, he strengthened himself with new civil and military orders, with the result that, in the space of the one year in which he held the principality, he was not only secure in the city of Fermo, but he became frightening to all of his neighbors. And his overthrow would have been as difficult as that of Agathocles, if he had not let himself be deceived by Cesare Borgia, when at Senigallia, as was said above, Valentino snared the Orsini and the Vitelli. There Liverotto too was taken, just one year after the parricide he committed, and together with Vitellozzo, whom he had had for a teacher in his virtues and in his crimes, he too was strangled.

Anyone might wonder how it happened that Agathocles, and anyone like him, after infinite betrayals and cruelties, could live securely in his fatherland for so long, and defend himself from external enemies, while yet his own citizens never conspired against him; and meanwhile many others have not been able to maintain their states by means of cruelty, even in peaceful times, not to mention in the uncertain times of war. I believe that this depends on whether cruelties are badly used or well used. Cruelties may be called "well used," if it is permitted to speak well of evil, when they are done all at once, out of the necessity of securing oneself, and when afterward they are not insisted upon, but are converted as much as possible into utility for the subjects. Cruelties "badly used" are those, even if they are few at the beginning, that instead grow over time rather than extinguish themselves. Those princes who observe the first manner may have some remedy for their state, with God and with men, as Agathocles did; for the others it is impossible to maintain themselves.

From this it should be noted that, in seizing a state, the one who occupies it should consider carefully all of those offenses that it is necessary for him to commit, and to commit all of them at once, so as not to have to renew them every day, and to be able, by not renewing them, to reassure men, and to win them to himself by benefiting them. Whoever does otherwise, whether out of timidity or from bad counsel, need always keep his sword in hand. Nor can he ever rely on his subjects, since they, because of their fresh and continuing injuries, can never be sure of him. For this reason injuries ought to be done all together, so that being tasted less, they offend less. Benefits ought to be done little by little, so that they taste better. Above all, a prince ought to live with his subjects in such, a manner that no chance event whatsoever, whether for ill or for good, makes him change it; for, when owing to adverse times, necessities arise, then you have no time to do

ill, and the good that you do will not help you, for it is judged to be forced, and you receive no thanks for it whatsoever.

CHAPTER 9: On the civil principality

But to come to the other point, when a private citizen, not through wickedness or other intolerable violence, but through the favor of his fellow citizens, becomes prince of his fatherland (which may be called a “civil principality” -- and to arrive there neither complete virtue nor complete fortune is necessary, but rather a fortunate cleverness), I say that one ascends to this principality either with the favor of the people or with the favor of the great. For in every city are found these two differing humors, and from this it arises that the people desire to be neither commanded nor oppressed by the great, and the great desire both to command and to oppress the people. And from these two differing appetites there arises in the city one of three effects: principality, or liberty, or license. The principality is brought into being either by the people or the great, according as the one or the other of these factions has the opportunity for it. For, since the great see that they cannot resist the people, they begin to polish the reputation of one of their own, and they make him prince so as to be able, under his shadow, to satisfy their appetite. The people, too, when they see that they cannot resist the great, polish the reputation of one man, and they make him prince in order to be defended by means of his authority.

He who comes to the principality with the help of the great maintains himself with more difficulty than he who becomes prince with the help of the people. He finds himself prince with many persons about him who think they are his equals, and for this reason he can neither command nor manage them after his own manner. But he who arrives at the principality with popular favor finds himself alone, and he has about him either no one or very few who are not prepared to obey. Beyond this, one cannot in honesty satisfy the great without injury to others, but one may so satisfy the people, for the end of the people is more honest than that of the great, since the latter want to oppress and the former want not to be oppressed. Moreover, a prince can never secure himself against the people when they are hostile, since they are too many, but against the great he may secure himself, since they are few. The worst thing that a prince may expect from a hostile people is to be abandoned by it. But from the great who are hostile he must fear not only being abandoned but also that they may move against him, for, since these have more awareness and more cleverness, they plan in advance how to save themselves, and they try to ingratiate themselves with the one they hope will win. Further, the prince always necessarily lives with the same people, but he can get along just fine without the same great men, since he is able at any time to make or unmake some of them, and to take away or give them reputation at his pleasure.

To clarify this point better, I say that the great should be considered principally in two manners: either they conduct themselves in such a manner in their proceedings that they are obligated wholly to your fortune, or not. Those who obligate themselves, and are not rapacious, ought to be honored and loved. And those who do not obligate themselves have to be examined in two manners. If they do this out of cowardice and natural lack of spirit, then you should make use of them, especially those who are of good counsel, because in prosperous times it brings you honor and in adverse times you have nothing to fear from them. But when from scheming and on account of ambition they do not obligate themselves, that is a sign that they think more of themselves than of you; and against those men the prince must guard himself, and fear them as though they had been revealed to be enemies, because in adversities they will always help to ruin him.

One who becomes prince through the favor of the people, therefore, ought to keep them friendly to him. This will be easy for him, since they ask only not to be oppressed. But one who becomes prince against the people, with the favor of the great, ought, before anything else, to try to win the people to himself, which will be easy for him if he takes up their protection. And since men, when they receive good from someone from whom they were believing they would receive evil, are more obliged to their benefactor, likewise the people become quickly more benevolent toward him than if he had been brought to the principality through their favors. The prince may win them to himself in many ways, although, because these vary according to the circumstances, a certain rule cannot be given for them, and for this reason the ways will be omitted. I shall conclude only that for a prince it is necessary to have the people as his friend; otherwise, in adversities, he has no remedy. Nabis, prince of the Spartans, withstood a siege by all Greece, and by a most victorious Roman army, defending his fatherland and his state against them. And it sufficed for him, when the danger was approaching, to secure for himself only a few men; whereas, if he had had the people as his enemy, this would not have been enough.

And let there be no one who counters this opinion of mine with that trite proverb that “He who builds on the people builds on mud.” That holds true when a private citizen lays his foundation on the people, and allows himself to think that the people will free him if he is oppressed by his enemies, or by the authorities. In such a case he could easily find himself deceived, as happened at Rome to the Gracchi and at Florence to Messer Giorgio Scali. But if as a prince who is able to command, he builds on the people, and if he is a man of heart, who does not take fright at adversities, and does not fail in his other preparations, and who, with his spirit and his orders, keeps the populace inspired, he will never find himself deceived by the people, and he will see that he has laid foundations that are good.

Princes of this kind are usually imperiled when they are about to ascend from a civil to an absolute order. Such princes command either by themselves or by means of magistracies. In the latter case their state is weaker and more dangerous, because they rely completely on the will of those citizens who preside in the magistracies, and these, especially in adverse times, may with great facility take the state away from him, either by abandoning him or by going against him. And amid dangers the prince has no time to seize absolute authority, for citizens and subjects who in emergencies are used to receiving commands from the magistracies, in these emergencies are not about to obey the commands that come from him. And always in uncertain times he will have a shortage of those in whom he can trust. A prince of this kind cannot found himself on what he sees in peaceful times, when the citizens have need of his state, for then everyone rushes up to him, everyone promises, and each is willing to die for him so long as death is far off. But in adverse times, when his state needs its citizens, few of them are to be found. This experience is so much more dangerous inasmuch as one may go through it one time only. For this reason a wise prince must adopt a manner by which his citizens, always and in every kind of circumstance, have need of his state and of himself, and then they will always be faithful to him.

CHAPTER 10: In what manner the strengths of all principalities should be measured

It is appropriate, while examining the qualities of these principalities, to consider another thing, that is, whether a prince has a state sufficiently strong that he may stand by himself if he needs to, or if, instead, he needs always to be defended by others. To clarify this point better, I say that I judge the ones who can stand by themselves to be those who are able, whether through abundance of men or of money, to put together a proper army, and to fight a battle in the field with whoever comes to attack them. And, similarly, I judge the ones who always need others to be those who cannot appear on the field against the enemy, but must flee within their walls and guard them. As to the first case, it has been discussed, and in what is coming we shall say about it what is needed. As to the second case, nothing else can be said save to advise such princes to fortify and supply their own town, and to pay no attention to the countryside. Whoever has fortified his town well, and managed himself concerning the other affairs of his subjects, as stated above, and as will be said below, will be attacked always with great caution. For men are always the enemies of undertakings that appear difficult, and it cannot seem easy to attack a man who holds his own town gallantly and is not hated by his people.

The cities of Germany are very free; they have little countryside; they obey the emperor when they want to, and they fear neither him nor any other nearby power. For they are fortified in such a manner that each power thinks that taking them would be tedious and difficult. They all have suitable moats and walls; they have sufficient artillery;

they always keep in their public storehouses enough to drink, to eat and to burn for a year. And, beyond this, so to be able to keep the plebs fed without loss to the public treasury, they always keep a common store of the raw materials needed to supply work for a year in those trades that are the sinews and the life of that city and of the industries from which its plebs feeds itself. They also hold military training in repute, and, in this regard, they have many orders for maintaining it.

Thus a prince who has a strong city, and does not make himself hated, cannot be attacked. And even if there were someone who attacked him, the attacker would depart in shame, since the things of the world are so changeable that it is almost impossible that someone could stand idle with his armies for a year to besiege him. And if anyone should reply, "If the people have their farmlands outside, and they see them burn, they will have no patience, and the long siege and self-interest will make them forget the prince," I answer that a powerful and spirited prince will always overcome all of those difficulties, sometimes by giving his subjects hope that the evil will not last for long, sometimes by fear of the enemy's cruelty, sometimes by skillfully restraining those he thinks are too bold. Beyond this, the enemy ought reasonably to burn and ruin the countryside upon his arrival, which is also the time when the spirits of the prince's men are still warm and willing to fight in defense. Yet for this reason the prince should worry even less, because after some days, when spirits cool, the damages are already done, the evils are perceived, and there is no longer a remedy. Then, even more, his men come to unite with their prince, because he seems to have an obligation toward them, since it was for his defense that their houses have been burned and their farmlands ruined, and the nature of men is to obligate themselves for benefits given, just as for those received. Therefore, if everything is considered well, it will not be difficult for a prudent prince first to keep and then to confirm the spirits of his citizens in the siege, so long as he does not lack what is required to keep them alive or to defend them.

CHAPTER 11: On ecclesiastical principalities

At present it remains only for us to reason about ecclesiastical principalities. All of the difficulties that concern them arise prior to their possession, since they are acquired either through virtue or through fortune, and they are maintained without the one or the other. For they are sustained by orders that have become ancient in religion, which have been so powerful, and of a such a quality, that their princes are maintained in their states no matter the manner in which they proceed to live. These men, alone, have states and do not defend them. They have subjects and do not govern them. And their states, although they are not defended, are not taken from them. And the subjects, although they are not governed, do not care, nor do they think of freeing themselves from their princes, nor are they able to. Hence only these principalities are secure and happy. Yet since they are ruled by higher causes that no human mind is able to reach, I shall leave out speaking about

them: since they are erected and maintained by God, it would be the office of a presumptuous and rash man to discuss them. Nonetheless, in case anyone should inquire of me why it happens that the Church has come to such greatness in temporal affairs, despite the fact that, before Alexander, the Italian powers (and not only those that called themselves powers, but every baron and lord, even the least of them) esteemed her little in temporal affairs, and now a king of France trembles at her, and she has been able to remove him from Italy and to ruin the Venetians -- although this is known, it does not seem to me to be superfluous to recall a good part of it to memory.

Before Charles, the king of France, came into Italy, this province was under the control of the pope, the Venetians, the king of Naples, the duke of Milan and the Florentines. These powers had to have two principal cares: the one being that an outsider should not enter into Italy with arms; the other being that none of them should increase his state.

Those about whom they had the most concern were the pope and the Venetians. To keep the Venetians back, the unity of all the others was needed, as happened in the defense of Ferrara. To keep the pope down, they used the barons of Rome. Since these barons were divided into two factions, the Orsini and Colonna, there was always a cause for scandal among them. And, since they lived in the very sight of the pontiff with weapons in their hands, they kept the pontificate weak and unstable. Although sometimes there emerged a spirited pope, as Sixtus was, nevertheless fortune or wisdom could never disoblige him of these inconveniences. And the brevity of the popes' lives was the reason for this, for, in the ten years, on average, that a pope lives, he would hardly be able to bring down one of these factions. And if, for example, one pope had almost eliminated the Colonna, there would spring up another pope, an enemy of the Orsini, who would permit the Colonna to rise again before the Orsini could eliminate them. This kept matters such that the temporal powers of the pope were of little esteem in Italy.

Then there arose Alexander VI, who, among all those who have ever been pontiff, showed the extent to which a pope with money and armies could prevail. With Duke Valentino as his instrument, and with the opportunity of the arrival of the French, he did all of those things that I discuss above concerning the actions of the duke. Although his intent was not to make the Church great, but the duke, nonetheless what he did resulted in the greatness of the Church, which after his death, once the duke was eliminated, became heir to his labors.

Then came Pope Julius. He found the Church great, since it possessed all of the Romagna; the barons of Rome had been eliminated, since Alexander's blows annihilated their factions; and he also found the road clear for accumulating money in a manner that before Alexander had never been practiced. These things Julius not only continued but

increased. He planned, moreover, to win Bologna, to eliminate the Venetians, and to chase the French out of Italy. He succeeded in all of these enterprises, and with so much greater honor for himself, inasmuch as he did everything for the increase of the Church, and not for any private person. He also kept the factions of the Orsini and Colonna within the bounds in which he found them; and although there may have been leaders among them who could have tried to make some disturbance, still two things stopped them. One was the greatness of the Church, which frightened them; the other was that they did not have any cardinals, who are the origin of the tumults between them. Nor will these factions ever be at peace so long as they have cardinals, because their cardinals nourish the factions, both in Rome and beyond, and their barons are forced to defend the factions, and so from the ambition of prelates are born discords and the tumults among the barons.

His Holiness Pope Leo has thus found this pontificate most powerful. One hopes, if these last popes have made it great with their arms, this one will make it very great and venerable through his goodness and his other infinite virtues.

CHAPTER 12: How many kinds of military forces there are, and concerning mercenary soldiers

Since I have discussed point by point all of the qualities of those principalities that I proposed to reason about at the start, and since I have considered to some extent the causes of their well-being or illness, and shown the manners in which many persons have tried to acquire and hold them, it remains for me now to discuss generally the offensive and defensive measures appropriate to each of the aforementioned principalities.

We have said above that it is necessary for a prince to have good foundations; otherwise, of necessity, he must be ruined. The principal foundations that all states must have, whether new or old or mixed, are good laws and good arms. And because good laws cannot exist where there are not good arms, and where there are good arms there should be good laws, I shall leave out the reasoning of laws and I shall speak of arms.

I say, therefore, that the arms with which a prince defends his state are either his own or they are mercenary, either auxiliary or mixed. Mercenary and auxiliary arms are useless and dangerous, and if a prince keeps his state founded on mercenary arms, he will never stand firm nor secure. For these arms are disunited, ambitious, without discipline, and unfaithful. They are gallant among friends, but cowardly among enemies. They have no fear of God, and no faith with men. Defeat is deferred only so long as the attack is deferred. In peace you are despoiled by them, and in war you are despoiled by your enemies. The reason for this is that they have no other love, nor other reason, that keeps them in the field, save a small stipend, and this is not sufficient to make them want to die

for you. They very much wish to be your soldiers so long as you do not make war, but when war comes, they want to desert or let their contracts expire.

I should not have to expend much effort of persuasion on this point, for Italy's present ruin is caused by nothing other than her having relied, for the space of many years, on mercenary arms. These arms once made progress under certain captains, and they seemed gallant when they fought among themselves, but when a foreigner came they showed what they really were, so that Charles, the king of France, was able to seize Italy "with a piece of chalk." He who used to say that the cause of this was "our sins," was telling the truth, although the sins were not the ones he believed they were, but rather these I have narrated. And, since these were sins of princes, they too have suffered the penalties for them.

I want better to demonstrate the infelicity of these arms. Mercenary captains are either men excellent in arms, or not. If they are excellent, you cannot trust them, because they will always aspire to their own greatness, whether by oppressing you who are their patron, or by oppressing others beyond your intention. But if the captain is not virtuous, he ruins you in the ordinary way. And if it were objected that anyone who has arms in his hands will do this, whether he is a mercenary or not, I would reply that the arms have to be directed either by a prince or by a republic. The prince should go in person and himself assume the office of captain. The republic has to send its own citizens; and if it sends one who does not prove a courageous man, it should exchange him; and when he is courageous, it should restrain him with laws so that he does not cross the line. From experience it is seen that very great strides are made by princes who are alone in charge, and by armed republics, while nothing but harm is done by mercenary arms. And a republic armed with its own arms falls into servitude under one of its own citizens with more difficulty than does a republic armed with external arms.

Rome and Sparta stood armed and free for many centuries. The Swiss are highly armed and very free. Among the examples of ancient mercenary arms are the Carthaginians, who were almost undone by their mercenary soldiers after the first war with the Romans was finished, even though the Carthaginians had their own citizens as captains. After the death of Epaminondas, the Thebans made Philip the Macedonian the captain of their troops, and after their victory he took away their liberty.

The Milanese, after the death of Duke Filippo, hired Francesco Sforza against the Venetians. Once the enemy was defeated at Caravaggio, he joined with them to undo his patrons the Milanese. Sforza, Francesco's father, when hired by Queen Giovanna of Naples, suddenly left her disarmed, so that she, in order not to lose the kingdom, was forced to throw herself in the lap of the king of Aragon.

And if the Venetians and Florentines have in the past increased their empires with these arms, and their captains have not made themselves their princes, but defended them, I answer that the Florentines in this case were favored by chance, for of the virtuous captains whom they might have feared, some did not win, some had opposition, and some turned their ambition elsewhere. The one who did not win was John Hawkwood, whose loyalty could not be known because he did not win; but everyone will admit that, if he had won, the Florentines would have been at his discretion. Sforza always had the Bracceschi against him, so that each watched the other. Francesco turned his ambition toward Lombardy, Braccio against the Church and the Kingdom of Naples.

But let us come to what happened a little while ago. The Florentines made Paolo Vitelli their captain: he was a most prudent man, and one who from private fortune had won a very great reputation. If he had taken Pisa, there is no one who could deny that it would have been necessary for the Florentines to stick with him, for if he had gone into the pay of their enemies they would have had no remedy, and yet, if they kept him, they would have had to obey him.

If one considers the steps of the Venetians, one sees that they advanced securely and gloriously so long as they made war with their own people, which was before they turned to their enterprises on land. Then, with their nobles and their plebs under arms, they advanced most virtuously. But once they began to fight on land, they abandoned this virtue and followed the customs of warfare in Italy. And in the beginning of their expansion on land, because they did not have much state there, and because they had a great reputation, they did not have much to fear from their captains. But when they grew, which was under Carmagnola, they had a taste of this error. For when they saw that he was very virtuous, since under his command they defeated the duke of Milan, and since they knew on the other hand that he was cool toward the war, they determined that they could not win with him anymore, because he was unwilling, nor could they dismiss him, because they did not want to lose what they had acquired. Hence it became necessary, in order to secure themselves against him, to kill him.

Afterward the Venetians had as their captains Bartolomeo of Bergamo, Roberto da Sanseverino, the Count of Pitigliano, and other similar men. With them they had to fear their losing rather than their winning, as then happened at Vailate, where, in one day's battle, the Venetians lost what they had acquired with so much trouble over eight hundred years. Such arms bring acquisitions that are only slow, weak and late, and the losses are sudden and astonishing.

And because I have offered these examples from Italy, which has been governed by mercenary arms for many years, I want to discuss these arms from a higher perspective, so that having seen their origin and progress one may better correct them. You have to understand, therefore, that in these latter times, as soon 'as the Empire began to be cast off in Italy, and the pope seized more reputation in temporal affairs there, Italy became divided into many states. Many of the large cities took up arms against their nobles, who, with the favor of the emperor, had previously kept them oppressed. The Church favored the cities in order to gain reputation for itself in temporal affairs. In many other cities their own citizens became their princes. Hence, since almost all of Italy had fallen into the hands of the Church and of a few republics, and since customarily neither the priests nor the city-dwellers knew about arms, they began to hire outsiders. The first who gave reputation to this kind of military force was Alberico of Cunio, a Romagnol. From the school of this man were descended, among others, Braccio and Sforza, who in their times were the arbiters of Italy. After these came all the others who, down to our own times, have governed these arms. And the result of their virtue was that Italy was overrun by Charles, plundered by Louis, forced by Ferdinand, and insulted by the Swiss.

The order they followed was, first, so as to give reputation to their own forces, they stripped the infantry of its reputation. They did this because, being without a state and working for pay, having only a few infantrymen would give them no reputation, and if they had many they would not be able to feed them. For this reason they resorted to horses, so that in more supportable numbers, they could be fed and honored. And matters developed to the point that in an army of twenty thousand soldiers there were not even two thousand foot infantry. Beyond this, they made every effort to relieve themselves and their soldiers from labor and fear. They did not kill one another in their battles, but took prisoners without asking ransom. They did not fire at night into the towns; and the soldiers in the towns did not fire at night at the tents. They made neither a stockade nor a ditch around their camp. They did not campaign in winter. And all of these things were permitted in their military orders, and invented by them, as has been said, in order to flee labor and dangers, so much so that they have conducted Italy into slavery and shame.

CHAPTER 13: On auxiliary troops, mixed troops, and one's own

Arms are auxiliary, which is to say they are the other sort of useless arms, when one calls on a powerful person who with his arms comes to help and defend you, as Pope Julius did in recent times. Julius, after he witnessed the failure of his mercenary arms in his invasion of Ferrara, turned to auxiliary arms, and he made an agreement with Ferdinand, the king of Spain, that with his troops and armies Ferdinand would help him. These arms may be useful and good in themselves, but for whoever calls on them they are almost always harmful. For, if they lose, you remain defeated, and if they win, you remain their prisoner. And although the ancient histories are full of examples of this, I do not want to

leave out this fresh example of Pope Julius II, whose decision could not have been less considered, when, because he wanted Ferrara, he put himself entirely in the hands of an outsider. But his good fortune made a third thing happen, so that he did not have to harvest the fruit of his bad choice: for, after his auxiliaries were routed at Ravenna, the Swiss rose up, and beyond all expectation, whether of others or his own, they chased away the victors, and he became the prisoner neither of his enemies, who had fled, nor of his auxiliaries, since he had won with arms other than theirs. The Florentines, when they were completely unarmed, brought ten thousand French troops to Pisa to take it, and in this decision they bore more danger than in any other time of their troubles. The Emperor of Constantinople, to oppose his neighbors, brought ten thousand Turks into Greece, who, when the war was over, did not want to leave. This was the beginning of the servitude of Greece to the infidels.

Whoever, therefore, wants not to be able to win should avail himself of these arms, since they are much more dangerous than mercenary arms. For in auxiliary arms the plot for your ruin is already prepared: they are all united and all directed toward the obedience of others. But with mercenary arms, after they have won, before they offend you, a greater opportunity and more time are needed, since they are not a united body, and they were found and paid by yourself, and a third party whom you put at their head cannot instantly seize so much authority among them as to offend you. In sum, in mercenary arms cowardice is more dangerous, in auxiliary arms virtue is. A wise prince, therefore, has always avoided such arms and relied on his own; and he has wished rather to lose with his own men than to win with others, judging it not a true victory if it was acquired with the arms of others.

I shall never hesitate to cite Cesare Borgia and his actions. This duke entered the Romagna with auxiliary arms, bringing in troops that were all French. And with these he took Imola and Forli. But since he did not think such arms were safe, he turned to mercenary arms, since he judged there was less danger in them. And he engaged the Orsini and the Vitelli, whose arms, when he later discovered them to be doubtful and disloyal and dangerous to manage, he eliminated. And he relied on his own. And one can easily see what difference there is between the one and the other of these kinds of arms, if one considers what a difference there was in the reputation of the Duke from when he had only the French, to when he had the Orsini and the Vitelli, to when he remained with his own soldiers with himself on top. And one will find that his reputation always increased, and he was never esteemed so much as when everyone saw that he was completely in possession of his own arms.

I did not want to depart from my examples, which are Italian and fresh, nevertheless, I do not wish to leave out Hiero the Syracusan, since he was one of those who were named by me above. That man, as I said, when he had been made head of the armies by the Syracusans, knew immediately that the mercenary soldiers were useless, because their commanders behaved like our Italians, and since he decided he could neither keep them nor let them go, he had them all cut to pieces, and afterward he made war with his own arms, and not those of others.

I want also to recall to memory a figure of the Old Testament suited to this purpose. When David offered himself to Saul to go to combat Goliath, the Philistine challenger, Saul, in order to give David spirit, armed him with his own arms. But David, once he had them on his shoulders, rejected them, saying that with those arms he could not acquit himself well, and for that reason he wanted to meet the enemy with his own sling and his own knife. In the end, the arms of others fall off your back, or they weigh you down, or they constrict you.

After Charles VII, the father of King Louis XI, had, with his fortune and virtue, freed France from the English, he understood this necessity of arming oneself with one's own arms, and he decreed in his kingdom the ordering of men-at-arms and of infantry. Afterward King Louis, his son, eliminated the ordering of infantrymen and began to hire the Swiss. This error, which was followed by the other kings, is, as in fact one now sees, the cause of that kingdom's dangers, because while it gave reputation to the Swiss it degraded the king's own arms. For he has completely eliminated the infantry, and his men-at-arms are tethered to the arms of others, for, since they are accustomed to fight alongside the Swiss, they do not think they can win without them. From this it arises that against the Swiss the French are wanting, and without the Swiss they do not try against others. Thus the armies of France have been mixed, part mercenary and part their own, and both of these arms together are much better than simple auxiliary or simple mercenary troops, but much inferior to their own troops. Let the example mentioned suffice, for the Kingdom of France would be unconquerable if Charles's order had been expanded or preserved, yet the small prudence of men begins a thing because it tastes good for the time being, while it fails to notice the poison that lies beneath, as I said above concerning consumptive fevers. Thus he who in a principality does not recognize evils when they arise is not truly wise, and this ability is given to few. And if the first cause of the ruin of the Roman Empire is considered, it will be found that it was when they started to hire the Goths, for from that beginning the forces of the Roman Empire began to be enervated, and all of the virtue that left it was given to the Goths.

Thus I conclude that, unless it has its own arms, no principality is secure. Instead it is completely dependent on fortune, since it does not have the virtue that faithfully defends it in adversities. And it was always the opinion and judgment of wise men "that nothing is so weak and unstable as a reputation for power not founded on its own strength." One's own arms are those that are composed of your subjects, your citizens, or your dependents: all the others are either mercenary or auxiliary. And the manner for ordering one's own arms is easy to find, if one goes over the orders of the four men named by me above, and if one sees how Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, and the many republics and princes that have taken up arms have ordered themselves. To these orders I entirely submit.

CHAPTER 14: What the prince should do concerning the military

Thus a prince must have no other object or thought, nor take any thing as his own art save warfare and its orders and training. For that is the only art that belongs to one who commands, and it is an art of such virtue that it not only maintains those who are born princes, but many times it makes men of private fortune rise to that rank. Contrariwise, one sees that princes, when they have thought more about delicate things than about arms, have lost their state. The chief reason why you lose your state is the neglect of this art; and the reason why you can acquire one is because you are proficient in this art. Francesco Sforza, because he was armed, from being a private man became duke of Milan. His sons, because they fled the hardships of arms, from being dukes became private men. For, among the other reasons that being unarmed does you evil, it makes you contemptible, which is one of the infamies against which the prince should guard himself, as will be said below. For between an armed and an unarmed man there is no harmony whatsoever, and it is not reasonable that a man who is armed should willingly obey a man who is unarmed, and that the unarmed should be secure among servants who are armed, because since there is disdain in the armed man and suspicion in the unarmed man, it is not possible for them to work well together. And, therefore, a prince who does not understand the military, beyond his other unhappinesses, as was said, can neither be esteemed by his soldiers nor trust in them.

He ought therefore never to lift his thought from the exercise of war, and in peace he should train more than in wartime. This he may do in two manners: one is with deeds, the other is with his mind. And as to his deeds, beyond keeping his men ordered and trained, he must be frequently on hunts, and through these accustom his body to hardships, and meanwhile learn the nature of terrains, and recognize how mountains rise, how valleys open up, how plains lie, and understand the nature of rivers and marshes, and take very great care in this. This knowledge is useful in two manners: first, if he learns to recognize his own country, the prince can better understand its defenses; afterward, through the

recognition and use of those terrains, he can comprehend with facility any other new terrain that it becomes necessary for him to study. The ridges, the valleys, the plains, the rivers, the marshes that are in Tuscany, for example, have a certain similarity with those of other provinces, so that from the knowledge of the terrain in one province, one can easily arrive at the knowledge of other provinces. And the prince who lacks this skill lacks the first part of what a captain should have, because this part teaches how to find the enemy, select encampments, march armies, order battlefields, and besiege towns to your advantage.

Among the other praises that writers have conferred on Philopoemen, prince of the Achaeans, is this: that even in times of peace he was. ever thinking of the ways of war. And when he was in the countryside with his friends, he used often to stop and reason with them: "If your enemies were on top of that hill, and we found ourselves here with our army, which of us would have the advantage? How could one go to meet them while preserving order? If we wanted to retreat, what would we have to do? If they retreated, how would we have to follow them?" And as he went he used to propose to them all of the chances that may befall an army. He used to listen to their opinion, he used to say his own, and would strengthen it with these reasonings, so that, because of these continuous cogitations, there could never arise any accident when he was leading armies for which he did not have the remedy.

But as for the exercise of his mind, the prince ought to read histories, and in them consider the actions of excellent men. He should see how they governed themselves in their wars, and examine the reasons for their victories and losses, so as to be able to avoid the latter and imitate the former. And, above all, he must do as did some excellent men in the past, who chose some man from an earlier time who· had been praised and glorified, to imitate. They always kept a book with the man's deeds and actions close by; and it is said that Alexander the Great imitated Achilles; Caesar, Alexander; and Scipio, Cyrus. And whoever reads the life of Cyrus written by Xenophon recognizes afterward, in Scipio's life, how much glory that imitation brought him, and how much, in his chastity, affability, humanity and liberality, Scipio conformed with those things that had been written by Xenophon about Cyrus.

A wise prince should observe manners such as these, and never in peaceful times remain idle, but industriously make capital of them, so as to be able to avail himself of them in adversities, so that fortune, when she changes, finds him prepared to resist them.

CHAPTER 15: On those things for which men, and especially princes, are praised or blamed

It remains, therefore, to see what should be the manners and conduct of a prince, whether with his subjects or with his allies. And because I know that many people have written about this, I worry in writing about it too that I shall be held presumptuous, especially since in my disputation of this material I shall depart from the orders of the others. But since my intent is to write a thing that is useful for whoever understands it, it seemed to me more appropriate to go after the effectual truth of the thing than after the imagination of it. And many have imagined republics and principalities that have never been seen or known to exist in truth. For there is such a distance from how one lives to how one ought to live that he who abandons what is done for what ought to be done learns what will ruin him rather than what will save him, since a man who would wish to make a career of being good in every detail must come to ruin among so many who are not good. Hence it is necessary for a prince, if he wishes to maintain himself, to learn to be able to be not good, and to use this faculty, and not to use it, according to necessity.

Thus, leaving behind the things that have been imagined about a prince, and discussing those that are true, I say that all men, when they are spoken about, and especially princes, because they are placed higher, are noted for some of the following qualities, which bring them either blame or praise. That is to say that one man is held liberal, one a miser (I use a Tuscan word because in our tongue an “avaricious” man is still he who desires to take through robbery; we call a “miser” the man who refrains excessively from using his own wealth); one is held a giver, one rapacious; one cruel, one compassionate. The one is held a breaker of faith, the other faithful; the one effeminate and pusillanimous, the other fierce and spirited; the one kind, the other proud; the one lascivious, the other chaste; the one honest, the other clever; the one hard, the other easygoing; the one serious, the other light; the one religious, the other unbelieving; and similar things. And I know that everyone will admit that it would be a most praiseworthy thing, among all the qualities listed above, for there to be found in a prince those that are held to be good. But since these qualities cannot all be had, and since one cannot wholly observe them, as human conditions do not allow it, it is necessary for the prince to be prudent to the extent that he knows how to flee the infamy of those vices that might take the state away from him. And as for those that would not take the state away from him, he should guard himself against them if possible, but, if he cannot; here he may let himself proceed with less caution. Indeed, let him not worry about incurring the infamy of those vices without which it is difficult for him to save the state. For, if everything be well considered, one thing will be found that will appear a virtue, but will lead to his ruin if adopted; and another thing that will seem a vice, if adopted, will result in his security and well-being.

CHAPTER 16: On liberality and parsimony

If I am to begin, therefore, with the first of the qualities stated above, I say that it would be good to be held liberal. Nonetheless, liberality, when used in such a manner that you are held to be liberal, harms you, for if it is used virtuously and as it ought to be used, it will not be recognized, and you will not shed the infamy of its contrary. But if you want to keep the name of a liberal man, it becomes necessary to omit no quality of sumptuousness, so that always a prince of this sort will entirely consume his means in works such as these; and he will be required, in the end, if he wishes to maintain the name of a liberal man, to burden his people extraordinarily, to tax heavily, and to do everything that can be done to raise money. This will begin to make him hateful to his subjects, and of little esteem to anyone else as he becomes impoverished. The result is that because of this liberality of his, since he has offended the many and rewarded the few, he feels every new hardship, and with each new danger he is imperiled, and when he recognizes this, and wishes to draw back from it, he immediately incurs the infamy of the miser. Thus, since a prince cannot use this virtue of the liberal man in a recognizable manner without harm to himself, he ought, if he is prudent, not to worry about the name of the miser. For, with time, he will be thought ever more liberal, seeing as, on account of his parsimony, his revenues are sufficient for him, he can defend himself against whoever makes war on him, and he can make campaigns without burdening his peoples. So much so that he arrives at using “liberality” toward all those from whom he does not take, who are infinite, and “miserliness” toward all those to whom he does not give, who are few.

In our times we have not seen great things done except by those who have been thought misers; the others were destroyed. Pope Julius II, although he used the name of a liberal man to reach the papacy, afterward did not think to maintain it for himself when he wanted to be able to make war. The present king of France has made so many wars without imposing an extraordinary tax on his subjects only because his long parsimony has subsidized his superfluous expenses. If the present king of Spain had been thought liberal, he would neither have made nor won so many campaigns. Therefore a prince ought to care little -- if he wishes not to have to rob his subjects, and to be able to defend himself, and not to become poor and contemptible, and not to be forced to become rapacious -- about incurring the name of miser. For this is one of those vices that let him rule. And if someone should say, “Caesar attained the Empire through liberality; and many others, because they were and were also reputed to be liberal, achieved the highest ranks,” I answer that either you already are a prince, or you are on the way to acquiring a principality. In the first case, this liberality is harmful; in the second, it is indeed necessary to be and to be held to be liberal. And Caesar was one of those who wanted to achieve the principality of Rome. But if, after he had achieved it, he had survived, and he had not refrained from those expenditures, he would have destroyed that Empire.

And if anyone should answer, “Many have been princes and have done great things with their armies who were reputed very liberal,” I reply to you that the prince spends either what belongs to himself and his subjects, or what belongs to others. In the first case, he ought to be sparing. In the other, he ought not leave out any part of liberality. And as to the prince who goes with his armies, who feeds himself with spoils, with sackings, and with ransoms, and manages on what belongs to others, for him this liberality is necessary: otherwise he would not be followed by his soldiers. And of what is not yours or your subjects’ one may give more broadly, as did Cyrus, Caesar and Alexander. For spending what belongs to others does not strip you of reputation but adds to it; the spending of what is yours is what hurts you. There is nothing that consumes itself so much as liberality, since as you use it you lose the ability to use it, and either you become poor and contemptible or, in order to avoid poverty, rapacious and hateful. Among all the things that a prince ought to guard himself against is being contemptible and hateful, and liberality leads you to both things. There is more wisdom, therefore, in keeping for oneself the name of miser, which bears an infamy without hatred, than, out of wishing for the name of liberal, to incur necessarily the name of rapacious, which bears an infamy coupled with hatred.

CHAPTER 17: On cruelty and compassion, and whether it is better to be loved than to be feared, or the contrary

Descending next to the other qualities mentioned before, I say that each prince ought to desire to be reputed compassionate and not cruel. Nonetheless he must be alert not to use this compassion badly. Cesare Borgia was reputed to be cruel; nonetheless, that cruelty of his restored the Romagna, unified it, and restored it to peace and faithfulnes. If one considers this well, one will see that he was much more compassionate than the Florentine people, who, to avoid the name of cruelty, allowed the destruction of Pistoia. A prince, therefore, must not care about the infamy of cruelty in keeping his subjects united and faithful, for by making a very few exemplary punishments he will be more compassionate than those who, through too much compassion, permit the disorders that give rise to killings or robberies. For the latter usually harm an entire population, but in the executions ordered by the prince a particular person is harmed. Among all the kinds of princes, for the new prince it is impossible to avoid the name of cruelty because new states are full of perils. And Virgil, in the mouth of Dido, says

> *The harshness and the newness of my kingdom drive me to make such exertions, and to protect with guards my borders far and wide.*

Nonetheless, the new prince must be cautious in believing accusations and in taking action, and he should not create fear of himself, but proceed in a manner tempered with prudence and humanity, lest too much confidence make him incautious, and too much distrust render him intolerable.

From the above a debate arises whether it is better to be loved than feared or the contrary. The answer is that one would want to be both the one and the other, but because it is difficult to join them together, if one has to do without one of the two, it is much safer to be feared than loved. For the following may be said generally about men: that they are ungrateful, changeable, pretenders and dissemblers, avoiders of dangers, and desirous of gain, and while you do them good they are wholly yours, offering you their blood, their property, their life, and their children, as I said above, when the need is far off, but when it comes close to you they revolt. And that prince who has founded himself wholly on their words, because he finds himself naked of other preparations, is ruined. For the friendships that are acquired at a price, and not with greatness and nobility of spirit, are paid for but they are not owned, and at their expiration they cannot be used. Men exhibit less caution in attacking one who makes himself loved than one who makes himself feared, since love is held in place by a bond of obligation that, because men are wretched, is broken at every opportunity for utility to oneself, but fear is held in place by a fright of punishment that never abandons you.

Nonetheless, the prince must make himself feared in such a manner that, although he does not acquire love, he avoids hatred, for being feared and being not hated may exist very well together. And this he will always do if he abstains from the property of his citizens and his subjects, and from their women. And if he must proceed against someone's life, he should do it when there is appropriate justification and manifest cause. But above all he should abstain from the property of others, for men sooner forget the death of their father than the loss of. their patrimony. After all, reasons for taking property are never lacking, and he who begins to live through robbery always finds an excuse for confiscating what belongs to others, while, on the contrary, the excuses for bloodshed are more rare and sooner disappear.

But when the prince is with his armies, and has command of a multitude of soldiers, then it is necessary to care not a whit about a reputation for cruelty, because without such a reputation no army was ever kept united and ready for whatever feat of arms. Among the admirable actions of Hannibal is numbered the following, that, although he led a very great army, mixed with infinite kinds of men, to fight in lands that were foreign, there never arose any dissension, neither among themselves, nor against the prince, in bad as well as in his good fortune. This could not have arisen from anything other than his inhuman cruelty, which, together with his other infinite virtues, made him always venerable and terrible in the sight of his soldiers; and without it, his other virtues would

not have sufficed for him to achieve that effect. And writers have hardly understood this, for on the one hand they admire this career of his, and on the other they condemn the principal cause of it.

And that it is true that Hannibal's other virtues would not have sufficed may be understood in Scipio, who was exceedingly rare, not only in his own times but in the remembered deeds of all times, yet against whom his armies in Spain rebelled. This arose from nothing other than his compassion, which had given more license to his soldiers than is appropriate to military discipline. His compassion was reproved in the Senate by Fabius Maximus, who called him the corrupter of the Roman military. When the Locrians had been destroyed by a legate of Scipio's, they were not avenged by him, nor was the insolence of that legate corrected. And it all arose from his easy nature; so much so that when someone wanted to excuse him in the Senate, he said that "Many men know better how not to err than to correct errors." This nature of his would, with time, have dishonored the fame and glory of Scipio, if he had persevered in it as a commander, but, since he lived under the direction of the Senate, this harmful quality of his not only was hidden, indeed it brought him glory.

I conclude, therefore, returning to being feared and loved, that since men love at their own pleasure, but fear at the pleasure of the prince, a wise prince must found himself on that which is his, and not on that which belongs to others. He must only contrive to avoid hatred, as was said.

CHAPTER 18: In what manner faith should be kept by princes

How laudable it is in a prince to maintain faith and to live with integrity and not with cleverness, everyone understands. Nonetheless, one sees from experience in our own times that the princes who have done great things have held faith of small account, and they have known how, with their cleverness, to so spin men's brains that in the end they have outdone the ones who founded themselves on sincerity.

You should know, therefore, that there are two kinds of combat: one with laws, the other with force. The first one is proper to man, the second is proper to beasts. But because many times the first is not enough, one must have recourse to the second. For a prince, therefore, it is necessary to know well how to use both the beast and the man. This point has been taught covertly to princes by the ancient writers, who write how Achilles and many others of those ancient princes were given to Chiron the centaur to raise, so that under his instruction he would look after them. This having as preceptor a half-beast and half-man means nothing other than that it is necessary for a prince to know how to use the one and the other nature; and the one without the other cannot endure.

Thus, since it is necessary for a prince to know well how to use the beast, from among the beasts he should choose the fox and the lion, for the lion does not defend himself from traps, and the fox does not defend himself from wolves. He must, therefore, be a fox to recognize traps, and a lion to awe the wolves. Those who simply stick with the methods of the lion do not understand this. A prudent lord, therefore, cannot, nor should he, observe faith when such observance turns against himself, and when the reasons that made him promise it have been eliminated. And if men were all good, this precept would not be good; but because they are wicked, and they would not observe faith for you, you too do not have to observe it for them. Nor does a prince ever lack reasons to legitimate the painting over of his non-observance. Of this one could give infinite modern examples, and show how many peaces, how many promises have been rendered void and vain by the faithlessness of princes. And the one who has known better how to use the fox has come out better. But it is necessary to know how to mask this nature well, and to be a great pretender and dissembler, and men are so very simple, and they so well obey present necessities, that he who deceives will always find someone who will allow himself to be deceived.

I do not want to be silent about one of the fresh examples. Alexander VI never did anything -- never thought about anything -- other than deceiving men, and he always found material with which he could do it. Never was there a man who had greater efficacy in his assertions; and the greater the oaths with which he affirmed something, the less he observed it. Nonetheless, his deceits always fell out for him according to his desires, because he knew well this side of the world.

Thus it is not necessary for a prince actually to have all of the above written qualities, but it is very necessary to seem to have them. Indeed, I shall dare to say the following: that when these qualities are possessed and always observed they are harmful, but when they seem to be possessed, they are useful. So it is useful to seem compassionate, faithful, kind, honest, religious -- and to be so, but to stay in a manner so constructed in your spirit that, if it is necessary not to be these things, you are able and know how to become the contrary. And one must understand the following: that a prince, and especially a new prince, cannot observe all of those things for which men are believed good, since to maintain his state he is often required to act against faith, against charity, against kindness, and against religion. And for this reason he needs to have a spirit disposed to change as the winds of fortune and the variation of things command him, and, as I said above, not to depart from the good if he is able, but to know how to enter into evil when he needs to.

Thus a prince must take great care that nothing ever escape his mouth that is not full of the five qualities stated above, and that he appear, to those who hear him and observe him, all compassion, all faith, all integrity, all kindness, all religion -- and there is nothing more necessary to appear to possess than this last quality. And men in general judge more with their eyes than their hands, because everyone is permitted to see, but few are permitted to touch. Everyone sees what you seem to be, few feel what you are -- and those few do not dare to oppose the opinions of the many that are supported by the majesty of the state. And in the actions of all men, and especially of princes (where there is no judge to whom to protest), one looks to the end. Therefore let a prince act so as to win and maintain his state; the means will always be judged honorable and praised by everyone. For the masses are always captivated by appearances, and by the outcome of the thing, and in the world there are only the masses, and the few have no standing when the many have someone to support them. A certain prince of present times, whom it is best not to name, never preaches anything but peace and faith, and he is a great enemy of both; and if he had observed both, either his reputation or his state would have been taken from him many times.

CHAPTER 19: On avoiding contempt and hatred

But because I have spoken concerning the most important of the qualities that are mentioned above, I want briefly to discuss the others under the following general terms: that the prince should think, as is said in part above, to avoid those things that could make him hateful and contemptible, and whenever he will avoid this thing, he will have fulfilled his duties and in the other infamies he will find no peril at all.

It makes him hateful, above all, as I said, if he is rapacious and the usurper of the property and women of his subjects, from which he should abstain. And whenever he does not take away property or honor from the generality of men they live content. One has only to combat the ambition of the few, which is controlled in many ways and with facility. But it makes him contemptible if he is believed to be changeable, light, effeminate, pusillanimous, irresolute: from this a prince ought to guard himself as from a reef, and contrive that in his actions are recognized greatness, spiritedness, weightiness, and strength. With regard to private dealings among his subjects, he should want his pronouncements to be irrevocable. And he should maintain a reputation such that no one thinks either to deceive or to get around him.

The prince who creates this opinion of himself is very well-regarded; and against anyone who is well-regarded it is difficult to conspire, and with difficulty is he attacked, so long as it is understood that he is excellent and revered by his own people. For a prince must have two fears: one internal, on account of his subjects, the other external, on account of outside powers. From the latter he is defended by good arms and good allies;

and always, if he has good arms, he will have good allies. And internal matters will always stand firm when external ones stand firm, unless they have already been disturbed by a conspiracy. And even if external things should be in motion, if he is composed and has lived just as I have said, provided he does not despair, he will always withstand every thrust; as I said Nabis the Spartan did.

But as to his subjects, if external things are not in motion, he has to fear that they may conspire secretly, against which the prince secures himself very well if he avoids being hated and despised and keeps the people satisfied with him, which it is necessary to achieve, as I said above at length. And one of the most powerful remedies a prince has against conspiracies is to be not hated by his own people. For whoever conspires always believes he satisfies the people with the death of their prince, but if he believes he would offend them, he lacks the spirit to take such a step. For the difficulties that exist on the side of the conspirators are infinite, and from experience one sees that conspiracies have been many, but few have had a good end. For whoever conspires cannot be alone, nor can he take partners save from those he believes to be malcontent. And as soon as you have revealed your intention to a malcontent, you give him the stuff with which to make himself content, because plainly he can hope for every advantage from the knowledge: so that when he sees sure gain on this side and he sees that it is doubtful and full of peril on the other side, he must be either a rare friend or a completely obstinate enemy of the prince to observe faith with you. And to reduce the thing to brief terms, I say that on the side of the conspirator there is only fear, apprehension and worry about a punishment that frightens him; but on the side of the prince there is the majesty of the principality, the laws, and the shields of his friends and of the state that defend him. So that when popular benevolence is added to all these things, it is impossible that anyone should be so foolhardy as to conspire, because where a conspirator ordinarily has to be afraid in advance that the deed will go wrong, in this case he must also be afraid afterward, since he will have the people as his enemy once the crime has been committed, and for this reason he can hope for no refuge whatsoever.

One could give infinite examples concerning this material, but I want to be content with only one, which happened in the times of our fathers. When Messer Annibale Bentivoglio, grandfather of the present Messer Annibale, who was prince in Bologna, had been killed by the Canneschi, who conspired against him, and no others survived him save Messer Giovanni, who was still in swaddling clothes, the people rose up immediately after such a homicide and killed all of the Canneschi. This arose from the popular good will that adhered to the house of the Bentivoglio in those times. This good will was so great that although no one of the house remained in Bologna who could rule the state, when the Bolognese had information that in Florence there was someone born of the Bentivoglio who was believed until then to be the son of a blacksmith, the Bolognese

came for him in Florence, and they gave him the government of their city, which was governed by him until Messer Giovanni reached an age appropriate for governing.

I conclude, therefore, that a prince must hold conspiracies of little account if the people are benevolent to him. But if they are his enemy, and they have hatred for him, he must fear everything and everyone. And well-ordered states, and wise princes, have with all diligence taken care not to make the great desperate, and to satisfy the people and keep them content, because this is one of the most important matters that concern a prince.

Among the kingdoms that are ordered and governed well in our times there is the Kingdom of France. In it are found infinite good institutions on which the liberty and the security of the king depend; of which the first is the Parlement and its authority. For the person who ordered that Kingdom recognized the ambition of the powerful and their insolence, and he judged that a bit in their mouth was necessary to correct them; and, on the other hand, he recognized that the hatred of the populace against the great was founded on fear. And although he wished to secure the populace, he did not want that this fear should be the particular care of the king, in order to take away from himself the blame that he might have incurred with the great if he favored the popular side, and with the popular side if he favored the great. And for this reason he established an independent judiciary, as a third party, that would be the one who, without blame for the king, would beat down the great and favor the lesser folk. And this order could not have been better or more prudent, nor could there be a greater reason for the security of the king and the kingdom. From this one may extract another notable thing: that princes must have the things that bring blame administered by others, but keep for themselves the things that bring favor. Again I conclude that a prince must esteem the great, but not make himself hated by the people.

It would appear perhaps to many persons, if the life and death of some Roman emperor were considered, that these emperors were examples contrary to this opinion of mine, because they could find some emperor who always lived excellently and showed great virtue of spirit, but nonetheless lost the Empire, or even was killed by his own men who had plotted against him. Since I wish, therefore, to respond to these objections, I shall, on the one hand, discuss the qualities of certain emperors, showing that the causes of their ruin were not dissimilar to what has been advanced by me; and, on the other hand, I shall place under consideration those things that are notable to whoever reads the deeds of those times. And I want it to suffice for me to select all of those emperors who succeeded to the Empire beginning with Marcus the philosopher following down to Maximinus: these were Marcus, his son Commodus, Pertinax, Julianus, Severus, his son Antoninus Caracalla, Macrinus, Heliogabalus, Alexander, and Maximinus. And, first, it should be noted that where in other principalities it is only necessary to contend with the

ambition of the great and the insolence of the people, the Roman emperors had a third difficulty: to have to endure the cruelty and avarice of their soldiers. This thing was so difficult that it was the cause of the ruin of many emperors, since it was difficult to satisfy both the soldiers and the people. For the people loved quiet, and for this reason they loved modest princes; and the soldiers loved the prince of military spirit, and that he should be insolent, cruel, and rapacious. They wanted him to practice these things among the people, so as to have their pay doubled and to vent their avarice and cruelty. These things brought it about that those emperors who, whether by nature or by art, did not have a great reputation, such that with it they might hold the one and the other in check, were always ruined. And most of them, especially those who came to the principality as new men, once they recognized the difficulty of these two different humors, turned to satisfying their soldiers while they cared little about injuring the people. Such a choice was necessary, because, since princes cannot fail to be hated by someone, they must first try not to be hated by collectivities, adhere to the soldiers rather than the people. This turned out to be useful or not for them depending on whether that prince knew how to maintain his reputation with the soldiers.

From these causes mentioned above it happened that among Marcus, Pertinax, and Alexander, who were all of modest life, lovers of justice, enemies to cruelty, humane and benign, all, except for Marcus, had a bad end. Marcus alone lived and died a most honored man, because he succeeded to the Empire by hereditary right. He did not have to acknowledge a debt to either the soldiers or the people, and since he was accompanied by many virtues that made him venerable, he always kept the one and the other order within their bounds, and he was never hated nor despised. But Pertinax was created emperor against the will of the soldiers, who, being accustomed to live licentiously under Commodus, could not tolerate that honest life to which Pertinax wished to return them. Having created hatred of himself, and to this hatred having added disdain, since he was old, soon Pertinax was ruined, in the first beginnings of his administration. And here one should note that hatred is acquired by means of good works as well as wicked ones; and for this reason, as I said above, a prince who wants to maintain his state is often forced not to be good. For when that collectivity -- whether it be the people, the soldiers, or the great -- that you judge you need most to maintain yourself, is corrupt, to satisfy it you must follow its humor, and good works then are your enemies.

But let us come to Alexander, who was of such goodness that among the other praises that are attributed to him there is this: that in the fourteen years he held the Empire no one was put to death by him without a trial. Nonetheless, since he was held to be effeminate, and a man who allowed himself to be governed by his mother, he was disdained for this and the army conspired against him and killed him.

Now, on the other side, reviewing the qualities of Commodus, of Severus, of Antoninus Caracalla and Maximinus, you will find them most cruel and rapacious. These, to satisfy the soldiers, spared no kind of injury that could be committed against the people. And all had a wretched end except Severus. For in Severus there was such virtue that, by maintaining the soldiers as his friends, although the people were burdened by him, he was able always to rule happily. For those virtues of his made him so remarkable, in the sight both of the soldiers and the people, that the latter remained somehow stupefied and astonished, and the former reverent and satisfied. And because the actions of that man were great and noteworthy in a new prince, I want briefly to show to what extent he knew well how to use the person of the lion and of the fox, whose natures, I say above, are necessary for a prince to imitate.

Since Severus knew the knavery of the emperor Julianus, he persuaded his army, of which he was captain in Slavonia, that it would be good to go to Rome to avenge the death of Pertinax, who had been killed by the praetorian soldiers. And under this color, without showing that he aspired to the Empire, he moved his army against Rome, and he arrived in Italy before his departure was known there. When he came to Rome, the Senate, out of fear, elected him emperor and put Julianus to death. After this beginning there remained for Severus two difficulties, since he wanted to become lord of all the state: one in Asia, where Pescennius Niger, the head of the Asian armies, had had himself proclaimed emperor; and the other in the West, where there was Albinus, who also aspired to the Empire. And because he judged it dangerous to reveal himself the enemy of both, he decided to attack Niger and deceive Albinus. To the latter he wrote that, now that he was elected emperor by the Senate, he wanted to share with him that dignity, and he sent him the title of Caesar and by decision of the Senate he joined him as a colleague, which things were accepted by Albinus as true. But after Severus had defeated and killed Niger and pacified eastern affairs, when he returned to Rome, he complained in the Senate that Albinus, little cognizant of the benefits received from him, had tried treacherously to kill him, and for this reason it was necessary to go and punish his ingratitude. Then he went to meet him in France, and took from him his state and his life. And whoever will examine minutely the actions of this man will discover him a most ferocious lion and a most clever fox, and he will see him feared and revered by everyone, and by the armies not hated, and he will not marvel that Severus, a new man, will have been able to hold so great an Empire, because his very great reputation always defended him from that hatred which, on account of his robberies, people might have conceived.

But his son Antoninus was also a man of most excellent parts, which made him admirable in the sight of the people and welcome to the soldiers, for he was a military man, most ready to endure any trouble, a disdainer of all delicate food and of all other comforts, and this made him loved by all the armies. Nonetheless his ferocity and cruelty were so great and so unheard of -- since after infinite particular murders he put to death a

great part of the people of Rome and all of Alexandria -- that he became most hateful to all the world. And he began to be feared even by those he had around him such that he was killed by a centurion in the midst of his own army. Here it is to be noted that assassinations such as these, which result from the planning of an obstinate spirit, are unavoidable for princes, since anyone who does not care about dying can attack him. But still the prince ought to fear them less, for they are very rare. Only he should guard himself against doing serious injury to any of those whom he employs, and whom he uses in princely services, as Antoninus had done, since he disgraced and killed a brother of that centurion, and he used to menace the centurion every day, yet kept him as his bodyguard, which was a reckless decision, apt to bring ruin, as happened to him.

But let us come to Commodus, who had great facility in maintaining the Empire because he had it by hereditary right, since he was the child of Marcus. And he needed only to follow in the footsteps of his father, and he would have satisfied both the soldiers and the people. But since he was of a cruel and bestial spirit, in order to practice his rapacity on the people, he took to indulging the armies and making them licentious. Moreover, by not maintaining his own dignity, for he descended often into the arenas to fight with gladiators, and did other things that were most vile and little worthy of his imperial majesty, he became contemptible in the sight of his soldiers. And since he was hated on the one hand and despised on the other, there was a conspiracy against him and he was killed.

It remains for us to narrate the qualities of Maximinus. He was a most warlike man, and since the armies were disgusted with the softnesses of Alexander, whom I discussed above, after Alexander's death they elected him to the Empire. This he possessed for not very long because two things made him hateful and contemptible. The first was that he was really vile, because he had formerly herded sheep in Thrace, which thing was very well known everywhere, and it brought him into great disdain in the sight of everybody. The second was because, at the beginning of his principate, he deferred going to Rome and taking possession of the imperial seat, so that his prefects in Rome and in every part of the Empire practiced many cruelties, and he created for himself the opinion that he was cruel. So, when all the world was stirred up, with disdain for the vileness of his blood, and with hatred on account of its fear of his ferocity, first Africa revolted, and then the Senate, together with the people of Rome and all Italy, conspired against him. To this was added his own army, which, when he was besieging Aquileia and was having difficulty capturing it, became disgusted with his cruelty, and since they feared him less, because they saw he had so many enemies, they killed him.

I do not want to reason about Heliogabalus or Macrinus or Julianus, who were immediately eliminated because they were entirely contemptible, and I shall conclude this discourse and say that the princes of our own times, in their conduct, have less of this difficulty of satisfying their soldiers in extraordinary ways; for, notwithstanding that some consideration has to be given to them, still the difficulty is quickly resolved, since none of our princes keeps together armies that are experienced in the government and administration of provinces, as were the armies of the Roman Empire. And for this reason, if it was more necessary then to satisfy the soldiers than the people, because the soldiers could do more than the people, today, for all princes, except for the Turk and the Sultan, it is more necessary to satisfy the people than the soldiers, because the people can do more than the soldiers. I except the Turk from this because he continually keeps together around him twelve thousand infantry and fifteen thousand cavalry on which the security and strength of his kingdom depend; and it is necessary for that lord to put aside any other consideration and keep them his friends. Similarly, since the kingdom of the Sultan is entirely in the hands of his soldiers, it is appropriate that he, too, without regard for the people, should maintain them as his friends. And you should notice that this state of the Sultan is unlike all the other principalities, because it is similar to the Christian pontificate, which cannot be called either a hereditary principality or a new principality. For the children of the old prince are not the heirs, and they do not remain as lords, but the next prince is rather he who is elected to that rank by those who have authority over it. And since this order is ancient, it cannot be called a new principality, since there are not any of those difficulties in it that there. are in new ones. For even if the prince is new, the orders of that state are old, and they are established to welcome him as though he were their hereditary lord.

But let us return to our matter. I say that whoever will consider the above-written discourse will see that either hatred or contempt has been the cause of the ruin of those emperors named above. And he will recognize, too, whence it arises that, with part of them proceeding in one manner and part in the contrary manner, in each of these two ways one of them had a happy end and the others unhappy ends. Because for Pertinax and Alexander, since they were new princes, it was useless and harmful to want to imitate Marcus, who was in the principality by hereditary right. And similarly for Caracalla, Commodus and Maximinus it was a pernicious thing to imitate Severus, because they did not have virtue such as would be sufficient to follow in his footsteps. Therefore a new prince in a new principality cannot imitate the actions of Marcus, nor again is it necessary for him to follow those of Severus. But he must choose from Severus those parts that are necessary to found his state, and from Marcus those that are appropriate and glorious for preserving a state that is already established and firm.

CHAPTER 20: Whether fortresses, and many other things made or done by princes every day to preserve their states, are useful or useless

Some princes, to hold their states securely, have disarmed their subjects; some others have kept their subject towns divided. Some have fed hatreds against themselves; some others have taken to winning over the persons who were suspect to them at the beginning of their states. Some have built fortresses; some have ruined and destroyed them. And although on all of these things I cannot pass definitive sentence, without coming to the particulars of those states where any decision like this has to be made, nonetheless I shall speak in the broad manner that the material in itself allows.

Thus it never happened that a new prince acting wisely disarmed his subjects; on the contrary, when he found them unarmed he always armed them. For in arming them those arms become yours: those who are suspect to you become faithful, and those who were faithful remain so, and from subjects they are all made into your partisans. And because all of your subjects cannot be armed, if the ones you arm are benefitted, the others are dealt with more securely. And that difference in treatment, which they recognize among themselves, renders them obligated to you, while those others excuse you, since they judge it necessary that the ones who have greater danger and duty should have greater reward. But if you disarm them, you begin to offend them: you show that you mistrust them, whether for cowardice or lack of faith, and the one and the other of these opinions generates hatred against you. And because you cannot stay unarmed, you must turn to a military of mercenaries, which is of that quality as was said above, and even if it were good, it cannot be large enough to defend you against powerful enemies and subjects who are suspect. For this reason, as I have said, a new prince in a new principality has always ordered the arms there: of these examples the histories are full. But when a prince acquires a new state, which like a limb is attached to his old state, then it is necessary to disarm that state, except for those who were your partisans in acquiring it; and these too it is necessary to render soft and effeminate, with time and as opportunities offer themselves, and to order things in such a manner that all the arms of your state belong only to those soldiers of yours who used to live with you in your old state.

Our own ancients, including those who were esteemed wise, used to say that it was necessary to hold Pistoia with factions and Pisa with fortresses. And because of this they nourished the differences in certain towns that were subject to them in order to possess them more easily. This, in those times when Italy was in a certain manner balanced, must have been a good feat; but indeed I do not believe it can be given as a precept today, for I do not believe that divisions ever did any good whatsoever. On the contrary, divided cities, when the enemy approaches, are necessarily lost, because the weaker party always joins with the outside forces so that the other party cannot remain in power.

The Venetians were moved, as I believe, by the reasons stated above, when they used to nourish the Guelf and Ghibelline sects in the cities that were subject to them. And although they never let them come to bloodshed, nevertheless they used to nourish these disagreements among them, so that, since those citizens were occupied by their own differences, they could not unite against the Venetians. This, as was seen later, did not turn out to their advantage, since when the Venetians were defeated at Vailate, immediately one of these factions became bold and took away from them all of their state. Measures like these are therefore evidence of weakness in the prince, because in a strong principality such divisions will never be permitted. For they are profitable only in peacetime, since by their means the prince may manage his subjects more easily, but when war comes such an order shows its own fallacy.

Without doubt princes become great when they overcome the difficulties and the opposing forces that face them. And for this reason fortune -- most of all when she wants to make a new prince great, since he has greater need of acquiring reputation than a hereditary one -- creates enemies for him and impels them to enterprises against him, so that he should have the opportunity to overcome them, and to climb higher by means of the ladder that his enemies have brought for him. For this reason, many judge that a wise prince, when he has the opportunity, must cleverly nourish some enmity, so that, when it is defeated, his greatness comes out increased.

Princes, and especially those who are new, have found more faith and more usefulness in those men who were held suspect at the beginning of their states than in those of whom they were confident at the beginning. Pandolfo Petrucci, prince of Siena, ruled his state more through those who were suspect to him than with others. But of this thing one cannot speak broadly because it varies according to the subject. I shall say only this, that at the beginning of his principate the prince can always win over very easily those men who had been enemies, and who are of a quality such that to maintain themselves they must rely on others. They are forced all the more to serve him with faith, inasmuch as they recognize that it is more necessary for them to cancel with deeds the sinister opinion that was had of them. Thus the prince always extracts more utility from them than from those who, because they serve him with too much security, neglect his affairs.

And since the matter requires it, I do not want to neglect to remind the princes who have taken a state anew by means of favors from within, that they should consider well what cause moved those who favored him to do so. And, if there is no natural affection among them, but if it was only because those men were not content with the former state, he will be able to maintain them as friends only with hardship and great difficulty, because it would be impossible for him to be able to please them. And if he reviews the cause of this well, with the examples that are drawn from ancient and modern affairs, he

will see that it is much more easy for him to win to himself as friends those men who used to be content under the previous state than those who, because they were not content with it, became his friends and favored him in occupying it.

It has been the custom of princes; in order to hold their states more securely, to build fortresses, so that they may be the bridle and the bit of those who might design to act against them, and to have a secure refuge from sudden attack. I praise such a measure because it has been practiced since ancient times; nonetheless, Messer Niccolo Vitelli, in our own times, was seen to destroy two fortresses in Citta di Castello in order to hold that state. Guidobaldo, duke of Urbino, when he returned to his dominion, from which he had been chased out by Cesare Borgia, razed to the foundations all of the fortresses of that province, and he judged that without them it would be more difficult to lose that state again. The Bentivoglio, when they returned to Bologna, used similar measures. Fortresses, therefore, are useful or not according to the times; and if in one respect they do well for you, in another they harm you. And this point may be discussed as follows: that prince who has more fear of the people than of outsiders should make fortresses; but he who has more fear of outsiders than of the people should do without them. The castle of Milan that was built there by Francesco Sforza has brought more harm to the house of Sforza than any of that state's disturbances. For this reason the best fortress there is, is not to be hated by the people. For even if you have fortresses, if the people hold you in hatred, the fortresses do not save you, since outsiders who will help them are never lacking for the people once they have taken up arms. In our own times, it is not evident that fortresses have profited any prince at all, with the exception of the countess of Forli, after her consort Count Girolamo was killed, since by means of her fortress she could flee the popular attack, wait for help from Milan, and recover her state, although the conditions then were such that there was no outsider to assist the people against her. Yet afterward, for her, too, the fortresses were of little value when Cesare Borgia attacked her, and her hostile people joined together with the outsider. For that reason, both then and earlier, it would have been safer for her not to be hated by the people than to have her fortresses. Therefore, having considered all of these things, I shall praise both whoever will make fortresses, and whoever will not make them, but I shall blame anyone who, because he trusts in fortresses, thinks little of being hated by the people.

CHAPTER 21: What the prince should do to be thought outstanding

Nothing makes a prince so greatly esteemed as do great campaigns and giving rare examples of himself. We have in our own times Ferdinand of Aragon, the present king of Spain. This man may be called almost a new prince, since from being a weak king he has become, through fame and glory, the first king of the Christians. And if you will consider his actions, you will find them all very great, and some you will find extraordinary. In the

beginning of his reign he attacked Granada, and that campaign was the foundation of his state. First of all, he did it privately and without fear of being impeded. He meanwhile kept occupied in the campaign the spirits of the barons of Castile, who, because they were thinking of the war, did not think of innovating; and by this means he acquired reputation and command over them without their notice. He was able furthermore to supply his armies with money from the Church and the people, and, through that long war, to lay a foundation for his military that afterward brought him honor. Beyond this, so as to be able to undertake greater campaigns, all the while making use of religion, he resorted to an act of pious cruelty by chasing the Marranos from his kingdom and despoiling them: nor could there be an example more wretched or more rare than this. He attacked Africa under this same cloak of religion; he made his campaign in Italy; and lately he has attacked France. And in this way he has always done and ordered great things that have kept the spirits of his subjects always suspended and wondering and worried over their outcome. And these deeds of his have been born the one from the other in such a manner as to never give space between each one and the next in which men might be able to work quietly against him.

It also helps a prince very much to give rare examples of himself concerning internal government (similar to those that are told about Messer Bernabo of Milan) when the opportunity occurs of someone who does something extraordinary in civil life, whether for good or evil, and to choose a manner to reward or punish him that will be very much talked about. Above all a prince must contrive, in each of his actions, to give himself the fame of a great man and of an excellent intelligence.

A prince is also esteemed when he is a true friend and a true enemy; that is, when without any hesitation he reveals himself in favor of one person and against another. Such decisiveness will always be more useful than staying neutral. For if two powerful neighbors of yours come to blows, either they are of a quality that if one of them wins you have to fear the victor, or not. In each of these two cases, it will always be more useful for you to reveal yourself and wage open war. For, in the first case, if you do not reveal yourself, you will always be the prey of whoever wins, to the pleasure and satisfaction of the one who was defeated, and you do not have justice or anything at all to defend you or come to your aid. For he who triumphs does not want friends who are suspect, and who do not help him in adversities; while he who loses offers you no refuge, because you chose not to take up arms to share in his fortune.

Antiochus had passed into Greece, having been brought there by the Aetolians in order to chase out the Romans. Antiochus sent orators to the Achaeans, who were allies of the Romans, to encourage them to remain neutral; and, on the other side, the Romans were trying to persuade them to take up arms for them. This matter came to be decided in the council of the Achaeans, where Antlochus' legate tried to persuade them to stay

neutral, to which the Roman legate replied: “As to what they say, moreover, about your not intervening in the war, nothing is farther from your interests: you will be the prize of the victor, without thanks and without dignity.” It will always happen that he who is not an ally will ask for neutrality from you, and the one who is your ally will ask that you come out with your arms. Irresolute princes, to avoid present dangers, follow that neutral way most of the time, and most of the time they are ruined.

But when the prince reveals himself strongly in favor of one side, if the one to whom you adhere wins, although he is powerful and you remain at his discretion, he is obliged to you, and there is a contract of love; and men are never so dishonest as to give a very great example of ingratitude by oppressing you; and victories are never so clear that the victor does not have to show some regard, above all, for justice. But if the one to whom you adhere loses, he gives you refuge; and so long as he can he helps you; and you become a partner in a fortune that may rise again.

In the second case, when those who fight each other are of a quality such that you do not have to fear the one who wins, it is even greater prudence to adhere to one of them, because you go to the destruction of one of them, bringing help to the other, who if he were wise, ought to save him. And if he wins, he remains at your discretion; yet it is impossible, with your help, that he not win. And here it should be noted that a prince must be careful never to make a partnership with one who is more powerful than himself in order to attack others, unless necessity compels him, as is said above, for if you win you remain his prisoner, and, as much as they can princes should avoid being at the discretion of others. The Venetians accompanied France against the duke of Milan even though they could have avoided the partnership, and the result was their ruin. But when one cannot avoid it (as happened to the Florentines when the pope and Spain went with their armies to attack Lombardy), then the prince must ally himself for the reasons said above. Nor let any state ever believe that it can always make safe choices. On the contrary, let it think that it has to take them all as doubtful. For it is found, in the order of things, that one never attempts to avoid one inconvenience without incurring another. Prudence consists in knowing how to recognize the qualities of the inconveniences and choosing the less bad as if it were good.

A prince must also show himself to be a lover of the virtues by giving hospitality to men of virtue, and he must honor those who are excellent in an art. Next, he must encourage his citizens to be able quietly to practice their trades, in commerce, in agriculture and in every other human occupation, so that one man is not afraid to improve his properties for fear they will be taken from him, and another is not afraid to open a business for fear of taxes. But he must prepare rewards for whoever wants to do these things, and for whoever thinks to increase his city or his state in whatever manner. Beyond this, at the appropriate times of the year, he should keep his people occupied with

feast-days and spectacles. And because every city is divided into guilds or wards, he should take account of those collectivities, meet with them sometimes, and offer himself as an example of humanity and munificence, while nonetheless always confirming the majesty of his high rank, for he does not want this ever, in any respect, to be lacking.

CHAPTER 22: On those whom princes keep in their service for secret matters

The choice of his ministers is not of small importance to a prince. These are good, or not, depending on the prudence of the prince. The first impression that one has of the mind of a lord comes in seeing the men that he has around him. And if they are capable and faithful one may always reckon him wise, since he has known both how to recognize that they are capable and to maintain them as faithful. But if they are otherwise, always one may come to a judgment of him that is not good, because the first error that he makes, he makes in this choice.

There was no one, if he knew Messer Antonio of Venafro when he was the minister of Pandolfo Petrucci, prince of Siena, who could not have judged Pandolfo to be a most worthy man, since he had that man as his minister. Minds are of three kinds: one that understands by itself; another that discerns what others understand; and a third that understands neither itself nor others. The first is most excellent, the second is excellent, and the third useless. It must be, therefore, of necessity, that if Pandolfo was not in the first rank, he was at least in the second. For whenever someone has the judgment to recognize the good or the evil that is done and said, even though he lacks the intelligence to discover it by himself, he recognizes good works and wicked ones by means of his minister, and he exalts the former and he corrects the others; and the minister cannot hope to deceive him, and he remains good.

But as for how a prince may know his minister, there exists the following manner that never fails. When you see that the minister thinks more of himself than of you, and that in all of his actions he seeks some profit for himself, a man of this kind, so constructed, will never make a good minister, and never will you be able to trust him. For the man who has someone’s state in his hand should never think of himself, but of the prince, and he should never bring to the prince’s attention anything that does not pertain to the prince. And, on the other side, the prince, in order to keep him good, should care for the minister by honoring him, making him rich, obligating him to himself, and giving him a share in honors and offices, so that the minister sees that he cannot stand without the prince, that his many honors do not make him desire more honors, that his many riches do not make him desire more riches, and that his many offices make him fear revolutions. When, therefore, ministers with regard to their princes, and princes with regard to their

ministers, are so established, they may trust one another, but when it is otherwise, the end becomes harmful always, whether for one or for the other.

CHAPTER 23: In what manner flatterers should be avoided

I do not want to leave .out one important point, an error from which princes defend themselves with difficulty if they are not very prudent, or if they do not make good appointments. And it regards the flatterers of whom the courts are full. Men so take pleasure in their own affairs, and they deceive themselves with them in such a manner, that with difficulty they defend themselves against this plague. Yet in seeking to defend themselves against flatterers, they run the danger of becoming contemptible. For there is no manner of guarding against flatteries other than for men to understand that they do not offend you when they tell you the truth; but when everyone can tell you the truth, you lose their reverence.

A prudent prince must keep to a third way, therefore, by appointing in his state men who are wise, and to these appointed persons only should he give free access to speak the truth to him, and only concerning those things that he asks them about, and nothing else. Yet he should ask them about everything, and hear their opinions, and afterward he should decide by himself, in his own manner. And in these councils, and with each one of them, he should conduct himself in such a manner that everyone knows that the more freely he speaks the more welcome he will be. Outside of those councils he should not want to hear anyone; he should stick with what has been decided; and he should be unmovable in his decisions. Whoever does otherwise either falls headlong because of flatterers, or he often changes his mind because of their varying opinions, from which there develops a low reputation of him.

I want in this regard to bring forth a modern example. Priest Luca, a man of Maximilian, the present Roman emperor, when he spoke of His Majesty, said that he used to take counsel with no one and that he never accomplished anything as he had planned it. This arose from his holding to a pattern contrary to the one stated above. For the emperor is a secretive man, he does not communicate his plans, and he does not seek out opinions about them. But once his plans start to be recognized and to be revealed as he puts them in motion, they begin to be contradicted by the persons he has around him, and he, like a simpleton, discards them. From here it arises that the things that he does in one day he destroys the next; it is never understood what he wants, or what he plans to do; and one cannot base oneself on his decisions.

A prince therefore must always take counsel, but when he wants to, and not when others want to. Indeed, he must discourage everyone from counseling him about anything if he does not ask him about it. Yet he must be a broad questioner, and then, concerning the things asked about, a patient listener for the truth. Indeed, if he understands that anyone, out of whatever regard, does not tell him the truth, he must become angry about it. And whereas many reckon that any prince who creates for himself a reputation as prudent is held to be thus, not because of his nature, but because of the good counselors that he has about him, I say without doubt they are deceived. For the following is a general rule that never fails: a prince who is not wise by himself cannot be counseled well, unless by chance he has already entrusted himself to one person alone, who is extremely prudent, to govern him in everything. In this case it could even happen that he would be counseled well, but it would not last long, because that governor, in a brief time, would take his state away from him. Yet if he takes counsel with more than one person, a prince who is not wise will never receive counsels that agree, nor will he know how to bring them into agreement by himself. Among the counselors, each will think of his own affairs; and the prince will know neither how to correct them nor will he understand them. And counselors cannot be found who are otherwise, for men will always turn out wicked for you if they are not made by some necessity to be good. For this reason one concludes that good counsels, wherever they come from, must arise out of the prudence of the prince, and not the prudence of the prince from good counsels.

CHAPTER 24: the princes of Italy have lost their kingdom

The things set forth above, if observed prudently, make a new prince appear hereditary, and they make him immediately more secure and more firm in his state, as though he had grown old in it. For the deeds of a new prince are observed with much more interest than those of a hereditary one; and when they are recognized to be virtuous, they grip men much more, and they obligate them much more than does ancient blood. For men are taken with present things much more than with past ones, and when they find good in present things, they enjoy it there and look for nothing else; indeed, they will take up every defense for a prince, if he is not lacking in the other things that pertain to himself. In this way he will have doubled his glory, by having given a beginning to a principality, and by having adorned it and strengthened it with good laws, with good arms and good examples; just as a man has doubled his shame if, although born a prince, he has lost his principality through lack of prudence.

And if one considers those lords who in Italy have lost their states in our own times, such as the king of Naples, the duke of Milan and others, he will find in them, first, a common defect as regards their arms, for the causes that have been discussed at length above. Next, one will see either that some of them had their own peoples for enemies, or, if the people was their friend, they did not know how to assure themselves of the great.

For without such defects states are not lost that have sinews such that they can keep an army in the field. Philip the Macedonian, not the father of Alexander, but the one who was defeated by Titus Quinctius, had a state that was not very large with respect to the greatness of the Romans and the Greeks who attacked him. Nonetheless, because he was a military man, and one who knew how to please the people and to assure himself of the great, he supported a war for many years against those enemies; and if, in the end, he lost his dominion over certain cities, nonetheless he kept his kingdom.

Therefore these princes of ours, who were in their principalities for many years, ought not to accuse fortune for having lost them, but their own knavery. For they never, during quiet times, thought that the times could change -- which is a common defect of men, to not think of storms during a calm. Then, when adverse times did come, they decided to flee, not to defend themselves; and they hoped that their peoples, when they were disgusted with the insolence of the victors, would call them back. This option, when others do not exist, is a good one; but it is surely bad to have abandoned other remedies on behalf of this one. For one should never collapse just because you believe someone will lift you back up. Either this does not happen, or, if it happens, it is not to your safety. For such a defense was cowardly, and it did not depend on you; and the only defenses that are good, certain, and lasting are those that depend upon yourself and your own virtue.

CHAPTER 25: How much fortune is able to do in human things, and in what manner she may be opposed

It is not unknown to me that many persons have held -- and hold -- the opinion that the things of the world are governed by fortune and by God, in such a manner that men, with their prudence, cannot correct them, and instead they have no remedy for them whatsoever. For this reason they might judge that there would be no point in sweating over things much, but allow themselves to be governed by chance. This opinion has been believed more in our own times on account of the great variation in affairs that has been seen, and is seen every day, beyond all human conjecture. Sometimes, when I think of this, I am inclined in some part toward their opinion. Nonetheless, so that our free will may not be eliminated, I judge that it may be true that fortune is the arbiter of half of our actions, but that even she allows us to govern the other half of them, or almost that much. And I liken her to one of these ruinous rivers that, when they become angry, flood the plains, ruin the trees and the buildings, and lift earth from one side and place it on the other. Each person flees before them; everyone surrenders to their attack without being able, under these circumstances, to block them at any point. Although they really happen this way, it does not follow from this that men, when there are quiet times, are not able to make provision for them with both dikes and embankments, so that, if later the rivers rise, these would either go into a canal, or their onslaught would be neither so boundless nor so harmful. It happens similarly with fortune. She shows her power where virtue is not

prepared to resist her; and she turns her rushing current here where she knows that embankments and dikes have not been made to hold her. And if you will consider Italy, which is the seat of these changes, and the one who has put them in motion, you will see that this is a landscape without embankments and without any dikes. For, if she had been diked by appropriate virtue, like Germany, Spain and France, either this flood would not have made the great changes that it has, or it would not have come here. And with respect to universals I want it to suffice to have said the above concerning the opposing of fortune.

Yet, narrowing myself more to the particulars, I say that one sees today a certain prince is happy, and tomorrow ruined, without having seen him change in nature or in any quality. This I believe arises first from the causes that are reviewed at length earlier, that is, that the prince who relies completely on fortune is ruined when she changes. I believe, too, that the man who conforms his manner of proceeding to the quality of the times is happy, and, similarly, that he whose proceedings the times disagree with is unhappy. For one sees men, in the things that drive them toward the end that each pursues (namely glory and riches), proceeding differently: one with caution, another with impetuosity; one with violence, another with art; one with patience, another with its opposite. And each one, in these differing manners, is able to arrive there. One also sees that, of two cautious men, one arrives as he planned, but the other not. Likewise, two men are equally happy but from different inclinations, since the one is cautious and the other is impetuous. This arises from nothing but the quality of the times, to which they conform in their proceedings, or not. From this arises what I said, that two people, although they operate differently, obtain the same effect; and of two operating equally, one achieves his end and the other not. From this too depends the variation in outcomes. For one who governs himself with caution and patience, if the times and his circumstances run in such a manner that this course of action is good, arrives happily. But if the times and his circumstances change, he is ruined because he does not change his manner of proceeding. Nor is a man to be found who is so prudent that he knows how to accommodate himself to this: both because he cannot deviate from that toward which his nature inclines him; and, moreover, because, when a man has always prospered by walking in one path, he cannot be persuaded to depart from it. For this reason the cautious man, when it is time to become impetuous, does not know how to do it whence he is ruined; although, if he could change his nature with the times and with the circumstances, then he would not change in his fortune.

Pope Julius II proceeded impetuously in all his affairs, and he found that the times and the circumstances so conformed to his manner of proceeding that he always came out with a happy ending. Consider the first campaign that he undertook, against Bologna, while Messer Giovanni Bentivoglio was still living. The Venetians were not happy with it; the king of Spain was the same; while with France Julius was still negotiating such an

undertaking. Because of his ferocity and impetuousness, he set out personally on the expedition. This move made Spain and the Venetians stand still and suspended; the latter out of fear, and the other because of his wish to recover the remainder of the Kingdom of Naples. On the other side, Julius pulled in the king of France behind him. For, once the king saw him move, since the king desired to make the pope his friend in order to bring down the Venetians, he decided that he could not deny Julius his troops without manifestly insulting him. Thus Julius brought about, by his impetuous movement; what another pope, with all human prudence, could never have brought about. For if he had waited to depart from Rome with firm conclusions and all his affairs ordered, as any other pontiff would have done, it would never have succeeded for him, because the king of France would have had a thousand excuses, and the others would have given him a thousand reasons to fear. I shall let stand his other actions, which were all similar, and all succeeded well for him. And the brevity of his life never allowed him to experience the contrary; for if there had come times in which it was necessary to proceed with caution, his ruin would have followed, for he would never have deviated from those manners toward which his nature inclined him.

I conclude, therefore, that since fortune varies, and since men are obstinate in their manners, men are happy so long as the two agree, and when they disagree, they are unhappy. Yet, I judge the following: that it is better to be impetuous than cautious, for fortune is a lady, and it is necessary, if one wants to have it off with her, to strike her and to toss her down. And one sees that she lets herself be won more often by such men as these, than by those who proceed coldly. For this reason, as a lady, she is always the friend of the young, because they are less cautious, more ferocious, and they command her with more audacity.

CHAPTER 26: An exhortation to take charge of Italy, and to take back her liberty from the barbarians

Having considered, therefore, all the things discussed above, while also thinking to myself whether at present in Italy the times were running so as to honor a new prince, and whether there would be material that might offer opportunity to someone who was prudent and virtuous, such that by introducing form to the material, it would bring both honor to him and good to all of its people in general, it seems to me that so many things are coming together to the benefit of a new prince that I do not know a time that has ever been more appropriate for it. And if, as I said, it was necessary, if one wanted to see the virtue of Moses, that the people of Israel should have been enslaved in Egypt; and to recognize the greatness of the spirit of Cyrus, that the Persians should have been oppressed by the Medes; and for the excellence of Theseus, that the Athenians should have been dispersed; so, at present, in order to recognize the virtue of an Italian spirit, it was necessary that Italy should be reduced to her present circumstances, and that she

should be more enslaved than the Hebrews, more servile than the Persians, and more dispersed than the Athenians: without a head, without order, beaten, despoiled, torn, pillaged, and having suffered ruin of every sort.

Although before now there was visible in a certain person a flickering light, such that one could judge that he was ordained by God for Italy's redemption, nevertheless it was seen afterward how, at the very peak of his exertions, he was rejected by fortune, with the result that, remaining as though lifeless, Italy still awaits whoever it might be who can heal her wounds, and put an end to the sackings of Lombardy and to the ransoms demanded from Naples and Tuscany, and cure her of the sores with which she has been infested for so long. One sees how she prays to God that he send someone to redeem her from these cruelties and barbaric insolences. One sees her still completely ready and disposed to follow a banner, provided there be someone who takes it up. Nor is there to be seen at present anyone in whom she could hope more than in your illustrious house, which, with its fortune and virtue, favored by God and by the Church of which it is now the prince, can make itself the leader of this redemption. It will not be very difficult, if you will keep in mind the actions and lives of the men named above. Although such men are rare and wondrous, nonetheless they were men; and each of them had a lesser opportunity than the present one, for their undertakings were not more just than this, nor easier, nor was God more a friend to them than to you. Here there is great justice: "[F]or war is just for those for whom it is necessary, and arms are pious where there is no hope save in arms." Here there is a greatest readiness, and where there is great readiness there cannot be great difficulty, provided that your house adopts the orders of those persons whom I have proposed as your models. Beyond this, see here the extraordinary things, without precedent, conducted by God: the sea has opened; a cloud has shown you the path; the stone has poured forth water; here the manna has rained down. All things have come together for your greatness. The remainder you have to do yourselves. God does not want to do all things, so as not to take away our free will or any part of that glory that belongs to us.

And it is no wonder if none of the aforenamed Italians has been able to do that which it may be hoped your illustrious house can do, and if, amid so many revolutions in Italy, and amid so many maneuvers of war, it seems always that in Italy military virtue is extinguished. This arose from her former orders not being good ones, and from there not being anyone who knew how to find new ones. And nothing confers so much honor on a man who rises anew as do new laws and the new orders he invents. These things, when they are well established and have greatness in them, make him worthy of reverence and admirable. And in Italy there is no want of material into which any form may be introduced; here there is great virtue in the limbs, provided it is not lacking in the heads. Reflect on the duels and engagements of small groups, and how much superior are the Italians in their energy, their skill, and their intelligence, yet when it comes to armies they

do not measure up. It all proceeds from the weakness of the leaders, because those who know how are not obeyed, and everyone thinks he knows how, since until now there has been no one who stood out in virtue and fortune such that the others would yield.

Whence it arose that, over so much time, in so many wars waged in the past twenty years, whenever there has been an army that was entirely Italian it always failed the test. To this stands witness, first, the battle of the Taro, then Alessandria, Capua, Genoa, Vailate, Bologna and Mestre.

If your illustrious house wishes to follow the example of those excellent men who redeemed their provinces, it is necessary, before all other things, as the true foundation of every undertaking, that you provide yourself with your own arms. For you cannot have more faithful, more true or better soldiers. And if each of them singly is already good, all of them together will become even better when they are seen to be commanded by their prince, and honored and treated warmly by him. It is necessary, therefore, to prepare these arms so as to be able, with Italian virtue, to defend against outsiders. And although the Swiss and Spanish infantry are regarded with fear, nonetheless there is weakness in both of them, such that a third order could not only oppose them but be confident in overcoming them. For the Spanish are not able to sustain a cavalry charge; and the Swiss must have fear of infantry troops when they meet ones who are as obstinate as themselves in fighting. Thus it has been seen, and will be seen, by experience, that the Spanish are not able to resist a French cavalry charge, and the Swiss are ruined by a Spanish infantry charge. And although of this last point complete experience may not have been seen yet; nevertheless, a taste of it was had in the battle of Ravenna, when the Spanish infantry met German companies that observe the same order as the Swiss. There, the Spanish, with their bodily agility and the help of their bucklers, had entered below among the Germans' pikes; and they were secure in attacking them without the Germans having remedy against it; and if it were not for the cavalry that charged them, they would have finished them all. It is possible, therefore, knowing the defect of the one and the other of these infantries, to order anew an infantry that resists horses and does not fear footsoldiers. Creating the right weapons and changing the placement of the ranks will accomplish this. And these are among those things which, when ordered anew, give reputation and greatness to a new prince.

This opportunity, therefore, should not be allowed to pass, so that Italy, after so much time, may see a redeemer for herself. Nor can I express with what love he would be received in all those provinces that have suffered from these foreign floods; with what thirst for revenge, with what obstinate faith, with what piety, with what tears. What gates would be closed to him? What peoples would deny him their obedience? What envy would oppose him? What Italian would deny him homage? This barbarian domination stinks to everyone. Let your illustrious house therefore take up this enterprise with that spirit and

that hope with which just undertakings are taken up, so that under its insignia this fatherland may be ennobled, and under its auspices that saying of Petrarch may be realized:

> *Virtue against fury*
>
> *Will take up arms, and may the struggle be short;*
>
> *since the ancient valor*
>
> *in Italian hearts is not yet dead.*