Charles. Inſtead oſ taking advantage of the diſtreſſed condition of France, Henry therefore determined to aſſiſt her in her preſent calamities. Some diſgusts alſo had taken place between him and Charles, and ſtill more between Charles and Wolſey. The elevation of the cardinal of Medici to St Peter’s chair, on the death of Adrian, under the name of Clement VII. had made the Engliſh miniſter ſensible of the inſincerity of the empe­ror’s promiſes, while it extinguiſhed all his hopes of the papacy ; and he reſolved on revenge. Charles, too, had ſo ill ſupported the appearance of moderation which he aſſumed, when firſt informed of his good fortune, that he had already changed his uſual ſtyle to Henry ; and inſtead of writing to him with his own hand, and ſubſcribing himſelf “ your affectionate ſon and couſin,” he dictated his letters to a ſecretary, and simply ſubſcribed himſelf “ Charles.” Influenced by all theſe motives, together with the glory of raising a fallen ene­my, Henry liſtened to the flattering ſubmiſſions of Louiſa ; entered into a defenſive alliance with her as regent of France, and engaged to uſe his beſt offices in order to procure the deliverance of her ſon from a ſtate of captivity.

Meanwhile Francis was rigorouſly confined ; and ſe­vere conditions being propoſed to him as the price of his liberty, he drew his dagger, and, pointing it at his breaſt, cried, “ ’Twere better that a king ſhould die thus !” His hand was with-held : and flattering him­ſelf, when he grew cool, that ſuch propoſitions could not come directly from Charles, he deſired that he might be removed to Spain, where the emperor then reſided. His requeſt was complied with ; but he languiſhed long before he obtained a fight of his conque­ror. At laſt he was favoured with a viſit ; and the em­peror dreading a general combination againſt him, or that Francis, as he threatened, might, in the obſtinacy of his heart, resign his crown to the dauphin, agreed to abate ſomewhat of his former demands. A treaty was accordingly concluded at Madrid ; in conſequence of which Francis obtained his liberty. The chief article in this treaty was, that Burgundy ſhould be reſtored to Charles as the rightful inheritance of his anceſtors, and that Francis’s two eldeſt ſons ſhould be immediately de­livered up as hoſtages for the performance of the con­ditions ſtipulated. The exchange of the captive mo­narch for his children was made on the borders between France and Spain. The moment that Francis entered his own dominions, he mounted a Turkiſh horſe, and putting it to its ſpeed, waved his hand, and cried aloud ſeveral times, “ I am yet a king ! I am yet a king·”

Francis never meant to execute the treaty of Ma­drid : he had even left a proteſt in the hands of nota­ries before he ſigned it, that his conſent ſhould be con­ſidered as an involuntary deed, and be deemed null and void. Accordingly, as ſoon as he arrived in France, he aſſembled the ſtates of Burgundy, who proteſted againſt the article relative to their province ; and Fran­cis coldly replied to the imperial ambaſſadors, who urged the immediate execution of the treaty, that he would religiouſly perform the articles relative to him­ſelf, but in thoſe affecting the French monarchy, he muſt be directed by the ſenſe of the nation. He made the higheſt acknowledgments to the king of England for his friendly interpoſition, and offered to be entirely guided by his **counſels. Charles and his miniſters ſaw**

that they were over-reached in thoſe very arts of nego­ciation in which they ſo much excelled, while the Ita­lian ſtates obſerved with pleaſure, that Francis was re­ſolved not to execute a treaty which they conſidered as dangerous to the liberties of Europe. Clement abſolved him from the oath which he had taken at Madrid ; and the kings of France and England, the Pope, the Swiſs, the Venetians, the Florentines, and the duke of Milan, entered into an alliance, to which they gave the name of the *Holy League,* becauſe his Holineſs was at the head of it, in order to oblige the emperor to deliver up Francis’s two ſons on the payment of a reaſonable ranſom, and to re-eſtabliſh Sforza in the quiet poſſession of the Milaneſe.

In conſequence of this league, the confederate army took the field, and Italy once more became the scene of war. But Francis, who it was thought would have inſuſed ſpirit and vigour into the whole body, had gone through ſuch a ſcene of diſtreſs, that he was become diffident of himſelf, diſtruſtful of his fortune, and deſirous of tranquillity. He flattered himſelf, that the dread alone of ſuch a confederacy would induce Charles to liſten to what was equitable, and therefore neglected to ſend due reinforcements to his allies in Italy. Mean­time the duke of Bourbon, who commanded the Imperialiſts, had made himſelf maſter of the whole Milaneſe, of which the emperor had promiſed him the inveſtiture; and his troops beginning to mutiny for want of pay, he led them to Rome, and promiſed to enrich them with the ſpoils of that city. He was as good as his word ; for though he himſelf was ſlain in planting **a** ſcaling ladder againſt the walls, his ſoldiers, rather enraged than diſcouraged by his death, mounted to the aſſault with the utmoſt ardour, animated by the greatneſs of the prize, and, entering the city ſword in hand, plundered it for ſeveral days.

Never did Rome in any age ſuffer ſo many calami­ties, not even from the Barbarians, by whom ſhe was often ſubdued, the Huns, Vandals, or Goths, as now from the ſubjects of a Chriſtian and Catholic monarch. Whatever was reſpectable in modeſty, or ſacred in reli­gion, ſeemed only the more to provoke the rage of the ſoldiery. Virgins ſuffered violation in the arms of their parents, and upon thoſe altars to which they had fled for ſafety. Venerable prelates, after enduring every in­dignity and every torture, were thrown into dungeons, and menaced with the moſt cruel death, in order to make them reveal their ſecret treaſures. Clement him­ſelf, who had neglected to make his eſcape in time, was taken priſoner, and found that the ſacredneſs of his cha­racter could neither procure him liberty nor reſpect. He was confined till he ſhould pay an enormous ranſom impoſed by the victorious army, and surrender to the emperor all the places of ſtrength belonging to the church.

Charles received the news of this extraordinary event with equal ſurpriſe and pleaſure ; but in order to con­ceal his joy from his Spaniſh ſubjects, who were filled with horror at the inſult offered to the ſovereign pon­tiff, and to lessen the indignation of the reſt of Europe, he expreſſed the moſt profound ſorrow for the ſucceſs of his arms. He put himſelf and his court into mourn­ing; ſtopped the rejoicings for the birth of his ſon Phi­lip, and ordered prayers to be put up in all the church­es **of Spain for the recovery of the pope’s** liberty.