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LORENZO DE’ MEDICI

THE MAGNIFICENT

BY

ALFRED VON REUMONT

TRANSLATED from THE GERMAN by ROBERT HARRISON

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. I.

LONDON
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1876

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TO

CINO CAPPONI

THE HISTORIAN OF HIS NATIVE CITY

WITH

RESPECTFUL HOMAGE AND

FRIENDSHIP

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[vii]

NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

I am bound to confess that it has been no easy task to interpret for English readers the admirable biography of Lorenzo which Herr von Reumont has given to the world. His extraordinary talent for research seems to have spent itself freely over every scrap of paper or parchment written or printed on the subject of the Medici and their times that has come within his reach. If these volumes convey to their readers the vivid impression of the Medicean age which may be derived from the original work my humble but laborious duty will not have been undertaken in vain.

R. H.

London Library: *June 1876*.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE second half of the fifteenth century exhibits, in the development of the Renaissance in Italy, the singular spectacle of a transformation of the modern world under the influence of ancient classical culture in conjunction with the opening out of a new intellectual horizon. In a state the importance of which cannot be measured by its circumference or material strength, we see a struggle between form and spirit among a community that had stood there alone from the Middle Ages. This struggle was the exciting cause of a new growth, of the production of fresh branches and new foliage on a tree that had become incurably rotten and hollow. The Christian world has only once taken up a position like this in the fruitful interpenetration and transmutation of real and ideal elements. It shows us a man, the product and consummation of these circumstances and conditions, at once the child and the pioneer of his age, an age which was filled with the most joyous and elevated existence both in material and spiritual things. A man like him could only be born and grow up under such circumstances, in the ferment and strife of events and of the moral forces of the time. [x] Family and civic influence as well as the temper of the people and of the century contributed to this result.

A justly popular life of Lorenzo [by Roscoe] was written when the knowledge of Italian history was limited and its sources confused and difficult of access. If a similar attempt is now made eighty years later, it is under altered circumstances and with expectations greatly enhanced. The supply of original materials, then very small, however skilfully arranged, has increased in our day to a degree almost beyond management. At that period the insight of the historian, not informed as to the internal politics of Florence, reached no great depth below the dazzling surface of Lorenzo's magnificence. At the present day deep places are exposed to view which had been kept only too dark. A flood of light envelops the personality of the man who was distinguished by so many things that charm and attract. If the sum-total of his history conveys a graver impression and comes upon us with a feeling of pain, our interest in it is scarcely less keen because of the obstacles through which this brilliant spirit made its own way, or of the entanglements and dangers against which he had to struggle. Should I succeed in describing truthfully him and the surroundings from which he was never separated and without which it is difficult to imagine him, I shall have completed a thank-offering due for a past full of varied [xi] enjoyment and for many friendly aids, received during the preparation and composition of this book from the countrymen of Lorenzo de' Medici.

I am indebted to scholars and art-critics, to keepers of archives and museums, to librarians, and above all to the man whose name rendered famous by the history of his native city stands in the front of this book, which attained its present form for the most part under his roof. To him do I owe it especially that after a deep and critical change in my own life, Florence remained to me a second home.

BONN: *Palm Sunday, 1874*.

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CHAPTER I.

THE HOUSE AND FAMILY OF THE MEDICI—DEVELOPMENT OF THE FLORENTINE DEMOCRACY.

At the entrance of the Via Larga in Florence there rises to view, at the corner of one of the cross streets leading to the church of San Lorenzo, one of the most magnificent palaces of that rich and beautiful city. The recent enlargement of the passage to the neighbouring cathedral square—the Via de' Martelli—has exposed to view the southern aspect of the palace, and displays the harmony of its proportions on a side that formerly was not to be seen. The traditions of mediæval life are still manifest in the building, notwithstanding the modification introduced by the large windows on the ground-floor, and by the additional wing that prolongs the façade. Huge blocks of stone, rough-hewn, with deep incisions, lend to the basement of the edifice the appearance of a fortress. They recall to mind the fortified palaces of the ancient nobles who, when transplanted from the country to the town, found themselves associated, willingly or unwillingly, with the burghers, and before long under the control of men who vied with them in the erection of towers and strongholds that overawed their own. The great town-hall was as solid a structure as any castle, even at a time when milder manners had subdued, if not the violence of party spirit, at least the fury of street riots, and had proscribed the towers which once by hundreds dominated the narrow streets, with their heavy iron chains ready for a barricade. The progress of civic life may be traced in other parts of the building—in the bow windows of the upper stories, divided by slender pilasters, in the *renaissance* decoration, and in the Corinthian pillars which ornament the quadrangle of the courtyard. Inscriptions and antiques introduced at a later period adorn the walls of the portico of the courtyard; but the statue of David has disappeared from the centre, and although fountains still exist in the second court—once a garden—the figure of Alessandro de' Medici, yet visible, indicates a century later. Though much altered in modern times, the original plan of the interior, which was regular and commodious, can be traced. Such a design was uncommon in days when the comparatively small area of the houses made a large suite of rooms a matter of rare occurrence, and when generally one story rose above another, with steep stairs and narrow passages into which a scanty supply of light was admitted from courtyards deep as wells.

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The house was built by Michelozzo di Bartolommeo, then forty years old, for Cosimo de' Medici, in the first half of the fifteenth century. Filippo Brunelleschi, the greatest architect of modern Italy, had made a design for the palace of the rich and art-loving citizen, who was one of his best friends. It was the plan of a vast building, unenclosed on all sides, and fronting towards the square of San Lorenzo, where stood the church, the restoration of which had been begun by the same artist for Cosimo's father. But cautious, calculating Cosimo, fearing that a house on so magnificent a scale as that designed by Brunelleschi, even if not beyond his means, would exceed the ordinary dimensions of a citizen's dwelling, and might excite popular jealousy, gave the preference to Michelozzo's more limited design.[1] Brunelleschi took offence at this neglect of himself, and destroyed his model. Yet Cosimo acted more prudently than did, at a later period, a countryman of his, who began to build

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from the design of the same master the largest edifice that perhaps a private citizen ever undertook, and who consequently lost much in public estimation and respect.

In the second half of the fourteenth century the Medici had removed into the neighbourhood of San Lorenzo's church, where their residence occupied the ground adjoining Cosimo's palace on the north, and remained in the possession of his brother Lorenzo, the founder of the subsequent ducal line.[2] Their original dwelling-place was in the centre of the old town, on the market-place, inside the first wall. Many of the foremost families were once settled here, and even now the lover of history and antiquity will find among the damp stalls of the butcher, fishmonger, and dealer in vegetables, sparse remains of past and, so far as concerns this part of the town, better days. The little church of San Tommaso in this place was in the patronage of the Medici from time immemorial.

The Medici did not belong to the historic families of the city on the Arno. The first trace of them is to be found about the end of the twelfth century in Giambuono, of whose extraction nothing is known. The coat of arms exhibits red balls in a gold field, whose number and arrangement were different at different times, until, under Cosimo's son, the coat of arms assumed the form which it has ever since retained. From these balls (*palle*) the dependents of the family bore the name of Palleschi. From whence the Medici came, what was the meaning of the coat of arms, no one knew. Genealogical dreams have gone as far back as Perseus and the apples of the Hesperides, whilst modest historians have contented [6] themselves with the time of Charlemagne, and the mountainous land north of Florence, known by the name of Mugello, where the family had always held important possessions, designated as their home.

The only dispute now is whether they descend from a knight who in days of yore received on his shield the blows of a giant's iron flail, or from a physician who chose for his sign, in his small beginnings, three pills or cupping-glasses.

Giambuono's son Chiarissimo sat in the Council of the Commune in 1201, when an alliance was formed with the town of Siena for the purpose of attacking the castle Semifonte in the Elsethal, which lay between the territories of the two towns, and was soon after destroyed. This was the first step towards the extension of territory and the overthrow of the landed aristocracy. The thirteenth century, at the beginning of which the Medici first stand forward in history, was the period in which the community of Florence, after many vicissitudes, received its definitive form. Just at the time of the first attempts of the Florentines to acquire an independent self-government do we meet with the first of that race which three centuries later strove successfully to transform what had become a powerful republic into a monarchy.

The province of Tuscany, divided into two duchies, in the time of the Longobards formed, first under dukes, then under margraves, a part of the Roman Teutonic kingdom, whose dependence on the later powerful emperors, and also on margraves ruling over wide stretches of land to the north of the Apennines, was more nominal than real, yet still existed according to right.

In the summer of 1115, after the death of the great Countess Mathilda—daughter and heiress to the last Margrave Bonifacius, who lived mostly in Lucca—first began the freer movement of the Tuscan Commune. At this time the men who afterwards attained to the lordship over the greater part of the country occupied anything [7] but a prominent position. The great changes in the strength and extent of the imperial power in Italy as it was under the last of the Franconians, under Lothair of Saxony, and the two first Hohenstaufen, necessarily affected the position of these Communes. Their form of government under consuls changed just as their dependence or independence of the imperial authority was affected by the prevailing political condition of the empire. The landed nobility, of Germanic origin for the most part, were supported by Frederic Barbarossa against the Commune of Florence, with which several great families, headed by the Uberti, had engaged in a bloody and protracted feud on account of their claims to an authority which was not compatible with consular government. Henry VI. exercised his imperial rights and privileges in Tuscany still more vigorously than his father had done. His brother Philip, invested with this province as a dukedom, maintained a command

such as, perhaps, no other vice-emperor had possessed. In a part of the country claimed by the Popes as the patrimony of Mathilda, Philip's power overcame the Guelfic element which was so much opposed to the 'Imperium,' and which in most of the towns was the predominant principle.

Suddenly, however, all was changed, when the Emperor died in the prime of his manhood, leaving behind him an infant son, three years old, and a distracted kingdom, which never fully resumed its ancient greatness. In the Papal chair, on the other hand, sat one of the most aspiring and successful of the Pontiffs—Innocent III., who at once assumed that authority in the legations which Henry VI. had taken so much pains to put down. The Tuscans, however, were not more disposed to submit patiently to the Papal sovereignty than they had been to that of the Emperor, and this the Pope was not slow to perceive. But while he avoided all direct assertions of sovereign power over the towns, he made use of his influence to form a Tuscan Union, that should be closely allied with the [8] ecclesiastical government at Rome, and firmly opposed to the Imperial authority. In 1198 a Union was formed at San Genesio, which lies at the foot of the hills in the lower valley of the Arno, and within sight of the venerable towers of San Miniato. The negotiators on this occasion were two Cardinals representing the Pope on one side, and on the other deputies elected by the several towns interested. Pisa, which was Ghibelline, alone of the great towns held aloof. The federation was intended to form a bulwark against Imperial encroachments, and all matters of internal administration and municipal government were left untouched. The supremacy of the Papacy was felt to be a lighter yoke than that of the Empire.

It is worthy of remark that this practical protest against Imperial domination should have its starting-point in a spot where the Guelfs, especially the Florentines, were reminded that their liberties depended on the pleasure of the Emperors. For the lofty towers that from the hill of San Miniato look down upon the Val d'Arno, and across the well-watered plain that stretches to the borders of Lucca, formed part of the palace of Barbarossa, and from it his high decrees were sent forth in the name of the Arch-chancellor of the Empire, the Archbishop of Cologne. Here tarried Henry VI. and Frederick II., and here the Vicar of the Empire, under Rudolf of Hapsburg, received the oath of allegiance. At a later period, in March 1355, Charles IV. revived the ancient dignity by stopping at San Miniato both before and after his coronation. The deputies of the place, called from these circumstances San Miniato the German (*al Tedesco*), had gone to Pisa to pay their obeisance to Charles.

Events like those enumerated above were favourable to the territorial extension of the Florentine Commune. Their progress would have been greater, had not an ancient feud among the nobles come to a bloody outbreak in the second decade of the thirteenth century. The effect of this factious contest, which was embittered by [9] religious animosity and the quarrel of Frederic II. with the Pope, was to enfeeble the nobility, and react mischievously on the people. The murder of Messer Buondelmonte de' Buondelmonti at the entrance of the old bridge in 1215 is celebrated in history and poetry as the presumed origin of the hostile factions of Guelf and Ghibelline. A stone cross in the small square, called, from the junction of three streets, the Trebbio, commemorates the victory of the orthodox citizens, led by Peter Martyr of Verona, against the Patarian heretics. About 1247 the most violent civil war raged. Although the Ghibelline faction had the upper hand at first, and Frederick of Antioch, the Emperor's son and Imperial Vicar in Tuscany, drove out the Guelf nobility, the tables were turned when heavy losses overtook Frederick in Lombardy and were followed by his death. The year of Frederick's death, 1250, marks the victory of the Guelfic cause in Florence, for although their adversaries had a momentary triumph they could not hold out, and the city so famous under the Salieri for its devotion to the Emperor, became the stronghold of the Guelfs. This decisive change, which brought constitutional changes with it, took place towards the end of October 1250, a little before the Emperor's death.

Up to that time, from the beginning of the twelfth century, the city had been governed by a magistracy consisting of first four and then six consuls, assisted by a council of one hundred good men (*Buonuomini*). From 1207 the administration was entrusted to a foreign knight, learned in the law, and called the Podestà. After the fashion of the Lombard cities, he was elected for six months, then

for twelve, and had the assistance of a general council. Encouraged by the factiousness and weakness of the nobility, who had till then been supreme in the place, the citizen class banded together in an organised insurrection, and initiated great political reforms. The town was divided into sixths, (*Sestieri*), each sixth into twenty militia companies (the number being subject to change, under [10] different standard-bearers, or *gonfaloniers*, each of whom had a distinguishing mark). At the head of all, in place of the Ghibelline Podestà, who was done away with, was a captain of the people (*Capitano del Popolo*), assisted by a council of twelve elders, two for every sixth, and six and thirty corporals. At a later period these institutions developed into the small and the great councils. The standard of the people, put into the hands of the captain, was half red, half white, and was subsequently replaced by one bearing a red cross on a white ground. The banner of the Commune, displayed by the Podestà, bore first a white lily on a field of red, then a red lily on white ground. The civic militia were called to arms by the tolling of a bell from the Lion's Tower, which has long disappeared, but stood probably near the palace of the Capitano, on the site of which the palace of the Signoria, now the Palazzo Vecchio, was erected in the sixteenth century. The country districts also received a military organisation. To the Capitano was attributed authority over both the civil and criminal administration, with the co-operation of the elders, but the Podestà subsequently resumed his criminal jurisdiction. The latter also occupied the palace, built originally in 1255 as a council-chamber for the Capitano and his assessors, but much enlarged in the following century. It is still called after the Podestà, and, restored after long neglect to somewhat of its ancient dignity, now looks down in lofty grandeur upon the bustle of modern life going on around its walls.

Though not free from factious disturbance the city continued to prosper for years after the revolt against the nobility. Its commerce was extended and its influence over neighbouring communes strengthened either by treaty or by force of arms. No better witness of this prosperity can be cited than the number of buildings erected for the public good about this time. Besides this, many religious houses arose at the time when the order called the Humiliates were [11] manifesting extraordinary activity. In the year 1252 also was coined the golden florin which, exercising a patent influence on the currency of mediæval and modern times, contributed largely to the influence of Florence among men of commerce, and shadowed forth her subsequent supremacy. As yet the two hostile factions of the city, though coming frequently into jealous collision, dwelt near together. In the summer of 1258 an attempt was made to overthrow the Constitution as settled by the Guelfs, and bind Florence to the Imperial interests, to which Pisa and Siena were already attached. The promoters of this revolution were the family of the Uberti, champions of the Ghibelline cause, in alliance with King Manfred, the Emperor Frederick's son.

It was plain that the triumph of the Imperialists in the South of Italy would be incomplete without the acquisition of Tuscany. The attempt miscarried and the natural consequences ensued. All the great Ghibelline families were sent into exile, and they took refuge for the most part in Siena. The refusal on the part of the conquerors to respect any obligations that had been previously entered into with the banished families led to a war in 1260. On September 4 in that year the Tuscan Guelfs suffered a severe defeat at Montaperti on the Arbia, in view of the walls of Siena, whose inhabitants, assisted by the horsemen of Manfred, were the victors. The effect in Florence was instantaneous. Without waiting for the return of their enemies, the principal Guelf families, patrician and plebeian, at once quitted the city and sought shelter in Lucca. The Guelfs of the dependent towns soon followed this example, and in three days the Ghibellines were installed in Florence, with Giordano of Anglona, a captain of Manfred's, at their head, as the king's vicegerent. Guido Novello, of the race of the Palsgrave of Tuscany, assumed the office of Podestà. The Guelfs were compelled to abandon Lucca and retire to Bologna, leaving the Ghibellines masters of the whole of Tuscany. Affairs continued in this state for six years, when King Manfred [12] overthrew at Benevento the army of Charles of Anjou, Count of Provence, who had been called in by the Pope, and who was assisted by many Tuscan Guelfs.

An attempt at compromise between the two factions and a settlement of the differences of the nobility and the burghers was

made by appointing two Knights of the Order of the Virgin Mary to the joint exercise of the office of Podestà. With these *fratres gaudentes* was associated a Council of thirty, selected from the trading classes. The arrangement was made with the consent of Pope Clement IV., and accepted by the threatened Ghibellines as an expedient. It was soon discovered, however, that a real reconciliation was impossible, and that the Pope was pursuing extensive political schemes that were agreeable to no party.

On November 11, nearly nine months after the battle of Benevento, an insurrection against a tax, forced the Ghibellines and Germans to evacuate Florence. The Knights of Mary were replaced by two knights from Orvieto, who were respectively appointed Podestà and Capitano. Again efforts were made at a reconciliation by the recall of the more moderate among the exiles, and by offers of family alliances, but without success.

Charles of Anjou, now King of Sicily and Naples, was striving, like Manfred, to strengthen his influence in Tuscany, and being secretly incited by Guelf leaders he sent a troop of 800 armed men to Florence, under Guy de Montfort, in 1267. The Ghibellines proved irreconcileable, and left the city on the night of Good Friday in that year. Further endeavours at pacification were alike unavailing. The party spirit was too strong, and resisted the authority of Pope Gregory X. in the spring of 1273, as steadily as that of Cardinal Latino Malabranca (a nephew of Pope Nicholas III.), in February 1279. Nor was the influence of the two holders of supreme power of much avail even after the accession of Rudolf of Hapsburg to the throne of Germany had altered the relations between Church and State.

Meanwhile two changes occurred in the internal government of [13]
the city of great, if unequal, importance. The first was the vice-regency of foreign princes, who now held in the Commune the position formerly belonging to the chief of the empire, with this difference, that the Commune awarded the dignity to foreign princes on certain conditions, and for a certain number of years. The supremacy of King Manfred was followed in 1267 by that of Charles of Anjou, which the city bore for ten years. The authority of these princes and their representatives was limited. A committee of twelve good men selected from the municipal nobility sat as assessors to the viceroy. Besides this there were both the council-boards already named, to which was now added a third body, the secret council of the Guelf burghers, making together a general or common council. The statutes introduced by the viceroy were sent to the united councils as to a court of general jurisdiction, before they were definitively accepted by the Council of Three Hundred. The limits of the viceroy's authority were not easily fixed. In the first half of the ensuing century, when the city was unable to hold out against the arms of the Ghibellines without the aid of Charles of Anjou, this part of the Constitution was remodelled more than once. The Anjou viceroyalty, in concert with the Guelfs, thoroughly rooted out the suspected Ghibellines. In 1268-69 some three thousand were banished, many of whom went to the south of France. Their goods were sold, and the profits devoted to the interests of the victorious party. A special Commission was appointed to manage the 'capitani di parte Guelfa,' and was assisted by a committee of the Council, composed of nobles and burghers. In the course of years this body acquired almost dictatorial power in the State.

The second fact alluded to above was of far more importance in its social and political bearing than the position of the vice-kings of Tuscany. It was the enfranchisement of the lower class of Florentine citizens. The population of the city was divided into three classes: 1, [14]
the feudal nobility; 2, the municipal nobility, or wealthy burgher families; 3, the common people. The influence of the first, who were never very numerous, was based on their landed possessions in the provinces; that of the second on their wealth in money and their trade; while the third class were held in no consideration, and up to the middle of the thirteenth century had no share in the government of the State. When Frederic II. died a democratic spirit manifested itself in union with the Guelfic feeling of opposition to the Imperial authority, and made rapid progress. The old and new nobility united to resist the popular movement; but the people, who had increased in numbers and in substance by the free exercise of their skill in arts, manufactures, and commerce, aspired to a share in the civil government, and made an effort to attain it. The discords of the nobility and the confusion of the government in 1250 gave the

people an opportunity of forming an independent body, half political, half military. While the Podestà remained at the head of the administration of justice, the ‘Capitano del Popolo’ was military chief of the third or lower class, who, set on securing their own rights, paid little attention to the quarrels of the factions. After the overthrow of King Manfred and the Ghibelline party the third class advanced a step forward by the definite formation of guilds. The object of the organisation of 1250 was mainly military; the end now in view was to give a more solid form and more popular character to the civil relations. An excellent means for the attainment of this was at hand in the corporations, already large, to which the richest and most respectable members of the third class already belonged.

The industrial and commercial societies, the origin of which is traceable to Roman times, kept pace in development with the Commune of the twelfth century. We shall presently see how, at the end of this century, their influence extended abroad, and at the beginning of the next was felt through their delegates in matters of [15] state. They gave themselves statutes and exercised influence before they assumed that form which erelong enabled them to take the chief share in the executive as well as in the legislative power. They consisted principally of professional men, traders, and the higher class of artisans, and these represented the whole class of lower citizens. There were seven guilds: the lawyers, merchants, money-changers, weavers, silkworkers, doctors and apothecaries, and the furriers. These were the grand guilds which always retained exceptional privileges. Each one had a first and a second delegate or consul elected every four months, and representing severally two quarters of the town. There was a syndic and other officers with jurisdiction over all the members of the guild. They bore arms and banners, and were commanded by a gonfalonier or captain, thus forming a complete society, having its own residence or guild-hall. Supreme over all the seven guilds was a proconsul, whose place was among the highest officers of the Commune, and who was chosen from the first, or lawyer’s guild. He superintended the general interests of these incorporated societies, decided questions of competency and the like. The presidents and officers formed a council, called the ‘Consiglio delle Capitudini delli Maggiore,’ to which were referred the enactments which had previously been laid before the ‘Consiglio del Popolo.’ There is still in Florence much that wears the stamp of the power of these city liveries of the Middle Ages. The architecture of the guildhalls bears witness to the greatness of the institution which, soon exceeding its original purpose, was blended with the powers of the State. Coats of arms and names of streets and other things give similar testimony. In the course of sixteen years fourteen guilds—called the smaller—were added to the original seven; and, with slight modifications, the same number has been preserved in the same relative position.

It is natural that an institution like this should grow stronger with [16] the increasing strength of the people and the decay of the nobility. In 1279, when Cardinal Latino first extinguished the strife of the leading Guelfs, tormented by continual intestine discords, and then reconciled them to the Ghibellines, a supreme magistracy of fourteen Buonuomini was instituted, consisting of eight Guelfs and six Ghibellines, both nobles and citizens. This harmony lasted but a short time. In 1282, the Sicilian Vespers having given a heavy blow to the house of Anjou, the Ghibelline party raised its head once more, but was again defeated. Hereupon the guilds resolved to take the government into their own hands, and that they were able to do so without serious opposition shows to what a height their power had risen. The new administration was styled ‘The Priors of the Guilds,’ the chief being the Captain of the People, who was called ‘Defender of the Guilds.’ At first three, then six priors were elected from the Grand Guilds—being one for every *sestieri*, or sixth part of the city. The term of office was two months, except for those of the Lawyer Guild, who took part in the administration in any other way. Subsequent changes made the number of priors eight, two for each quarter of the city. The magnates, or *grandi*, as they were called, might belong to the administration if they became members of a guild. This gave a powerful check to the popular tendencies which were already so far advanced. The nobility made no difficulty of entering the guilds; and before long two jealous classes stood face to face and threatened the destruction of the government, by corporations which the people had set up as a defence against the aristocracy.

The reform of 1293, when Guelfism was in the ascendant, was carried by Prior Giano della Bella, a respected popular tribune, who, with the consent of his colleagues, and of the higher magistracy, did the work very thoroughly. It was declared essential to everyone who desired to take part in the administration that he must really practice the art or craft of the guild he belonged to. This declaration was tantamount to an exclusion of the nobles, so tenacious of their [17] dignity, from all civil offices. Stringent orders, called 'Orders of Justice,' were issued against the noble class,[3] the execution of which was entrusted to a newly made officer, called the gonfalonier of justice, who, at his pleasure, could summon to his banner, the red cross on the white field, 1,000 or 2,000 of the popular militia. The office of gonfalonier, who, in conjunction with the priors, formed the Signoria, afterwards became the highest in the community. In 1306 the special application of the penal laws against the aristocrats was committed to the 'esecutore degli ordini di giustizia,' whose attributes resembled those of a Roman tribune. This new addition to the number of upper magistrates increased the evils arising from a conflict of jurisdiction, and, like the number and frequent changes of the larger council-boards, became a source of confusion and weakness in the State. The age of the gonfalonier was to be not less than forty-five, that of the prior thirty, the term of office two months. The elections to the new Signory were originally left to the retiring members, the president of the guilds, and a number of deputies, summoned from different parts of the town by the priors. But electoral practices were subject to change according to the pleasure of the ruling faction. At the time when the fortune of the family which deprived the city of its freedom was at the highest the whole business of the elections was a mere pretext, as only the names of supporters found their way into the bag, while the drawing by lot depended on commissaries chosen from among the adherents of the actual chief of the State. The Signory held its sittings in the beginning, and for some time after, in the convent (Badia) opposite the palace of the Podestà. Later on, a magnificent palace was erected, worthy of the first magistracy of a large community, and [18] with its prominent tower indicative of a stormy period replete with heroic deeds.

There was vested in the Signory the highest deliberative, legislative, and executive power, spite of many modifications and changes more or less illusory. In connexion with the Signory under the name of Colleges were the gonfaloniers of the militia companies, now sixteen in number, with the Captain of the People, and after 1312 a magistracy of twelve Buonuomini, without whom nothing of importance was decided. The projects of law finally went to the General Council. The exercise of authority thus came into the hands of the people who formed the great guilds—the fat people, as they were called—*popolo grasso*. In course of time, it is true, the latter had to share political power with the smaller guilds; but the nobility was shut out, as well as the common people who paid no taxes nor belonged to any guild. Citizens pronounced guilty of any civil or political offence (*ammoniti*) were excluded from the franchise and from office for life or for a certain period, as were also persons marked in the register as negligent in the payment of dues. This ostracism was a weapon of great power in the hands of the factions during the fourteenth century, by which they kept the road to office clear for their own followers. The Balia was another and effective means to the same end. When a signory or party dreaded any hostile influence they called the people together by means of a great bell. Assembled in the square in front of the palace, the signory came out to them on the tribune, or ringhiera and asked them if they would like to grant power to a certain number of citizens to change the laws and constitution. The square being surrounded by armed men a refusal of this request was not to be expected. The select few, invested thus with discretionary power, nominated a second group to the task of naming citizens eligible for office. The privileges of these *accoppiatori*, as they were called, sometimes lasted for years, so that freedom of election to the magistracy and other offices [19] became illusory in respect to many citizens who were eligible. It will presently be seen what resulted, in the second half of the fourteenth century, from the abuse of the Ammonire and the Balia. When the citizens of Florence reformed their constitution they had a twofold object in view. They wanted first to have the chief power in their own hands, and secondly to prevent internal dissensions by a wide distribution of places among the citizens, which was to be effected

by short terms of office and frequent changes. The first of these objects was attained, but the endeavour to accomplish the second was not successful. The rigour of the suspensive laws augmented the opposition of the class who suffered by them, and the Guelf faction shook the city to its very foundations. The quarrel of the Neri and Bianchi, made famous by the greatest poet of the Middle Ages, induced consequences that were fatal to the Liberal and popular party, and restored for a time the nobles to power. But again the lapse of a few years was sufficient to show their weakness. This brought disorder and violence into the town, and led to the recovery of political power by the citizen class at the very moment when the efforts of the Imperialists to reconquer their old position in Italy more than ever demanded strength in the popular element of the governing power.

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CHAPTER II.

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY—RULE OF THE ALBIZZI —GIOVANNO D'AVERARDO DE' MEDICI.

The sanguinary conflict of Campaldino was fought, in 1289, in the plain on the Arno which is overlooked by Poppi, the principal place in the Tuscan valley of the Casentino, where stood the stronghold of those Counts Guidi, who were the protectors of the Guelf cause when brought to its lowest ebb by the war of the Vespers. Two years after the battle, in 1291, Ardingo de' Medici first sat among the Priors of Florence, and in 1296, when the office was still a new one, he was appointed Gonfalonier, as also was his brother Guccio three years later. Of the last-named there exists a memento, the oldest relating to the family, in the sarcophagus that once held his bones and was immured in the outer wall of the Baptistery. This antique, which is carved in relief with a representation of the chase in Calydon, was placed in the courtyard of the Medici palace, and bears on its modern cover the arms of the family, as well as those of the Guild of Woolstaplers, to which the Medici belonged. Thus, at the end of the thirteenth century we see members of the family in a position of respectable burghers in the enjoyment of civic honours.

Nothing remarkable is heard of them until the middle of the fourteenth century. They formed part, in their numerous branches, of the large family of the people who were increasing more and more their trade and manufactures, and shared on an equal footing in the government of their city.

In the second half of the century two of them became remarkable [21]
in different ways, Averardo, called Bicci, son of Salvestro, called Chiarissimo, and Salvestro, son of Alamanno, two cousins in the fourth degree. Of the first we shall speak presently. Salvestro played the chief part in a transaction that shed a lurid light on the history of Florence of that period, but which was the beginning of that influence which ended in the sole supremacy of the Medici.

The heroic age of Florence terminated with the first decade of the fourteenth century. The city, at the head of the Tuscan league, which bound together the Anjous and the Guelfs of Rome and Upper Italy, had manfully resisted Henry of Luxemburg, but succumbed to Louis of Bavaria and the Ghibellines, spite of the aid of foreign auxiliaries. At the same time the rulers from Naples, as well as the foreigners who were appointed to enforce established ordinances, were in a certain measure above the law, and in the exercise of arbitrary power. Fortune smiled on none of their undertakings, nor was the State guided to any better state of things by what the poet of the 'Divine Comedy' called 'the new people and the sudden gains.' Strength in arms began to decline, and an undue preponderance of material interests to prevail. No period of Florentine history is so poor in men distinguished by arms or policy as that which followed the repulse of Henry VII. Material interests even were not adequately protected. For although the springs of gain had yielded copiously, and still continued partially to flow, the cost of war and the taxes pressed with proportionate weight; and in the third decade of the century began the failures of the great banking houses, from which they did not recover for a long time, if they ever did completely. To this must be added distressing losses occasioned by inundations and epidemics. Confusion in the government, due on the one hand to the resentment of the aristocracy, on the other to the ill-feeling of the lower classes, brought matters at length to a crisis in 1342. A foreign adventurer, closely connected with the house of Anjou, Walter de Brienne, Count [22]
of Lecce and Duke of Athens, was enabled by the assistance of the lowest class of artisans, and some adherents of the nobler families, to make himself for a short time absolute master of Florence. The tyranny, indeed, was overthrown in the following year by a union of the upper and lower classes, who were not, however, long in falling out again, to the great detriment of the nobility. On the pretext of purging the Guelf party the system of *Ammonirism—i.e.* exclusion from public offices—was put in practice. It was directed against the decaying nobility on the one hand, and on the other against certain suspected persons in the lower classes. In this way, some thirty years after the expulsion of the Duke, the supreme power was vested in an oligarchy, at the head of which was the Captain of the

Guelf faction. They had the whole machinery of government under their control, and were mainly supported by a few families of the wealthier burghers.[4] Among these were the Albizzi, who, originally from Arezzo, having acquired great riches and a high position, stood first in the city of Florence.

Salvestro de' Medici, who in 1370 had held the office of Gonfalonier, sought to put an end to the tyranny of party when he was again appointed Gonfalonier in the spring of 1378. The reigning faction, though mistrusting him, dared not oppose him, for fear of the multitude, who were in his favour. His attempt to diminish the authority of the Capitano and re-open the way to office to the excluded ones (*Ammoniti*) brought on a violent insurrection of the common people. This 'tumulto dei ciompi,' as it was called, placed Florence for a time under mob-rule, and would have degenerated into the wildest anarchy but for the energy of one poor man, Michele di Lando, the woolcomber, whom the infuriated populace [23] had raised to the chief magistracy, and who, with remarkable instinct, steered the State safely through the storm which threatened its ruin. This state of things lasted three years, during which the all-powerful mob became the tool of designing men, who wreaked their vengeance on the party that had so lately been supreme. The latter, however, in their turn seized the opportunity when the better sort among the populace were disgusted with the tyranny of their fellows, and overthrew the mobocracy, setting up in its place a conservative government, formed of the *Optimates*, or better citizens, under the lead of the Albizzi. Salvestro de' Medici, the original author of the revolt, contributed nothing to its suppression. It was, perhaps, beyond his power to do anything. He died in 1388, and the name of the Medici became identical with that of representatives of the interests of the people. Five years later, when the oppressions of the Albizzi had excited general discontent, an armed body of the people marched to the house of Vieri de' Medici, and asked him to be their leader. He was of the same branch of the family as Salvestro, but he prudently declined the proposed honour, and appeased the revolters.

Averardo, styled Bicci, was the founder of the line that came to be talked of in the world. Little more is known of him than that in 1357 he was employed on behalf of the Republic in the Mugello. His grandfather, of the same name, was Gonfalonier in 1314, when Florence, to escape from the pressure of the Ghibellines, submitted to the Anjous. He was, it is said, the first of the family that amassed wealth by trade, and laid the basis of that prosperity which was a potent factor in the political transactions of his successors. The real splendour of the family, however, began with his son Giovanni d'Averardo, commonly called Giovanni di Bicci, who was born in 1360, and was in the bloom of manhood when the Albizzi held undisputed sway over Florence. The position of the Medici was a difficult one, for the favour they enjoyed among the people exposed them to the suspicion and dislike of the upper class. An attempt [24] made in 1397 to restrict the power of Maso degli Albizzi, head of his family and of the State, ended in the exile and execution of the ringleaders, among whom were found some of the Medici. The prudence and foresight which Giovanni exhibited not only preserved his authority among his friends, but extorted respect from his opponents.

There were stirring times in Giovanni's maturer years. The government of the conservative party was burdensome on the people and their friends, who were heavily taxed, but it was a successful government in the conduct of foreign affairs, and in the production of public works at home. Florence increased in political importance. The war against the Visconti of Milan, who were extending their power, and aiming at the establishment of a kingdom in Italy, was very costly and not always fortunate to the Guelf republic. Among the vicissitudes undergone by the latter was the defeat of their German champion, King Ruprecht of the Palatinate, whom they had summoned across the Alps. Nevertheless, the ultimate issue was favourable to Florence, which at this time enjoyed a brilliant and comparatively quiet existence. The death of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, in 1402, relieved her of an enemy who had already set foot in Tuscany, and in 1406 she took possession of Pisa, which, weakened by centuries of war and internal commotion, surrendered after an heroic resistance. With varying fortune, Florence made war against Ladislaus, King of Naples, with whom expired in 1414 the male branch of that house of

Anjou with whom she had once been so closely allied. She also extended her political influence to Umbria, took Cortona in 1411, and, ten years later, Livorno. With all this her trade and manufactures expanded and matured, increasing her resources and preparing her for other emergencies. The republic which had been the most steadfast friend of the Holy See, was in bitter dispute with it during the later period of the Avignon Papacy. Actively desirous for the restoration of ecclesiastical unity, Florence, in the midst of [25] the great schism, witnessed in her newly acquired territory of Pisa an attempt to reunite the adherents of both Popes, the one at Avignon and the one at Rome. The attempt was a failure, and only added to the confusion by setting up a third Pope, but it gave occasion to the next General Council of Constance, which brought the rupture to a close in 1417.

Notwithstanding so large a military expenditure the wealth of the republic continued to flourish. There was a discrepancy, indeed, in the account of private wealth and public revenue. Two hundred thousand gold guilders were promised for Pisa, sixty thousand were paid to King Ladislaus for Cortona, and a hundred thousand to the Genoese for Livorno. In this way the balance of income and revenue was seriously disturbed. An attempt was made in 1411 to avoid the risks of large grants of money by increasing the number of courts that had to consider the projects of law laid before the Signory. In the fourteenth century was manifested the canker in the finances of Florence that was never quite eradicated. It is true the income of 1328 amounted to more than 300,000 gold guilders, while the regular expenditure was only 40,000, showing a surplus of more than 260,000. The sum was raised in great part by the excise or other indirect taxes, detailed statistical accounts of which still exist. [5] This surplus was so far inadequate to meet the oppressive military expenditure, the pay of the Anjou and other leaders hired by the republic, the cost of fortifications, the purchase of new territory, and the outlay on public works, that by degrees a considerable State debt was contracted, which we hear of under the name of *Monte Comune*. The growth of this debt is made intelligible by the fact that in the twenty-nine years from 1377 to 1406, eleven and a half million guilders were spent in war, while the sojourn of [26] Duke Charles of Calabria in the city, cost 900,000, and that of the Duke of Athens 400,000. In the wealth of families great changes had taken place. The fourteenth century exhibited remarkable peculiarities in the matter of private property. Shortly before the middle of the century, the insolvency of England had brought to the ground most of the Florentine bankers, some of them for ever. Immediately after that, famine and the Black Death produced a change, which was intensified by the measures taken against the families of those nobles and the ruling party who were hated or suspected. Most of the old families became poor, while a crowd of small folks grew into importance; and the haste to grow rich, infinitely greater than it was in the time of the author of the ‘Divine Comedy,’ whose admonishing voice we have heard, augmented the recklessness and corruption which greatly contributed to the great revolution of 1378. In spite of considerable fluctuation an aristocracy of wealth was formed consisting chiefly of members of the seven great guilds, in whose hands, after the close of the thirteenth century, lay the government of the State. The guilds of the money-changers and of the woolstaplers were the principal, for the first gave the law to all foreign banks, the last, to which smaller societies were subject, governed all foreign markets.

Giovanni di Bicci was one of those who knew how to avail himself skilfully of the favourable opportunities offered by the conclusion of peace at the beginning of the fifteenth century. At the time of the Council of Constance, which agitated the world to an unusual degree, all the great monetary affairs in which Italy was concerned passed through Giovanni’s hands. He is said to have gained enormous sums of money, which were increased when the acquisition of Livorno afforded an advantageous outlet to the commerce of Florence. The advantage would have been lasting, but for the war with Milan, which broke out a few years later, and caused grave troubles. If Giovanni gained much, he was generous [27] with his gains. Where need was, he showed no stint, and for public works his contribution was always ready. Having promised a chapel and sacristy for San Lorenzo, when the enlargement of the whole church was taken in hand (1419) he prompted Filippo Brunelleschi to design a grand plan for its entire reconstruction, which was

begun in 1421, and in which the Medici and seven other families took an especial interest. Giovanni, though he did not seek offices in the State, never refused any to which he was called. He conducted negotiations with Ladislaus, King of Naples, went to congratulate Alexander V. on his election as Pope by the Council of Pisa, and accompanied Martin V. when the latter, on his return from Constance, passed through Florence to Rome. Giovanni was elected to the office of Podestà in Pistoja, and in 1421 was chosen Gonfalonier in Florence. The choice was not quite agreeable to the ruling party, for popular traditions were associated with the name of Medici, and Giovanni stood so high in the favour of the multitude that he could, if he had wished, easily have stirred up an insurrection against the oligarchy. Niccolo Uzzano, a prudent and moderate man, who, after Maso degli Albizzi's death in 1417, shared with Rinaldo the leadership of the conservative party, opposed the election of Giovanni, but did not push his opposition to extremes, for he saw there was a struggle coming on. Giovanni, on his side, made no attempt during his term of office at anything that would disturb the peace.

Ere long external causes placed the party in danger. The antagonism between Florence and Milan could not be removed by mere treaties of peace. Gian Galeazzo's only remaining son, Filippo Maria, was treading in his father's steps. He had not only recovered the dominion which, at his father's death, fell to pieces, but had added Genoa to it. He now stretched out his hand to the Romagna, where he came into collision with the interests of Florence, for the small gentry of that province, hitherto in connection with the republic, were in danger of being subjected to the will of a powerful [28] and ambitious neighbour. Out of this arose the war of 1423, which was far from being successful. As in earlier times, the Florentine forces in 1424 were unable to cope with the Milanese, whom they encountered, first in the Romagna and afterwards in their own territory. The fault lay not so much in the men and their officers as in the absurd system of directing the movement of troops by a committee of civilians, called the Board of War, seated at home. Rinaldo degli Albizzi succeeded in calming the agitation of the people after the severe defeat of Zagonara on July 24th, but the damage done to his party only increased the ascendancy of Giovanni di Bicci. At the beginning of the war he had advised that the Duke of Milan should not be followed into the Romagna, but should be waited for on this side of the Apennines, but his advice was overruled.

In the beginning of 1426 Florence succeeded in forming an alliance with Venice, which, though a rival in mercantile interests, was as sensitive about the encroachments of Milan in the north as was the sister republic about his encroachments in the centre of the peninsula. The lords of Ferrara, Mantua, and others joined the alliance. The disasters of the war and increase of expenditure gave rise to much dissatisfaction, more loudly expressed among the higher than by the lower classes, the fear of whom led the administration to press their fiscal measures most heavily on the richer citizens. Rinaldo degli Albizzi thought to effect a change by weakening the democratic element in the Council. At a meeting of the heads of his party in the Church of Sto. Stefano, near the old bridge, he proposed that the number of lesser guilds should be reduced one half, and the votes of the smaller citizens diminished correspondingly. Changes in the relative numbers of the guilds had always been the means employed by either party for securing political preponderance; for the relative position of the parties was not strong enough to make manœuvres of this kind superfluous. Besides the twenty-one guilds, there was a number of smaller [29] corporations representing branches of the different trades. No less than twenty-five such societies were the offspring of the largest of the guilds, that of the woolstaplers. They had their delegates too, but were dependent on the greater guilds, who represented them in the State. On one occasion, in 1300, the representatives of seventy-two companies, were gathered together in council. The Duke of Athens, who relied on the lower classes, made the smaller companies independent, and put their consuls on a level with the others, but this did not last. The same thing happened at the insurrection of 1378, but the members of the small companies were again unable to keep their independence long. The diminution of the small companies, proposed by Rinaldo degli Albizzi, was at this time a question of some delicacy. Nicolò da Uzzano remarked that before

anything was proposed against the people it would be advisable to come to an understanding with their friends. On this Rinaldo conferred with Giovanni di Bicci, whom, of course, he found opposed to the innovation. Had he wished to see a new insurrection he might have agreed to the project, but his native prudence had increased with years. Anyhow, he reaped this advantage, that, as the matter could not remain secret, to him would be ascribed the merit of thwarting a scheme intended for the oppression of the lower classes. Ere long they had to face another great undertaking.

The distribution of the public burdens among individual contributors was for a long time connected with serious evils, that were the more conspicuous in proportion to the severity of the taxation. The scale was furnished by the *estimo* or assessment of real and personal property,[6] which was in use as early as the [30] eleventh century, and resembled the *colletta* that prevailed in the Two Sicilies after the time of King Roger. The tax-system of Florence, where Neapolitan rulers had often exercised power, bore the mark of Southern Italy. At the time of its fullest application, when the Anjou Viceroys were supreme the *estimo* attached to land, capital and personal income. It extended from the city to the country, where its operation was regulated in districts. The framework underwent frequent revisions in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, particularly in the latter, when the example of Naples increased the rigour of the fiscal authorities and gave rise to frequent complaints and petitions for a reform of the taxation. The *arbitrium* was often called into play before 1346, when the Government of the Duke of Athens ordered a register of all estates. The *estimo* was the standard on which the public loans were based. These, with the excise and other indirect taxes—which, in the palmy days of commerce, were very productive—served to cover the public expenditure. Loans were made in the first half of the thirteenth century, and before its close the *taille* was introduced by the Viceroy of Anjou for the maintenance of the French and other mercenaries. There were two methods of raising a loan. By the first, the treasurers of the commune made an agreement with one or more of the great banking-houses, who, on an assignment of the custom duties to them, advanced the money and distributed the loan among their customers and friends.[7] By the second method, the government itself announced the loan and allotted it to the citizens according to their income, as recorded on the *estimo*, the security being in this case also the customs duties for a certain definite period. Instead of a percentage the contributors received a [31] monopoly of salt, with the privilege of selling it to the retail dealers at an enhanced price.

As the necessities of the State increased, other sources of revenue were looked for. In 1343 the hearth or fire tax was adopted (*fumanti* or *focatico*). Before that attempts had been made to tax the clergy. In the war against Mastino della Scala, Lord of Verona, which ended in 1339, the loans amounted to 350,000 gold guilders, and exceeded the annual revenue from the excise by 50,000 guilders. The accumulation of the debt after the expulsion of the Duke of Athens necessitated the continuance of the *monte comune*, already mentioned, for the administration of the public debt. In the previous century, when payment of the debt due to the citizens became impossible, a ‘great book’ was opened, which in the course of forty years was superseded. During the war of 1325, against Castruccio Castracane, resort was had to similar means for raising money, and the Republic, being unable to pay the debt without borrowing again, established the *monte comune*. The interest paid was at the rate of five per cent., though at other times it reached as high as twenty-five.[8]

At the beginning of the fifteenth century the taxation was continually rising, and in the war with King Ladislaus the whole of the income registered on the *estimo* was charged with a tax of five per cent. for three years. Nonpayment of the tax was punished by exclusion from office. The defaulter’s name was entered in a register called the ‘looking-glass’ (*specchio*), whence the expression *netto di specchio* applied to a man eligible for office. According to a regulation of 1421 no man was so eligible unless he, his father, or grandfather, had been regular in paying his taxes for thirty years.

Of course there were manifold murmurs at these extraordinary proceedings. The real evil, however, and cause of discontent was [32] not only the high rate of taxation, but its arbitrary and partial

distribution. When the partition of the burdens was made an arm of offence against which the citizens rose to defend themselves by violence it was necessary to find some other basis, if the State economy were to be preserved from ruin. The regulation of the *cadastre* in 1427 had a twofold object in view, namely, first to raise the public income by putting together the property tax, the income tax, and the interest on the national debt (*paghe* or *luoghi di monte*); secondly, to make the distribution of the imposts independent of personal and political opinions. This financial reform, which changed nothing in the nature of the tax, but only established a better partition of it, was not a new thing. At bottom it was but a complement of the *estimo*, and the expression *catasto* for census, from *accatastare*, to pile together, was used in Florence a century earlier. That it was brought forward with a view to adjust more equally the incidence of taxation may be gathered from the preamble of the ordinance of May 22, 1427: 'It is hard to express in speech or writing how much the citizens have suffered in their goods and their liberty by the inequality of the public burdens. They have been robbed and driven to desperation. How many, who would gladly have returned to their homes, have been kept back in doubt and uncertainty, exposed to all the ills that flow therefrom.'

A commission of ten members was appointed to make within the year a register of property. Arranged methodically, it was to specify the various families in each quarter of the town, the name and age of the several members of the family, the estimated value of each one's property, real and personal, in town and country, and in foreign parts. In the estimate were reckoned the domestic animals of value, merchandise, ready cash, money in the funds, and all good debts. The rent of houses was specified, and in the case of land cultivated by the owner the average crop was taken. The *mezzeria*, or lands let out to farm, were valued according to the market-price [33] of produce, allowance being made for the working material furnished to the farmer by the proprietor. The capitalised value of property was estimated at 100 for 7 per cent. produce, and on this capital half a guilder, that is, one-half per cent., was levied. In casting up the various elements of personal property and income the same principle prevailed as when it was capitalised. Both sources of revenue united furnished the total of what was called the *sostanza*, according to which the quota of taxes was fixed. Certain deductions were allowed by law, so that the tax-paying portion of the income was only the surplus over the sum required for the strict necessaries of life. Among these deductions was the rent of the dwelling-house, and of the warehouse, stall, or booth used in the way of business. The fiscal legislation adhered to the principle of burdening the old nobility of the city, nor did it spare the magnates of the provinces, many of whom, up to the time of the French Revolution, preserved an exceptional position. They had to pay twice, nay, three and four times, as much in taxes as other people, and were charged with rates from which the ordinary inhabitants of the country were free. The valuation held good for three years. Five registers were opened. The first was for the burghers; the second for country-people of various shades and degrees, including the peasantry; the third for the clergy; the fourth for guilds and corporations holding land, such as the woolstaplers', silkmercers', and money-changers' guilds; the fifth and last for persons not belonging to the State, yet possessed of territory or engaged in commerce.

An examination of the first *cadastre* for the years 1427-30 gives a clear insight into the condition of property in town and country. The gross income of the citizens of Florence, then 90,000 to 95,000 in number, was estimated in round numbers at 620,000 gold guilders, which, allowing for the triple value of money, would be equal to 5,000,000 thalers (750,000*l.* sterling) at the present day. The town duties produced 25,300 guilders, those of the country 18,500. [34] Thirty-two families paid upwards of a hundred guilders in taxes, two hundred paid in all more than 12,800 guilders. The highest tax—that paid by Palla Strozzi—was 507 guilders, which presupposes a fortune of 101,400 guilders, or, in present currency, 820,000 thalers (123,000*l.*). Second in the list of rich contributors is Giovanni de' Medici, who pays 397 guilders. Then come two branches of the Panchiatichi, Francesco Tornabuoni, Niccolò da Uzzano, and Bernardo Lamberteschi, with more than 200 others. The landed property belonging to the clergy, to most of the benevolent institutions, and to the guilds within the jurisdiction of the Republic,

was valued at 1,577,000 guilders, while the revenues of the clergy and the charities were put down at 130,000 guilders. The value of the untaxed monasteries was registered at 152,000 guilders. A few years later than this Cosimo de' Medici, with his sons and relatives, were charged with a tax of 428 guilders for his business transactions. Seventy guilders of this amount were paid by the bank at Florence, as much by the branches at London and Bruges, 96 by those of Avignon and Geneva, 65 by that of Venice, and the rest by the partners in the firm.

Undoubtedly the new mode of taxation distributed taxation more equally than before. All those—some 3,000 in number—who, divested of property, lived only by the labour of their hands, were valued *pro formâ*, and counted by heads; but the payment of rates was not strictly enforced on them. They constituted a particular class, known as *miserabili*. Another class, one degree better off than these, and numbering more than 5,000, came to terms with the revenue officers for the payment of a small quota of taxes. If, however, the poorer classes were very lightly burdened, the charges on the rich were enormously heavy. Many among them paid the *estimo* ten and twenty times over, and could not as formerly obtain exemption from any charge on the plea of expenses incurred in the public service by the discharge of official duties confided to them. [35] Malcontents were numerous. Those who owned land and capital, which are easy to get at and to tax, complained of the favour extended to trade and commerce. The lower classes, however, still dissatisfied, demanded political power, and a revision of the old payments. Giovanni di Bicci, by acting as mediator between the classes, did more than anyone in keeping off injudicious demands and maintaining peace. To him is generally ascribed the merit of the measure which aimed at a more just distribution of the public burdens. But in the deliberations on the subject that took place after 1426 he played but a secondary part, and at the last sitting declared that his adhesion to the measure was due not to his confidence in its success, but to his feelings of deference for the many citizens who had recommended it.[9] Rinaldo degli Albizzi and Niccolò da Uzzano were, for political reasons, both secret and avowed, foremost in supporting the proposal, although, as it happened, they and their friends were the most seriously affected by the new mode of taxation. There were insinuations against Medici that he profited by the embarrassments of his country in time of war, as he did by the distresses of individuals in time of panic, for all came to him for advances. It must be remembered, however, that his business extended far beyond Italy to all parts of France, and to Flanders especially, and that his trading interests would be best promoted by the peace of his country and the prosperity of his neighbours. With Pope Martin V., as with his predecessor, John XXIII., Di Bicci was on the best terms. The former made him Count of Monteverde, in the province of Fermo, on May 8, 1422.

Giovanni di Bicci lived to be sixty-nine. Only two sons remained [36] to him, the children of his wife Piccarda, daughter of Odoardo Bueri. She survived her husband three years. He, on feeling his end approach, called his sons to him, and bade them follow his example —to be prudent, benevolent, and on friendly terms with those who wished them well. 'Do nothing,' he said, 'against the wish of the people, and if they wish what they ought not, endeavour to turn them from it by friendly remonstrance rather than by arrogant dictation. Do not make the government-house your workshop, but wait until you are called to it, then show yourselves obedient, and avoid big swelling words. Strive to keep the people at peace, and the strong places well cared for. Engage in no legal complications, for he who impedes the law shall perish by the law. Do not draw public attention on yourselves, yet keep free from blemish as I leave you. Take care of my wife, your mother, and let her keep the place she now has.'[10] He expired on February 20, 1429, and was carried to San Lorenzo on an open bier. His remains were followed by his two sons, and twenty-eight members of the family, accompanied by the ambassadors of Venice and of King Sigismund, with many other persons, including the magistrates. The obsequies cost more than 3,000 guilders, and Cosimo and Lorenzo presented to the chapter a sum of 800 guilders for the institution of an annual festival in memory of the departed, to be held on the day of his death.[11] There, in the sacristy built at his own cost, lies Giovanni di Bicci, with his spouse, in a sarcophagus worked by the hand of Donatello, with genii holding the coat-of-arms carved in semi-relief on the

cover, and inscriptions cut on the lower parts.[12] The contemporary already mentioned has described the personal appearance of Giovanni.[13] ‘He was tall and strong in figure, and broad in the face, with a dark, sallow complexion. His sense of humour was greater than anyone would have imagined from his melancholy expression. In business transactions he was straightforward, though not exactly eloquent, for nature had not endowed him with the graces of speech. Yet in public he was always ready with a good argument and sound advice. No one spoke ill of him. Niccolò da Uzzano, who passed for his rival, said to his sons, with tears in his eyes, “Your excellent father has left you in favour with the people, and beloved by the burghers, with splendid and improving pecuniary prospects.” He loved the good, and pitied the bad. The wicked, he said, existed for their own misfortune, and the good by the grace and good providence of God. He never complained of other citizens, nor they of him. The poor excited his compassion, and the rich enjoyed his friendship and support. He strove against misery, and promoted the happiness of mankind, when he could do so without injury to the Commonwealth. His hands were clean, and not seldom he neglected his own interests in the service of others. For others, too, he would often ask favours of the Government, never for himself. Yet, the fewer the pretensions he had, the more did the duties of State devolve upon him.’

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CHAPTER III.

THE CITY OF FLORENCE UP TO THE BEGINNING OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

DURING the two centuries that laid the foundation of the power of the Medici the city of Florence had reached the size which it has retained to our day, and presented much the same internal appearance as it did down to a very recent period. The site was a favourable one. About midway between its source and its mouth the Arno issues from the narrow valleys of the Casentino, Aretino, and the upper Arno, and flows down the western slope of Tuscany towards the Mediterranean. On a spot where there rises a group of low hills, close to the left bank of the river, the city was founded. On the right bank a semicircle of hills, crowned with the tower and ruined walls of the ancient Etruscan city of Fiesole, recedes in gentle declivities. Not long before the decline of the Roman Republic the community was formed which was destined in the course of centuries to be the ruling power in Tuscany, to promote the revival of literature and art, and to recall to life the culture of the ancients, under the influence of Christianity.

Many circumstances combined to promote the prosperity of the city. Although the river had neither any great volume nor steadiness in its flow it afforded a means of communication, and its course lay through flowery meadows which, watered by brooks descending from the sunny hillsides, were well fitted for the cultivation of the vine and olive, inexhaustible sources of wealth to the inhabitants of those southern regions. The pure air of the mountains, which [39] glistened with the snow upon them until late in spring, together with the powerful influence of the sun, removed all fear of the malaria incident to such low-lying districts. These advantages seem to have attracted settlers from Fiesole, who established here a fair for the convenience of trade. A Roman military colony augmented the population and importance of the settlement; and although the ancient inhabitants of the city were proud of their Roman descent, their posterity attributed the inflexibility of the popular character, ‘which still retains its stony and rocky nature,’ to the admixture of their blood with that of the mountaineers of Fiesole. The oldest traditions speak of the special veneration in which the God of War was held; and if the opinion that the baptistery built on the northern boundary of the original city was his temple be false, at all events the figure of Mars was to be seen on the old bridge, until it was swept away by one of the frequent inundations of the Arno.

Moreover, in the Roman town there are reminiscences of the Capitol in fragments of the amphitheatre which have been dug up at different times, and have been used in edifices of later date. Evidences of the same are said to have existed in the church of Santa Maria di Campidoglio, once standing in the old market-place. The circuit of the walls of the Roman town, which was connected with the opposite shore by the bridge above mentioned, may be roughly traced by following the direction of the narrow streets of the crowded quarter between the river and the cathedral square, and the Piazza of Santa Trinità and Santa Firenze. When the declining Roman Empire could no longer resist the pressure of the northern nations Florence was besieged by the wild hordes of Radagaïs. They were, however, utterly destroyed by the general Honorius Flavius Stilicho, when the city was relieved. The storm of Gothic and Lombard war subsequently swept over the country, until at length Charlemagne, who in legends is called the Restorer of Florence, established peace, and set up a form of government, [40] founded on Lombard institutions, which, with various changes, was maintained until the uprising of the free Communes.

Towards the latter end of the eleventh century the portion of the city on the right bank of the river had been considerably enlarged, so that it extended eastward as far as the piazza of Santa Croce, northward to that of San Lorenzo, and westward to where subsequently the Carraia bridge was built. The city enclosed also within its walls, which not long afterwards withstood an assault of the Emperor Henry IV., that portion of the left bank of the river which extends as far as the Piazza de’ Pitti. This was the city that was seen in his youth by the author of the ‘Divine Comedy,’ who was born in 1265, a year before the Guelfs obtained supreme authority.

But Dante beheld it already changed in its internal aspect, and in the character of its population, hurried along as they were on the path of conquest, with which this change in character was closely connected. He has described the manners and customs of the ancient citizens, 'when they were still purely reflected in the lowest artisan,' that is, before peasants and men of the lower classes had immigrated from the subjugated villages of the neighbourhood, attracted both by the protection they enjoyed in a powerful city and the promise of gain from the daily increasing value of their industry. This was, to use the poet's words, before citizens of Roman descent had to endure the stench of peasants from Aguglione and Signa, whom avarice alone had allured to Florence.[14] Dante Alighieri lived to see likewise the commencement of the great architectural transformation. Numerous churches had long adorned the city, which reverenced in Zanobi a saintly bishop, and had numbered among its illustrious citizens St. John Gualbert, the founder of the Order of Vallombrosa. Beside the church of St. John, the supposed [41]
Temple of Mars, there had arisen in the first half of the eighth century Santa Reparata, the subsequent cathedral, and in the tenth and eleventh Santa Felicità, San Martino, Sant'Ambrogio, Santa Maria Maggiore, San Remigio, San Salvi, San Lorenzo, San Piero Scheraggio, San Romolo, Santa Trinità, etc., in and near the city, were either newly founded or rebuilt. Nothing now remains of the original structure of any of these churches, many of which have quite disappeared. Specimens of the Roman style are still preserved in the city and its environs, in the octagon of San Giovanni, the little Basilica of Sant'Apostolo, that of San Miniato on a neighbouring eminence,[15] and the façade of the Abbey-church at the foot of the hill of Fiesole. These buildings all belong to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and were probably completed before the end of the latter, and the conception and finish of this architecture serve to explain how Gothic architecture, which arose in the following century, was never entirely free from reminiscences of the older style, and, notwithstanding its more graceful characteristics, declined before attaining the same degree of perfection.

The architectural industry of the thirteenth century was very great, and was exercised as much for ecclesiastical as for secular purposes. Before that period narrow streets and small, irregular squares made the city gloomy.

On every side rose lofty square brick towers without any break or ornament whatever, sometimes so close together as to be within arm's length of one another. The dwelling-houses, which were built of freestone, were small in size and built with a view to purposes of defence and attack as much as for habitation. The streets were first paved in 1237, in which year the Milanese knight, Rubaconte da Mandello, Podestà of the corporation, built over the Arno, at that [42]
spot within the city where the river is at its broadest, the bridge named after him, but generally known by the name of the chapel of Sta. Maria delle Grazie. Bricks placed on end were used for the purposes of paving as well as for the bridges. About the middle of the century a partial demolition of the towers became necessary. This, however, by no means put an end to the civil conflicts, or even deprived them of their ferocious character. Stones were used for building the city walls, particularly on the left bank of the river. At the present day many towers, both in the oldest portion of the city between the old bridge and that of the Trinity, and also by San Pier Maggiore, and in the quarter beyond the Arno, recall the bloody feuds of the irreconcilable factions of the nobility. In these conflicts the strife was carried on from tower to tower, from house to house; streets were barricaded with heavy chains, and homes made desolate with fire and sword.

At this period the construction of those great buildings began, some of which still impart to the city its peculiar aspect, and of these some have already been named in the introduction to this history. Amongst the first were the original bridge of Sta. Trinità, the Oratory of Confuggio, out of which grew the brilliant Servite church of the Annunziata, the old Town-hall, afterwards enlarged and named after the Podestà, the Carmelite church beyond the Arno, and the magnificent Sta. Maria Novella, which is, perhaps, the purest and most graceful example of the so-called Tuscan Gothic.

The Dominicans, who are said to have come to Florence in 1219 and who at first lived in hospitals, were presented two years later by the Bishop and Chapter with the little church of St. Mary, which was

extended in size till it became one of the largest houses of Divine worship, with the addition of a spacious cloister. Not long after the arrival of the Dominicans the order of the Franciscan Minorites was established in Florence, and about the middle of the century they rebuilt their great church of Sta. Croce, situated by the wall on the [43] east side, and transformed it into the majestic temple we behold at the present day.[16] The corporation had already purchased pieces of ground and also houses in various places, to make room for widening the older streets and laying out others. In this way space was found for the Hall of Or San Michele, which was built about the middle of the century, and which took its name from a church of the Archangel, pulled down to make room.[17] Similarly space was obtained in 1282 and following years in the quarter of the city beyond the Arno and in the west suburb, for laying out the older square by Sta. Maria Novella.[18] About the same time the final enlargement of the city was commenced by laying out the line of wall which those now living have seen still perfect with its gates and towers. But of all this nothing more remains on the right bank of the river, since Florence, which for centuries had been content with its mediæval boundaries, was extended as far as the foot of the hill of Fiesole, and numerous conventual and other gardens were transformed into squares and streets, while fields and meadows were enclosed within the city. The character of its circuit has thus been materially altered, although remains of the ancient style of architecture are still visible here and there. The great work of the new boundary wall is ascribed to the two Dominican brothers, Fra Sisto and Fra Ristoro, who built Sta. Maria Novella and were employed in Rome in Sta. Maria sopra Minerva, and to Arnolfo, who stands in the first rank of the historical architects of Florence. Arnolfo, the son of Cambio, a native of Colle in the valley of the Elsa, was named after his master Arnolfo di Lasso, who was a German by origin, and known as architect of the castle of Poppi and the Palazzo del Podestà.

The development of the political power of Florence, now fully [44] conscious of its importance, was coincident with an increase in material wealth and with an awakening of intellectual life. Arnolfo had the good fortune to be born in the period when that great movement began, which, furthered rather than hindered by the animosity of civil strife, led to a remarkable revival in Italy of literature and art. It must be remembered that the way to it was paved by the age of the Hohenstaufen.

The great poet who is so much identified with this eventful time[19] saw the foundations laid for the palace of the Signory and the new Cathedral, Sta. Maria del Fiore, Sta. Croce, and Sto. Spirito; he witnessed the construction of the Corn Exchange of Or San Michele, and the gloomy prison which still recalls the memory of party-strife.[20] In his banishment he thought of his beautiful San Giovanni, and in order to picture the steep ascent in Purgatory drew a comparison with the straight path, that now no longer exists, leading to the church of San Miniato, which looked down on the Rubaconte bridge, and commanded a view of the city.[21] Beside it in his time Bishop Andrea de' Mozzi had begun to build the first embattled episcopal palace, which was completed by his successor, Antonio d'Orso, the same who instigated the populace to rise against the Emperor Henry IV. Dante was a witness of the indefatigable zeal with which corporation and citizens emulated each other in the erection of churches, great public buildings, the city-wall and defensive castles for the environs. No will was held valid unless a legacy was left by it towards the expenses of building the wall, while immunity from taxes was granted to the architect of the cathedral in gratitude for his excellent work. Benevolence had [45] long been engaged in relieving human misery, and now with increase of means it was still more displayed. Folco Portinari, the father of him whose name has become celebrated far and wide through Dante Alighieri, founded the hospital of Sta. Maria, now one of the largest in any country, by extending a charitable institution commenced by Mona Tessa, a servant of his house. The corporation built the hospital at the Porto al Prato and took under their superintendence the one long since founded by a pious citizen at Porta San Gallo. The hospital of San Jacopo and that of Sta. Maria della Scala were annexed later. Contributions were everywhere given for churches and convents, for that of the Camaldulensians in the Angeli, the Servites in Cafaggio, the Silvestrines in San Marco,

and others. An especial magistrate was appointed for the care of the streets and sewers, and the Carraia bridge was rebuilt.

In the midst of this activity, in June 1304, a conflagration laid a great part of the city in ashes, during a violent feud between the populace and the nobility. It is said that 1,700 noblemen's palaces, towers, and houses of citizens were destroyed, besides incalculable wealth, and many monuments of the old town. The prior of San Piero Scheraggio, Ser Freri Abbati, was the incendiary. As an example of the ferocity of the manners of the times it may be here mentioned that in the year 1307 the belfry of the Benedictine abbey was partially demolished because the monks had rung the alarm-bell during a quarrel which had arisen respecting taxation of the clergy. Activity in construction was not, as we have said before, confined to the defence and adornment of the city itself, for at this period the building of numerous forts was determined upon for the protection of the environs, the completion of which was afterwards vigorously carried on. Such defences were necessary in times of perpetual warfare, like the feuds of the communes; and the marches upon Rome led by Henry of Luxembourg and Louis of Bavaria, with the enterprises of Uguccione della Faggiuola and Castruccio [46] Castracane, in connection with these, gave immediate occasion for them. In much later times they were still an effectual protection, for the art of besieging was still in its infancy when the art of defence had already made important progress, and armies under celebrated generals were stayed for months by inconsiderable villages, as the history of the second half of the fifteenth century will show.

The style of palaces and houses remained faithful to the older traditions. The public palaces were like castles. For centuries those of the Podestà and the Signory, for example, had been carefully strengthened and kept in a state of defence. From the towers, the bells of which summoned the citizens, there was a wide prospect over the city and its environs. The battlements, of the square form customary among the Guelfs, were adapted for defensive purposes. The windows on the ground storey were few and narrow, the gates were strengthened by double doors. The building material, consisting of heavy stones, or *macigni*, was furnished by the neighbouring stone-quarries of the hills of Fiesole and Golfolina on the Arno, at the spot where the river forces a narrow passage from the Florentine to the broad lower valley.[22] Great blocks of freestone, rough-hewn and gradually blackened by exposure to the air, formed those massive walls that seemed as though built for eternity. These walls have stamped their character on the later Florentine architecture; for the fifteenth and even the sixteenth century remained faithful to this *opus rusticum*, which has been transmitted down to our own days—modified, it is true, in its harsher features, but essentially unchanged. The windows of the upper storeys, divided first by slender marble columns, and then by various ornaments in the spaces of the pointed arch, relieve the gloominess of the fortress. The halls of the guilds and the palaces of the nobility exhibit the same style, though in them the embossments [47] are partly or entirely smoothed away, and the windows are quite plain. Many of them are still preserved in the older quarters of the city, in the Borgo Sant'Apostolo, in the Via delle Terme, in the Mercato Nuovo, in the Via de' Cerchi and Condotta, in the narrow streets behind the Old Palace in Via de' Neri and de' Rustici, and in Piazza Peruzzi, where they have even nestled in the Roman amphitheatre and elsewhere. The former palace of the Spini, between the Arno and the Piazza of Santa Trinità, the restoration of which has been undertaken by the present municipal authorities, presents, with its massive crown of battlements, the severe character of a fortress. The houses of the Mozzi at the south end of the Rubaconte bridge, and those of the Manelli on the Ponte Vecchio, among others, represent, in spite of change, the age of Dante; some, indeed, are now, after a lapse of six centuries, occupied by descendants of the very families that then possessed them.[23] The ground floors often show the traces of walled-up loggie, an indication of more peaceful days, for this style of building was continued even when party quarrels were fought out more by change of constitution and by proscription than by force of arms.

The numerous religious institutions show of themselves how important a field was offered to ecclesiastical architecture. At the most flourishing period of German architecture, Sta. Maria Novella furnishes the first example of the endeavour to obtain as wide and slight an arching to the vault as possible, by employing antique

pilasters, composed of semi-columns and pillar corners. This attempt has met with comparative success in Sta. Maria del Fiore, in which plain pillars adorned with more developed capitals composed of acanthus leaves have been used, while for the gigantic [48] central nave of Sta. Croce the vaulting is relinquished, and the open principle of the Christian basilica of Rome adopted. The same plan is also to be seen in San Miniato al Monte. If, however, the management of the material in Sta. Maria del Fiore exhibits extraordinary skill, a certain baldness was, on the other hand, scarcely to be avoided; and this forms a contrast with the awkwardly set cupola of the choir and transept—a fault, perhaps, less to be charged upon the first architect than is generally assumed. The exterior marble facing of the first two of these churches was similar to that of San Giovanni, but displayed a greater tendency to picturesque effect, which was increased by the additions of later times. The marble was supplied from native quarries, those of Prato and the Maremma, and after 1343 particularly from Carrara.[24] The craft of the painter was and remained combined with that of the architect, as a fine art, distinguished in fact only by the employment of different materials. That same painter, to whom art history—which in the fifteenth century was just awakening, and in the next, although not yet critical, reached descriptive perfection—has given, following tradition, a higher position than belongs to him, painted both with the brush and with coloured *pastilles*, and his most distinguished pupil adorned the city with its most graceful architecture. Dante has extolled them both, the one as a setting and the other as a rising star. The legend derives the ancient family name of Borgo Allegri from the popular rejoicing which accompanied Charles of Anjou on his way to inspect the great Madonna picture in the studio of Giovanni Cimabue, which now adorns the church of Sta. Maria Novella. It was Giotto di Bondone who broke through the narrow circle of typical painting in the Byzantine style, and, both in single figures of Madonnas and Saints and in grand historico-allegorical compositions, opened a way to freer spiritual development, in which he was followed by a large school. Although, as was natural, [49] considering the large number of its followers, its original principles did not continue unmodified, this school in all essentials became the authority for the fourteenth century. No new creative peculiarity, however, was evinced, and constant repetition of the same motive can be observed in form of face, drapery, architecture, and colouring. The admiration that Giotto's works, which adorned all Italy, had excited in his native city, the talents that were ascribed to him outside the art to which he had especially devoted himself, are shown by a decree passed by the Signory on April 12, 1334,[25] in concert with the Buonuomini—an act redounding no less to the honour of the State than of the painter. By this decree Giotto was nominated architect of the Sta. Maria del Fiore, of the boundary wall, and of the other architectural undertakings of the Corporation. 'Let it be done,' so it ran, 'in order that the public works may progress effectually and in fitting manner, which can only be the case if a practised and celebrated man conduct the management of them, and for this purpose no one can be found in the whole world able to do more excellently in this, as in many other things, than Master Giotto di Bondone of Florence, painter, whom, as a great artist, his native city will lovingly receive and honour.' Giotto lived two years after his praises were thus proclaimed. After death he was honoured with the erection in the cathedral, with the building of which he had been entrusted, of a monument adorned by one of the finest inscriptions of the Renaissance period.

During the time that the façade of this church, which was destined to undergo many a change, was building, together with its side-walls, doors, and the walls and gates of the quarter Oltr'arno; and while the belfry of the cathedral, the most graceful, rich, and perfect work of its style, arose, great efforts had to be made to clear away the last traces of the fire of 1304, and the ravages of the great [50] inundation of November 1, 1333. Three bridges were broken up; the old bridge, with those of Santa Trinità and Carraia, and even the column before the Baptistery, which had been raised in memory of St. Zanobi, was thrown down. Every nerve was strained to the work of restoration. One of the most active among the artists was Giotto's pupil, Taddeo Gaddi, who, in the summer of 1337, began building the new Hall of Or San Michele, on the site of the one burnt down, which was, however, no longer destined to serve the former

purpose, but to be used as an Oratorium, while two upper stories were to be employed for the garnering of corn. So arose this magnificent edifice, which forms one of the most remarkable ornaments of Florence, and, seen from the neighbouring hills, towers above the clustering houses. It forms a quadrangle, of which the sides are of unequal length. The character of a hall is still visible in the ground-floor, with its wide tripartite arched windows, which are richly panelled, and in the two upper stories with their arched windows, in groups, alternately, of two and three, divided by columns; the whole being surmounted by a moulded cornice. In this cornice are niches with statues and groups of marble, which had been built at the cost of the guilds, and set on the pilasters of the older hall; and here, as on the middle storey, are placed the arms of these guilds with those of the commonwealth.[26] Two years later Taddeo Gaddi began rebuilding the old bridge in essentially the same form as at present. The palace of the Podestà had been already considerably enlarged and beautified when in 1326 it served Duke Charles of Calabria, the son of King Robert of Naples, as a residence; but in February 1332 it had suffered by fire, and in the year following by the inundation, so that a thorough restoration was necessary. The Carraia bridge was finished in 1337; that of the Trinità required several years more; the belfry of the Benedictine abbey had been rebuilt in 1330. The short reign of the Duke of [51] Athens caused no cessation in the process of construction. A new front was built to the palace of the Signory, in which the Duke took up his residence, which did not, however, protect him from the resentment of the populace; and in the palace of the Podestà, of which the picturesque courtyard was then building, with arcades running round three sides of the ground-floor, his coats of arms bear witness to his activity. The following years were so restless and disturbed, owing to the peril the country was in from the swarms of freebooters, who, towards the middle of the century, laid all Italy under contribution, and from the fearful ravages of the Black Death, that architecture was rather called into requisition for the safety of the city than for its adornment.

The brigandage and pestilence that prevailed might well cripple constructive progress for a time, but it was soon aroused to renewed activity. If the last fearful calamity led to immorality among the lower orders, it yet induced many to relinquish the bustle of the world for grave meditations and pious works. The means of charitable institutions were considerably increased by alms and legacies. In 1349 was decreed the erection of a chapel to St. Anne, in the hall of Or San Michele, in commemoration of the expulsion of the Duke of Athens on the day of that saint. The work was conducted by Neri de' Fioravante, who, on the occasion of that event, superintended the erection of the barricades at the Place of the Signory, and by Benci di Cione of Como. Three years later Andrea Orcagna began in the same place the rich chapel of the Madonna, which may be considered as the best work of architectural sculpture belonging to this period. The graceful loggia which, in the year 1351, were commenced opposite San Giovanni, as frontage to the Oratorium, are probably by the same artist. This Oratorium originally belonged to the brotherhood of the Misericordia, a society formed after the plague in 1326, and still in meritorious activity. It came later into the hands of another benevolent society, that of the Capitani del Bigallo.[27] The building [52] of the Certosa, which was commenced by Nicola Acciaiuoli, in the year 1341, on the neighbouring hill of Montaguto, was carried on with vigour, and the mausoleum containing the beautiful monuments of the family belongs likewise to these years. In 1360 the building of Santa Maria del Fiore, which had been so continually interrupted, was fairly proceeded with, and four years later the cupola was commenced. In the neighbourhood of the palace of the Signory the site for the new Mint was obtained in 1361. Several churches were altered or rebuilt, and the façade of the church opposite to Or San Michele—now named after St. Charles Borromeo, but formerly dedicated to the archangel—is a monument of the graceful style of the period, though of small dimensions, and sparely ornamented. An endeavour was made in 1351 to fill the voids left by the plague in the ranks of the artists, by granting permission to strangers to carry on both sculpture and architecture. The tendency of the period towards the formation of guilds had manifested itself in the year previous by the institution of the Society of Painters, under the patronage of St. Luke, which, altered

and enlarged, exists at the present day.

The Hall of the Signory, which, since the 16th century, has been generally called the Loggia de' Lanzi, is the most important architectural work of the latter part of the 14th century. In the architecture of this building the spirit of the Renaissance breaks boldly through the barriers of the Gothic style, without entirely renouncing it. A hall in which the whole members and friends of a family could meet was looked upon as a necessary distinction of the high rank of the owner, and, indeed, no house of any importance was without such an adjunct. This hall was afterwards gradually converted into a separate and public building. Even in the middle of the following century Leon Battista Alberti wrote thus: 'Streets and [53] markets will be adorned by halls in which older people may assemble to avoid the heat and discuss their business, while their presence will act as a restraint upon the young in their games.' Even private family affairs were transacted here, and it is related of Giovanni Rucellai, a rich citizen of the 15th century, who built a new loggia opposite his house, that he arranged his daughter's wedding there. None of these loggias are at present in complete preservation,[28] for even where the exterior form has been preserved the arches have been walled up, and the building has been diverted to other uses, the original destination being uncalled for by altered customs. Numerous traces of them, however, still exist, notably of the Loggias of the Cerchi, the Agli, the Buondelmonti, the Cavalcanti, the Tornaquinci, the Peruzzi, the Alberti, the Canigiani, Burdi, Frescobaldi, Guiccardini, in the quarter of Oltr'arno, and, of later origin, those of the Albizzi and Rucellai.

A commodious hall was naturally desired for the Signory in view of the public nature of the business transacted by them, and the unsuitableness of the Tribune of Ringhiera, which was added to the façade of their palaces in 1349 and pulled down during the domination of Napoleon. Notwithstanding, however, the utility of such a building and the practice of annexing loggias to private dwellings, when the square of the Signory was enlarged in 1356, to make room for the hall, by pulling down the church of San Romolo, a part of the Mint, and several houses, the general opinion was, that a great public hall was better fitted for a despotism than for a free city.[29]

As already mentioned, it was not until twenty years later that the hall of the Signory was commenced.[30] Benci di Cione and Simone Talenti were the architects. The former was an artist much in [54] request, and was not only incessantly engaged in the architectural works of the city, but also in the construction of the fortifications. His death happened in 1388. The superintendence of this building was entrusted likewise to the directors of Sta. Maria del Fiore, their funds exceeding their necessities. Although the building of the loggia of the Signory is ascribed to Orcagna in error, seeing that he had died eight years before, and had not lived even to see the square cleared, the way for it was prepared by the hall of the Bigallos, which was undoubtedly by his hands. The Gothic style had, even at the end of the previous century, displayed great boldness in the treatment of the pointed arch. The circular arch was now adopted, which in bold sweeps forms three openings on the façade, and one at each side. An architrave rises above the capitals of lofty but strongly built pillars, surmounted by a boldly projecting cornice, with wide cross-vaulting inside. Antique tradition was nowhere so perceptible as in this building, the unsurpassed, nay, unattainable, model for all later ones of the kind until the present day. In the year 1380, in which Antonio di Puccio, the ancestor of the yet flourishing family of the Pucci, executed the third vaulting, the building seems to have approached its completion, but eleven years longer sculptors and painters were occupied with its adornment by numerous sculptures in high and low relief, in which mosaic and colouring were employed to heighten the effect.[31]

Florentine sculpture of the latter part of the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries followed essentially the bent of Giovanni Pisano, who endeavoured to unite the decided tendencies of his father Nicolò towards the antique with those of the Gothic style, which then began to assert itself; and he thus traced out for his followers the way which they have long pursued. Andrea Pisano, the son of one Ugolino of Pontedera, was the chief representative of [55] Giovanni's school during the first half of the fourteenth century. If

there is any question as to whether the design of the bronze door of the Baptistery, worked by him in 1330, being Giotto's, the great influence exercised by Giotto on the sculpture of his time is undoubted. Neither Orcagna, whose most important work, the altar to the Virgin in Or San Michele, has already been mentioned, and who displays both in painting and in sculpture the greatest originality in conception and in form of any artist of this epoch, nor Andrea Pisano's pupil, Alberto di Arnoldo, to whom the grave and noble group of the Virgin with Angels in the Oratorium of Bigallo is owing, was able to escape the influence of Giotto. The decoration of the façade of the cathedral, of the belfry and interior of the baptistery, as also of the side doors of the cathedral, with sculpture, statues, reliefs, and ornaments, gave employment, irrespectively of others, to numerous artists from foreign parts, but much of their work has unfortunately been destroyed or mutilated. Meanwhile the churches were being adorned with numerous frescoes and altar panels, particularly Sta. Croce, so rich in chapels, which was only completed in the following century, Sta. Trinità, which was enlarged in 1383, Sta. Maria Novella, Ognissanti, and others, in which work Agnolo Gaddi, Orcagna, Giovanni da Milano, Jacopo del Casentino, and many others were employed. Before the middle of the century the great chapter hall of Sta. Maria Novella, commonly called Capellone degli Spagnuoli, which contains the mural paintings ascribed, without ground, to the Siennese painter, Simon Martini, and Taddeo Gaddi, had been built by a citizen of Florence, named Buonamico di Lapo Guidalotti. The frescoes from the history of St. Benedict, by Spinello of Aretino, in San Miniato al Monte, date after the year 1380, and those from the New Testament in the Rinuccini chapel, probably by Giovanni da Milano,[32] somewhat earlier. Orcagna, who next to Giotto possessed the most catholic spirit of [56]
the century, had breathed a fresher and more original life into the school then dominant. He was followed pre-eminently by the two last-named masters, who, notwithstanding the duration of the Giottoesque traditions, herald in the coming epoch.

Not alone the end of the thirteenth, but the onward marching fourteenth century likewise beheld the establishment of great charitable institutions. In the year 1377 the building of the hospital was commenced, which Bonifacio de' Lupi of Soragna, from Parma, formerly Podestà and Capitano del Popolo, dedicated as a mark of attachment to the city which had bestowed its freedom on him. In the course of centuries it has been much changed, but still exists as the Spedale di Bonifazio. Seven years later Lemmo Balducci, of Monticatini, founded the hospital of San Matteo, on the site now occupied by the Academy of Fine Arts. In 1400 the hospital Sta. Maria dell'Umiltà (San Giovanni di Dio) was erected by Simone Vespucci, near the houses of his family. Churches and monasteries followed one another, and, as the enlargement of the square of the Signory necessitated the demolition of a church, it was rebuilt in another place. In 1394 Bishop Onofrio Visdomini consecrated the magnificent charter-house of the Acciaiuoli, which was established at the public cost. In 1392 the convent Il Paradiso, before Porta San Nicolò, on the slope of the hill of Arcetri and Miniato, was founded by Messer Antonio degli Alberti, under the influence of the excitement created in the ecclesiastical world, then distracted with the great schism, by the report of the prophecies and piety of Bridget of Sweden, whose fame extended far beyond Rome, where she passed so many years of her life. This period showed itself grateful towards men of merit. In 1393 the directors of San Maria del Fiore received permission to raise a monument to John Hawkwood, who, as a commander under the name of Giovanni Aguto, had the thanks of the Republic for his faithful services. A year later it was resolved to erect in the same church a monument to the learned and useful public servant, the Augustine monk Luigi [57]
Marsigli. By a decree passed in the year 1396 it was intended to perpetuate in the same manner the memory of the lawyer Accursio, Zanobi da Strada, also Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. The decree was, however, never carried out.

The power of the aristocracy, at the head of which were the Albizzi, now approached its height. After the unfortunate attempt of 1397 to obtain some popular balance to this domination, a less violent state of affairs came gradually about, one manifestation of which was the great expenditure of money, both by the State and private individuals, in the prosecution of important and valuable works. This activity renders the period worthy to be compared with

the end of the previous century, and formed a new epoch in the history of art. It was formerly the custom to associate the name of the Medici with the outburst of the Italian Renaissance, and likewise with the height of its perfection at the beginning of the fifteenth century. They had, however, only followed in the footsteps of their predecessors the Albizzi, and Pope Julius II.

The stages of the progress of the Renaissance are visible, in following the history of art, from Benci di Cione, to Brunellesco, from Orcagna and Alberto d'Arnoldo to Ghiberti and Donatello, from Orcagna again, Spinello, and Nicolò di Pietro, to Masolino and Masaccio. In the province of architecture, classical art entered again upon its rights under the influence of the new spirit. Brunellesco, who, while in his native town, had fixed his attention on Roman edifices, accustomed his eye when in Rome to the large dimensions and simple yet harmonious forms of ancient art. The Italian Gothic, which is not of one cast, but more or less dependent upon the older forms of art, must, in comparison with the latter, appear arbitrary in its character. Yet the classical principle obtained by no means an easy victory. The greatest work of the period, the dome of Sta. Maria del Fiore, is the result of a compromise, which under the circumstances was unavoidable, between the traditions of [58] two epochs, and between the characters of two different tendencies. The requirements both of a strict division and demarcation of masses, and the perception of grand beauty and ample space had also to be reconciled. So in other branches of art the Gothic style asserted itself for a length of time by the side of the new tendency.

In February 1393 a commission was first appointed for the building of the dome, the sacristy, and the canonica of the cathedral.[33] But it was a full quarter of a century before the work was fairly begun. On August 19, 1418, the famous competition, which has since been celebrated in a novel, was invited for models of the dome. On November 14, 1419, a commission of 'Officiales Cupolæ' was appointed, consisting of four of the principal citizens. April 16, 1420, the office of *Proveditores* was conferred on Filippo Brunelleschi, Lorenzo Ghiberti and Battista d'Antonio; and on August 12, 1434, it was resolved that the lantern with which the dome was to be closed should be built after Brunellesco's model. The lantern was, however, only completed in 1462, sixteen years after the great artist's death.[34] The greatest and most complex work of modern architecture belongs consequently to the time when the Albizzis held power. Meanwhile many other buildings were undertaken. In 1411 an illustrious citizen, Nicolò Davanzati Bostichi, began the construction of the convent S. Michele of Doccia, near Fiesole, which, built against the dark background of the wooded hillside, can be seen far and wide. In 1416 the plan for the rebuilding of San Lorenzo was sketched out; in 1421 the great foundling hospital of the Innocents, with its beautiful portico on the Piazzi of the Annunziata, was begun; and twelve years later Sto. Spirito, the two latter after Brunellesco's designs. Notwithstanding some defects, owing chiefly to the difficulty, imperfectly surmounted, of continuing the colonnade from the nave through the [59] transept and choir, and to the unsuitability of the dome to this form, Sto. Spirito is the finest example of the independent adoption of the Roman basilica style for modern ecclesiastical architecture. Sta. Maria Novella was consecrated September 8, 1420, by Pope Martin V., for whom a part of the adjoining convent had been converted into a dwelling the year before. This was followed the next day by the consecration of Sta. Maria Nuova (Sant'Egidio) by Cardinal Antonio Correr, Bishop of Bologna, to which ceremony the frescoes refer with which Bicci di Lorenzo, who superintended the building, adorned the façade under the modern portico of the present day.

Filippo degli Scolari, who, under the name of Pippo Spano, had been influential in Hungary in the days of King Sigismund, ordered upon his death, in 1426, the construction, by Brunellesco, of a great central building for the Camaldolensians of the Angeli, but it went no further than a portion of the vast octagon, which was vulgarly called *Il Castellaccio*.[35] The Place of the Signory was still too small, and the wish to procure more space for the palace on the south side occasioned the demolition in 1410 of a side-aisle of San Piero Scheraggio. This church, after being gradually more and more mutilated, made way a century and a half later for the edifice of the Uffizi, by whom this quarter of the city, in which streets and houses were crowded together down to the river-side, was completely

transformed.

The splendour and beauty of the public buildings necessarily influenced the construction of private dwellings. The narrow houses, lofty in proportion to their base, fell gradually into disuse, the more as the city, which had been considerably enlarged, afforded greater space. The beginning of the fifteenth century, which reached its climax in the Florentine palaces, turned the scale in this respect; but, as already remarked in the introduction, the mediæval [60] traditions were here more faithfully adhered to than in ecclesiastical architecture. Moreover, a sense of timidity in passing certain limits existed in this case, which was connected with the circumstances of a free republic. This feeling has been recognised in Cosmo de' Medici, and will be found again in Filippo Strozzi. We are reminded of the same fact even in the following century by the history of the Bartoline house on the Piazza Sta. Trinità, the door and window frames of which were considered unsuitable for a private dwelling, though they were soon to appear simple enough. In earlier times, too, there were large private houses, but their number appears to have been inconsiderable. In the first decade of the fifteenth century several were erected, which we still behold essentially in their original form. The house of Nicolò da Uzzano in Via de' Bardi, already mentioned, built probably about 1420, is of large proportions, but perfectly plain, and without any sign of the modern spirit. The palace of the Bardi family in Via del Fosso indicates, both by its straight-sided façade and by the square courtyard with the antique arrangement of the columns, the innovations of the new style; while the broad, projecting, wooden roof and the plain windows recall an earlier time. On the Trinity bridge the houses of the Capponi and Gianfigliazzi retain something of the ancient style. In the seventeenth century the interior of the house of the Albizzi, the residence of Piero, Maso, Rinaldo, was rebuilt. This building is in the street named after them, in which palace follows palace, though the full effect is lost, owing to the narrow space. The exterior bears, however, decidedly the mark of time, which is still more the case with the neighbouring palace of the Alessandri.

The streets were mostly paved with flagstones (*lastrico*), even in the suburbs—a custom which gradually replaced the causeways of tiles (*ammattonato*) or of small stones (*selciato*); and when adopted in the smaller Tuscan towns contributed to give them a clean and [61] well-to-do appearance. Even before the end of the thirteenth century this kind of pavement is said to have been used. The stones were procured from the hill of San Giorgio, adjoining the city on the left bank of the river, and the immediate neighbourhood, as well as from the quarries of Fiesole and Golfolina, already mentioned. For a long time the stones were left in their polygonal quarry form, until in recent times it was preferred to hew them square. The laborious and costly work required by a strong and perfectly uniform embankment to the sewers of the city would progress but slowly. It was placed under the careful superintendence of the commissariat officials (*officiales grasciæ*), to whom was especially entrusted the charge of those streets in which the Barbary-horse races took place. [36] The paving of the Place of the Annunziata—the centre of which remains, however, at the present day unpaved, like those of Sta. Maria Novella, San Marco, and others—was first undertaken, in 1421, by the Servite monks, who solicited subsidies for the purpose, in consideration of the crowds which thronged to the miraculous image in their church.

It is comprehensible that the noticeable revolution in architecture should likewise affect the sister arts. Here, however, we encounter in the first rank two artistic characters essentially differing from one another. With Lorenzo Ghiberti the influence of the school of Giotto is very perceptible, and in the reliefs, his master-pieces, he allows the picturesque principle to predominate to a certain extent, and with a careful calculation of the effect, which to some degree surpasses the ability or courage of the painter so active in his youth. The attitudes and drapery, however, of Ghiberti's figures are in harmony with the spirit of antiquity which had inspired Nicolò Pisano more than a century and a half earlier. The full outbreak of realism in conception and form is displayed in the somewhat younger Donatello, who, unpoetical and less [62] imaginative than Ghiberti, depends for models rather upon real, if even less beautiful, nature, than upon works of antiquity, of which, indeed, Rome afforded him but scanty and doubtful specimens. Both were goldsmiths, whose art had at that time reached a high degree

of perfection, and was distinguished by the production of great works. It was the profession which Brunellesco had originally followed, and for centuries remained connected with that of the sculptor. In 1408 Ghiberti, then only twenty-two, received the commission for his first bronze door of the Baptistery, the completion of which required more than twenty years. In 1414 he executed the statue of St. John, and six years later that of St. Matthew, for two niches on the exterior of the ground-floor of Or San Michele, the sculptural adornment of which, at the cost of the guilds, had been determined upon in 1406. In 1424 the execution of the second door of the Baptistery was entrusted to him, which was finished twenty-eight years after, three years before his death. One work of less importance remains from the year 1428—the bronze chest executed for the brothers Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici for the reception of the relics belonging to the Camaldulensian convent of the Angeli.[37] In 1411 Donatello began the statue of St. Mark, which he produced, together with that of St. Peter, for Or San Michele; about 1420 he began the monument for Pope John XXIII.; and in 1427 he was commissioned by the Medici to execute the monument of Cardinal Rinaldo Brancacci for Naples. His most excellent work in respect to lightness and grace, and which is without a touch of the heaviness so often characteristic of him, is the statue of St. George for Or San Michele. The date of the production of this work can as little be determined as that of the [63]
excellent figures of the Prophets which adorn the niches on the belfry of Sta. Maria del Fiore.

In painting the spirit of realism gained the victory much more slowly, and to a far less extent. Even when this victory had been obtained in Florence, the softer feeling and typical form derived from Giotto prevailed in other parts of central and upper Italy in peculiar and flourishing schools. Not long before Masaccio had begun his frescoes in the Brancacci chapel in the Carmine, which was consecrated in 1422, the Camaldulensian Don Lorenzo had painted his beautiful pictures, which still represent the tendency of the previous century, although with a freshness and freedom far superior to the later Giottesque style. And Fra Angelico da Fiesole, who in 1407 entered the Dominican cloister of the little town whence he derived his name, remained his whole life long true to the tradition to which he has given the consecration of gentle poverty, pious fervency, religious sensibility, and at the same time, *naïve* simplicity. Not even Gentile da Fabriano, a son of the Anconite border, who was gifted with a more lively natural feeling and graceful freshness and serenity, and in 1421 had himself inscribed in the list of Florentine painters, succeeded in breaking through this narrow circle, which did not afford sufficient scope to the creative power of the new spirit of art. Masaccio has given expression to this spirit in a manner which has served as example to the most highly developed periods, by uniting the most true, lifelike, and varied expression with free but nobly naturalistic form. The artists who stand more or less under the influence of Masaccio, and also of the modern plastic art, belong chiefly to the period which we shall contemplate further on.

Thus had the city of Florence, when the fifteenth century entered on its fourth decade, developed in both severe and graceful beauty, under the influence of an art which, notwithstanding foreign traditions, was, nevertheless, in its peculiarity and luxuriance, the growth of its own soil. In external appearance, likewise, Florence was the city of a rich, active, sovereign republic, which sought its [64]
honour rather in the grandeur and brilliancy of its public buildings, both for ecclesiastical and secular purposes, than in the luxury of private houses. The city was at once munificent and thrifty, and, through all change, however precipitate, held firmly by old tradition, as was expressed by the prevailing similarity of the character of the architecture, notwithstanding the development of successive styles. Most of the streets were and remained narrow, the number of large squares was inconsiderable, but these streets were well paved, when in Rome people waded for years longer in the deep mire and dust of streets provided only with a tile causeway on each side. The greater number of houses were built of massive stone. The number of projecting upper storeys which darkened the streets had lessened more and more in the course of years. Some restriction was put on this mode of building by the imposition of a tax, which in Giovanni Villani's time brought in 7,000 florins. Subsequently, however, it was expressly forbidden by law, and under the first Duke many of

the projecting storeys were pulled down, so that their number is now proportionally small. A greater evil was the projection of the roofs over the street, but this was not removed till 1766. Although no fortress was assigned to the chief magistrate of the city, he was provided with a secure residence, and one befitting the dignity of his position. The boundary wall of Florence was a remarkable work. It enclosed the foremost height on the left bank of the river, and was fortified with towers. The gates were magnificent, among which that of St. Nicolò, with its projecting double storey, offers an example of its kind as the only one in complete preservation since the transformation undertaken in the sixteenth century.

The frame to the beautiful picture was afforded by the environs. As at the present day, so in late mediæval times, the city seemed to extend on every side into the plain, as well as up into the neighbouring mountains which skirted the flowery plain watered by [65] the Arno. At the gates were hospitals and lazarettos for the sick and for pilgrims, particularly for all whose residence in the city seemed unadvisable, such as lepers and other sufferers from skin diseases. These charitable institutions were founded chiefly in the fourteenth century, and owe their origin to the benevolence of wealthy citizens and the companies. There were, moreover, convents, which were increased in number and extent from year to year, some of them situated immediately before the walls, some on the hills by the bridges leading across the streams and brooks of Mugnone, Terzolle, Mensola, Ema, and Greve. Celebrated names are connected with the history of many of these foundations. We may mention that of Cardinal Ottaviano degli Ubaldini, who founded in 1260 the nunnery of Monticelli, opposite the Porta Romana; also that of his relative, the saintly Chiara, who was its first abbess. We may likewise allude to the family of the Acciaiuoli, who, both in politics and in Church history, played so great a part in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Even in Dante’s time numerous villas had risen, and one of these reminds us of the poet himself—the one in possession of his family before Porta Pinti, where the ground rises towards Fiesole; while the graceful narrator of the fourteenth century brings country life in the Florentine environs in bright pictures before us. The number of villas already foreshadowed the time in which Ludovico Ariosto sang; they would exceed a twofold Rome if enclosed by a wall. The necessities of the period converted many convents and villas into fortresses, and many have retained their castellated character, as San Miniato, the Charterhouse, and Passignano, the villa of Petraja, the former villa of Salviati at the base of the hill of Fiesole, Castle Pulci on the left bank of the Arno below the town, and Torre del Gallo on the hill of Arcetri; not to speak of the mountain fortresses of a more ancient period, as Castle Vincigliata on the eastern hills, which has been restored in modern times. Such fastnesses rendered good service [66] when, in 1363 and 1364, the Pisans pressed up to the walls with their foreign mercenaries, and stormed the gates. While the German mercenaries under the lord of Bongard, and the English under Hawkwood, at that time an adversary, saw the villas on the hills of Montughi, Bellosguardo, Arcetri, and Pozzolatico perish in flames, they could not touch the Charterhouse; and from the strong tower of Petraja the Brunelleschi, the possessors of the villa, courageously repulsed the attack of the English. In March 1397, the Abbot of Passignano withstood the troops of Alberigo of Barbiano, who had come to Pisa in the service of the Visconti, and laid waste the Florentine territory. Even in later times security from surprise was as much considered in the construction of a villa as picturesque effect and artistic adornment.

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CHAPTER IV.

INDUSTRY, TRADE, AND LIFE IN FLORENCE.

THE large sums which were continually expended by the Government as well as the citizens of Florence, from the middle of the thirteenth century, for public objects—such as the enlargement, fortification, and embellishment of the city, for palaces and the residences of officers of the State, bridges and streets, churches and convents, hospitals and charitable institutions—would lead us to infer pecuniary means apparently out of proportion with the extent and resources of the territory and the site of the town, excluded as it was from the unrestricted use of the sea route till far into the fifteenth century. The great industrial activity and unusual intelligence of the inhabitants profited by favourable and conquered unfavourable circumstances so far, that while the Pisans still commanded the port which bore the name of their town, and was afterwards replaced by that of Leghorn—while Lucca possessed the harbour of Motrone, and Siena that of Talamone, and could thus shut out the inland state from the sea—the trade and industry of Florence had long surpassed theirs. The political importance attained by the great guilds so soon after their institution shows how firmly rooted was their power, even at the commencement of their existence, and that they really represented the most respected and affluent part of the community. We are vividly reminded of these corporations when we stand before the magnificent building of Or San Michele, or, at the eastern end of the Piazza della Signoria, gaze upon the arms graven in stone upon the residence of [68]
the Magistrate of Trade, who had to decide in all disputes and questions of competition between the magistrates of the different guilds. Four of these guilds come under consideration when we treat of industrial and commercial activity on a large scale—viz., the cloth-weavers, merchants or traders in foreign cloth, silk-weavers, and money-changers.

The woollen manufacture arose perhaps earliest of all, to satisfy one of the most important demands; and though it is doubtful whether native productions are spoken of in a Lucchese document of the year 840 respecting woollen and silk goods, we certainly do not err in the inference that Florence knew and practised this branch of industry at least from the time of her political rise, after the death of the Countess Matilda. In the beginning of the following century, a corporation of cloth-weavers existed, whose consuls signed a treaty of peace between their fellow-citizens and Siena in the year 1202. Thirty-seven years later, this branch of industry received an important accession from the Lombard order of the Humiliates, founded by Bishop Pietro Manadori. They settled first in the neighbourhood of the city, where the extensive buildings and gardens of the Villa San Donato are now to be seen, and finally, removed in 1256, to the monastery of Ognissanti, where they were long actively employed in their own interests and the welfare of the community who protected them, and did much to promote and perfect the woollen manufacture. On the neighbouring banks of the Arno arose workshops, houses for dyeing and washing wool, warehouses and booths of these brethren, who also aided essentially in the draining and cultivation of a somewhat marshy district. By the time the useful activity of the order slackened (about 1330 it entirely ceased), the Florentines had learnt all they could teach, and the city was full of cloth-weavers, as the names of several streets still remind us. From the ordinary kinds of cloth, with which they began, when the finer still came from the Levant, they advanced to [69]
better and best qualities, and strict regulations after the fashion of the guilds in the Middle Ages, certainly not to the disadvantage of the producers and their wares, guaranteed their excellence. The extensive sale and higher prices testified to their value. The wool was imported principally from France and Flanders, and also in considerable quantity from England and Scotland, especially from the wealthy abbeys and convents; and in the eighth decade of the thirteenth century we hear of Florentine agents in London buying up the wool for several years in advance. These agents stood in connection with no less than two hundred convents.[38]

In close and varied connection with the Arte della Lana was that of the Mercatanti, usually called Arte di Calimala, the oldest

statutes of which date from 1339. As the native cloth manufacture did not suffice for the demand, and at first only supplied ordinary kinds, French and Flemish cloth was imported from abroad in great quantity, in a raw state, to Florence, where it was dyed, shorn and dressed, and returned to foreign countries, often to the place whence it had come. The skill of the dyers and other workmen in Florence, whose processes long remained a carefully guarded secret, made this profitable trade a monopoly until the rise of manufactures in the western countries of Europe. The guild had its representatives, couriers, settlements, and hostelries in France. It is clear that only the most conscientious honesty could sustain their credit, wherefore the strictest statutes respecting the different qualities of the cloth, the dyeing, and all other things to be taken into consideration, regulated the manufacture as well as the sale. The dyers formed a special guild, which, however, was subordinate to the consuls of Calimala, to whom also, rather singularly, the gold and silver smiths were subject. Another guild belonging to that of the Arte della Lana was that of the washers and combers of wool, [70] which still exists as Compagnia dei Battilani, and has its meeting-place in Via delle Ruote, near Via San Gallo. Its church, whose sacristy is adorned by the portrait of Michele di Lando, was publicly exhibited every year on the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin, the high festival of the company. That such subordinate connections gave rise to misunderstandings in troublous times, and that new guilds arose without being able to maintain themselves permanently, has been already stated.

In the year 1338 the number of workshops (*botteghe*) of the clothiers' guild amounted to more than 200, which supplied from seventy to eighty thousand pieces of cloth at the price of 1,200,000 gold florins, the third of which sum at least remained in the city as workmen's wages, not to mention the profits of cloth merchants. The number of workmen amounted to 30,000. In the first years of this century the number of workshops had been a third more, and that of the pieces of cloth above 100,000; but the quality and price were lower, as they had not then the excellent English wool. The number of the magazines (*fondachi*) of the Calimala guild amounted to twenty. These imported yearly more than 10,000 pieces of foreign cloth, to the worth of 300,000 gold florins, for sale in the city itself, besides those which were again exported.[39] Among the proprietors of such magazines, we find the names Acciaiuoli, Alberti, Albizzi, Bardi, Buonaccorsi, Capponi, Corsini, Peruzzi, Pucci, Ricci, Ridolfi, Rinuccini—names which are mentioned a hundred times in the annals of the city, and which mostly are still heard there. Even in the second half of the thirteenth century, and therefore some time before their political power, these two guilds were very active in France, and we find their agents in 1281, beside those of the Genoese in Nismes, where, fifteen years later, we meet with the representatives of the trading companies of the Cerchi, Mozzi, Spini, Scali, and Folchi. In 1325, Filippo Villani and Cione di Lapo [71] Ghini conducted the business of the Peruzzi and the Scali as Florentine consuls at Paris. The great fairs of Beaucaire and Forcalquier, with those of Provins, Lagny, Troyes, Bar-sur-Aube, etc., were of the greatest importance for this branch of industry.[40] In Italy, Venice was an important emporium for this trade, for Germany and Hungary as well as for the Levant. Till a few years ago, the extensive barn-like building which served for the dyeing and washing of the wool was still to be seen on the Lung'arno above the Uffizi; and on several palaces we still see the rings for holding the wooden staves on which the woollen fabrics were hung out as an indication that the houses belonged to the guild. The guild-hall of the Arte della Lana was the present Canonica of Or San Michele, where the coat of arms—the lamb with the flag, and the comb with the lily above it, in a blue field—still reminds one of its former destination, as well as an inscription of the date of 1308. The guild-hall of the Calimala, which had as a device a golden eagle standing over a ball of wool in a red field, stood in the little street leading from the Piazza della Signoria to the New Market, which is now called Calimaruzza: though it was converted into private houses after the abolition of the guild, the old devices may still be seen upon them. The street leading from the New to the Old Market still preserves the name Calimala, respecting the origin of which only untenable conjectures exist, and which in its present aspect reminds us as little as does any part of the whole centre of the old city of the former flourishing state of the trade.[41]

Of no less importance, and perhaps hardly less ancient than the [72]
cloth manufactures, was the weaving of silk, which, after its introduction into Sicily by King Roger, had been in a short time transplanted to Central Italy, if, indeed, it was not previously cultivated in Lucca. Of all the great branches of industry of the Middle Ages, this is the only one which has preserved a certain importance down to our day. The Arte della Seta was usually called the Por Sta. Maria, after the St. Mary's Gate, or Porta Regina, opposite the Ponte Vecchio, at the entrance of the street still called Via di Por Sta. Maria (usually Mercato Nuovo), where the former guild-hall still stands, near the church of Sta. Maria sopra Porta, in the Via di Capaccio, distinguished by the coat of arms, a closed red door in a white field. The silk-weavers appear already, in the twelfth and oftener still in the thirteenth century, as a corporation in public acts and treaties, in the conclusions of peace and other compacts. In the list of the masters of the guild in the year 1225 their number is given as more than 350, and probably they had even then statutes; but the oldest still extant date from 1335, and therefore from a time when this industry seems to have attained considerable importance under the Guelfs from Lucca, who had emigrated to Florence in great numbers in 1316. The dyeing of silk was pursued here with great skill, and in particular the crimsoned tissue stood in high reputation in the fourteenth century. We shall speak later of the most brilliant epoch, the fifteenth century. The Vicolo della Seta, in the vicinity of the former hall, and the Via de' Velluti, on the left bank of the river, near Via Maggio, where numerous silk-weavers and other mechanics originally lived, and where the still flourishing family of the Velluti took its rise, remind us of their former great activity.[42]

Though the branches of industry we have mentioned contributed [73]
much to increase the wealth of the Florentine people, and make their name famous in foreign lands, they were not the chief source of national wealth. The business of money-changing seemed thoroughly at home here, and it is not surprising that the invention of bills of exchange, which we first meet with in 1199 in the relations between England and Italy, should be ascribed to Florence. The money trade seems to have flourished as early as the twelfth century, towards the end of which a Marquis of Ferrara raised money on his lands from the Florentines. In 1204 we find the money-changers as one of the corporations. In 1228, and probably from the beginning of the century, several Florentines were settled in London as changers to King Henry III.; and here, as in France, they conducted the money transactions of the Papal chair in conjunction with the Sienese. Their oldest known statute, which established rules for the whole conduct of trade (Statuto dell'Università della Mercatanzia) drawn up by a commission consisting of five members of the great guilds, is dated 1280. Their guild-hall was in the Via Calimaruzza, opposite that of the Calimala, and was later included in the buildings of the post-office, on the site of which, after the post-office had been removed to what was formerly the mint, a building was lately erected, similar in architecture to the Palazzo of the Signoria, which stands opposite. Their coat of arms displayed gold coins laid one beside another on a red field. At the end of the thirteenth century their activity, especially in France and England, was extraordinarily great. But if wealth surpassing all previous conception was attained, it not seldom involved loss of repute, and those who pursued the calling ran the risk of immense losses from fiscal measures to the carrying out of which they themselves contributed, as well as those which were caused by insolvency or dishonesty. These losses would indeed have ruined the trade and credit of the Florentines in the fourteenth century, had not their resources been so varied, and their intelligent [74]
activity so great. The names of Tuscans and Lombards, and that of Cahorsiens in France, no longer indicated the origin, but the trade of the money-changers, who drew down the ancient hatred upon themselves which the *fœneratores* had incurred from too frequently confounding usury with rightful gains. It is this which the *Divina Commedia* describes where it speaks of shadows sitting mournfully shielding themselves from the glow of vapours with their hands, and with bags round their necks on which they feed their eyes.[43] France possessed at this time the greatest attraction for the Florentine money-makers, although they were sometimes severely oppressed, which is sufficient proof that their winnings were still greater than their occasional losses. In 1277, they, with other

Italians, were obliged to compound for a sum of 120,000 gold florins, when King Philip III. took advantage of a decree of the Council to proceed against the usurers, a manœuvre which Philip IV. the Fair repeated fourteen years later.

If Florentines suffered among those prosecuted by this king for 'money coining on the Seine,'[44] Florentines certainly aided him in other extortions and dishonesties in France and in Flanders, and it was the bank of the Peruzzi which paid the sum by means of which the constables of Philip the Fair, and chief among them the Tuscan knight and financier Musciatto Franzesi, accomplished the attempt on Pope Boniface VIII. in 1303 at Anagni.[45] New oppressions arose under Philip VI., in whose person the line of Valois ascended the French throne. He not only again debased the coinage for the [75] necessities of the English war, but also extorted a heavy forced loan from all foreign merchants and bankers, and furthermore assisted the Duke of Athens, after his expulsion, in his reprisals against the Florentine trade. But notwithstanding all partial losses, and the great catastrophes which befell the Florentine trade in the same century, it remained, even in the following, mistress of the French money transactions, and, in certain respects, of French trade.

The Florentine money market suffered the severest blow from England. At the end of the twelfth century there were already Florentine houses of exchange in London, and if Pisans, Genoese, and Venetians managed the trade by sea in the times of the Crusades, it was the Florentines mostly who looked after financial affairs in connection with the Papal chair, as we have seen. Numerous banks appeared about the middle of the thirteenth century, among which the Frescobaldi, a family of ancient nobility, and as such attainted by the prosecutions against it, took the lead, and were referred to the custom-house of the country for re-imbursement of the loans made to the kings Edward I. and II. Later, the two great trading companies of the Bardi and Peruzzi came into notice, and with their money Edward III. began the French war against Philip of Valois. But even in the first year of this war, which began with an unsuccessful attack upon Flanders, the king suspended the payments to the creditors of the State by a decree of May 6, 1339. The advances made by the Bardi amounted to 180,000 marks sterling, those of the Peruzzi to above 135,000, according to Giovanni Villani,[46] who knew only too well about these things, since he was ruined by them himself to the extent of 'a sum of more than 1,355,000 gold florins, equivalent to the value of a kingdom.' Bonifazio Peruzzi, the head of the house, hastened to London, where he died of grief in the following year. The blow fell on the whole city, for, as may be supposed, numerous families were interested in [76] the business of the great houses, which not only counted a number of partners or shareholders, but had also money from all sides, from the city and from foreign countries, to keep as deposits or to invest profitably. The injury to credit was very threatening. In the year 1326, the fall of one of the oldest and most important of the banking companies, that of the Scali, Amieri, and Petri, had occurred just as the war against Castruccio, the lord of Lucca, took an evil turn. But the position of affairs was now far more critical. Both houses began at once to liquidate, and the prevailing disturbance contributed not a little to the early success of the ambitious plans of the Duke of Athens. The real bankruptcy ensued, however, in January 1346, when new losses had occurred in Sicily on account of the measures of the French Government which we have already mentioned. The banks of the Acciaiuoli, Bonaccorsi, Cocchi, Antellesi, Corsini, da Uzzano, Perendoli, and many smaller ones, as well as numerous private persons, were involved in the ruin. 'The immense loans to foreign sovereigns,' adds Villani, 'drew down ruin upon our city, the like of which it had never known.' There was a complete lack of cash. Estates in the city found no purchasers at a third of their former value; those in the country were disposed of at two-thirds their value, and fell even lower than this. The chronicler who gives us this sad information was imprisoned for debt on account of the failure of the Bonaccorsi, whose partner he was.

As the first result of these misfortunes was the impoverishment of numerous families, the community at large was soon involved in it; as the revenues diminished quickly with the public affluence, money was only to be obtained at unheard-of usurious interest, and the *prestige* of the Florentine trade lost considerably in foreign countries. The famine and pestilence of 1347 and 1348, the

oppressions of the mercenary bands and the heavy expenses caused by them, the cost of the war against Pope Gregory XI., and finally the tumult of the Ciompi, left Florence no peace for a long time. The [77] aristocracy, which came into power in 1382, at last succeeded in restoring the equilibrium, opening new resources to industry and trade, and rendering the old connections again secure. Thus, at the beginning of the fifteenth century industry was again flourishing in all its branches in Florence, financial operations were extended, and foreign countries filled with Florentine banks and mercantile houses. After the fall of Pisa the last restrictions on navigation were removed, and it was no longer necessary, as in past times, to hire French vessels in Aiguesmortes for conveyance to the insecure and small roadsteads of Motrone or Pietrasanta, or to conclude treaties with the Sienese for the use of the bad and pestilential harbour of Talamone. The number of Florentine settlements and offices had been already very considerable a century earlier. In London the most important firms had their representatives, Bruges was the chief place for Flanders, and we shall see how these connections lasted to the time of the greatest splendour of the Medici. France is frequently mentioned. The official representatives of the Florentine nation resided in the capital, while numerous houses established themselves in Lyons, in Avignon (since the removal of the Papal chair to this town), in Nismes, Narbonne, Carcassonne, Marseilles, &c. Large transactions were made in Upper Italy at Venice and Genoa, at Castel di Castro in Sardinia, in Apulia, Barletta, and at Palermo in the island of Sicily; Rome and Naples saw in the fifteenth century the greater part of the banking business and a considerable portion of other trade in Florentine hands. There were Florentine colonies in Majorca, at Tunis, at Chiarenza in the Morea, in Rhodes under the supremacy of the Knights of St. John, and in Cyprus under that of Guy de Lusignan; while Florentine merchants carried trade into Asia Minor, Armenia, the Crimea, far into Central Asia and Northern China. The house of the Peruzzi alone had sixteen counting-houses in the fourteenth century, from London to Cyprus.

The prudence and careful calculation which were in general [78] characteristic of the Florentine trade prevailed in everything relating to the transmission and receipt of money and the term of payments. Not only have we general rules from Balducci Pegolotti, in the first thirty years of the fourteenth century, as to how they should proceed in calculating the money to be paid abroad, but detailed notes on the fluctuations of the money market in consequence of fairs, expeditions of galleys, regular proceedings of the State, purchase of wool, etc., in the most important places, as Naples, Genoa, Bologna, Venice, Avignon, Paris, Bruges, Barcelona, etc. The Papal court, with which such extensive business was pursued—whether Rome or Avignon, or for the time another town, were its residence—seemed to the experienced Florentine to deserve especial remark. ‘Wherever the Pope goes, money is dear, because from all sides one has to pay so much to him. When he goes away, an ebb sets in, because the members of his court, if they are not rich, must borrow.’ The times when the bills fell due were regulated generally by the distance. An order drawn at Florence on Pisa or Venice was due on the fifth day after the money was paid in; in Rome and Genoa it was the fifteenth day; in Naples the twentieth; in Provence, Majorca, and France, the sixtieth; in Flanders the seventieth; in England the seventy-fifth; and in Spain, after three months. The contracting parties could, however, make arrangements at will.[47] According to the report of an annalist,[48] seventy-two exchange houses and tables were counted in Florence, in the Mercato Nuovo and its vicinity, in the year 1422, and the sum of money in circulation was calculated at two millions of gold florins; while the value of the wares, the letters of credit, and other property defied calculation.

While industry and trade had accumulated great wealth in [79] Florence, the spirit of the community accorded well with it. In spite of the many wars and other disturbances the city rose to such prosperity in the first decades of the fourteenth century (when its territory included only Pistoja, Colle, and Arezzo, and therefore scarcely a third of Tuscany in later times) that Giovanni Villani could remark in 1336-1338 that her revenues exceeded those of the kings of Naples, of Sicily, and of Aragon. With all the changes after the rise of the new wealthy families at the beginning of the century the style of living had remained simple, and even continued so after the luxury of the court of Anjou, partly supported by Florentine money,

had affected Florentine manners unfavourably; yet there was no stinting for public works. The citizens were in general beneficent: the number and importance of the charitable institutions prove it. As with the Government, so with the corporations, a lively sense was always displayed of the dignity and grandeur of the city and community. And even if that oft-mentioned decree of the republic of the year 1294,[49] according to which the architect Arnolfo shall be charged to design the model of a cathedral church 'of such splendour that human power should be unable to invent anything grander or more beautiful, in consideration that a people of noble origin ought so to arrange its affairs that even in the exterior works a wise and lofty mind may be recognised'—even if this decree appears to be a production of the sixteenth instead of the thirteenth century, there are not wanting reliable records which announce the same spirit, and, still more, works which testify to it. In the year 1296, legacies in aid of this church were made a duty for every one; notaries were obliged to enjoin them in drawing up wills, and omissions were punished.[50] In 1338 the community granted subsidies for this same building, 'that a work so beautifully and honourably begun might be continued and completed still more beautifully, and the grants made by the community appear liberal [80] and considerable.' When a pavement for the Piazza della Signoria was ordered in June 1351 it was especially insisted upon that the dignity and importance of the whole town were concerned, as well as the stateliness and beauty of the palace of the chief magistrate of state. When in August 1373 the public reading and exposition of the *Divina Commedia* was applied for and permitted, the petitioners assigned as the ground of their request the wish that, even if otherwise unlearned, they themselves, their fellow-citizens, children, and posterity, be instructed in eloquence, guided to virtue, and warned against vice. When in 1409 the fabrication of the bronze gates of the shrine of St. Zanobius was entrusted to Lorenzo Ghiberti, it was said that he must have regard to the ancient veneration for the saint, as well as to the high dignity of the community, and respect to the cathedral in which this work was to have the most honourable place possible allotted to it. At the first mention of the building of the Foundling Hospital, begun in 1421 at the expense of the silk-weavers' company, it is remarked that 'this beautiful building is destined for the reception of those whose father and mother have maliciously forsaken them, contrary to the rights of nature.' As the silk guild here, so was the woollen guild in Sta. Maria del Fiore entrusted with the guidance of the works, beside the regular building committee (Opera del Duomo). The share of the companies in the building and decoration of Or San Michele is repeatedly mentioned. As a matter of course, all that concerned the adornment of the city, the churches not excepted, must be subordinate to the requirements of safety and defence. In 1353, when the people were fighting against Giovanni Visconti, and afterwards, when the enterprise of Cardinal d'Albornoz for regaining Romagna for the Holy See gave a prospect of unsettled times, and the disorder of the freebooters led by the Knight of St. John of Montreal (Fra Moriale) began, the money held in readiness [81] for the bell-tower was employed in enlisting men. As late as October 1368, when the city fell to bickerings with the Emperor Charles IV., which were then, as usual, made use of by the Visconti for the extension of their own power over Tuscany, and when their mercenary bands penetrated to the gates of Florence, a decree was passed that the sums destined for the completion of Sta. Maria del Fiore should be employed for strengthening and repairing the walls. The architects of the church were soon afterwards commanded to build a wall along the river, from the Castell Altafronte, which is still in partial preservation, and which joins the Uffizi, built in the sixteenth century, to the Rubaconte bridge, and to level the road 'as should appear most suitable to the adornment of the city.'

A people which accomplished such great things must have possessed unusual civic virtues, apart from their more brilliant intellectual qualities, and spite of the weaknesses and faults which the greatest of the sons of Florence has scourged in angry love and loving anger. A despot can in a short time heap splendour on splendour; the activity of spirit of a popular commonwealth is different and more steady. The two free States in which we meet with the most perfect expression of this, Venice and Florence, show that this is not dependent on the form of government, but on a firm will and clear conception. The Florentine people combined these in

a high degree. In the midst of political troubles and civil disturbances they constantly advanced; the final gain was greater than the losses through momentary retrogression, however violent. The people were contented, frugal, industrious, and attached at all times to ancient customs. That great changes were gradually made in customs and modes of life was according to the law of all ages, and of natural development, though some aspects of it did not seem the most pleasing. Manners and feelings of those days, which the Paradiso in the 'Divina Commedia' describes with such incomparable beauty and at the same time with such melancholy, [82] when 'in the old encircling walls, Florence was peaceful, moderate, and modest,' the 'civic life so calm, so beautiful, the society so reliable,'—a state of things which the poet closes with the time 'before Frederic had fought out his quarrel,'[51]—they indeed lay far behind him who has lent to their memory form and duration for all future time. But the greatest change was to come after his death. The influence of the numerous foreigners, especially the French and Frenchified Neapolitans who came with the Angevins and their regents, was by no means beneficial; and the various sumptuary laws which were to restrain the women point especially to the example set in 1326, by Charles Duke of Calabria and his consort, Marie of Valois, the parents of the unhappy Joanna I., with their whole court. Then came the times of the Duke of Athens; soon after, the pestilence with its evil results, which are open to all in the stories of the 'Decamerone.' Giovanni Villani, who died in the year 1348, says once that the Florentines of the thirteenth century in their simple life and poverty achieved more than those of his time in the midst of their wealth and luxury.

Nevertheless, the age was in many respects simple, and remained so even after communication had been rendered easier in all directions, wealth accumulated, and more connections formed. The houses were simple, with their windows closed, not yet by panes of glass, but by wooden shutters, with their steep staircases and narrow courtyards; the furniture and the meals were simple, even of the foremost citizens and high magistrates; the clothing of the men was simple—and all this lasted to the fifteenth century, and during a part of it. The loggie have been already spoken of, in which, about the middle of this century, important family affairs were still despatched. At weddings and other family festivals, those who were invited assembled before the house, which often had not [83] space to hold them all—as may be easily comprehended, when we find that the statutes of 1415 decreed that the number of the guests on both sides should not exceed two hundred. Notwithstanding Dante's complaint that a father, at the birth of a daughter, thought with terror on the time of her marriage, the dowry was still, a century after his time, small in comparison with the wealth of the family. They saved at home, in order to gain means for public purposes, for ecclesiastical buildings and endowments, for beneficent institutions and patriotic festivals. The building of churches and hospitals came before the expenses for decorating town-house and villa. The public festivals were brilliant, and united spiritual and worldly interests. First in rank were those on the day of John the Baptist, the patron saint of the city, to which all the towns, villages, and *protégés* of the territory brought votive offerings, and races were held in the afternoon, a custom which dated from 1288, when the Florentines had besieged Arezzo on that day. Races were customary on other festivals also, either with riders or free horses (*barberi*), as in the present day in Florence and other towns of Italy. The prizes consisted of large pieces of gold and silk brocades, called *palio*. Beside the feast of St. John, in which the whole city with the signoria and other magistrates took a part, and that on St. Peter's day, various others celebrated patriotic events. Thus the feast on St. Romulus' day commemorated deliverance from the threatening hordes of Radagaïs; that on St. Barnabas' day the victory over the Ghiellines on Campaldino in 1279; that on St. Anne's day the expulsion of the Duke of Athens; St. Victor's day the victory over the Pisans in 1364. Church festivals were frequently united with mysteries in Carmine, Sto. Spirito, San Felice, &c.; representations which we find shared in by the highest classes, and customary even in the second half of the fifteenth century. Various kinds of amusements took place in the open air; and the history of the Carraia bridge tells of the accident which occurred on May 1, [84] 1304, when the bridge fell in, during a representation of the infernal regions by means of a grand apparatus.

May 1, the Calendimaggio, was the high day for the people, and the green branches on the door-posts have preserved the name of May in Italian as well as in German (and in English). It was on this day that Dante first saw Beatrice Portinari at an entertainment for children. Among the popular festivals were the Epiphany (*Befana*), celebrated by processions and masquerades, which are still carried on; and the Ferragosto, the Roman August holidays, where a donkey-race took place, with a buffalo-race as counterpart. Public games in which physical strength and, still more, agility were brought into play, delighted high and low. Among these were *calcio* and *maglio*: the first of which was played on the large oblong square, afterwards shut in by rows of houses which bears the name of Prato d'Ognissanti; the latter in the vicinity of the Piazza San Marco, where the Via del Maglio still reminds us of it. In the one game the feat consisted in throwing a ball with the hand; in the other it was propelled by a wooden hammer weighted with iron. We shall speak farther on of the tourneys, exercises, and festivals of the high, and the merry popular gatherings of the *potenze*. There was never a lack of music. The trumpeters and other musicians of the Signoria were never absent from any procession, and cheerful tunes accompanied every festival. Boccaccio's tales and the frescoes in the Camposanto of Pisa show how music formed an integral part of social life. The most renowned instrumental performer who flourished in the second half of the fourteenth century, Francesco Landino, enchanted all by his delicate performances on the harpsichord, even in his old age and blindness.

Such were life and manners in the times preceding the rise of the Medici to power. The original simplicity no longer existed, and could no longer exist; but, in the tone and conduct of public as well as private life, the good old traditions still retained their influence. [85] When the Romans and Neapolitans mocked at the frugal habits of the Florentines, the Florentine, seeing the anarchy and degeneracy of the former, and the effeminacy and instability of the latter, could point to his beautiful city, and the order in his private life, in which, though everything was conducted with the most scrupulous economy, the necessaries of life, and, in many cases, its luxuries, were always to be found. In Florence we find no Roman and no Neapolitan in trade and industry; but in both Naples and Rome, the principal business was in the hands of the Florentines, whose gains were profitable to their native city. Among these, in the fourteenth century, none was so conspicuous as Niccolò Acciaiuoli, who became a great and influential man at the court of Anjou, and lord of extensive possessions in Apulia and Greece, but whose heart belonged to his native city, in the neighbourhood of which he prepared his family vault. The heroic times of the Farinata, Cavalcanti, and Donati were past; but the Florentine of the later times combined the citizen and the great lord, the merchant, statesman, and patron of art, in a harmonious whole, to a degree never surpassed by the denizen of any other country.

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CHAPTER V.

THE ALBIZZI AND COSIMO DE' MEDICI.

Cosimo de' Medici was a man of mature age when his father died. Born on September 27, 1389, the day of the saints Cosmo and Damian, he was christened after the former; and a Florentine expression blended veneration for the sacred martyrs with veneration for the ruling family, who had chosen them as patrons: 'Per San Cosmo e Damiano ogni male fia lontana.' His education was excellent; and, although he was intended for a mercantile life, he studied the Latin language thoroughly, and under the guidance of masters such as the grammarians Niccolò of Arezzo,[52] and Roberto de' Rossi, acquired a taste for literature and science which remained with him, and even increased, during the whole of his long life. He was, perhaps, twenty-four years old when he married Contessina de' Bardi. Her father, Alessandro, Count of Vernio, belonged to a family which is of note among the Florentines from the eleventh century; and from which the principal street on the left bank of the Arno, between the old bridge and that of Sta. Maria delle Grazie, derived its name. The Bardi were originally a plebeian family, but were afterwards counted among the nobility. They, with other nobles, had aided the people to break the tyranny of the Duke of Athens, but were defeated a year later in valiant strife with the same people, who would no longer suffer 'the great' to have any share in the government, and set on fire the houses of those who had shortly before fought beside them. Piero de' Bardi, Contessina's great-grandfather, then withdrew to his castle of Vernio, situated in the Apennines to the north of Prato, which had been purchased ten years before by his brother from the Alberti, and recognised by the Emperor Charles IV. as a fief held under him. The enmity between the castellans and the Florentine people grew so violent, that Sozzo, Piero's son, was condemned by the commune *in contumaciam* to death by fire, under the seemingly false accusation of having coined false money in Vernio.[53] Sozzo's son was the father of Contessina, whose mother, Milla Pannocchieschi, was descended from the ancient Sienese dynasty of the Counts of Elci, which has lately become extinct. The name of Contessina (Contessa, Tessa), which we so frequently meet with in earlier times in Tuscany, calls to mind the great Countess Matilda, whose memory was preserved by a grateful people. The enmity between the great and the plebeians, though it still prevailed, and was used as a pretext when the question of political rights arose, never at that time interfered with family alliances.

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We hear nothing of Cosimo till the time when Pope John XXIII., on his eventful journey to the Council of Constance, halted in Florence. The relations between the republic and the Pope were to be traced from the time when the latter was all-powerful under his predecessor, Alexander V., as Cardinal Baldassar Cossa. When John XXIII. called upon the Florentines to send plenipotentiaries to Constance, and the counsellors were undecided, Filippo Corsini observed that they must not say 'No' to the Pope. He it was who had first originated the Council of Pisa, through which the way had been paved to the new assembly, and without his active assistance Florence would not have been able to resist King Ladislaus. The Pope had been already in connection with the Medici when he was legate of Bologna, and during his reign the money matters of the Curia were chiefly in the hands of Giovanni di Bicci. After John XXIII., yielding to King Sigismund's urgency, had consented to the Council of Constance, in spite of his disinclination to a council on German soil, he was for a time in Florence, where he resided in the convent degli Angeli of the Camalduli. It was here that the Medici, with many respected citizens, visited him, and entered into negotiations with him. Here, too, he addressed to Bartolommeo Valori, in whom he had great confidence, upon his warning of the danger of holding this council in a foreign country, the remarkable words: 'I own that this council is not to my advantage; but what can I do if my fate compels me to it?'[54] When the Pope set out for the Lake of Constance in the autumn of 1414, Cosimo de' Medici was among his escort; not, as has been supposed, overrating the position as an aid to him in his own affairs, but simply to manage the money

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matters of the Holy See.

In these matters the Medici, who always remained true to John XXIII., were helpful to him even after his fall. On December 6, 1418, the deposed and imprisoned Pope drew up a bond in the Castle of Heidelberg for 38,500 Rhenish florins, which Giovanni de' Medici and Niccolò da Uzzano, with the consent of Pope Martin V., paid by a bill on the Nuremberg house of Romel, as ransom to Duke Louis of Bavaria. When, after many difficulties, the liberated man had by means of his Florentine friends come to terms with his persecutor and obtained a safe-conduct from him, the Medici received him in Florence, where they undoubtedly aided in his reconciliation with Pope Martin. When the afflicted man, who in his misfortunes assumed a far more dignified attitude than formerly in the times of his greatness, made his last will on December 22, 1419, he appointed Giovanni di Bicci and three other distinguished [89] Florentines as executors. That the first enriched himself with the legacy was a calumny which has long been disproved, for Baldassar Cossa left scarcely enough for his legatees to be paid.[55] The beautiful monument which the Medici erected to the deceased stands in the baptistery; the reclining figure was cast in bronze by Donatello, and in the marble portions Michelozzo assisted. 'Johannes quondam Papa XXIII.' says the significant inscription.[56]

Their friendship with the late Pope did not prevent the Medici from coming to a good understanding with the new one. The mark of favour to Giovanni di Bicci already mentioned tells of friendly relations even at a time when Martin V. was not well disposed towards the city, on account of disagreeable occurrences during his residence in Florence in 1420. We have seen how Cosimo accompanied John XXIII. to Constance, where, in the words of a contemporary, the whole world was assembled. On the flight of his patron he left the town in disguise, and resided for some time in Germany and France, till he returned home after about two years' absence. In 1426, having been entrusted with embassies in Milan, Lucca, and Bologna, he stayed for some months in Rome, employed in State affairs at the time that the tedious strife with Filippo Maria Visconti had, by the conquest of Brescia, taken a favourable turn for the allied Florentines and Venetians; and it was important to persuade the Pope to act as umpire, since all parties, and especially the Florentines, longed for peace. This peace was actually signed at Venice on December 30, the Bishop of Bologna, the excellent Niccolò Albergati, representing Martin V.; and when the duke broke [90] the treaty, which had only just been concluded, new and heavy misfortunes in arms forced him to appeal to the same mediation which he had so lately scorned. But it was only in the spring of 1428 that terms were agreed upon advantageous to Venice, which retained Brescia, but offered no compensation to the Florentines for their enormous expenses, thus justifying the prudence of old Giovanni di Bicci, who had counselled against the war. In gratitude to the Pope for his support, the Florentines, in 1427, bestowed the freedom of their city on his relations, the Colonna family.

At the death of his father, Cosimo was forty years old. In all business, public as well as private, he had proved himself skilful, active, and prudent. All who did not belong to the party which guided affairs since 1380 regarded him as their natural leader. The number of these opponents of the ruling faction was great, not only among the people—in whom more or less indistinct hereditary traditions were instinctively hostile to a government which had now existed for fifty years, and which, though it originated with the people, had from the first been tinctured with the character of an oligarchy—but also among the higher classes, many of whom were considerably oppressed by this faction. Giovanni di Bicci had always avoided appearing as the actual head of a party, perhaps from prudence, perhaps also for fear of exposing himself to the risk of catastrophes such as he had experienced in his youth. It was to be proved whether his son shared this feeling, and Cosimo's behaviour hitherto implied that he did. It was a question, however, whether the oligarchy would find it advisable to suffer a man beside them whose reputation and wealth daily increased, and who, even without wishing it, must be dangerous to them if misfortune or blunder should arouse discontent. Since the death of Maso degli Albizzi, his son Rinaldo, Niccolò da Uzzano, and Palla Strozzi stood at the head of the party.

The Albizzi, who, as we have said, derived their origin from

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Arezzo, were at first of the Ghibelline faction, and appeared in Florence about the middle of the thirteenth century. They soon obtained repute among the plebeian families. From 1282 ninety-eight of their family sat in the magistracy of the priors, and fourteen attained to the office of *Venner* or Gonfalonier. Piero son of Filippo, the first Gonfalonier, was he who in a short time raised the authority of his family above that of all others. He led an active life at a time when the republic claimed much of the time and pecuniary means of the principal citizens, but in return afforded them opportunities of satisfying their ambition, and attaining to a height of power which might become dangerous to the commonwealth. He had repeatedly been charged with embassies to princes and republics; had been present at coronations; concluded treaties, among them those with the plundering mercenary bands, and with Bernabò Visconti; had been sent with congratulatory messages, as in 1367, when Pope Urban V., summoned by all the Italian patriots, returned from Avignon to Rome, unfortunately only for a time. Jealousy of his rising authority induced the heads of the Ricci, a rival family to his own, and their friends, to propose the exclusion from office of all such as were suspected of Guelphism. This measure was directed principally against the Albizzi; but Piero, cleverer than his opponents, helped to carry it through, while they had counted on his opposition. He knew how to make use of them. In 1357, being chosen president of the tribunal entrusted with this political inquisition of the Parte Guelfa, it was he who, with his friends, began that proscription which united all power in the city and government in his hands and those of his adherents, but also created that unendurable condition of affairs against which the rebellion of 1378 broke out. In the following year Piero, banished at first from Florence, having returned to one of his estates, fell a victim to the summary justice executed by the aristocratic leaders of the mob. A false accusation brought him to the scaffold; at a time when no law was respected, he paid the penalty of having himself made the laws subservient to political ends. [92]

The family retired into exile; their houses were plundered and burnt. One of the branches, in a quarrel with relations, had discarded the name and altered the coat of arms, and flourishes still under the name of the Alessandri. The reaction of the year 1381 brought the exiles back, and they were soon more powerful than ever. Maso (Tommaso), Piero's nephew, had been first banished to Barletta, on the Apulian coast, and then made a 'Grande,' *i.e.* disqualified for holding communal offices. He now attained almost dictatorial power, and exercised it with political insight, and a consistency which essentially aided in raising the republic to that height of power and repute on which it remained thenceforward, and long after his own faction was destroyed, till the revolution in Italian affairs at the end of the fifteenth century. If he acted intolerantly in home affairs; if proscriptions did not cease, and the prosecution of the Alberti, who were concerned in the insurrection of 1378 and in the execution of Piero degli Albizzi, showed cruelty in the enactment which commanded their houses to be razed to the ground, their coats of arms to be destroyed, and their property confiscated; a law that punished alliances by marriage and commercial transactions with them, extended even to their posterity;[57] it is less the fault of the man than of the spirit which had prevailed in the republics for centuries, and which led even the most discerning to make the commonwealth ever subservient to party policy, and to look upon their own faction as the State. Embassies to Gian Galeazzo Visconti, to King Rupert of the Palatinate, Pope Gregory XII., &c., alternated for Maso with a continuous series of the most important offices. Even when he was out of office, nothing was done without him. When the republic manfully resisted the progress of Gian Galeazzo in Central Italy, [93] enlarged and secured her own territory by the conquest of Pisa, actively contributed to ecclesiastical union, and brought the dangerous war with King Ladislaus to a successful end, it was all really due to Albizzi. He was a rich man; the street outside the oldest district of the town, still named after his family, was almost entirely occupied by their houses and those of the Pazzi; and in our time, the palace belonging to his descendants, as well as that of the Alessandri, the half-ruined tower, the walled-up loggia, the passage to the market of San Piero, with the portico of the demolished church built by a descendant of Maso, remind us of the brilliant days of the family, whose coat of arms is still to be seen on the

buildings—two concentric golden circles on a black field, and above it on a silver field the cross of the German order granted to Maso. In the lower valley of the Arno, on the right bank of the river, where a low range of hills stretches between the Lake of Bientina, reaching to the foot of the mountains of Pisa, and the green level of the marshes of Fucecchio, lies the large Villa Montefalcone, which came into the possession of the family in the second half of the fourteenth century. It was formerly a castle (destroyed by Castruccio) with a splendid view over the valley, strewn with villages lying mostly on low hills, and the beautiful wooded heights of Monte Albano, behind which the fertile Pistojan plain joined the Florentine valley of the Arno, which, while more varied, rivalled it in fertility.

Maso degli Albizzi died in 1417, aged seventy-four. His eldest son, Rinaldo, was the heir to his position in the Senate. He was a boy eight years of age when his relations fell in the tumult of Ciompi, had grown up in the traditions of his house, and from the year 1399 was active in affairs of State. No citizen was employed so much as he in embassies and commissions of all kinds. We meet with him in great and small matters; for the statesmen of the free city as little thought of declining small matters, as the greatest [94] artists thought it beneath their dignity to paint shields and domestic implements, or to carve coats of arms on door-posts and chimney-pieces. Fifty different commissions were entrusted to Rinaldo, some in the vicinity, and some to the Popes, King Sigismund, to Naples, Lombardy, Genoa, Ferrara, Romagna, &c. The hard-working man left careful and detailed notes of all, which, with the documents and letters relating thereto, he first collected in 1423, and afterwards continued. They are models of a natural, pure, perspicuous, and always appropriate diction, at a time when the Tuscan dialect was threatened with an overgrowth of learned affectation and distortion, and was losing its popular simplicity. These notes are a source of the amplest knowledge of details for any one who earnestly studies the history of this period, remarkable in so many ways.[58] While he was so frequently employed in foreign service—for the year before his exile we find him at Rome—his opponents laboured at home for his ruin. It is as if Gino Capponi, Neri's son, had thought of him when he wrote the advice intended for his son: 'He who wishes for a great position in his native city, should not leave it too often, except in important cases.' 'Messer Rinaldo,' says Giovanni Cavalcanti, a contemporary and adherent of the Medici, 'knew not what fear is. He had clean hands, was well read in the sciences, was full of perseverance and love of justice, so that the multitude accused him of being hard and cruel. He lived only on simple fare, and hated feastings, and was accustomed to say that he who wished to keep in health must be no gormandizer; which his enemies interpreted as meanness. Would to God that we could not have said of this man that he was proud! for else he would have excelled many others in good qualities. But his pride clouded his own virtues, and misjudged those of others.'[59]

Beside the two Albizzi, none exercised greater influence in the [95] guidance of affairs in the half-century of the oligarchy than Niccolò da Uzzano. The name of the family, extinct in the second half of the seventeenth century, was Miglioretti; but they were generally named after a little castle, now a gentleman's villa, lying south of Florence, in the Greve valley, the environs of which are renowned for their excellent wine. The Da Uzzano appeared first in Florence in the days of the Emperor Henry VII. Niccolò, the son of Giovanni and Lena de' Bardi, born about the middle of the fourteenth century, represented the moderate principle in the ruling party, as Giovanni di Bicci did among the opposition. He wished for an oligarchy, but did not desire the supremacy of a single family. As long as he lived, a restraint was laid upon the Albizzi; nay, he was even reported to have said, that, if he must live to see one stand at the head of affairs, he would sooner endure Cosimo than Rinaldo. For he feared the violent ambition of the latter more than the crafty calculation of his rival, and said of Rinaldo, that he would see no citizen by his side, but all beneath him, and did not think so much of destroying the Medici as of acquiring unlimited authority over his own party.[60] Niccolò did not, however, trust to its unity, and sought, therefore, to hold and preserve matters equally balanced. His repute was so high, that the faction was indeed named after him, and his beneficence equalled his wealth. In the Via de' Bardi we still see the great palace which he is said to have had built by the painter Bicci di Lorenzo, and which, as he had no sons, passed with

his daughter Ginevra to a branch of the Capponi, which still possesses it.[61] The severe unadorned façade of Opus rusticum still represents the simplicity of the time, which was soon replaced by [96] the greater richness of form of the Medicean epoch; and his statue in marble, said to be a work of Donatello's, is still shown in the house; whereas another likeness, painted by Masaccio, and once in one of the houses of the Corsican,[62] is said to have disappeared.

But Niccolò wished to leave his native town a memorial of his affection, and began building a lyceum for young men after a design by the same Bicci. By his last will he left a considerable sum invested in the national funds for completing the work and endowing lectureships; but the State expended the money for other purposes, and in the present day only the name of the broad Via della Sapienza, leading from the Piazza di San Marco to the Annunziata, reminds us of Niccolò da Uzzano's patriotic intention. 'He who wishes to be of use to the world, and to found of himself an honourable memory,' remarks Giorgio Vasari, 'must work himself as long as he lives, and not trust to posterity and heirs.'

Palla Strozzi was not made for the strife of factions; his heart belonged to study. 'Messer Leonardo of Arezzo,' remarks the Florentine bookseller Vespasiano da Bisticci,[63] 'who has left us a whole gallery of interesting portraits of remarkable and meritorious men, used to say of him, that he was the happiest man he had known; for he possessed all that is requisite for human happiness, in intellectual as well as physical gifts. He was very useful to his native city, and obtained all the honours in the home and foreign administration which could be granted to a citizen. As ambassador he received honourable commissions, and, at the same time, always promoted the welfare of his country. With these gifts he united the strictest sense of honour, and was personally the most cultivated [97] and respected burgher of the city. His modesty extended from his private life to his public position. He sought to avoid envy as much as he could, well knowing what harm is wrought by it to the commonwealth, and how it pursues deserving men. He did not like to be seen in public; he never appeared on the square of the Signoria, or the new market-place, except when he was summoned thither. If he went to the Piazza, he took the way past Sta. Trinità, through the Borgo Sant'Apostolo, stayed there only a short time, and then repaired to the palace. He was sparing of time, never wandered about the streets and squares, and scarcely had he arrived at home than he studied Greek and Latin, and lost not an hour.' He was a rich man. In the registers of 1427 he opened the list of the tax-payers with a sum exceeding the valuation of Giovanni di Bicci by more than a fifth. A great part of his income he employed in the purchase of manuscripts and for scientific purposes. The origin of his family is unknown: the name occurs towards the end of the thirteenth century. That the Strozzi were Guelphs and plebeians is shown by their whole position; that they were popular, we see from the circumstance that the names of more than a hundred of their family occur among the priors of the corporations, while not less than sixteen attained the office of Venner. Their wealth increased rapidly, as did the branches into which they were divided, and in the territory they possessed lands and castles. One of them, Tommaso, was among those of higher rank who turned the popular insurrection of 1378 to their own purposes, and had to esteem himself fortunate in escaping the victorious reaction by a flight to Mantua, where he founded a branch of his family, which is still flourishing. Onofrio (Noferi), Palla's father, who had died in 1417, seventy-two years old, was one of the most respected men of the republic. He was twice elected Gonfaloniere, and, beside other offices, he filled that of superintendent of the Mint; while embassies led him to the Popes Gregory XII. and Alexander V., when Florence [98] tried her best to restore unity in the Church. It was he who determined on building the beautiful chapel in Sta. Trinità which now serves as sacristy, a building which was completed by his son, and the exterior of which is adorned with the three crescents, the arms of the Strozzi. The epoch of their greatest brilliancy had not yet begun, but they were approaching it rapidly.

As long as the different elements which formed the political parties held the balance of power, peace remained intact at home. The city had never been so rich or so splendid, trade and industry never so flourishing as then; the great burghers had never shown more lively common feeling, or created more beautiful public works,

or devoted more helpful interest to science. It was felt that any inconsiderate step, from whatever side it might come, would disturb this peace; but it was this very consciousness of responsibility which enforced prudence. Niccolò da Uzzano used to say that he who summoned a parliament—*i.e.* who would bring about any decided change in the existing state of things—would dig his own grave.[64] Many respected burghers shared his views. It was natural however that an event should at last occur to cause open discontent in the city, and a more hostile position of the parties. The conquest of Pisa had not satisfied Florentine ambition; Lucca, with which Florence had so often quarrelled, remained a thorn in her side. When, a hundred and twenty six years after the time of which we are treating, Giorgio Vasari was employed in painting the great hall in the former palace of the Signoria with representations from the history of Florentine conquests, he was visited by the Lucchese ambassador at his work, and on his question, what he intended to portray on the remaining space, gave the bold answer, 'The conquest of Lucca.' This is only an insolent expression of the popular wish. In the Milanese war, Lucca, where, for nearly thirty years, a citizen, Paolo Guinigi, had ruled with almost absolute power, had taken sides for the Visconti, and thereby certainly [99] placed Florence in some danger. Rinaldo degli Albizzi stood at the head of those who demanded that their neighbours should be chastised. But division arose in his own party; Niccolò da Uzzano, Palla Strozzi, Agnolo Pandolfini, and others, opposed him. The attitude of Cosimo de' Medici was ambiguous. The reproach of having agreed to the plan of war in order to ruin the hopes of his rival, cleaves to him in spite of its being contradicted.[65] The war party, supported by Neri Capponi, one of the most influential burghers, and son of him who had taken Pisa, prevailed. In the Council the opponents were scarcely allowed to speak; a pretext was easily found, and the determination was taken at the end of 1429. Rinaldo degli Albizzi undertook the guidance of affairs as Commissary of the Republic, with extensive authority.

It was an undertaking as unsuccessful as it was unjust, notwithstanding the guilt of the Lucchese. The Florentines accomplished nothing from a military point of view; their great architect, Filippo Brunellesco, forfeited his fame as an engineer; the land was as cruelly as uselessly desolated; and the Duke of Milan was drawn into the war. Venice, Genoa, even Siena, took sides for or against; and after the leadership of Guinigi, by no means to the advantage of the Lucchese, had been lost by it, a peace was concluded in April, 1433, which was to restore every one his own—in what condition no one ventured to ask. The unsuccessful campaign had already caused much disturbance in Florence from the beginning, and given abundant material for evil speaking. Rinaldo degli Albizzi had returned from the camp without leave of absence: he was accused of having acted as a trader, and employed rations and booty for his villa of Montefalcone. His successor, Messer Giovanni Guicciardini, did not fare much better; the least offence he was accused of was, that he had sold the bread intended for the camp to the Lucchese.[66] Every one was in an ill-humour and at enmity when the costly and fruitless war was ended. Rinaldo [100] could not conceal from himself the fact that his authority had suffered a dangerous blow. He thought to re-establish it more firmly by drawing the reins tighter. The one man of his party who had always dissuaded him most decidedly from this was no more: Niccolò da Uzzano had died during the war, in 1432. The void created by his death was soon visible to all.

The bitter enmity between Cosimo and Rinaldo seems first to have arisen at this time, for the two men do not appear to have been personal opponents till then. In the autumn of 1430 Cosimo had repaired to Verona on account of a sickness prevailing in Florence; at Ostiglia, on the Po, he heard of the loss suffered before Lucca. Appointed with Francesco Tornabuoni as ambassador at Venice, he had, on what grounds is unknown, declined the commission, but had gone, in March 1432, with Palla Strozzi to Ferrara, to make an agreement with Milan in the affair of Lucca, which, however, as we have said, was not carried out till a year later.[67] What had kindled such irreconcilable hatred between Rinaldo and Cosimo—who, hitherto, whatever might be their private feelings, had frequently worked together—is not known. The rival party reproached both Cosimo and his brother Lorenzo, who had for some time resided at

Milan as Florentine ambassador, with having taken part in intrigues against the State, in order to prolong the war. But accusations of this kind usually rest on one-sided testimony, and it is much more likely that both the Medici quietly waited for a change at home, which public discontent, and the loss of reputation to the reigning party in consequence of the failure in war, seemed to announce. Cosimo did not deceive himself respecting the prevailing opinion against him. He kept himself aloof from the eminent men of the ruling faction, and appeared seldom in the palace; but it availed him little, for it was said he wished to lull the suspicions of the rulers, and his relations to the lower orders, which he could not, and [101] perhaps would not, conceal, were made out a crime. The large loans which at different times he had been making to the public finances, as well as those to private citizens for whom he procured access to office by paying their arrears of taxes, had made him a popular favourite, but at the same time had increased the number of his political adversaries. It became more and more plain that things could not remain as they were. Rinaldo had tried, through Niccolò Barbadore, to persuade Niccolò da Uzzano to mediate shortly before his death, but had been repulsed. He now determined to act. He could reckon all the more on support because Cosimo, if he relied on popular favour, was suspected by the decided Guelphs from his connections with the old nobility—being a brother-in-law of the Bardi and Pannocchieschi, and through his brother Lorenzo related to the Cavalcanti and Malaspina, families of the Lunigiana; while he was united by friendship to the Buondelmonti and other nobles. Rinaldo had attempted to secure the consent of many partisans to violent measures against Cosimo and his adherents, when the election of a Signoria decidedly favourable to his plans, which entered on office with the gonfaloniere Bernardo Guadagni on September 1, 1433, seemed to offer the favourable moment. Bernardo Guadagni belonged to a distinguished family, the name of which occurs in various offices since the beginning of the thirteenth century; he was opposed to the Albizzi in the political movements of 1378, but afterwards became attached to them. Bernardo had not been eligible because he owed taxes, but Rinaldo cancelled the debt, and made him his tool.[68]

On September 7 Cosimo de' Medici was summoned before the Signoria.[69] He had been at his villa in Mugello, from whence he was recalled to town under the pretext that his counsel was desired, [102] and he was in fact appointed a member of a commission (*pratica*) for affairs of the commonwealth. As he passed the Or San Michele, Alamanno Salviati warned him that evil was intended, but he replied that he must obey the Signoria. Arrived at the palace, he was confined as a prisoner in a chamber of the upper storey called *La Berberia*. The principal accusation concerned treasonable machinations in the Lucchese war. That his life was aimed at is scarcely to be supposed, though certainly possible: that the prisoner feared it, is certain. The waves of party feeling ran so high, tongues were so sharp, and even the assemblies held in churches, ostensibly for purposes of Divine worship, were so openly employed for political ends, and for manœuvring against the Government, that it was not difficult by inquisitorial proceedings to justify the severest measures. The city was in the power of the opponents of the Medici; Lorenzo, his brother, who was in the country, seems to have tried in vain to bring about a rising. Niccolò da Tolentino, the general of the Republic, and a friend of Cosimo's, rode with a squadron from Pisa to the village of Lastra, on the Arno, seven miles from the city, but hesitated to proceed farther, and declared that he appeared in support of the public peace. It was an anxious time of suspense.

The Signoria summoned the people to a parliament on the Piazza, surrounded by armed friends of the Albizzi. The result at first was favourable; but when the newly-appointed Balia had to decide on Cosimo's fate, the differences of opinion showed themselves. The prisoner had found means to employ his money, and had bribed the Gonfaloniere, among others, with 1,000 gold florins. He has himself remarked that the people did not understand their own advantages; if they had wished for 10,000 gold florins, he would have paid the sum to save himself from the danger. There was no lack of representations of many kinds, even from foreign countries. The end was, that all the Medici, with the exception of Vieri's descendants, were excluded from office. Cosimo was banished on September 29 [103] to Padua for ten years, his brother for five years to Venice, and others of the family to Naples, Rimini, Ancona, and other towns. On

the evening of October 3, as Ormanno degli Albizzi held the Piazza, guarded with his people, and an attack upon Cosimo was feared if the latter left his prison in the palace, the Gonfaloniere caused him, after the penalty had been announced to him, to be brought into his own lodgings under a safe-guard. Here he partook of some supper, left the city by the Porta San Gallo, and rode through Pistoja to the village of Cutigliano, on the road leading over the Apennines to Modena, where he arrived on October 4, the day of St. Francis d'Assisi. 'On the 11th,' so he relates, 'I reached Venice, where many nobles with Lorenzo came to meet me, and I was not received like an exile, but as an ambassador. On the following day I visited the Signoria, to thank them for their influential mediation in my favour. The Signoria received me with kindness and honour, expressed regret at what had happened to me, offered residence and money supplies to whatever extent I wished. Many nobles came to visit me. On the 13th I repaired to Padua, as I had been enjoined, accompanied by Messer Jacopo Donato, who placed his beautiful house, provided with everything, at my disposal.'

While Cosimo de' Medici thus resided, partly in Padua and partly in Venice, where he was allowed to go, honoured and loved for his well-calculated liberality, in personal connection with some of his friends and in correspondence with others, affairs in Florence rapidly approached another crisis. Other banishments had followed: that of the brothers Pucci, the eldest of whom, Puccio, was one of the most eager adherents of Cosimo, and one who had circulated the gold florins of his patron, when in prison, most skilfully; and Agnolo Acciaiuoli, whose correspondence with the exiles had been discovered. The fortune of war, already unfavourable to the Albizzi, now entirely forsook them. When new quarrels broke out in the Romagna between the Florentines and the Duke of Milan, the [104] former were defeated. The excitement in the city increased to an alarming degree. Rinaldo soon perceived that he was no longer master of the situation. When, towards the end of August 1434, came the election of the Signoria, who were to take office on September 1, Rinaldo perceived that he must use force if he would prevent his enemy's return. When neither the attempt to force new elections nor the endeavours to attract the old nobility succeeded, and the new Signoria expressed itself without reserve in favour of the Medici, while representations on the other side were useless, the Albizzi began to arm their followers, and to draw a number of discharged warriors to their service, in the hope of having the majority of the city with them, and dictating the law to the highest magistrate. But they calculated wrongly; even the heads of their own party, like Palla Strozzi and Giovanni Guicciardini, did not all flock to them. The city remained divided.

At the news of the warlike preparations which threatened them, and relying upon the support of the majority of the people, the Signoria determined to be beforehand with their opponents. On September 26, they caused the Piazza to be lined with armed men, and invited Rinaldo and some of his most eminent friends to appear before them; when, however, instead of obeying, the latter came to Sant'Apollinare, and advanced to the Piazza, with more than 600 men, the gates of the palace were hastily closed. Had the assailants proceeded vigorously, their cause would have prevailed—at least for the moment; but instead of advancing, they condescended to bargain, and then they were lost. While Ridolfo Peruzzi, one of the leaders of the party, was parleying in the palace with the Signori, who did not spare fair words, Rinaldo allowed himself to be persuaded to repair to the convent Sta. Maria Novella, to Pope Eugene IV., who, having fled before the insurrectionary Romanists, had reached Florence not long before, and now wished to play the peace-maker. As the adherents and people of Albizzi in vain awaited their leader, whom the Pope delayed with long speeches, the crowd [105] dispersed, some going here, some there. The Signori gathered courage as they saw the crowd of opponents diminish, and ordered the alarm to be rung. Armed burghers hastened from all sides, and country people flocked into the city.[70] Messer Bartolommeo Orlandini caused the entrances to the Piazza to be guarded: Papi di Medici came at the head of the peasants. The Signori appeared on the balcony of the palace, and summoned the people to a parley. About three hundred and fifty voices gave the Signoria full power to appoint a Balia, after the usual manner, to proceed to urgent measures. With the Pope it was easy to come to an agreement by means of his confidant, Giovanni Vitelleschi, then Bishop of

Recanati, the same whom Rinaldo had withheld from advancing. The revolution had succeeded without bloodshed. The speedily chosen extraordinary commission, more numerous than any before, conjointly with the colleges, recalled with one voice, Cosimo and his companions from banishment, into which they sent Rinaldo degli Albizzi, and with him more than seventy of his most distinguished partizans. 'Oh, Pope Eugenius,' said the knight to him, who now sought to console him with words, as he had before put him off with words, 'I am not surprised at the destiny which befalls me, but I blame myself for having trusted to the promises of one who could not help himself; for he who is powerless in his own affairs cannot help others.' Rinaldo degli Albizzi never saw his home again.

Cosimo de' Medici had set out from Venice, September 26, accompanied by his brother, on the news of the first favourable events in Florence. On October 1 they learned the victory of their party; on the 5th they reached the territory of the Republic—on the same date, and at the same spot in the Pistojan mountains, where they had quitted it. 'I have noted this,' he observes in his 'Ricordi' above mentioned, 'because at our expulsion several good and devoted persons said not a year would pass before we should again [106] be in Florence. On the way several burghers met us, and in Pistoja the whole population flocked out of the gates to see us so armed. We did not enter the city. On the 6th we dined at our villa at Careggi, where a number of people had assembled. The Signori informed us that we should not enter Florence till they had sent us word. This happened after sunset, and we set out with a numerous escort. As it was expected that we would repair to our house, the whole street was filled with men and women. Lorenzo and I, accompanied by a servant, rode, however, along the wall, and so we passed the Santissima Annunziata and the back of the cathedral, the palace of the Podestà and that of the executors, to the palace of the Signoria, almost without being observed, for every one was in the Via Larga and at our house. The Signori had arranged it so in order to avoid excitement. They received us kindly, and I thanked them as was fitting, and at their wish we remained with them. We heard that, before our arrival, Messer Rinaldo and Ormanno his son, Ridolfo Peruzzi, and several other citizens, had been banished. The city was quiet, but, nevertheless, for security, the square and palace were guarded by a number of armed men.'

Florence had now a master. On January 1, 1435, Cosimo de' Medici entered upon office as Gonfaloniere.

In an early work, unfortunately incomplete, and unknown till a few years ago, which relates the history of Florence from the return of Cosimo de' Medici to the League of Cambray, Francesco Guicciardini[71] thus condenses his views on the government of the Albizzi: 'After various disorders, a firm order of government was at last introduced by Parliament in 1393,[72] when Maso degli Albizzi held the office of Gonfaloniere. He, in order to avenge his uncle [107] Piero, expelled almost all the Alberti, and the government remained in the hands of clever and sensible men, who conducted it in great harmony and safety till towards the year 1420. One cannot be astonished at this, for the people were so tired of the preceding disturbances that, when an orderly state of things began, every one adapted himself gladly to it. At this time it was plainly shown how great the power of our city is when unity prevails in her. For twelve years she maintained the war against Gian Galeazzo with infinite expense, and with Italian or foreign armies, for they often summoned a duke of Bavaria, a count of Armagnac, or a King Rupert over the Alps, to their aid. Scarcely was this war at an end, and, as was thought, the city exhausted and without means for some time, when she began the undertaking against Pisa which cost heavy sums in buying as well as in the siege. Then followed the war with King Ladislaus, in which she not only defended herself bravely, but also gained Cortona, though certainly at a heavy price. In short, the city attained such important success, preserved her freedom under the guidance of capable and honest men, warded off powerful enemies and enlarged her territory so considerably, that it was rightly said to be the wisest, most glorious, and successful government which Florence had ever had. The years from 1420 to 1434 were occupied with the war against Duke Filippo Maria, and the division of the city into two parties. At the head of one stood Niccolò da Uzzano, a man respected by all as wise and a lover of freedom; at the head of the other, Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici, and then his son Cosimo. Disunion and various excitements were

introduced by the year 1433, after Niccolò had departed this life—first, Cosimo's exile, then his return and the fall of his opponents; and as both changes, that of 1433 as well as of 1434, were brought about by the Signoria which entered on office on September 1 (it was usually elected on the day of the decapitation of St. John, August 29), it was decreed that the drawing of the lots should no [108] longer take place on this day, but on the preceding, as has happened since, with the exception of a few years at the time of Fra Girolamo Savonarola.'

When the government of the Albizzi came to an end, the domain of the Republic had, with the exception of some smaller territories and villages in the mountainous regions of the Casentino and the valley of the Tiber, attained pretty nearly the same extent which she preserved up to the union of the Sienese State with that of Florence, and the consequent formation of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. The enlargement of this territory had proceeded of course gradually, but constantly. Dante Alighieri says once it would have been far better for Florence had the inhabitants of Campi, Figline, and Certaldo remained her neighbours, instead of becoming her fellow-citizens, and corrupting the pure Latin blood of her old families. Two centuries after the writer of the 'Divina Commedia,' the most famous statesman of modern Italy expressed pretty nearly the same opinions. 'Venice and Florence'—such are Niccolò Machiavelli's words in his reflections on the first ten books of Titus Livius—'were far weaker when the first had attained the supremacy over Lombardy the latter over Tuscany, than when Venice was content with the sea and Florence with six miles of territory.' The increase of subjects by the absorption of other communities is certainly of small advantage: when it once exceeds due measure it is ruinous. While it cannot contribute to the strength of warlike States, it has a most hurtful influence on unwarlike ones, of which the Italian republics give evidence: an opinion which would sound paradoxical if we did not consider that he who expressed it had before his eyes the spectacle of a State, without unity in itself, consisting of the most different elements, united only by an outward bond, whose laws, founded on systematic oppression of the nobles, appeared to him as the reason of its evident helplessness in the second half of the fourteenth century.

With the aid of many hundreds of documents in the Tuscan [109] archives[73] we can closely follow the history of the growth of the Florentine territory, as it increased in all directions above the valley of the Arno, often with difficulty and with the most violent struggles, beyond Prato, Pistoja, on the shore of the Mediterranean towards Leghorn, through the Elsa and Chiana valley, where the conflicts took place with Siena, beyond Arezzo; finally, by way of Cortona, to the upper valley of the Tiber, and towards the Umbrian frontier, as along the Apennines to that of Romagna, including, on the other side, Volterra and the long-contested Pisa. The forms under which the villages and territories were annexed were very various. First of these, was the submission (*submissio*), a result generally of war, but which sometimes was brought about by compacts with other commonwealths and rulers, and at times occurred spontaneously. The submitting commune assembled in such case a parliament to appoint a syndicus, who repaired to Florence to settle affairs with the Signoria, after which the Chapter was consulted, and a commissary of the Republic was sent to the place in question to receive homage, and complete the so-called act of taking bodily possession. These things were very simple in small communes. They expressed to the Signoria by their syndics and procurators the hope that they might be well governed by them, and live in peace; promised faith and obedience—appointing a fine in case of a breach of this promise; received a podestà and judge from Florence; retained free choice of their presidents from their own citizens; stipulated conditions in respect to markets, customs, weights and measures, etc., as well as observance of their own statutes, such as even the smallest communes possessed. For if, with the decline of the imperial power towards the time of the Swabian emperors, the legal power once pertaining to the empire might be considered as having passed actually to princes and commonwealths, the case now occurred that princes and larger towns claimed the former rights of [110] the empire over little towns, which defended themselves as far as they could by reservations. In such cases the statute of the chief town represented towards the subject communes the common law, to which there was an appeal from the separate municipal statutes

where appeal to the Roman law was not stipulated. After the subjection of Pisa, the Pisan statutes remained valid for all the dependencies of this town; but in Florence such dependencies had always a hearing if they appealed to the Florentine statute law. But where there was a special fortress in the stipulating place (Rocca, Cassero), the garrisoning of it was decided by the ruling commune.

The different conditions are as different as the nature of the community was varied. Larger cities naturally made their importance felt. A whole series of treaties were concluded with Pistoja, beginning with the peace made after the death of Castruccio Castracane on May 11, 1329, at the time of the confusion caused by Louis the Bavarian's Roman expedition. In the summer of 1331 the Florentine Signoria received full powers for a year for 'the security of freedom' and the government of city and territory. These temporary powers were repeatedly prolonged: commissions of Florentine citizens were appointed for the revision of statutes; the powers of the sovereign Signoria, and those of the magistrates of the subject town, were carefully limited in such a way that the actual decision in local government remained to the latter, which limited the supreme government. Volterra, which acknowledged the supremacy of the Duke of Athens, but had asserted its own independence after his fall, preserved it nominally up to the end of the fourteenth century; but the Republic of Florence had attained to such extensive rights that scarcely more independence remained to the commune than to subject States, especially after a rebellion excited by the introduction of the *Cadastre* had ended to the disadvantage of the people of Volterra. As can easily be understood, quite peculiar circumstances followed, when places were obtained [111] through agreement with foreign powers. By the repeated interference of the Neapolitan Angevin princes in Tuscan affairs, and the increasing military weakness of the communes, this occurred only too frequently. Prato, in the midst of the wars of the Ghibellines and Guelphs, in the times of the emperors of the houses of Bavaria and Luxembourg, powerless to protect itself, had acknowledged King Robert of Naples as its Signore in 1313, and remained under the rule of Neapolitan viceroys till Robert's granddaughter Johanna gave up the town to the Republic of Florence, in the year 1350, for the sum of 13,500 gold florins, which a citizen of Florence, Francesco Rinuccini, advanced without interest. Florence thus succeeded to the king's rights, and appointed the superior officers, while the town retained her own municipal government. It had happened most strangely of all with Arezzo. Unable to assert herself against the superior powers of the Guelphs, she had acknowledged the supremacy of Florence in 1337, and while retaining her own territories, statutes, and privileges, received only the higher magistrates, Podestà and Capitano, from Florence, to whom she promised fidelity and assistance in peace and war. The oppressions, and especially the building of fortresses, by which the ruling community here, as elsewhere, sought to secure itself, went so far, that when, after the fall of the Duke of Athens, the majority of the larger towns revolted from Florence, Arezzo also regained her independence, which she preserved till 1380, when she fell into the power of Duke Charles of Durazzo, in his expedition against Queen Johanna. Four years later the town was taken by the French army under Duke Louis of Anjou, marching to the assistance of the queen; and the commander, Enguerraud de Coney, sold it four years afterwards to the Florentines for 50,000 gold florins.

But there were other political connections beside that of subjection. The Accomandigia, or assumption of a protectorate, was an act, more or less solemn, by which a possession, either of the [112] Church or the commune, was recommended to protection, that might extend to the person of the possessor, who was then called *Raccomandato*. It was a very old connection, which united Florence with other communes, as for instance with Siena. As in the earliest times of the commonwealth, the distinguished family of the Buondelmonti recommended their castle, Montebuoni, to the Florentine bishop for protection, so did numerous and powerful lords of the commune recommend themselves afterwards. A kind of homage was always combined with the Accomandigia; it usually consisted of a pallium or banner of brocade or gold and silver cloth, presented on St. John's day. Those recommended for protection promised to be friendly to the commune, to assist it at its summons in its feuds, to share friendship and enmity with it, to grant free passage through their territories, not to hinder the transport of

provisions and merchandise, and to grant refuge to none who had been banished by the commune. The commune, on the other hand, allowed the *Raccomandati* law of arms on their own territory, promised defence or compensation for loss, and empowered the planting of the Florentine banner on their castles. The second half of the fourteenth century and the first of the following were exceedingly rich in such Accomandigie, because the smaller landowners felt themselves more and more weakened and threatened in their independence, in consequence of the great diminution of the number of independent communes, and thereby the accession of power to those still remaining, as Florence, Siena, and Lucca. Florence had begun by drawing the nobles in the nearer vicinity of the Arno valley into such a connection with herself, and also to absorb the smaller communes. Then the Accomandigia expanded more and more, till all the great noble families, so to say, for the most part originally free, imperial and Ghibellines, had lost their independence in the higher sense of the word. At last the turn came to others, even distant, where the relation of protection was essentially altered, as with the Grimaldi of Monaco, the Genoese [113] Campofregoso, the Appiani of Piombino, the Marchese of Monte Sta. Maria, the numerous Malaspine, who resided at their imperial fiefs in the Lunigiana, but naturally looked more to Florence and Genoa, to the Visconti and the Esti, than to the empire. Even Roman barons entered into connections of this kind. In 1395 the Colonna of Palestrina placed themselves, with all their castles, for five years under the protection of the Republic, whose service they entered. The Orsini of Savona whose relations, the Counts of Pitigliano, stood in the same relation to Siena, had preceded them. More important for Florence was the protection of many dynasties of Romagna and Umbria, of which we shall speak farther on. With regard to the landowners settled in Tuscany, if we except a few independent imperial vassals, who remained so up to the French time, the Counts Bardi of Vernio and Barbolani of Montanto, as well as the Macchesi of Monte Sta. Maria (Bourbon de Monte), whom we have just mentioned, the Accomandigia led to their subjection. In the States of the Church the Papal sovereignty prevailed, as might be expected.

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CHAPTER VI.

SUPREMACY OF COSIMO DE' MEDICI UP TO LUCA PITTI'S REFORM OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

The time at which Cosimo de' Medici attained to a position in his native town, such as a citizen had never yet held, promised neither rest nor peace to Italy.

We have already mentioned how, in the decisive crisis when Rinaldo degli Albizzi sought to carry the citizens along with him, and to destroy the Medicean party with one blow, Pope Eugenius IV. was a fugitive in the same convent of Sta. Maria Novella which his predecessor had inhabited on his way from Constance to Rome. Martin V. had died February 20, 1431, at the moment when the war of the Florentines with the Duke of Milan had brought the armies of the latter over the Apennines. His successor, descended from a Venetian family, did not understand how to preserve the quiet which Martin's skill and policy had established. While he fell into disputes with the relations of the latter, the Colonna—disputes which threatened the city of Rome itself—the eventful complication began with the council opened at Basle on July 23rd of the same year, which was to complete the reform of the Church, which the Council of Constance had not thoroughly effected. Eugenius had united with Florence and Venice in order to overthrow the Colonna family, but had thereby embittered Filippo Maria Visconti, who now, when the violent strife raged between Pope and Council, ranged himself on the side of the latter, and in May, 1434, even assisted to excite a revolt in Rome, which forced the Pope to fly. In the autumn of the [115] same year, although the Pope saw the city of Rome return to its allegiance, he still lingered on in Florence, at strife with the Council, which was pursuing the policy of striving to diminish the authority of the head of the Church, while the surrounding country was desolated by the Duke's mercenaries, till the Pope at last succeeded in coming to terms with his oppressor. Meanwhile, the intrigues began at Naples which for a century were the curse of that country, and finally of all Italy. The last of the Anjous, Ladislaus' sister, Johanna II., died on February 2, 1435, and left to the country, in consequence of her fickleness, a contest for the throne between Renè, Count of Provence, and Alfonso of Aragon, King of Sicily, whom she had successively adopted as sons, while the Pope showed an inclination to claim Naples as a relapsed fief of the Church. Alfonso, defeated and taken prisoner at the Ponza Islands by the Genoese, allied with Renè, was restored to liberty by Filippo Maria Visconti, then ruler over the Sigurian harbour, but this generosity was regarded as detrimental by the victors, and excited an insurrection in Genoa against the supremacy of Milan, which found support from the republic of Venice, the ancient enemy of the Visconti. Hereupon the Duke, not to have to cope with too many enemies at once, entered into the alliance with the Pope which has just been mentioned. As far as the resistance to Filippo Maria was concerned, the Venetians were hand-in-hand with the Florentines; as soon as Cosimo had returned, the Senate congratulated the Signoria. But Florentine plans of winning still independent parts of Tuscany, and the Venetian intentions on Romagna, upon which, for the sake of the safety of their own frontiers, the eyes of the Florentines were always directed, could not but endanger the harmony of the two republics. The whole of the remaining lifetime of Cosimo de' Medici was occupied with the endeavour to support and secure his position at home, and his connection with foreign [116] countries, each reciprocally aiding the other.

He found favourable soil in Florence. His partizans had prepared the way for him. All the heads of the opposite faction were exiled, and most of them ruined. Many were dead. It was easy for him to boast in his memoirs, that during his administration not one individual was banished or injured in any way. It was not lenity on his part, for he had no more horror of violence or bloodshed than the majority of his contemporaries where political ends were at stake, but it was prudent calculation. He knew that he could allow others to give the laws an interpretation which secured him, without being himself taxed with using hard measures. He did this by the execution of penal laws, and by making changes in the constitution. He first put forward Puccio Pucci, who showed such zeal, and

attained such authority, that the Hotspurs of the party were named after him Puccini. When it was an object to further the aims of this party even by the most sanguinary measures, or to raise money, Puccio, otherwise an able man, and proved to be such in office and in embassies, knew no scruples. Cosimo employed the services of Luca Pitti even more frequently than those of Pucci. The family came originally from Semifonte, in the Elsa valley, a castle the conquest and destruction of which, as has been mentioned, plays a part in the oldest annals of the development of the commonwealth. Maffeo Pitti sat as early as 1283 in the magistracy of the Priors. Buonaccorso was a man much employed about the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries. His activity partakes somewhat of the character of an adventurer, and he seems to have been equally versed in political and mercantile affairs. No one was so successful as he in obtaining foreign assistance against Gian Galeazzo Visconti, and it was chiefly he who, on the part of Florence, persuaded Rupert of the Palatinate to undertake the unsuccessful march into Lombardy, particulars of which are given in his instructive memoirs.[74] [117]

Buonaccorso's son was the principal tool of Cosimo. 'Luca Pitti,' says Francesco Guicciardini, 'was not a man of remarkable capabilities, but vivacious, liberal, courageous; one who ventured more for his friends than any one in Florence; a man who might safely be allowed to carry out everything, while he had not head enough to become formidable.'

Cosimo had friends of another kind than these two. At their head stood Neri Capponi. His father Gino, descended from a family which appears in the second half of the thirteenth century among the most distinguished, had won a good name for himself by the capture of Pisa in 1406, and by the judicious and reasonable administration of the severely tried city, while his history of the popular rebellion of 1378 is one of the most important aids to a right understanding of this important occurrence.[75] Neri belonged to those who before 1433 formed a kind of moderate party, but after the death of Niccolò da Uzzano he inclined more and more to Cosimo, and if unable to prevent his exile, he aided essentially in his recall. He was for the Medicean party what Niccolò had been for the Albizzi, the mediating element, but he never attained to the position which the latter held, because Cosimo was of a different nature from Maso, and still more unlike Rinaldo, and because in many cases Neri rather complemented him than represented a different principle. Neri Capponi certainly aided essentially in restraining the Medicean party government within certain limits; yet the measures which most confirmed their government were effected under his eyes. Cosimo, who required him because he enjoyed general confidence, and was skilled alike in peace and war, always found means to counteract his influence when it was inconvenient to himself. 'Neri,' says Francesco Guicciardini,[76] 'well knew the means employed against him. As he saw, however, that Cosimo's position was impregnable, and that to break with him would be to run his own head against the wall, he pretended, intelligent as he was, not to observe anything that passed, and waited patiently for time and opportunity.' But it is evident that this waiting, which we cannot but attribute to weakness of character or selfish indirect motives, established Cosimo's position more and more firmly; Neri's influence did not, however, increase, notwithstanding the great services accomplished by him, which will be more fully dwelt upon as we proceed. [118]

Agnolo Acciaiuoli held a position scarcely inferior to that of Neri Capponi. In the preceding century, his family, which rose with the majority of the plebeian races, attained to unusual splendour. When we descend the high road, leading southward from Florence to Siena, we perceive, three miles from the town, on an isolated height on the banks of the river Ema, the Certosa of Montacuto, convent and fortress at the same time, with towers and pinnacles, with grand colonnades and monuments of sculpture and painting in the splendid church. If we wander farther, quitting the high road to descend to the right into the valley of the Pesa, a tributary of the Arno, we see before us, on a low hill rising from the midst of a green valley, an imposing building, rather resembling a castle than a villa, the extensive mass of building surmounted by a tower resembling the Florentine Palazzo Vecchio—Monte Gufoni, once a splendid country seat, now, after the extinction of the family of its

possessors, deprived of its glory, and inhabited by poor peasants. Niccolò Acciaiuoli built convent and villa in the first half of the fourteenth century, when he wished to leave his native country monuments of his affection and piety. Like so many of his fellow-countrymen, having been originally attracted to the south by [119] commercial business, he had become, by talent and good fortune, all-powerful at the court of the Neapolitan Anjous, who made him grand seneschal of the kingdom, and afterwards a mighty ruler in Greece, where his relations became dukes of Athens and Corinth. Agnolo's grandfather Donato, in former years governor in Corinth for his brother the seneschal, was one of those who put an end to the ochlocracy of the Ciompi, but his attempts to moderate the supremacy of the Albizzi resulted in the exile in which he died. Agnolo had inherited his spirit. He wished, indeed, for the supremacy of a party in Florence, since Florence could no longer exist without the preponderance of one or the other, but he resisted the entire subjection to one family or one man. This opinion, which was held by a number of influential citizens, explains the frequent internal disturbances, the history of which, and consequently that of the whole State, is but half understood, if we do not take into consideration the great number of eminent men who exercised a secondary but yet important influence on the conduct of affairs, as was the case especially under Cosimo de' Medici, not to speak of later times, after the death of Lorenzo il Magnifico and during the last years of the Republic. Agnolo Acciaiuoli had during Cosimo's exile engaged in transactions which would have cost him his head if his brother-in-law had not, in the moment of danger, burned the incriminating correspondence, which did actually bring him to the torture, and to banishment to Cephalonia. That he, an active and capable man, afterwards attained to influence and dignity is easily explained: embassies and honours were heaped upon him, and he remained among the foremost of the Medicean party, although there were not wanting misunderstandings between him and Cosimo, which were revealed after the death of the latter.[77]

Together with Agnolo Acciaiuoli rose into eminence his cousin [120] Donato, whose great-uncle, the celebrated and active cardinal-vice-chancellor, also bore the name of Agnolo, and was the first Duke of Athens. At Cosimo's return, Donato was only six years old, but under the guidance of a sensible mother, Palla Strozzi's daughter, he developed rapidly, and we shall meet him repeatedly in later years engaged in important matters. Among those who held to the Medici there was no one who enjoyed the general confidence in a higher degree, while he, although State affairs claimed so much of his time, took a lively interest in scientific pursuits.[78]

If Diotisalvi Neroni, who attained in Cosimo's later years the reputation of great acuteness and skill, was involved in the misunderstandings to which we have alluded, other causes weighed in the opposite scale; for as the father of this man essentially contributed in 1434 to the prevention of Rinaldo degli Albizzi's elevation to power, so did he, as long as Cosimo lived, act as his clever and willing tool. To the most estimable partisans of the Medici belonged Bernardo Giugni, who was constantly employed on diplomatic embassies, and Agnolo Pandolfini, with his sons Carlo and Giannozzo. Whoever enters the Church of the Benedictines (Badia), which spite of repeated alterations even now recalls the old times of the Republic, may see the beautiful monuments, which were erected to Giugni and Giannozzo Pandolfini, whom the commonwealth honoured with a funeral at the public expense. The Giugni belonged to the oldest Guelph plebeian families, and took part in the administration at its beginning. The Pandolfini stood with them in the ranks of the Guelphs on the bloody field of Montaperti, and streets of the city are yet named after both families, which still flourish; while a palace built long after the time of which we are now treating, which, if not one of the largest, is one of the most [121] beautiful in Florence—a work of Raffael Sanzio's—keeps alive the remembrance of the Pandolfini even in the history of art. Alamanno Salviati would have been recommended by the talents of his father Jacopo, one of the most eminent citizens of the oligarchical time, even if he had not made himself remarkable by his talents and activity. No one could anticipate in those days that, a generation later, his relations would be involved in the most sanguinary catastrophe of the Medicean history. The Guicciardini,[79] a family from the Pesa valley, which had risen by trade, had stood on the side of the Albizzi. Of Luigi's two sons, who in 1378 filled the office

of Gonfalonier when the popular tumult broke out, in which he displayed no great energy, only one, Giovanni, remained true to his colours, and though he did not go into banishment at the return of his old enemy Cosimo, he was still excluded with his descendants from all share in the administration. The other son, Piero, went over to the Medicean party, was one of the most active in bringing about Cosimo's recall, and laid the foundation of the subsequent high position of his family, among whom his great-grandson gained immortal fame as statesman and historian, but as citizen of a free city he has left a name not free from censure.

It is evident that Cosimo de' Medici, powerful as he was, had no freedom of action. He had to contend with different elements, fulfil many obligations, and humour much sensitiveness. He understood it. Scarcely any one has ever guided a great party as he did, and placed himself so little in the foreground. His means were of different kinds. When he returned he found the political power in the hands of a Balia appointed by the Signoria of September, 1434, which had already freed the city from his most decided or most powerful opponents. He only needed to let them continue their work, and so their extraordinary power was prolonged from one [122] period of five years to another. The ballot-boxes were of course only filled with the names of partisans or unsuspected persons, for all in any way disaffected to the faction were excluded, or, according to the expression then in vogue,'messi a sedere.' But even this did not satisfy the party leaders, and instead of allowing the magistrates to be drawn by lot, they caused them to be appointed, at their own pleasure, by the Accoppiatori from among the eligible. While all offices thus fell to his confidants, Cosimo meditated another and most peculiar means of excluding those of whom he was not perfectly certain from any share whatever in the administration. He annulled the statutes which disqualified the old nobility and the so-called 'grandi' from holding office, and declared these families to have equal rights with the citizens. It was regarded as an important concession, as Cosimo was connected with many of them, but in practice the matter proved otherwise. The names of the families in question were not found in the ballot-box, and, besides, they lost the offices to which they had hitherto been admissible, such as legations, ministries of war, &c. It was said that the pride of the old families was a thorn in the eyes of the upstart, who had never trusted them.

That Cosimo promoted a number of people of the lower order evinces equally his intention of weakening the opposition, as the cynical answer which he gave to those who remonstrated with him on the subject expresses his unmitigated selfishness. For when it was observed to him that he did not do well to ruin so many noble families, and that the town must suffer by the loss of many of her most excellent citizens, he answered that a few ells of fine scarlet cloth would fill Florence again with distinguished citizens. A ruined city, he said, was better than a lost one, and one could not rule a state with Paternosters. So he showed himself unmerciful to all who had once opposed him, and while such as left the places of exile (*confine*) assigned to them, were declared rebels and lost their [123] property, those who observed the decree of banishment had their exile prolonged when the time of penalty had expired. Thus it was with Palla Strozzi. He had shown himself weak at the decisive moment of 1434, instead of supporting Rinaldo degli Albizzi. It did not save him; he was banished to Padua for ten years. When the ten years were over, he, who had only lived for science, kept himself within the prescribed limits, and never allowed any one to speak ill of Florence before him, hoped to see home again, but Cosimo condemned him to ten more years. It was very painful to him, for he was seventy-two years old, and loved Florence. He lived eighteen years longer in banishment, and his descendants never returned to his native city. His relations experienced the like hard fate with him. His daughter-in-law, Alessandra de Bardi[80] was, as a girl and young wife, a model of modesty and beauty: that did not save her. She saw her own father as well as her father-in-law go into exile, and die in exile. She saw her husband, Lorenzo, who could no longer bear the scorn, ill-treatment, and oppression to which the families of the exiles were exposed, and who went to Gubbio to earn his bread by teaching, die beneath a murderer's hand. She saw one portion of her property vanish after the other, and her life pass away joylessly in constant change of residence, and constant anxiety for her children. Numerous families, once affluent, were reduced to misery;

fathers and husbands wandered about in foreign lands, and their property was confiscated. Noble ladies begged alms. The poverty to which many were reduced by merciless party spirit, even more than by losses in war and bad harvests, incited the saintly Archbishop Antoninus in 1441 to found the charitable institution which still exists under the name of Buonuomini di San Martino, and which, managed by a society of trustworthy citizens, has for its object to soften misery, especially when undeserved and borne in silence. [124]

The sad fate of Rinaldo degli Albizzi and his nearest relations is the most striking example of the ruin impending over great families in those days from party spirit. On October 2, 1434, the Balia appointed in the Medicean interest gave orders to the Captain of the People, Messer Jacopo de' Lavagnoli of Verona, to proceed against the originators of the tumult which had taken place near Sant'Apollinaris. The sentence passed against Messer Rinaldo and his eldest son, Ormanno, was eight years of banishment, during which the exiles should remain at least a hundred miles distant from the Florentine frontiers, and present themselves every three days to the magistrates of their chosen place of residence, which must be certified by a notary's act. The bail for Rinaldo amounted to 4,000, and for Ormanno to 2,000 gold florins; but all their moveable and immoveable property, including that of the sons and wives, was made security for their proceedings. Of course the exiles were made incapable of all offices. Father and son presented themselves, according to order, in the towns of the district of Ancona, whither they first repaired, Matelica, Montalboddo, Yesi. On November 3, Naples was assigned to the former as his place of exile, Gaeta to the latter, and the banishment prolonged by ten years. Before Rinaldo could reach Naples his destination was changed to Frani, on the Apulian coast, with the command to repair thither in the space of a month. Thus the homeless ones were hunted like wild animals. They of course understood that even the most conscientious observation of the commands given them would never re-open the gates of Florence to them. That they then, driven by rage and despair, disregarded these commands, left the places indicated (it was called 'rompere il confine'), and sought to return by force of arms, is to be explained, if not to be justified. In the law that had fallen on them they recognised only violence, which they on their side determined to oppose by violence. [125] When Filippo Maria Visconti undertook his last campaign against Florence, the Albizzi and several of their fellow-sufferers were in the Milanese army. The day of Anghiari destroyed their hopes. Eight days after the battle, on July 6, 1440, the penalty was pronounced against the rebels, for that they were now. Rinaldo and Ormanno degli Albizzi, Messer Niccolò and Baldassarre Gianfigliazzi, Ludovico de' Rossi, Lamberto de' Lamberteschi, Bernardo Barbadori, and Stefano Peruzzi, all men of distinguished families, were declared to have forfeited their honour, and their portraits were painted on the wall of the Palazzo del Podestà, with insulting verses beneath, according to custom. Andrea del Castagno, an artist of reputation, painted the pictures, as Stefano, named Giottino, did before, and Andrea del Sarto after him. The official poet and jester of the Signoria (the Araldo or herald), Antonio di Meglio, to whose office it belonged to recite something to the Signori during their meals, and to compose eulogies or satires on public occasions, wrote the doggerel verses which indicated the character and crime of each. The painter obtained from his pictures the name of Andrea degli Impiccati.[81]

Rinaldo degli Albizzi resigned himself to his fate. Francesco Filelfo, the humanist, whom hatred against Cosimo de' Medici united to him, informed him from Milan that nothing was to be hoped for from thence. It was probably shortly after the lost battle that he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, in fulfilment of an old vow. Returned from thence, he stayed at Ancona, where he died, an aged man, on February 2, 1442, on the marriage-day of a daughter.[82] Seven years later, Ormanno, then more than fifty years old, turned to Cosimo's younger son, Giovanni, to beg him to obtain a favour in family affairs.[83] The letters from Mantua, where the Albizzi resided with the Margrave Ludovico Gonzaga, have the tone of old friendly connections; but how painfully clear is the fallen condition of the once rich and powerful family! How terrible it was we perceive from the narrative of a simple and trustworthy man, a friend and client of the Medici.[84] Messer Rinaldo's younger son Maso, married to a Gianfigliazzi, saw himself involved with his [126]

family in his father's misfortunes. He had a son, also called Rinaldo, who, in order to earn a livelihood, entered the service of Antonio Cicinello, the influential councillor of King Alfonso of Aragon, and attained his confidence and affection in a high degree. When Rinaldo was going to Ancona one day to visit his mother, who lived there, he was plundered on the way, and appeared in the doublet of a wretch whom he had seen hanging by the wayside on a tree. The young man died not long after, and Cicinello sent the unhappy woman, who had lost her husband also, and lived in extreme want at Ancona, a sum which he had been able to obtain from the property of the deceased, and which was part of what he had helped her son to gain. When the widow returned to Florence some time afterwards, Cicinello repaired thither on affairs of state, and took with him the remainder of the money. We will let our authority speak for himself: 'One morning Messer Antonio repaired to Sta. Trinità, and sent to the widow of Maso degli Albizzi (whose parental house joined the church) with the request to come to him, as he wished to speak with her. But the poor woman lay ill in bed, so that Messer Antonio sent her the thirty ducats which he had by him, with the words, he had once procured this money for her son, and now wished that it should be of use to her. When the poor woman received the money, and remembered the kindness which the sender of this money had shown her son, she said, weeping, 'It is now nearly thirty-five years since my husband was banished from Florence. I have wandered miserably about many parts of Italy, and during my husband's lifetime, as afterwards when I lost him, no one [127] regarded me or helped me in my distress, but I have been forsaken by all. Messer Antonio has shown greater sympathy with me and my son than has been evinced all this time by the whole world, in the midst of all the strokes of fate.'

Cosimo de' Medici did not content himself with rendering his old opponents harmless; he took care also that none of his adherents should become too powerful and dangerous to him. Therefore, remarks Francesco Guicciardini, he retained the Signoria, as well as the taxes, in his hand, in order to be able to promote or oppress individuals at will. In other things the citizens enjoyed greater freedom and acted more according to their own pleasure than later, in the days of his grandson, for he let the reins hang loose if he was only sure of his own position. It was just in this that his great art lay, to guide things according to his will, and yet to make his partisans believe that he shared his authority with them. It was necessary, however, that there should be one against the others, as was the case with Neri Capponi. To weaken the respect in which the latter was held when his name was in all mouths after the great victory over the Duke of Milan in 1440, Cosimo is said to have commanded the murder of the captain, Baldaccio da Anghiari, who remained in the service of the Republic, and was an intimate friend of Neri. The sanguinary deed was executed in the palace, whither the unsuspecting man had been summoned by command of the Gonfaloniere Bartolommeo Orlandini. Thus the share of Cosimo and his motives are veiled in obscurity, but the suspicion has never been removed from him.[85] The name of the Casa Annalena still recalls Baldaccio's widow, of the family of the Malateste of Rimini, who founded here a convent for destitute women and girls, the extensive buildings and gardens of which were employed for other purposes [128] at the dissolution of the monastic orders in 1808.

When Neri Capponi, who still acted as a counterbalance, though a very weak one, to the Medicean authority, died, November 22, 1457, at the age of sixty-nine, the prevailing party had already begun to divide. The old opponents were entirely annihilated, most of their chiefs dead and their families impoverished; the anxieties in which the long wars, first with the Visconti, then with Venice, had kept the government and the people, had been ended by the peace of 1454, which we shall mention later. Those who had held together in the face of danger, relaxed after safety had been gained. Cosimo's supremacy was burdensome to the aristocratic partizans of the Medici. They demanded that the extraordinary powers with which he had governed since 1434 should be terminated. Cosimo consented. The Balia, renewed only two years ago, was declared extinct in the summer of 1455, and the members of the Signoria were again drawn by lot like other magistrates. Giovanni Rucellai, a deserving man, was the first who thus received the office of Gonfaloniere. The people, who hated every appearance of arbitrary power, desired a return to the old forms as much as those who had

caused the changes, but the latter soon perceived that the greater freedom was more apparent than real; for when the ballot-boxes were filled with the names of such as held to Cosimo, the latter attained his ends without appearing on the stage. The revision of the registers revealed this. Then, according to the decree laid down when these were instituted, a revision ought to have been held every three years, but this had only happened in 1433. One of the restrictions put upon the extraordinary commission (Balia) of that year had been that it neither had power to change the ballot-boxes nor to abolish the registers, but at Cosimo's return no such limits were put to the authority of his partisans, and they returned indeed to the ancient arbitrary system which the law of 1427 had been meant to do away with. Instead of a firm base of taxation, party [129] spirit and party manœuvres prevailed. The measures resorted to had the double aim of ruining antagonists, or such as were suspected, and of gaining the lower classes. The most offensive of these measures, one which had been in contemplation during the mob-government of 1378, was the adoption of a progressive scale, which, by dividing the citizens into fourteen classes, ascended from a trifling imposition to fifty per cent of the supposed income, which was fixed by arbitration. Moreover, taxation was not limited as to time, but depended entirely on the want of means alleged by Government. The continuous wars which led the enemy at times into the interior of the country, caused a constant drain upon the revenue. One war-tax after another was proclaimed, and the results by no means corresponded always with the demand. In the summer of 1442 no less than 180,000 gold florins were paid as a reward to Francesco Sforza for his support of René of Aragon against Alfonso of Aragon—a vain expenditure, since Alfonso took besieged Naples, and established himself so firmly that all the enterprises of Anjou against him, and his son and successor Ferrante, were frustrated. The distribution of the taxes was a perpetual means for the faction to oppress those whom they disliked. Many people were entirely ruined. A number of considerable citizens had left the city and retired to villas, to escape the immoderate exactions, as the country had less to pay than Florence, but it availed them little. It was said of Cosimo de' Medici, that instead of the dagger, the usual weapon, he employed the taxes to rid himself of his enemies. He retained the instrument, or, as Francesco Guicciardini says, the dishonesty of the taxes, in his own hands, in order to ruin those in whom he saw declared opponents, to bring down to poverty others whom he mistrusted or who were inconvenient to him, and to favour partisans. The members of the commission entrusted with laying on the taxes were either his creatures or dependent on him. Lightening the burdens of the lower classes was only the pretext, and the [130] humiliation of the independent burghers the real aim. This aim was attained by Cosimo, his son, and his grandson. 'It is well known,' remarks the statesman and historian just mentioned, in his reflections on the Florentine administration, 'how much nobility and wealth were destroyed by Cosimo and his descendants by taxation. The Medici never allowed a fixed method and legal distribution, but always reserved to themselves the power of bearing heavily upon individuals according to their pleasure. Had they only employed this weapon to protect themselves against enemies and suspicious persons, they would have been to a certain extent excusable; but as they did not succeed by other means, or by appealing to their ambition and vanity, in attaching to themselves peaceful citizens more intent on their own business than on affairs of State, they made use of the taxes to win them over, and to set themselves up as lords of all, while they forced the people to seek to divine their will even in trifles.' The most striking example of the abuse of the power of taxation is the history of Giannozzo Manetti. After a life spent in the service of the State and of science, the veneration shown him both at home and abroad, as well as his inclination for Venice, brought on him the disfavour of Cosimo and his adherents, and he saw himself reduced to beggary by taxes which reached the incredible height of 135,000 gold florins. Abandoning house, property, and State-papers he went into voluntary exile, to drag out the few days still remaining to him, by means of first a Papal, and later a Neapolitan pension.

The shameless enrichment of many of Cosimo's personal adherents, and the discontent evinced in the city, made it at last appear advisable to many of the ruling party to make an end of the system which had lasted since 1434. It was asserted of Puccio Pucci

that he had acquired 50,000 gold florins of the public moneys by usury and dishonest administration. It was calculated that a certain Giovanni Corsini, who began with scarcely the necessary means of [131] life, had cheated Government of 20,000 florins. Florence was rife with evil tales of dishonest upstarts, of theft at the public cost, of dirty actions and extortion.[86] With Cosimo's silent consent (without this nothing could have been done), the Signoria at last commanded, on January 11, 1458, a revision of the registers, indicating, as far as it seemed advisable to them, the prevailing evils.[87] Scarcely was the measure decreed than many of Cosimo's party, and precisely those who had sought to fetter him by withdrawing the former extraordinary powers, were seized with a violent terror. For they saw themselves not merely obliged to declare the increase on moveable and immoveable property, which in a quarter of a century was immense with many of them, but the progressive scale employed in the new declaration threatened them with a double weight. Only from Cosimo could they expect assistance. The same people who had attempted to weaken his authority three years before, now entreated him to resume it, and proceed to action—that is, summon a parliament, and cause extraordinary powers to be granted by it. They had already formed the plan of doing away with the ballot-boxes, in order to effect new elections more favourable to them, but Cosimo declined to do their will. It suited him that those for whom his power was too great should perceive that they not only gained nothing by the independence more apparent than real of the Government, but sacrificed their authority while his own remained undiminished. He had ready the convenient explanation that extraordinary measures were only permissible in the case of highest need and danger, that now the heavy debts contracted in the long wars would be paid, the numerous changes in property taken into account, the irregularities in the valuation of movable property done away with, and the regular payment of the interest of the national debt be re- [132] established. As long as Alfonso of Aragon lived, who never lost sight of Tuscany, it did not seem advisable to undertake alterations which might arouse displeasure among the people. For Cosimo was never certain of this people, and in times of dearth, bad harvests, storms, contagious disease, which repeatedly occurred, or under oppressive war-taxes, the easily moved crowd was not to be trusted. It was by no means always on Cosimo's side. His measureless riches aroused much envy and evil-speaking. If he built much, and expended large sums in particular on churches and convents, it was said, We pay for his hypocrisy, which is, moreover, full of spiritual pride, by emptying our own purses. Even the secret cells of the brethren in the cloister he fills with the balls of his coat-of-arms! His palace might bear a comparison with the Colosseum. Who would not build splendidly could he but employ other people's money for it? It was said that the money-boxes at the city gates were emptied in the house of the Medici. When Cosimo, says a contemporary, advanced to the commune far greater sums than he took, nothing was remarked upon it. He did this certainly, but he kept an exact account of it, and it could hardly be said that the partnership between the State and the Medici was solely to the advantage of the former. One morning the doors of Cosimo's palace were found stained with blood.[88]

Such things occurred long before the time we are now considering. Cosimo had meanwhile no wish to remain passive after his haughty partisans had received a wholesome lesson. The license to which the lower classes inclined more and more, might have risen to such a point that his own authority would be endangered. He himself did not appear, but the tool was readily found. On July 1, 1458, Luca Pitti undertook the office of Gonfalonier. Three days before, King Alfonso had died; from his son—Ferrante—who had a difficult position in Naples on account of his illegitimate birth, and [133] who did not, like his father, command the powers of Sicily and Aragon—there was for the time nothing to fear. Neither reform of registers nor drawing the magistrates by lot were to the taste of the new Gonfalonier; and urged by his friends, but with consideration for Cosimo, who wished to avoid open violence, he sought to induce priors and colleges to proceed to new elections, and choose new magistrates. When he met with opposition in this, he determined to employ the usual violent means. On August 9 he caused the palace and square to be surrounded by mercenaries, had the neighbouring streets secured, and summoned the people by ringing the great bell. That the Gonfalonier could do this in opposition to the priors, or at

least to the majority of them, is an evident sign how weak the laws were. The Parliament, however it might be composed, granted to the Senate, and 250 of the burghers proposed by the party, the extraordinary powers demanded. These now proceeded to the new elections, and appointed a commission of eight citizens to preside at all elections for the future. It is easily understood that all actual authority was now more than ever in the hands of the heads of the faction, who filled the offices at their pleasure, and when the priors of the guild were after this called priors of freedom, it was in bitter irony. All opponents of the measures, several of whom endured torture, and a number of people who were either not trusted, or of whom one or other of the new wielders of power had to complain, were banished. In the months next following, exile and exclusion from office were but too common, and if in this way justice was sometimes done, as on the dishonest tax officials in Florence, Pisa, Arezzo, yet this made but a poor show in the presence of so many deeds of violence. According to the reform of taxation, the mercantile order was to be obliged to show their account books; an agreement was then made with them, agreeably to which a fixed sum of movable capital was declared, which was not the means to [134] find out the real amount, or to ensure the just distribution of the burdens. Luca Pitti became a great man. The Signoria granted him the dignity of knighthood, and Cosimo made him rich presents, in which others imitated him. His momentary splendour eclipsed that of Medici; not he, but Luca seemed to stand at the head of the State, and if his nature inclined generally to pomp and power, he now allowed it free scope. His arbitrary and unjust administration was to find its punishment years after.

In the last years of his life, Cosimo had no longer the guidance of his party in his hands, as formerly. What he had always feared and long managed to prevent, now happened: his most distinguished adherents grew too strong for him. He had always feared to place himself in a clear light; what would once have aided him, when it was a question of arousing no envy, now injured him, as others employed it to outshine him. His continual illness combined to render his share in affairs more difficult. He allowed much to pass that he could not hinder, but, crafty and accustomed to rule as he was, he would not confess that he could not hinder it. Thus, as people like Luca Pitti and his companions stood far below him, and knew nothing of that kind of prudent and calculated moderation which lay in his character, a grasping and unconscientious party-government was formed, such as Florence, with the exception of transient periods of disturbances and passion, had never known.

It is easy to conceive that, with such a government, and with men at its head ever ready to infringe or to corrupt the laws and constitution, the magistrates of the Republic enjoyed but a small measure of authority, which was allowed to them by the chiefs on whom they depended. The machinery of government remained the same as it had been in former days, but real power rested elsewhere. The oligarchy, which obtained a firm footing in Cosimo's last years, which tried to overthrow his son, and yielded to his grandson's consummate skill, kept in its hands the reins even when [135] its own independence was most doubtful. The thirst for public offices continued immoderate. These offices preserved ostensibly their dignity, and secured advantages of various kinds; but they no longer, as such, had any influence upon politics. The majority of them had been established between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; some had been added during the fifteenth. The upper magistracy, generally called the Signory, was the College of Priors of the Guilds, or of Freedom, as they were called after 1458. It had been established in 1282, and though afterwards transformed, was originally composed of eight members chosen every two months, with the Gonfalonier (*vexillifer justitiæ*) at their head.

In him was vested the highest power, which he, apart from the executive, shared with the colleges, with the Buonuomini appointed in 1312, with the assessors of the priors, and with the sixteen bannerets of the militia companies, at whose head was the Capitano del Popolo.

There has been a question raised as to the original military character of this institution. The projects of law agreed to by the Signory and the colleges were carried to three councils; first to the council of the people, which consisted of a hundred members, chosen originally only from the higher class of citizens, the *popolo grasso*. Then they went to the council of the 'Credenza,' which was

formed of the same number of members, and in which sat all the consuls and other officials of the guilds; lastly, to the Podestà's council, composed of the judges and legal functionaries, nobles and citizens, ninety in number. When a bill had passed through these three courts, it was brought before a General Assembly of them all, and not until then became law.

Forms, indeed, were duly observed, but these forms did not prevent the adoption of laws which fatally attacked the constitution from within. For the consideration of bills relating to foreign affairs, to peace and war, two other consultative bodies were established after 1411, when greater care seemed to be necessary, on account [136] of the heavy burdens caused by the dissensions of the great Schism. The one was the Council of Two Hundred, to which only those could be elected who had occupied the highest offices of State, and to which legislative proposals were sent before they came to the Council of a Hundred and Thirty-one—in which sat the members of the Signory and of the colleges, the 'Capitani di parte Guelfa', the 'War Ten,' the six councils of the craftsmen, the consuls of the guilds, and forty-eight other citizens. The bills had to be accepted in these two assemblies before they reached the first-mentioned councils. From such a mass of incongruous materials was the machine of State compiled.

The chief judicial functionary, and until Luca Pitti's reform the first dignitary, was the Podestà, assisted as he was by the Capitano del Popolo—whose rights and privileges were often changed—and by the executor of legal ordinances. All three were strangers: the first two noble personages learned in the law, the third a man of the people, of Guelfish family, holding office for one year. The Podestà's court included several adjuncts who took turn with the chief. The armed guard of the latter were under the chief bailiff or Bargello. Attached to these were the Magistracy of Eight (Otto di Guardia), who were nominated by the Signory, and installed in office for four months. They had to try criminal and police cases, and were conservators of the law—a sort of appeal court for the revision of the decisions of the Podestà's court. Much of their time, however, was spent in detecting the artifices and evasions of the tax-payers. The uncertain line of demarcation between the jurisdiction of the several co-existing law courts has always been one of the most serious evils of the constitution of Florence. For the separate branches of the constitution different functionaries were appointed. Foreign affairs and war were in the hands of the 'Peace and War Ten,' who were appointed in 1423 during the campaign against Milan. There had indeed been, half a century earlier, a similar [137] magistracy, nicknamed by popular wit, the 'Eight Saints,' because they conducted warlike operations against Pope Gregory XI. It was as secretary of the ten that Niccolò Machiavelli manifested that activity which, together with the literary talents which he afterwards developed, made the 'Segretario fiorentino' so celebrated. The influence exercised by this committee upon military operations was often most unfortunate, and in the peaceful times of 1480, we see it replaced by the 'Otto di Pratica.'

The office of Capitani di parte Guelfa, to whom was entrusted, by the statutes of 1267, the control of the property of the rebels—an office open also to the nobility—had long lost the political importance it acquired in the second half of the fourteenth century. To the magistracy of custom-dues, established in 1352, and in which always sat one of the nobility, was given the control of the indirect taxation; to the Uffiziali del Monte, the direction of the state debt; to the consuls, appointed after the acquisition of Leghorn, the management of navigation and of commerce beyond the seas. The assessment of loans was managed by special commissions. The tribunal of commerce (Mercanzia) was composed of six members of the large corporations and six foreigners learned in the law. The chief of the affairs of the guilds, the proconsul, who ranked immediately after the Signory and colleges, belonged to the first guild, that of the lawyers. In a town and commonwealth where a strong principle of beneficence prevailed, all charities had to be well arranged. The officials of the widow and orphan fund, whose premises are now occupied by the Society of Brethren of Mercy, on the Cathedral square; the Capitani di Sta. Maria, who were originally appointed to oppose the Patarian heresy, but subsequently devoted themselves to the care of orphans, and survive in the Uffizio del Bigallo opposite the Baptistery; the Buonuomini di San Martino, founded by St. Antoninus with their

domicile in the dwellings of the Alighieri—all these belong properly to the municipality. All the courts and committees had their chancellors or secretaries, whose importance depended on circumstances, but was enhanced by the fact that they were permanent officials, while the members were constantly changing. The Signory and other assemblies had many subordinate officers besides. The salaries were insignificant, and the only persons who received them were the foreign judges, chancellors, secretaries, subordinate officers, and servants; as also the officers in the towns of the district, the commissaries of the troops, and the ambassadors abroad, while the acting magistrates at home were unpaid.

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This form of government and councils continued, with slight modifications, until the month of December 1494, when the overthrow of the Medici was the signal of events which materially altered the constitution of the Republic.

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CHAPTER VII.

FOREIGN RELATIONS. WAR AND PEACE. COUNCIL OF UNION.

WHILE these things were going on at home, the exigencies of war for many years made serious demands on the State and its resources, and more than once the contest was carried into the territory of the Republic. To the dangers which arose from the fact that two ambitious and warlike princes governed the north and south of Italy, was added the unfavourable circumstance, that a Pope sat in St. Peter's chair who was constantly drawn into the din of war, less, perhaps, from his own restlessness, than from the hopeless confusion in the States of the Church. The principal scene of the war was Romagna, a country which, by its distracted condition, by the number of its petty lords, and the violent character of its inhabitants—still more by its geographical position and the vicinity of powerful States—seemed destined to be the general battle-field.

The hereditary enmity of Filippo Maria Visconti was aggravated by the hatred of the Florentine exiles, who, despairing of a return to their country on peaceful terms, stirred up the Duke of Milan to strife with her, under the usual pretext that it was not a war against their country, but against a faction. The want of success which attended the troops of Visconti in the territory of Lucca, under Niccolò Piccinino, was an enticement for Cosimo de' Medici to strive to obtain possession of this town, as he did six years later, but with no greater success than before. The war, begun in the Lucchese [140] territory, was continued in the Romagna, where Florence and Venice, with the aid of Pope Eugenius IV., resisted Visconti. The Milanese army did indeed once again cross the Apennines, but only to suffer a decisive defeat, on June 29, 1440, at Anghiari, between Arezzo and the valley of the Tiber. This defeat led to peace in the following year, and enlarged the Florentine territory by the mountain region of the Casentino, where the supremacy of the counts Guidi, allied with Milan, who, since the days of imperial power in Italy, had had dominion here, came to an end. Scarcely was the Milanese war at an end than Florence, like Venice, was drawn into the contest with Naples which Renè of Anjou was carrying on against King Alfonso of Aragon; both representatives of the dualism which the fall of the Hohenstaufen had bequeathed to South Italy. The Sienese country, the territory of Volterra and the Pisan Maremma, were the scenes of a struggle which might have been dangerous to the Republic, if the king had not been detained by besieging smaller places—though he was not unskilled in war; he suffered moreover from the malaria of the plains, and wasting the years 1447 and 1448 in inglorious and fruitless undertakings, was obliged for a while to lay down his arms without concluding peace, with the intention of taking them up again under more favourable circumstances. The opportunity was not long delayed.

In the midst of the feud between Florence and the Aragonese, Filippo Maria Visconti died, the last of a race which, more than any other, had represented the arbitrariness and cruelty of mediæval tyranny. He had appointed Alfonso of Aragon his heir, with a view perhaps that the weapons which he had wielded all his life long without stirring from the walls of his castle, might not rest even after his death. But the dukedom of Milan was in danger of dissolution. The capital, with Como, Novara, and Alessandria, cried out for a republic; Lodi and Piacenza threw themselves into the arms of Venice, which, engaged in ceaseless strife with Visconti, [141] was just now pressing him hard. Duke Charles of Orleans, Filippo Maria's nephew, prepared to support the rights of inheritance by force of arms; while the Duke of Savoy turned his eyes towards the rich Lombardy which his successors never again lost sight of. But there was another competitor—not a prince, but more able and skilled in arms than all the princes of the time: Francesco Sforza, the son of a valiant and successful *condottiere*, who had risen from the ranks of the peasantry. He had been at the age of twenty-three leader of the victorious mercenary troops of his father, who gave his name to a famous school of warriors. He had served Florence and Venice in war against the Visconti and Alfonso of Aragon; striven for and against Pope Eugenius IV. in Romagna and the frontiers; and in the midst of rapid changes of fortune and party, preserved relations

with Florence which proved more lasting than those of the *condottieri* generally were. Now attracted by Filippo Maria, again repelled by suspicion even after the latter had bestowed on him the hand of his natural daughter, Bianca Maria, he was about to come to his assistance, when the victorious Venetians had already crossed the Adda. The duke died, and the new republic, threatened by so many foes, chose him to be their general. Three years later he became Duke of Milan. Francesco Sforza possessed himself of the supreme power by treachery and force of arms, but he saved for half a century the independence of a State which, after 170 years of tyranny, was no longer capable of life as a commonwealth, and furthered its prosperity, while he powerfully contributed to the formation of a political system which, however great its weakness, was the most reasonable under existing circumstances.

Without the aid of Florence and Cosimo de' Medici, he would not have attained his ends. Cosimo had recognised his ability in the war with Visconti, and made a close alliance with him. In order to retain him in his service, when Filippo Maria offered him as a bait the hand of his daughter, Cosimo had gone in 1438 to Venice, in order [142] to obtain more favourable conditions for him from the Republic, friendly to himself, in which, however, he failed. During the distress of Sforza on the frontiers, he had supported him as much as he could. His son Piero was present at Sforza's marriage. Now it was necessary to choose between Sforza and Venice, for there was only one alternative; either the *condottiere* would make himself Duke of Milan, or the Republic of San Marco would extend its rule over all Lombardy. In Florence several voices declared in favour of the old ally on the Adriatic, who, however she might seek her own advantage with unscrupulous zeal, had yet ever been faithful at critical moments. Cosimo de' Medici gave the casting-vote in Sforza's favour. Perhaps it was hard to think of his old personal connections and obligations, but political expediency gained the day. Without Florentine money, Sforza would never have been able to maintain the double contest—on the one side against Milan, which he blockaded and starved out; and on the other against the Venetians, who sought to relieve it, and whom he repulsed. And when, on March 25, 1450, he made his entry into the city which proclaimed him ruler, he was obliged to maintain himself with Florentine money till he had established his position and re-organised the State. A Florentine embassy went to congratulate him —Piero de' Medici, Neri Capponi, Luca Pitti, Diotisalvi Neroni. The Venetians were exceedingly irritated, as was natural. They judged rightly that the Sforza owed his success essentially to the favour of their former friends. Their indignation became fiercer when Florence entered into negociations (June 29) with King Alfonso, with whom they were still at war. Common animosity to Florence and Sforza drew Venice and the king nearer to one another, and at the end of 1451 an alliance, offensive and defensive, was concluded against them, which Siena, Savoy, and Montferrat joined. It was at first directed against the Duke of Milan; the Florentines had the choice of joining it, for form's sake. But when they replied that, as [143] peace prevailed in Italy, new alliances were not necessary, the Venetians banished all the Florentine merchants from their territories, refused a hearing to Otto Niccolini, who was entrusted with an embassy, and persuaded the king to adopt like measures. On May 16, 1452, the Republic and, four weeks later, King Alfonso declared war, which the Emperor Frederick III., then in Italy, and Pope Nicholas V., successor to Eugenius IV. since 1447, in vain endeavoured to prevent.

The Venetians began the war in Lombardy, the Neapolitans in the valley of the Chiana. Ferrante, Duke of Calabria, the king's son, commanded the latter; Sigismundo Malatesta, lord of Rimini, the Florentines, who sent only foreign mercenaries to the field this time. The persistency with which the democracy had borne down the ancient nobility, who were trained to bear arms, had, in conjunction with the preponderance of the industrial and mercantile interests, completely annihilated the former warlike skill of the people, and though the Republic, in reliance on her pecuniary power, tried to hold her ground by means of mercenaries, she was far from being able to compete with States like Venice, Naples, and Milan, who, partly in consequence of their political form, attained greater unity in the conduct of war, and also had more men at their command, from their greater territorial power. The Florentines achieved some brilliant successes, but most of their campaigns were unfortunate,

and the ability of individual citizens employed as military commissaries could not outweigh the disadvantages which sprung from general strategic incapacity and the want of unity in the commanders. The tactics of the *condottieri* were on the decline throughout Italy, while the art of fortification and besieging was still in its infancy. The fertile though unhealthy plain which stretches on both sides of the sluggish Chiana, between Arezzo, Cortona, and Montepulciano, was desolated by the enemy, who, however, lay for thirty-six days before the little castle of Fojano, which was only [144] defended by 200 people. They had to retire from Castellina, another weakly-fortified place between Siena and Florence, without having effected anything, and only owed to the cowardice of the commander of Bada, in the Maremma, the capture of this unimportant fortress, before which a fleet of twenty galleys and other vessels cruised. So low had Italian strategy fallen, that they were only able to reduce even slightly defended places by hunger, while even the more practised generals feared to venture a battle, and the principal method of war was unsparing devastation of the land. The Florentines, destitute of good soldiers, sought to give another turn to affairs by inviting once more into Italy Alfonso's old rival, René, and then his son, John of Anjou, who also bore the title of Duke of Calabria, as his father retained that of King of Naples. They thus sought to relieve the Duke of Milan, and free themselves from the incursions of the Neapolitans, who once advanced to within six miles of the town, and did great damage. In the summer of 1453 their enemies were driven back upon the Sienese territory. But a foreign event contributed more than all to terminate this miserable war, and put an end to the petty squabbling of the Italian powers.

On May 29, 1453, Mohammed II. stormed Constantinople. The West was threatened, more especially Venice, which had such great and wealthy possessions in the Levant, and Naples. This time the excellent Pope Nicholas V. did not exert himself in vain. On April 9, 1454, Venice concluded a tolerably favourable peace with Francesco Sforza at Lodi, in which King Alfonso, Florence, Savoy, Montferrat, Mantua, and Siena, were to be included. The king, who had made considerable preparations for war, did not ratify the compact till January 26 of the following year. The States of Northern and Central Italy then joined in an alliance, and a succession of peaceful years followed, which were only momentarily interrupted in the case of Florence by the freebooting expedition of Jacopo Piccinino, a son of [145] the Niccolò who was conquered at Anghiari. Dismissed from the Venetian service, he attacked the Sienese territory in 1455, on his own account, but was defeated and compelled to set sail for Naples from Orbetello. In the confusion which broke out in Naples after king Alfonso's death neither Florence nor Venice was involved. The ancient Florentine friendship with the house of Anjou had to yield to other influences. At the same time, when the Turks conquered the Morea, and thus approached nearer and nearer to the coasts of Italy, the Angevin party in the kingdom attempted a new rising against Ferrante of Aragon, who in 1460 suffered a defeat from Duke John, which would have driven him from the throne had his opponents been more united and more powerful. Assistance from Milan and from Rome, where Pius II. now occupied the Holy See, after the short reign (not quite three years) of Calixtus III., combined with his own energy and skill, facilitated the King's restoration to power; and not long after, he saw the Anjou expelled from the kingdom by the decisive victory at Troia, and the insurrectionary barons, among whom were several of his near relations, given into his power. Thus Florence, like Venice, which had then little time to think of anything except danger from the Turks, was appealed to for assistance by Ferrante on the ground of the alliance concluded in consequence of the peace of Lodi; but Florence refused, from a consideration of the late King's double dealing in the affair of Piccinino.

In the midst of the civil disputes and confusion above described, of repeated foreign troubles, and an immense exertion of material power to secure her political position, Florence in the times of Cosimo de' Medici was still the harbour of refuge for all Italy, and, in consequence of an event important in the history of the world, the haven of Christendom. The ever-memorable movement in the intellectual world will be mentioned later; the occurrence which [146] forms an important epoch in ecclesiastical history must be considered here.

Pope Eugenius IV. had, as we have seen, to battle at once with a

double opposition, which, different in origin as in significance, united for a time, and clouded a considerable part of his reign of sixteen years. The attempt to restrain within reasonable limits the Colonna, the relations of his predecessors, who had been immoderately favoured and had grown insolent, excited agitation in Rome, and kindled a strife which extended through the greater part of the States of the Church. The course pursued by the council at Basle, opened not much more than four months after the elevation of Eugenius, necessarily led to irreconcilable dissension with the pontificate, because the new assembly, instead of considering the altered position of affairs since the termination of the great schism, and confining itself firmly and with wise moderation to what was truly edifying and necessary (as exemplified, for instance, in the new Frankish-Germanic countries), raised its pretensions so high, that if they had prevailed, the Papacy would have become a cipher. The simultaneous occurrence of the ecclesiastical contest at Basle with the ambitious plans of Filippo Maria Visconti, had filled Romagna and the frontiers, the patrimony—nay, even the Campagna —with the din of war; and on June 4, 1434, the Pope was obliged to take flight from Rome. As early as the end of January affairs had assumed such an aspect in the States of the Church, especially in Bologna, that Florence deemed it necessary to arm, foreseeing that the Pope would be forced to leave Rome, and Rinaldo degli Albizzi had then expressed his opinion that it would be advantageous and honourable for the State if Eugenius IV. should choose Florence as his residence.[89] Received honourably in the city, where he had already found support in his feud with the Colonna, and residing in the convent of Sta. Maria Novella, he was witness of the revolution [147] which brought Cosimo de' Medici to the helm of affairs, and he remained at Florence till April 1436, when he repaired to Bologna. As the controversy with the fathers assembled at Basle became hotter every year, and he himself was cited before their tribunal, he transferred the council to Ferrara on October 1, in the following year.

While, early in 1438, the fathers at Basle were pronouncing the suspension of the Pope, the latter opened, in the capital of the house of Este, a council, at which appeared shortly afterwards the Greek Emperor, John Palæologus, in whom the distress of his crumbling empire had aroused the hope of securing the assistance of the West by a union with the Church. A pestilence which broke out in Ferrara caused the removal of the synod to Florence, where in January 1439 it began its sittings, and on July 6 proclaimed the reunion of the two churches,[90] six weeks after the deposition of Eugenius IV. had been decreed by the council at Basle, which had degenerated into a *conciliabulum*, and which a few months later elected Duke Amadeus VIII. of Savoy, a powerless anti-Pope, under the name of Felix V. The bronze doors of the church of St. Peter's in the Vatican, the work of two Florentine artists, though not the best specimen of the Florentine sculpture of that age, commemorate these events in the reliefs. The reconciliation between East and West could not be of long duration; the schism, a double one, as it was a question of doctrine as well as supremacy, and was deeply rooted in the feelings of the people, broke out again immediately afterwards. But for Florence, where also a reconciliation of the Armenians with the Church of Rome took place, the council formed an epoch in the world's history.

Eugenius IV. resided for four years in the city, while powerful [148] regents, entrusted with full power, governed Rome. First, the cardinal-patriarch Giovanni Vitelleschi, for a time Archbishop of Florence, and involved in the catastrophe of Rinaldo degli Albizzi, as Luca Pitti was, six years later, in that which ended in his violent death; then Cardinal Ludovico Scarampi, likewise Archbishop of Florence at a time when this see needed a more worthy pastor than these prelates, wearing coat-of-mail and sword. It was precisely during these years that the Pope was more involved than suited his pastoral dignity in that endless confusion in the Romagna and the frontiers which occupied the last years of Filippo Maria Visconti, nor did his Holiness hold himself quite aloof from a share in Florentine party divisions. It would have been better for him if he had appeared there less as a temporal prince than as Pope. On March 25, the feast of the Annunciation, with which the year began, according to Florentine custom, he consecrated Sta. Maria del Fiore, where the solemn proclamation of union in the Church followed: two occurrences recorded on the large marble tablets which are to be

seen on each side of the entrance to the new sacristy. After the consecration, the Gonfaloniere, Giuliano Davanzati, received the honour of knighthood. The church of Sta. Croce was consecrated in 1442, in the presence of the Pope, by Cardinal Bessarion, Archbishop of Nicæa, one of the few Greeks who remained in communion with the Latin church. Another memorial of this Pope is the Collegium Eugenianum, founded in the year 1435, an institution for young priests, which now occupies the former locality of the Florentine university in the street named after it, Via dello Studio, where the antique modest building speaks of former days.

The contest for the Neapolitan throne almost produced a serious rupture between Eugenius IV. and Florence. The Pope had once recognised the claims of René of Anjou, and granted him the investiture which Cosimo de' Medici received February 23, 1435.[91] [149] He afterwards inclined to the side of his opponent, who, after the conquest of the capital, forced René to evacuate the kingdom. In the summer of 1442 the latter had come to Florence, with the hope of regaining the Pope's favour, and also of inducing the Republic to give active support to Francesco Sforza, who, as we have seen, had fought on his side, but was now hard pressed in Romagna and on the frontiers. The King, without a kingdom, was honourably received by the Gonfaloniere, Giovanni Falconi; one of the houses of the Bardi was assigned to him as residence, and twenty-five gold florins a day granted him for his maintenance. But Eugenius IV. was not to be won over, and the Florentines seem also to have despaired of any favourable result, after Sforza's contest had cost, and continued to cost, them such heavy sums. When René saw that he was wasting his time, he embarked at Leghorn in a Genoese ship, which brought him back to Provence.

At last, March 7, 1443, the Pope quitted Florence. The mistrust felt towards him on account of his supposed understanding with the exiles, had declared itself so openly, that advice was sent from Venice rather to hinder his departure than to let him go with anger and evil intentions in his heart. Leonardo Aretino, the chancellor, and other judicious citizens spoke against it. Venice herself, he said, would take care not to act so in a similar case. He was right, for the Pope was a power not to be despised. Vespasiano da Bisticci describes the impression which he made on the people.[92] When Eugenius, surrounded by the cardinals, stood on the scaffolding erected at the entrance to the cloisters of Sta. Maria Novella, to dispense his blessing, not a sound was to be heard in the Piazza, which with the adjoining streets was filled with people, and as he pronounced the 'Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini,' sobs and cries of 'Misericordia' were heard on every side. At such moments [150] he really appeared to be the Deity, whose vicegerent he was. The way in which Eugenius IV. departed from the city which had afforded him hospitality so many years, is a strange picture of the confused state of things. 'During the whole night before the day on which the Pope took his departure,' relates Vespasian again,[93] 'there had been a contention as to whether he should be allowed to go or not. After all the influential citizens had come to an agreement, they commissioned Messer Agnolo (Acciaiuoli) to go to the Pope early in the morning, and to inform him he could go whither he pleased. The Pope and his suite waited for this announcement. When Messer Agnolo entered Sta. Maria Novella, Messer Francesco of Padua (Cardinal Condulmer, nephew of Eugenius) came to meet him outside the Pope's chamber, and asked if they were prisoners. Messer Agnolo answered that, had they been prisoners, he would not have been charged with the commission, but another citizen who had voted in that sense. When the Pope heard it, he thanked him and the Signoria many times, instantly mounted and rode with his suite to Siena.'

In the Augustinian convent of Lecceto, before the Fontebrand, a gate of this city, where Eugenius IV. resided several months before returning to Rome, which had become more and more anarchical during his nine years' absence, he granted the investiture of the kingdom of Sicily to Alfonso, on July 15,[94] and thus began the uninterrupted though often threatened reign of the Aragonese line, which lasted till the oft-revived question of the succession ended in the violent overthrow of the whole political system for which the Medici had laboured in a different way and in another sense.

Sixteen years after the departure of Eugenius, another Pope came to Florence—another man, with other plans and thoughts. On

April 25, 1459, Pius II. came hither from Siena on his way to the [151]
conference of princes assembled at Mantua to organise a crusade against the Turks. Florence was by no means well inclined towards her Sienese neighbours, and the last Neapolitan war, favoured by Siena, had not exactly improved the feeling. The Sienese priest, raised to the highest dignity of Christendom, and desirous of setting a limit to the threatening progress of Islam, was, however, most honourably received. Several princes and lords had repaired to the city before the Pope, to welcome him. Galeazzo Maria Visconti, son of the Duke of Milan, sixteen years old, appeared with a troop of 350 horse and Cosimo de' Medici, although ill, could not be induced to neglect the duty of hospitality towards the son of his ally and friend; Sigismondo Malatesta, an Ordelaffi of Forli, a Pio of Carpi, one of the Feltrieri of Urbino, and others rode out with the young Sforza to San Casciano, where, eight miles from the city, the road descends into the valley of the Arno, and where the solemn reception took place. The Gonfaloniere, Agnolo Vettori, led Pius II. to Sta. Maria Novella, the usual residence of the Pope. The lover of learning and art delighted in the many beautiful things which the city, then exceedingly rich, offered to him; business, with the exception of a new election of bishops, does not seem to have been attended to. Cosimo de' Medici was hindered from being present by indisposition which could not have been feigned.

During the ten days' visit of the Pope there died on May 2, Archbishop Antoninus, who was already called a saint, before Pope Adrian VI. canonised him. Sound common sense, great goodness of heart, piety, and well-directed benevolence, which founded several institutions still standing, reformatory zeal and firmness in defending the rights of the Church, had made him, who was also learned in science, appear the model of an excellent pastor to the people during the fourteen years which he dedicated to the office of archbishop, in a time full of suffering and sudden revolutions of fortune. Such a model he has remained to the present day, when his writings have been collected, and a beautiful marble statue has [152]
been erected to his memory among those of distinguished Florentines. The pageantry of the days immediately preceding and following his decease suited but ill with the loss of a man so honourable and excellent, which was heavily felt by all the people. Splendid games and festivals were arranged for the princes of Milan and the other lords. To a tourney succeeded a festival on the New Market Place, where the most beautiful women were assembled; then a hunting-party on the Piazza before Sta. Croce, where, besides the usual forest animals, a lion and a giraffe were exhibited. A triumphal procession took place in the evening. A silver table-service, weighing 125 pounds, was presented to the youthful Sforza. It was a custom to entertain princely personages at the cost of the Commune.

On November 10, 1461, Charlotte of Lusignan, consort of Prince Louis of Savoy, arrived at Florence[95] on her way to Rome, whither she was going to entreat the aid of Pius II. against her illegitimate step-brother Jacob. The latter had possessed himself of the supremacy over Cyprus, belonging to her of right, and held her husband besieged in Nicosia. The Signoria, with the Gonfaloniere, Alessandro Machiavelli, at their head, went to meet her, and conducted her under a canopy to the house of Cambiozzo de' Medici, in the Borgo San Lorenzo, which was prepared for her reception. During her seven days' visit she went up to the basilica of San Miniato, which towers above the city, to visit the grave of the cardinal of Portugal, brother of Juan of Coimbra, her first husband, who had died here in 1459, on an embassy from Pius II. Pope Pius has described in his memoirs the last of the Lusignans, who in the summer of 1487, after more than a quarter of a century spent in exile, found in St. Peter's church in the Vatican that rest which had been denied to her in this life.

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CHAPTER VIII.

COSIMO DE’ MEDICI’S LAST DAYS.

As the year 1464 approached, Cosimo de’ Medici’s life drew to a close. He had long suffered from gout, which now became more violent, and attacked more sensitive parts. Often he could not quit the house for months together. He had experienced the fulness of joy and of sorrow, especially in his own family. His brother Lorenzo, his junior by six years, had always been of one mind with him, had eagerly furthered his interests and those of his sons in the critical moments of 1433, and had drawn upon himself the enmity of those in power. He had afterwards been an active and vigilant administrator of money matters for the Papal curia, and had rivalled his elder brother in collecting literary treasures. He was only forty-five years old when he died in the autumn of 1440, at his villa at Careggi, leaving a son, Piero Francesco, who at first had a share in the mercantile business of his uncle, then parted from him, and lived aloof from all political matters in his native city, superintending the management of his large property. This Lorenzo was the founder of two lines which both fell into enmity with the elder branch. One of them ended with the murder of the first duke, the last illegitimate descendant of Cosimo’s line, while the other gave to Tuscany one of her most valiant warriors and seven rulers. Cosimo had two sons by Contessina de’ Bardi, Piero and Giovanni. The former was born in 1416, and carefully educated. At first there was an intention of giving him the daughter of the Count of Poppi, Francesco de Guidi, in marriage. But his father seems to have been [154] fearful of allying himself with this old noble family, which would have brought him into connection with the lords of Romagna and Umbria, as well as with the house of the Roman prefects; connections which might have injured his position in a democratical community, not to mention the alliance of the Count of Poppi with the Visconti and Albizzi, which led to his ruin in 1440.

Piero de’ Medici married Lucrezia, daughter of Francesco Tornabuoni, of a distinguished Florentine family, a woman of extraordinary endowments, who will be often mentioned in the course of this history. As Cosimo’s elder son, who was sickly from his earliest youth, seemed to be incapable of taking his eminent and arduous position in city and state, the father built all his hopes on the younger son. He lost him, however, at the age of twenty-two, in the beginning of November 1463, not a year after he had buried his little son Cosimo, whom Maria Ginevra degli Alessandri had borne to him, and the loss of whom is said to have broken his father’s heart. The old man wandered inconsolable through the rooms: ‘This is a large house,’ he lamented, ‘for so small a family.’ Among those who addressed expressions of sympathy to him was Pope Pius II. ‘Not the departed one is the loser,’ replied Cosimo; ‘for what we call life is death, and that beyond is the true life; but who needed him are the losers.’[96] Thus there only remained to him the family of Piero, who, besides his two sons, had two daughters, Bianca and Nannina, who, the eldest in her grandfather’s lifetime, married into two Florentine families, the Pazzi and Rucellai. Besides his legitimate children, Cosimo had a natural son, Carlo, probably by Maddalena, a Circassian whom Giovanni Portinari had bought at Venice in the summer of 1427.[97]

He maintained great reserve in his whole manner of life. For a [155] quarter of a century he was the almost absolute director of the State, but he never assumed the show of his dignity. Many works of art and *virtù* were to be seen in his house; but in style of living, retinue and horses, he was modest. The ruler of the Florentine State remained citizen, agriculturist, and merchant. In his appearance and bearing there was nothing which distinguished him from others; he was simple, moderate, accessible, friendly and familiar with the common people. ‘He understood agriculture thoroughly,’ remarked Vespasiano da Bisticci, ‘and talked about it as if he had never occupied himself with other matters. He laid out the garden of the brethren of San Marco, which had been waste land, and created something really beautiful. Thus it was with his own possessions; he everywhere superintended the planting, grafted and pruned with his own hand. When residing at Careggi, on account of a pestilence, he dedicated the hours of the morning to two worthy employments.

Hardly was he up than he went into the vineyard, where he worked for two hours, just as Pope Boniface IX. did in the Vigne at the palace of the Vatican. When he returned home he read the moral writings of Gregory the Great. In the midst of all his employments he remembered every single plantation on his estates, and when his peasants came to him he conversed with them about them.'

He was a grave man, temperate in all enjoyments. Players, rioters, and jugglers found as little favour with him as those who displayed a luxury unsuited to their position. This, however, did not prevent him from granting free course at the banquets of the learned men who were about him, members of the Platonic Academy and others, to the hilarity and wit which the Florentines of that period were apt to flavour with licence as well as with Attic salt.

Of games he indulged in chess only, and this rarely, and not till after dinner. In his latter years he was very silent, and remained several hours without speaking. When his wife asked him the reason one day, he replied,'When you remove to your villa, you consider for [156] a fortnight what you have to see about. Do you think I have not much to think of when about to exchange this life for another?' In his speech he was witty, but cautious, and it was said of him that he liked to give ambiguous answers. He shrank from boasting, and said that there was a weed called envy, which must not be watered, but left to wither. But when he chose he could give sharp answers. When Rinaldo degli Albizzi, at the time of Visconti's warlike preparations, on which the exile fixed his hopes, said to him that the hen was brooding, he answered, 'It is difficult to brood outside the nest.' And on the warning of other exiles, that he ought to take care, for they were awake, he replied that he believed it, for he must have banished sleep from them. His remarks were always to the purpose. When Pius II. was arming for the crusade, he said the Pope was an old man, and was attempting a youthful feat. He reproved many without using a hard expression. His counsels in political and personal affairs were always moderate and prudent. When one of his partisans, a man of small capabilities, was going to a foreign town as Podestà, and asked him for advice, he only answered: 'Dress according to your position, and speak little.' In this way he maintained his position and that of the State for so many years in the midst of difficult circumstances. As has been already said, there was something cynical in him. Nothing characterises him so much as the words which he once addressed to an influential man, who, differing in opinion, quarrelled with him, and complained of Cosimo's being in his way. 'You,' he said, 'pursue the infinite; I the finite. You plant your ladder in the air; I on the ground, in order not to fall instead of flying. If I am anxious for the honour and advantage of my house, if I wish that it may retain pre-eminence over yours, there is nothing in that which is not honourable and just, and no one will blame me because I prefer my interests to yours. You and I are like two great dogs, who spring upon one another, but [157] then pause and sniff. As they both have teeth, each goes his own way. I advise you to look after your business; I will attend to mine.'

He did not deceive himself as to the difficulties which surrounded him, or as to the still greater hindrances with which his descendants would have to contend. The example of the heads of parties who had preceded him was not lost upon him. He knew, says Vespasian, that he owed his recall from exile to powerful friends, who did not intend to give up their position, and that it was not easy to keep on good terms with them except by temporising and making them believe that they were as powerful as he. Here he proved his great art. In all that he wished to carry out he managed to make it appear that it proceeded from others, not from him. He said that the greatest fault which he had been guilty of was not having begun to expend money ten years earlier; for now that he knew the character of his fellow-citizens, he foresaw that nothing would remain of his family and his house after fifty years except, the little that he had built; for after his death his descendants would find themselves in the midst of greater troubles than any that he had seen. He never spoke ill of others, and was very impatient when any one did so in his presence. His promises could be relied on, for he did more than he promised. His immense wealth enabled him to oblige many. His position was such a one that it was a proverbial expression to boasters, 'So you think you are Cosimo de' Medici?' From his father he had inherited a fine property, which he considerably increased by industry, acuteness, and good fortune. He ruled the money market, not only in Italy, but throughout Europe. He had banks in all the western

countries, and his experience and the excellent memory which never failed him, with his strong love of order, enabled him to guide everything from Florence, which he never quitted after 1438 except to go to the country. While he watched over his own advancement, all who were in business connection with him and conducted his [158] banks abroad, enriched themselves also. Thus it was with the Tornabuoni in Rome, with the Portinari in Bruges, with the Benci, Sassetti, Spini, &c. Besides this, numerous citizens had money from him in their possession, as was revealed after his death. How much he was capable of in financial affairs was seen when Venice and King Alfonso united against Florence. By withdrawing credit from them, he forced them to peace, notwithstanding their superior power. Pope Eugenius IV. mortgaged the castle of Assisi to him for the considerable sums advanced to him. The mutual relations into which he brought the finances of the State with those of his house by advances and repayments, laid the foundation, it is true, of those evils which assumed the most serious form under his grandson, when Cosimo's mercantile insight and success were wanting.

His conscience was not at peace. 'In the arrangement and administration of affairs of the city,' says the honest Vespasiano, with the straightforward naïveté and conscientiousness which he never lays aside, even when speaking of a man for whom he has great respect and admiration, 'it could not fail that his conscience was loaded with many things, as is usually the case with those who govern states and rule others. He perceived that if he wished to preserve himself in his position and obtain the mercy of God, works of piety were necessary. As it now appeared to him that a part of his possessions, I know not how, had been obtained in a doubtful manner, he wished to roll off this burden from his shoulders, and poured out his heart to Pope Eugenius IV., who was then in Florence, begging him to tell him how he could lighten his conscience.'

The building of churches and convents was a principal means of paying this debt, according to the ideas of the time; Duke Gian Galeazzo, not to mention a thousand others, built the cathedral of Milan and the Certosa of Pavia, and the citizen of Florence, whatever his sins may have been, was certainly no Visconti. But he built, in spite of dukes and kings, in Florence and out of it. It was his [159] special passion, and he understood this art. He had always architects around him; Michelozzi accompanied him into his exile, and Brunellesco was among his intimate friends. He executed great works in the city, not to mention his magnificent house, which must have been completed in 1440. We have already spoken of many of these works, and they will be treated of more in detail subsequently; here they may be enumerated in succession. San Lorenzo and San Marco are for the greater part due to him. The Vallombrosan cloister of Sta. Verdiana, founded at the end of the fourteenth century by Ser Niccolò di Buonagiunta, was restored by him. In the cloister of Sta. Croce, he built the novitiate, with the adjoining chapel and choir. He enriched with altars and adornments many churches. The Canonica of San Lorenzo is said to have cost him 40,000 gold florins, that of San Marco 70,000, and the palace 60,000. At the foot of the hill of Fiesole he built a church and abbey for the canons of the Augustinians, whom Pope Eugenius IV. transplanted thither in 1439; and higher up, not far from the little town, the church of San Girolamo, on the site where the congregation of the Jeromites was founded, about the end of the last century, by Carlo, of the family of the Counts Guidi, where the villa Ricasoli is now to be seen. The villa at Careggi, in the most beautiful situation, scarcely two miles from the city, and the favourite residence of himself and his sons, received its present form from him, as well as the villa now named after the Mozzi, on the Fiesolan hill, and that of Cafaggiuolo, in the thickly-wooded country on the slope of the Apennines, on the road leading to Bologna. He built a Franciscan convent in the midst of the woods in the neighbourhood of the latter. Nor far from thence he enlarged the villa of Trebbio, the castellated building of which reminds us of Cosimo, the first Grand Duke, who resided there in his youth. In Assisi he enlarged the cloister of St. Francis, and had the road paved which leads up to the town from the church of Sta. Maria degli Angeli, lying at the foot [160] of the hill. This church, the large marble fountain of which he caused to be built by Michelozzo for the benefit of the pilgrims, still bears his name and arms. The palace in Milan, presented to him by Francesco Sforza, he caused to be rebuilt by Michelozzo, and

painted by Vicenzo Zoppa and others. He restored the collegium built by a Florentine cardinal for his countrymen in Paris. In Jerusalem he erected a pilgrims' house for the Florentines on the spot where, according to tradition, the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles, and where a building stood, which he restored by appointing regular payments for its maintenance. He used to say that whatever he had given to God, he in his balance of accounts had never found Him to be his debtor. His connection with artists and scholars will be mentioned when we come to the description of his extraordinary services to art and his active interest in learning.

Such was Cosimo de' Medici—certainly, with all his faults, a remarkable man, who more than anyone contributed to keep alive not only the forms, but much of the spirit of civil equality and dignity, after it had become impossible to avoid a party government, leading sooner or later to the preponderance of one family. A spirit, which lay at all events in the character of the people, but also in the character of a race which had sprung from the people, which at last attained to power, and even in arbitrary times, preserved something of that which distinguishes it from other princely families. The people, those who disliked Cosimo not excepted, observed with anxiety his increasing ill-health. They said to each other that his influential adherents were infinitely inferior to him in goodness, consideration, and prudence, and feared that his son would not be able to restrain them. In the spring of 1464 he caused himself to be brought, with much suffering, to Careggi, where his wife and son were with him. When Francesco Sforza heard of his condition, he sent him a skilful physician, who, however, could effect as little as [161]
the others. On July 26, Piero de' Medici addressed the following letter to his two sons, who were residing at Cafaggiuolo:[98] 'The day before yesterday I gave you news of Cosimo's increasing illness, which, as it seems to me, is exhausting his strength. He himself feels it, so that on Tuesday evening he would have no one but Monna Contessina and myself in his room. He began to speak of his own life, then passed to the government of the city, family, his trade connections, and the state of his property. At last he came to speak of you, and encouraged me, as you have good intellectual endowments, to give you a careful education, that you might make many things easier for me in life. He said two things grieved him—first, that he had not done so much as he wished to do and might have done, and that he left me in bad health in the midst of many difficulties. He had not wished to make a last will even in Giovanni's lifetime, as he had always seen us united and affectionate. When God should take him to Himself, he wished for no pomp at the funeral; he then reminded me of what he had already said concerning his interment in San Lorenzo. He said all this so calmly and sensibly that it seemed wonderful to me, adding that he had lived long, and was content to leave the world at God's pleasure. Yesterday morning he rose and had himself fully dressed, in presence of the priors of San Lorenzo, San Marco, and the monastery. He confessed to the former, and then had mass said, repeating the responses with a strong voice. He afterwards pronounced the Creed, said the Confiteor, and devoutly received the sacrament after entreating the forgiveness of all. All this strengthened my hope and confidence in God, and although, according to human feelings, I am not free from sorrow, I am yet contented, having seen his strength of soul and pious frame of mind, to see him attain that end to which we must all come. He felt well yesterday, and also to-day, but at his advanced age no recovery is to [162]
be hoped for. Let the brethren in the forest (the Franciscans at Cafaggiuolo) pray for him, and distribute alms at your good pleasure. Pray yourselves to God that He may leave him to us for a little time, if it be for his good. And take your example by him; accept your share of toil as God wills while still young, and become men, for circumstances demand it. But above all, consider that which may bring you honour and advantage, for the time is at hand when you must be tried. Live in the fear of God, and hope. I will let you know how Cosimo is. We expect hourly a doctor from Milan, but I trust more to God than to men.'

In his memorandum-book Piero de' Medici wrote a few days later as follows:[99] 'On August 1, 1464, about half-past the twenty-second hour, Cosimo, son of Giovanni, the son of Averardo de' Medici, departed this life, after he had been long tortured with pains in the limbs, although otherwise in health, with the exception of the last month of his life, when a complaint of the bladder, with some fever,

reduced his strength much. He was 77 (75) years old, a tall and handsome man, and, excepting the complaints mentioned, of an excellent constitution. A man of great ability and yet greater kindness, the most respected and influential citizen, who had long ruled the city, possessed more confidence than all others, and was beloved by the whole people. No one can be remembered who stood in greater favour or better repute, or whose death awakened more general sympathy. This was deservedly the case, inasmuch as no one had to complain of him, while he promoted and assisted many; for his great pleasure consisted in well-doing, not only where relations and friends were concerned, but also in the case of strangers and even opponents, difficult of belief as this may appear and hard to carry out. In this way the number of those who wished him well was always increasing. He was liberal, benevolent, [163] merciful; his alms were numerous, in behalf of churches and convents, not merely in town and country, but even in distant lands. On account of his wisdom he enjoyed the respect and confidence of all the lords and powers of Italy, and of foreign countries. All honourable offices in the city were bestowed on him; he would undertake none abroad. The most honourable embassies fell to him. He enriched many citizens by his mercantile connections, not to mention the great fortune which he left, for he was a merchant as skilful as he was successful. He died at our house in Careggi, after having received all the sacraments of the holy Church with piety and reverence. He would not make a will, but left everything at my free disposal. On the following day he was interred in the church of San Lorenzo, in the vault previously chosen by him, without pomp of burial, in the presence of the canons and priests of the aforesaid church, and the regular canons of Fiesole, with neither more nor fewer tapers than are used at ordinary obsequies, as he had commanded with his last words, saying, one should give alms during life, then they were of more use than after death. I did what was my duty, and gave the orders for alms-giving and Divine worship, as my books will show.’[100]

Marsilio Ficino, the confidant of the family for four generations, and witness of Cosimo’s last days, wrote the following to the grandson of the latter, and his own pupil, Lorenzo, then sixteen years of age:[101] ‘A man intelligent above all others, pious before God, just and high-minded towards his fellow-men, moderate in everything that concerned himself, active in his private affairs, but still more careful and prudent in public ones. He did not live for himself alone, but for the service of God and his country. None surpassed him in humility or magnanimity. More than twelve years I [164] had philosophic conversations with him, and he was as acute in disputation as he was wise and strong in action. I owe Plato much, to Cosimo I owe no less. He showed me in practice those virtues which Plato presented to my mind. He was as covetous of time as Midas of gold; he measured days and hours, and complained even of the loss of minutes. After he had occupied himself with philosophy all his life, and in the midst of the gravest matters, he devoted himself, after Solon’s example, more than ever to it in the days when he was passing from darkness to light. For as you know, who were present shortly before his departure, he still read with me Plato’s book “On the One Reason of Things and Highest Good,” as though he would in reality now go to enjoy the good which he had tasted in conversation.’

The Signoria ordered a commission of ten citizens, Luca Pitti at their head, to make a proposal as to the manner in which the State could honour the memory of Cosimo de’ Medici, and express its gratitude. Donato Acciaiuoli made a speech, in which the determination to grant him the title of father of his country was announced.[102] In San Lorenzo, before the high altar, above the place in the crypt where stands the tomb inscribed with his name, the words may be read on the marble pavement:

COSMUS MEDICES
HIC SITUS EST
DECRETO PUBLICO
PATER PATRIÆ.
VIXIT ANNOS LXXV. MENSES III.
DIES XX.

SECOND BOOK.

PIERO DE' MEDICI.
FIRST YEARS OF LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT.

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CHAPTER I.

PIERO DE' MEDICI, HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

At the death of Cosimo de' Medici, his descendants, besides his natural son Carlo, who once more entered the ecclesiastical order, consisted of Piero, surnamed the Gouty (*il Gottoso*), and his four children. Piero was born in 1416, and was now forty-eight years old. He was a youth when the swift change of fortune in his father's life took place, which, at first threatening his house with ruin, had suddenly raised it to supreme power, and his manhood passed during the envied but not seriously disputed exercise of that power. His health was feeble, yet this did not hinder him from undertaking various civil offices, and may, perhaps, have been of service to him by covering his mediocre character and intellect, and enabling him to preserve that middle course which is so difficult for the head of a party filled with great and ambitious men. He was a sensible, quiet man, experienced in business, with a sound judgment and far more kindliness of heart and sincerity than his father, but without his political acuteness, knowledge of men, and talent for steering safely among the numerous rocks that beset his position.

A clever wife stood beside him. At a time when Florence had no lack of distinguished women, Lucrezia, the daughter of Francesco Tornabuoni, surpassed most in intellectual gifts and domestic virtues. Her family was a branch of an ancient and noble Florentine race, which, since the democratic reforms of 1293, had been excluded from holding civic offices, yet without losing importance. [168]
Like many others, Simon Tornaquinci, a hundred years later, had altered his coat-of-arms, enrolled himself among the plebeian families under the name of Tornabuoni, and attached himself to the Medicean party, in which his son Francesco took a not unimportant position. Tornaquinci and Tornabuoni possessed considerable landed property in the western part of Florence. A gate of the second wall, since called San Pancrazio, was once named after the former, and a street still bears the name of the latter.[103] Lucrezia de' Medici never experienced the anguish of exile; neither, separated from an exiled husband, had she to remain at the head of a ruined household, like so many noble ladies in those days of magnificence so often changing into misery. She beheld three generations in the possession of power, with its charge of care and sorrow. While conducting her household, which never lost its simple character, she paid homage to the muse in lyric poems and translations of Biblical histories. We shall speak later of her intercourse with Luigi Pulci (whom she encouraged to complete his poem on the legends of Charlemagne), with Politian and others. Lucrezia possessed great influence over her eldest son, whose youth she guided, and she lived to enjoy the period of his highest greatness.

Lucrezia gave birth to seven children, four of whom, two sons and two daughters, survived. Lorenzo was born January 1, 1449.[104] Nature had given him strength, but not beauty. To judge from his exterior, one might have prophesied him a long life, but not a brilliant one. He was above the middle height, broad-chested, powerfully built, and agile of limb. His features were, however, unpleasing; the sight weak, the nose flattened, the chin sharp, with

a pale complexion. He was entirely destitute of the sense of smell, and his voice was harsh.[105] These natural defects he conquered with equal skill and perseverance, but the advantages of his bodily health and strength did not last long. His early education was confided to Gentile de' Becchi of Urbino, afterwards canon at Florence and Pisa, and finally Bishop of Arezzo, a man of great ability and deeply attached to the family, an attachment which, at an important epoch in the life of his pupil and in Florentine history, led him to exaggerations which did not suit the ecclesiastical dignity. [169]

Cosimo had attracted Gentile[106] and entrusted him with the education of his grandson. This learned man, who was connected with the most famous scholars of his time, such as Francesco Filelfo, Marsilio Ficino, Cardinal Ammanati, Giovan. Antonio Campano, Politian, and others, certainly spared no pains in the education of the richly-gifted boy. Under his guidance and that of Ficino, Cristoforo Landino, and John Argyropulos, one of the Greek fugitives received by Cosimo, the youth amassed an amount of knowledge not often possessed even at that time, when learned culture was so general among the rich. He developed his excellent talents in many directions. A letter addressed by his tutor to Piero de' Medici, June 3, 1454,[107] with its assertion that the boy of sixteen excited the admiration of the whole city, is a pattern of that courtly style which began to be practised by the dependants of powerful families. It is worth mentioning here, because it speaks of a visit the boy paid to the Duke John of Anjou, who was then staying in Florence. 'On the day before your departure, Lorenzo assumed the French costume, which suited him so well that we had scarcely set out when we were surrounded by a crowd of children and adults, who followed us on the way to King René's son, whom we intended to visit. The Duke received him with great pleasure, as if he had been a little Frenchman fresh from his native country, and kept him the whole day in his presence. But not many were deceived by him, for his gravity, so little suited to the French character, betrayed his individuality.' [170]

His education was serious according to the custom of the time. Several hours were devoted to religious exercises, especially in the evening, when a fraternity of St. Paul was visited. His mother was especially particular in this respect, as she was also in inculcating on the youth habits of benevolence, by appointing dowries for poor girls, supporting poor convents, giving abundant alms to the needy, and pursuing every noble stratagem that would lead to popular favour. In bodily exercises Lorenzo soon surpassed most of his companions, and he early displayed that love for beautiful horses which he preserved all his life; he was also an accomplished rider. He was highly delighted when, just out of his boyhood, a valuable horse was sent him from Sicily. He made a rich present in return, and upon its being suggested to him that it would be better under such circumstances to buy the horse than receive it as a gift, he replied, 'Do you not know that it is a royal gift, and does it not seem royal not to be conquered in liberality?'[108]

Piero's younger son, Giuliano, was born in 1453. He was not permitted to arrive at maturity. Compared with his brother, he was rather in the shade, yet he promised to rival him in many things, as he certainly did in knightly exercises. He was tall, handsome, and strong, according to Angelo Politian's description,[109] who was intimately associated with him; had lively dark eyes, dark complexion, black hair falling on his shoulders, excelled in all bodily exercises, and was an eager huntsman. His expression and bearing were commanding. He was fond of poetry, and took a lively interest in the fine arts. Giuliano did not, however, equal his brother in versatile talents; his character rather resembled his father's than his grandfather's. [171]

The elder of the two daughters, Bianca, was married in Cosimo's lifetime to Guglielmo de' Pazzi. The great influence which the Pazzi family had on the fortunes of the Medici and of the State makes it necessary to dwell awhile upon their history.[110] Their origin is veiled in obscurity. Some have considered them as identical with the lordly family of the same name in the Arno valley, which was connected with the Donati, frequently mentioned in the heroic days of Florence, and related to Dante Alighieri. Others have traced them from Fiesole, whence the old family arms are said to be derived—six moons, alternately blue and red, in a silver field, a device which they exchanged in 1388 for that granted by the dukes of Bar, two

golden barbs in a blue field, and at present changed into dolphins with four small double crosses. According to unauthenticated tradition, Pazzo de' Pazzi went to Jerusalem in Godfrey de Bouillon's army, and the people of Florence preserved a fragment of stone which he is said to have brought home from the Saviour's tomb. At one time placed in Sta. Maria del Fiore, and then in Sant'Apostolo, this stone was used to strike the sparks from which the tapers were lighted, and in Sta. Maria del Fiore, during the mass, it set alight the Columbina, a squib in the shape of a dove, which ignited a cart full of rockets and other fireworks exploded between the church and baptistery. This cart, called the Carro de' Pazzi, drives round a part [172] of the inner town, and stops at the entrance of the Borgo degli Albizzi, named after the family, where one of their palaces forms the corner. About the middle of the twelfth century we meet with the name of the Pazzi in documents; towards the close they became divided into three principal branches. In the bloody battle of Montaperti, Jacopo de' Pazzi bore the banner of Florence, which, when the traitor Bocca degli Abati hewed his hands off, he pressed to his breast with the stumps till he sank down dead. His son Pazzino stood at the head of the Black party in the desolating party strife which preceded the Roman expedition of the Emperor Henry of Luxemburg. At the beginning of the fifteenth century the still flourishing line was strictly aristocratic, and only passed over to the plebeian families in 1434. This change arose out of the circumstance that so many of the families hitherto admitted to hold office were proscribed by being ranked among 'the great,' so that Cosimo feared to increase their numbers and consequently their power. He therefore caused the old noble families, if they did not exactly oppose him and his family, to be ranked among the plebeians. Thus it happened with Andrea de' Pazzi, who was born in 1372, and with whom the importance of the family in civic affairs commences. He was already experienced in embassies, and had treated with Pope John XXIII. When, as has been already related, King René resided in Florence in 1442, Andrea de' Pazzi was assigned to him as escort, and obtained the favour of that prince, who, though neither skilful nor successful in things political or military, had talents and was amiable. He made Andrea a knight, and stood godfather to one of his children, who was called Renato after the King. He erected the beautiful chapel of Sta. Croce and the palace at the Canto de' Pazzi, which, rebuilt by his son Jacopo, is still a monument of a style uniting severity with elegance, and is, moreover, the witness of an occurrence which has made the name of the family historical.

Andrea de' Pazzi left several sons by his wife Caterina Salviati, [173] two of whom, Piero and Jacopo, played an important part. Piero was one of the most brilliant and cultivated persons of his time. Niccolò Niccoli, to whom so many of his countrymen were indebted for mental culture, roused in him an interest in scholarship. 'Piero de' Pazzi,' relates Vespasiano da Bisticci,[111] 'was a most beautiful youth, and pursued his pleasures without thinking of graver employments, while his father, a wealthy merchant, who cared little for literature, which he did not understand, thought to dedicate him to his own pursuits. As he one day passed the Palazzo del Podestà, Niccolò Niccoli, another Socrates, saw him. Impressed by his exterior, he called him to him, and asked whose son he was and what he was doing. The youth, not unaware of the respect paid to the excellent man, replied that he was the son of Messer Andrea de' Pazzi, and passed his time as he best might. Niccolò continued, "As you are the son of such a highly placed citizen, and yourself of such favourable appearance, it is a shame that you do not study Latin literature, which would be a great accomplishment for you. If you do not learn it, you will reap no honour, and remain without inward resources when the bloom of youth has vanished." Piero was struck, and answered that he would willingly follow the good advice if Niccolò would procure him a suitable teacher.' Thus he began his studies under the guidance of Pontano, and soon made so much progress that he was a pattern for all the youths in the city. When he went with the Archbishop of Pisa, Filippo de' Medici and Buonaccorso Pitti, in October 1461, to France, to congratulate King Louis XI. on his accession,[112] he displayed extraordinary pomp and princely liberality, as well as skill and political address, and he was knighted by the King. When he returned he met with a brilliant reception. 'At his entry,[113] the whole city seemed to rejoice, for he [174] was beloved by all on account of his kindness and liberality. All the streets and windows were filled with people who awaited him. He

came with a suite in attire completely new, with costly pearls on their hats and sleeves. In the memory of man no knight had entered Florence as he did, which was a great honour for his family. He rode to the palace of the Signory, dismounted at the great door, and went in to fetch the banner, like those who returned home as knights. He then mounted again and rode to the palace of the principal men of the Guelph party, to receive the party badge. Here Messer Piero Acciaiuoli welcomed him in the presence of many, with a well-composed speech in the vulgar tongue. Upon this he received the badge, took the banner in his hand, and rode with a great suite home again, where for some days open house was kept. If a reproach could be cast upon him, it was that of excessive liberality. Only the man who asked for nothing received nothing from him. At the death of his father it was found that he had spent 12,000 gold florins, of which there was no account. To be sure, he had spent all, or nearly all, on things which, according to worldly ideas, sufficed for his honour and distinction.'

We know that Andrea de' Pazzi formed a friendship with King René. Piero attached himself to that king's son when he came to Florence in 1454. The connection served Duke John when he made war against the Aragonese, and the money of Florence and of Florentine citizens, especially of the Medici and Pazzi, was of great assistance. Had the Angevin been fortunate, Piero would undoubtedly have become a great lord like Nicola Acciaiuoli in older times. His friendly connections with Piero de' Medici led to the marriage of Medici's daughter Bianca with Guglielmo de' Pazzi, Piero's nephew. Piero attained to the office of Gonfaloniere in 1462, and died not long afterwards, a little over forty-six years old. 'Had he,' remarks Vespasiano da Bisticci, 'who surpassed all his family in good sense, lived longer, they would not have fallen into the [175] disorders which brought ruin to them and to the city.' His brother Jacopo, who was involved in these troubles, was nevertheless a clever man, and seemed to stand as high in the popular favour as Piero. After he had administered the office of Gonfaloniere in the beginning of 1469, the dignity of knighthood was accorded to him by a public vote, and bestowed on him by Messer Tommaso Soderini. He went twice as ambassador to the Emperor Frederick III. After his tragical end, his widow, Maddalena Serristori, retired into the cloister of the Franciscan nuns of Monticelli, before the Porta Romana. Here also the veil was taken by Jacopo's natural daughter Caterina, whose tutor had been a man who played a sad part in the tragedy of 1478. Caterina, after her death in 1490, was venerated as a saint. Of Antonio, a third son of Andrea, who died in 1459, there is not much to say; the three sons whom Cosa degli Alessandri bore him, Guglielmo, who married Bianca de' Medici, Giovanni, whose wife was Beatrice Borromeo, and Francesco, will often be mentioned again.

In the year 1466, Bianca's younger sister, Nannina, married Bernardo Rucellai. His family,[114] which has been supposed to come from Germany, was called Alamanno. They are first met with in the second half of the thirteenth century as members of the woollen guild, having risen to their position by industrial activity, as the name itself intimates; for Rucellai is nothing but a corruption of Oricellari, and at the present day one of the streets of a new part of Florence is called from the Latin name of the turnsole Oricella, or Roccella Tinctoria. The Florentine tradesman discovered in the East that the dye of this plant, treated with acids, gives a beautiful violet. The dyeing-works of Alamanno brought him and his descendants rich gain. His well-earned wealth was speedily followed by civic honours, and after 1302 a share in the highest offices of state. The [176] fourteenth century witnessed the rise and fall of several of the Rucellai, till they attained the highest respect and great wealth at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Giovanni Rucellai, the grandson of a man who had played some part in the times of the Duke of Athens, was born in 1403. His mother, Caterina Pandolfini, a widow after three years of wedlock, brought the boy to Palla Strozzi, who assigned him a post in his bank, and grew so fond of him that he gave him his daughter Jacopa in marriage when he had attained the age of twenty-four. The events which expelled Palla and his sons did not leave his son-in-law unmolested. Though Giovanni Rucellai was not banished, he was excluded from all offices, and remained out of the administration up to the last days of Cosimo, when the latter deemed it advisable to procure adherents in the family he had until then oppressed. This did not, however, prevent

him from increasing his wealth and making use of it for the general good, in which he was aided by the genius of Leon Battista Alberti. He completed the marble façade of Sta. Maria Novella, on which his name may still be read. He erected a chapel near the church of San Pancrazio, with an exact imitation in marble of the Saviour's tomb, as measured and copied by his orders in Jerusalem. This is still to be seen, though the church has long been disused for Divine worship. His family palace, already mentioned, in the Via della Vigna Nuova, with the Loggia opposite, now unfortunately walled up, is the most graceful example of the transition style from the ancient severity of the immense freestone façade to the antiquated ornaments of the Renaissance. He and his son will be mentioned later. The latter was born in 1448, a few months before Lorenzo de' Medici, whose grandfather, by becoming his sponsor, gave public expression to the reconciliation of the two families. Near relationship, however, could not make him feel attached to the family whose blood flowed in the veins of his children.

Thus was Piero de' Medici's family composed. Other connections [177]
of equal importance belonged to them. Foremost of all were the two Soderini, Niccolò and Tommaso.[115] Their ancestors are said to have been Counts of Gangalandi, and heads of the Ghibelline party, but they are found as a Florentine plebeian family in the second half of the twelfth century. They attained importance only 200 years later. Tommaso Soderini, like so many of his countrymen, spent a great part of his life in business matters at Papal Avignon, and returned in 1370 to his home, where, as a member of the magistracy of the Guelph party, he took so violent a part in the proscriptions, that in the insurrection of 1378 he was one of the first to have his house plundered and burnt. He went into exile to Tarascon, on the Rhône, but returning home after the victory of the oligarchy, he again attained to office and influence. In 1395, seven years before his death, he was Gonfaloniere. His two sons, Francesco and Lorenzo, went separate ways. Francesco, the son of Elisabetta Altoviti whom Tommaso had married after his return to Avignon, passed through the usual career of distinguished Florentines who attained to civic offices and embassies as soon as they reached the legal age. One of his missions took him to Mantua to celebrate the marriage of Ludovico Gonzaga with Barbara of Hohenzollern, the granddaughter of Frederick I., elector of Brandenburg. Like his father, he belonged to the party of the Albizzi, and had one of the daughters of Palla Strozzi as his wife. When Cosimo de' Medici went into exile he was one of the magistracy of eight that escorted him to the frontiers. He was not expelled when the Medici gained the victory, but his influence was at an end, and he only became Podestà in towns of Umbria and Romagna, and for a time he lay in prison on suspicion of having shared in the movements of his partisans. Niccolò da Uzzano destined him to be the rector of his university, and Donatello has given us his portrait in one of the
statues which are to be seen on the front of the bell-tower of Sta. [178]
Maria.[116] It is the figure standing next to the church called that of St. John the Baptist, and in its natural free bearing reminds one of the famous St. George of Or San Michele.

Lorenzo, Tommaso's other son, passed through a stormy career. Born at Avignon, of a woman of Auvergne, he endeavoured to cover his want of legitimacy by the diplomas of a Count Palatine and of Gian Galeazzo Visconti. After having been enrolled by King Charles V. of France in an order of knighthood, and married in Florence to Ghilla Cambi, he conceived the unfortunate idea, after his father's death, of proving the legality of his birth and his right to more wealth by means of forged documents. The severity, of the laws sentenced him to death, which he suffered in 1405. His two sons, Niccolò and Tommaso, born, the former in 1401, the latter in 1403, became eager partisans of Cosimo de' Medici on the sole ground of hatred of their uncle, to whom they attributed a participation in the tragical end of their father, and who took the other side. Niccolò received the dignity of Gonfaloniere in 1451, Tommaso in 1449 and 1454. The latter, by far the most distinguished, filled various offices in the provincial towns at an early age; when thirty-five he sat in the magistracy of the Priori. By his marriage with Dianora Tornabuoni, Lucrezia's sister, he was riveted to the Medicean interests, which no one supported with greater zeal and success, or with more statesmanlike ability. To no one did Piero or Lorenzo owe so much as to this man. We have already mentioned other families with whom the Medici were connected. Further mention will be made of

them in the course of this history.

CHAPTER II.

LORENZO'S YOUTH. CONSPIRACY OF DIOTISALVI NERONI AND HIS COMPANIONS.

Lorenzo de' Medici grew up. He was seventeen years old when his father sent him to Pisa to welcome Don Federigo of Aragon, King Ferrante's younger son, who set out from Naples, March 18, 1465, and having received the golden rose at Rome, was on his way to Milan with the most brilliant suite, no less than six hundred horse, to escort to Naples Francesco Sforza's intellectual and beautiful daughter Ippolita Maria, the bride of his elder brother, Alfonso, Duke of Calabria.[117] On April 17, Don Federigo entered Florence, accompanied by the Prince of Salerno, the Duke of Amalfi, the Bishop of Gaeta, and many other lords, and was received by the Signoria on the Ringhiera of the palace, after which he rode to Sta. Maria Novella, where the Papal lodgings were prepared for him, and where, entertained at the public cost, he stayed five days amid mutual expressions of politeness. The Prince, then only thirteen years old, wore mourning, with all his suite, in consequence of the death of the Queen his mother, which had happened shortly before. [118]

Florence had had much cause to complain of the Aragonese, even [180] in later years, and had long remained true to her sympathies with Anjou; but Cosimo de' Medici was too diplomatic not to see that the house of Spain had gained a firmer footing than that of France in southern Italy, and that peace was better secured by an alliance with the former, if the interests of the State made it possible. Cosimo always held fast to Francesco Sforza, even when he believed that he had cause of complaint against him; for Sforza, who had once encouraged his Florentine friend in the belief that after he was Duke of Milan he would aid him with his power in the subjection of Lucca, let the matter entirely drop when he had attained his end. Cosimo had more than anyone the conquest of Lucca at heart, for, unlike the Albizzi, who had enlarged the territory of the Republic by Pisa, he had nothing to show but trifling annexations by purchase, such as the Borgo San Sepolcro, in the valley of the Tiber, and he complained of the ingratitude of a man to whose grandeur he had so much contributed, though he still kept up a close connection with him.

The meeting with Federigo d'Aragona was afterwards of great use to Lorenzo; he met him again when he undertook a journey which led him to Bologna, Ferrara, Venice, and Milan. A letter addressed to him during this excursion is a proof of the interest which the gifted youth had long excited, even if we take into account the dependent position in which the writer stood towards the family. This was Luigi Pulci. The name of the author of the most celebrated heroic poem of the fifteenth century, which will be mentioned in the consideration of the literary movement, is inseparable from that of his constant patron and friend. Luigi Pulci belonged to a family of Provençal origin, which was ranked among the oldest in Florence, but did not rise, because when the popular element prevailed it was characterised as noble, and excluded from all share in public offices. A street was once named after the residence of the Pulci, which was pulled down in the sixteenth century when the Uffizi was built. Jacopo Pulci had by Brigida de' [181] Bardi three sons, of whom Luigi was the second: all three were poets, and had better success in poetry than in pecuniary affairs. Luigi was born on August 15, 1432, in Florence. He was still unmarried at the time now under consideration, and one of the confidants of the Medici, who employed him in various commissions. Piero's wife was especially well-disposed towards him, and we shall find him later as her escort on a journey. 'You have left us,' he writes to Lorenzo, April 27, 1465, 'so disconsolate at your departure that I do not know how to hold the pen to write this letter to you. Through Braccio, I am informed of your journey, and assume that you are now in Venice; and in order to begin my correspondence well, I inform you that I am lonely, forsaken, and sad without you. On the other hand, I rejoice in your journey, which seems to me a piece of good fortune for many reasons. You will see many remarkable things, which will delight your mind, superior, I

consider, to all, with one only exception. What promotes your interests can only be a pleasure to me.'[119]

Lorenzo's brother-in-law, Guglielmo de' Pazzi, was his companion on this journey, which was connected with the marriage of Francesco Sforza's daughter, who soon afterwards came through Tuscany on her wedding tour.

Piero de' Medici wrote repeatedly to his son during this journey, [120] showing the utmost solicitude for his welfare, as well as that he should make a good figure among these princes and noble ladies. He sent him plate for festivals which the young man might be called upon to give. 'Do not care for expense,' he says; 'think only of doing honour to your family. Think of making yourself alive, and of showing that you are a man and not a boy, and that henceforward you are capable of managing greater things. This journey is to you [182] the touchstone of your future career.' More than once Piero expressed a wish that Lorenzo and his companion should return before the arrival of the Milanese princes. 'It seems necessary to me that you should leave Milan before the bridal train; for the Princess is to inhabit our house, and if you and Guglielmo were absent, I should be like a man without hands.' On the afternoon of June 22, Donna Ippolita entered Florence, and was lodged in the Medicean house. Beside Don Federigo, she was accompanied by her two brothers, Filippo and Sforza Maria; suite and escort numbered 1000 horses; and all were maintained at the public cost during the passage through Florentine territory, while the Duchess herself enjoyed the princely hospitality of the most distinguished family in the city.[121]

At the beginning of March of the following year, Lorenzo went to Rome. Pope Pius II., in the midst of his preparations for the crusade, and in sight of the sea which was to bear his fleet and his allies to the Eastern coasts, had died at Ancona in the middle of August, 1464, a fortnight after Cosimo, and had been succeeded by the Venetian Pietro Barbo, under the name of Paul II. Pius's death had put an end for the time to the crusade which he had been about to undertake with insufficient power. But the thought of it was kept alive, particularly in the Pontificate; and the progress of the Turks, who in Paul's reign wrested the fortress of Negroponte from the Venetians, was so alarming that the preservation of peace in Italy, by which alone means of resistance could be hoped for, was most important for the Popes as well as the other rulers. In this respect Paul II. laboured in the most praiseworthy manner, at least during the first years of his reign, after he had disposed of the restless little dynasties in the neighbourhood of Rome.

Lorenzo was sent, ostensibly on business connected with some [183] alum-works and the bank, directed by his maternal uncle, Giovanni Tornabuoni, to Rome, where he was honourably received by the Pope, the court, and numerous friends of the family. But Piero had doubtless the intention of making him personally acquainted with the customs and life of a city which was of the utmost importance for Florence and the Medicean family, and where Cosimo had always striven to preserve an influence. He had scarcely arrived there when an event happened which attracted the attention of all Italy, and the Medici in particular. On March 8, 1466, Francesco Sforza died, after a long illness, at the age of sixty-six. He had attained by craft and violence the throne which he maintained bravely, and developed capacities of government hitherto unknown at Milan.

The last and most successful of the great *condottieri* of Italy, he laid down arms in order to exercise the arts of peace for the last twelve years of his life. In later times Machiavelli, who witnessed the swift and sad change in Lombardy under one of the sons and the grandsons of the first Sforza, said, in his reflections on Titus Livius, that nothing, however great and important it might be, could give Milan or Naples their freedom, because all their limbs were decayed; the reproach of having made them so belongs far less to Francesco than to the Visconti, for his government healed many wounds, opened many resources, and restored peace to the land, to which it had long been unknown. As at the Duke's death his eldest son, Galeazzo Maria, was absent in France, where he had been sent with a body of troops to assist King Louis XI. in the civil war which had broken out soon after his accession to the throne, the widowed Duchess Bianca Maria seized the reins of government with a firm hand, assured herself of the consent of the most eminent men of the

State, and prepared a festal reception and peaceful accession to power for her son, who entered Milan on the 20th of the same month.

It was necessary to induce the Italian princes to recognise [184] Sforza, in opposition to certain other claims, especially those of the house of Savoy, and Piero de' Medici was very active in this matter. On March 15 he wrote to Lorenzo[122] in Rome, who was soon able to give reassuring news with regard to the Pope's inclinations. He had himself applied to the latter immediately after receiving the news. Venice, however little affection she might feel for Sforza, was too much threatened in the Levant not to wish for peace in Italy; King Ferrante was related to the Milanese house. Thus it was not difficult to obtain the recognition of Galeazzo Maria everywhere, and although the Emperor Frederick III., who came again to Italy two years later, ignored the new duke, as well as his father, this was of small importance, from the political weakness of the temporal head of Christendom. That the French King, to whom the Republic wrote on April 3 to express sorrow at the loss of Francesco Sforza, 'so great a prince and friend, so rare a master of peace and war, so high an honour to the Italian name,' would share the same opinion, was to be foreseen, although his cousin, Duke Charles of Orleans, never resigned the hereditary claims of his mother, Valentina Visconti, on Milan. In fact, Louis answered on the 18th of the same month from Orleans, promising to interfere himself if it should be necessary.[123] Piero's letters to his son, eighteen years old, showed sufficiently how he trusted to his insight and wisdom. Soon events were to happen at home which would test these qualities of the youth severely.

The last years of Cosimo's life had shown how hard it was for him to maintain the supremacy over his party in Florence. The people had grown too rich and powerful. Cosimo had himself much contributed to it by his fear of putting himself forward; his prudent reserve had gone too far. He had long foreseen that his son would not be in a position to master and guide the contending elements, but precisely the measures he took to meet the danger brought it [185] nearer. Those in whom he trusted, from the conviction that as they had grown rich with him, and mostly through him, they would hold to his family, did not respond to this confidence. However different their motives might be, in a city where so many special interests prevailed beside the political party currents, and where men were so little accustomed to subordination, they yet united against him, whose inherited position was burdensome and hateful to them, and whom more than one looked down upon. The causes of the movement which broke out in 1466, and which threatened the authority of the Medici, were apparent soon after Cosimo's death. The great liberality of the rich merchant, by no means always dictated by pure motives, but for the sake of preserving his authority, had brought much idle capital into strangers' hands. The evil necessarily became clear when the accounts were revised. It was Diotisalvi Neroni, the man on whose acuteness and attachment Cosimo relied the most, who owed him much, and whom he had recommended to his son as the most trustworthy friend, who advised the former to call in the outstanding sums. The evil effect of following this advice—namely, the sudden embarrassment in which numerous citizens who were under obligations to the Medici found themselves, and the discontent and estrangement which followed—caused Diotisalvi to be suspected of bad intentions, a belief which was strengthened by his behaviour afterwards. Thus the historians of the time immediately succeeding him, as well as almost all later ones, express themselves in this sense.[124] But the motives must ever be veiled in obscurity. Diotisalvi was wealthy and respected, his brother Giovanni was Archbishop of Florence after 1462. Still it is difficult to believe that he aimed at becoming the head of the [186] State. The motives of the distinguished citizens who allied themselves to this man, in order first to undermine the position of the Medici, and then to overthrow them by violence, were, however, so different that we cannot be surprised at the failure of the undertaking.

Diotisalvi seems to have had an understanding with Niccolò Soderini. We have seen how Niccolò, then more than sixty years old, had been from his youth upward one of the zealous adherents of the Medici. But he belonged also to the number, always very great in Florence, of those who wished for a supreme authority, but not the

government of one family; equality of all rights for citizens qualified for the guidance of the State, and the freest possible form of government. There were scarcely any citizens more esteemed than he and his brother Tommaso. But it was otherwise with Luca Pitti. He was of a despotic nature, and had already shown that violent proceedings cost him nothing. Willingly or not, Cosimo had allowed him so much liberty that he already considered himself the head of the State while Cosimo was still alive. It was very unlikely, therefore, that he would be subordinate to the weaker son. Diotisalvi is said to have encouraged him in the hope of taking his place, thinking it easy to put aside the incapable man. The fourth in the association was Agnolo Acciaiuoli, lately returned from Milan, where he was highly esteemed by Francesco Sforza, and had much contributed to maintain the harmony so desirable for the Republic between the Duke and the King of Naples, when this seemed endangered by a tragical event, the murder of Jacopo Piccinino, a son of the famous *condottiere*, at the King's instigation.[125] Even though it may have been represented to Agnolo that the majority of the city wished for a change, still the motives which estranged him [187] from the Medici seem to have been purely selfish; whether it was that he was incensed at a legal decision in a matter of property unfavourable to his eldest son, or on account of the archbishopric of Pisa not having been granted to another son, or, finally, on account of the preference which Piero gave to the Rucellai family, when it was proposed to marry his youngest daughter, whose hand the Acciaiuoli wished to obtain. Agnolo attached himself to the others later, and they do not seem to have entirely let him into the secret of their intentions.[126]

The movement began in 1465. Diotisalvi Neroni had returned from Milan, whither he had gone as ambassador on the occasion of the marriage of Ippolita Maria, with the dignity of knighthood, which gave him still greater consideration. It was determined to proceed slowly against the Medici; abolition of the discretionary power of the Balia and the choice of magistrates by lot were first demanded. Piero and his friends knew too well how much attached the people were to this method of choice, which had often proved to be a mere sham, not to give way at once. On November 1, Niccolò Soderini undertook the office of Gonfaloniere, and now they thought the time had come for striking the first blow. The expectations cherished by the new Gonfaloniere recalled the time, eighty-seven years before, when Salvestro de' Medici entered office; only now his relations took the place of their former opponents. The people were in the greatest excitement. Niccolò proceeded to the palace, crowned with olive branches. Again, however, was seen the deceitfulness of such hopes when formed by parties composed of different elements. The old adherent of the Medici was driven hither and thither by contrary inclinations. On the one side were his new companions; on the other his brother. He twice summoned numerous assemblies of eminent citizens to his palace, to consult on the means of removing existing evils, and both times the result was [188] mere words. He wished to effect the dissolution of the Council of a Hundred, and could not carry it. He proposed to demand an account of the administration of the last years, and failed through the opposition of Luca Pitti, who dreaded such an inquisition. Altogether his adherents rendered the measures contemplated by Soderini impossible, because they feared they would not enable them to carry out their private ends; and his period of office expired without decisive action. In the meanwhile, as has been said, Francesco Sforza died, and his successor sent messengers to Florence to renew the alliance with the Republic, and at the same time to request a loan to suffice for pressing necessities. Piero contrived that 40,000 gold florins should be granted; but Diotisalvi Neroni, Luca Pitti, and Agnolo Acciaiuoli made such violent opposition, under the pretext that the State was in quite another position towards the inexperienced young Duke than it was formerly towards his father, that the payment was never made. The intention of the opposition was merely to bring Piero and his adherents into discredit, and loosen their connections with foreign lands. Another manœuvre was to serve the same purpose. In March 1465, Cardinal Lodovico Scarampi, the former Archbishop of Florence, had died, leaving a colossal fortune which was partly invested in Florentine banks. Pope Paul II. claimed this property as belonging to the Church; but Luca Pitti, whose brother Luigi was related to the Scarampi by marriage, prevented the delivery of the sums deposited

in Florence, which by no means increased the goodwill of the Pope towards the State.

In the spring of 1466 it became evident that a party strife was impending. In the beginning of May, after the occasion of the Milanese grant of money had revealed the deep-lying discord, the Signoria endeavoured to bring about a compromise. On the proposal of a commission appointed for the purpose of consultation, all the citizens eligible for the offices of State, from the age of twenty-four years upwards, were summoned to the palace, where the assembly [189] took place in a hall adjoining the chapel. Here resolutions were passed that no meetings should be held, political consultations, public or private, that were not summoned by the government; that everyone should solemnly promise to act in his office only according to right and law, and to let all party quarrels rest; that finally all existing political societies should be dissolved, and the ties which bound them become null and void.[127] The stipulations show plainly enough how things stood with the city. Those present took the oath to these obligations, which, being the mere outgrowth of discontent, no one, however, seriously thought of fulfilling. Everyone had a pretext in his neighbour's behaviour. Things took their natural course; Piero de' Medici knew nothing of the violent intentions of his opponents, but the factions already stood opposed to one another, although the strife was maintained on the grounds of the constitution. These factions were called those of the Mountain and the Plain (del Poggio—del Piano), because Luca Pitti's house stood on the slope of the hill of San Giorgio, that of the Medici on a level part of the city. When the heads of the Mountain party saw that the others were not to be reached by the usual seemingly legal means, they set on foot a formal conspiracy. The story of this conspiracy affords a remarkable example of the insecure foundation of public affairs in such states, as well as the want of all real determination when it was necessary to act. With Bartolommeo Colleone of Bergamo, the celebrated *condottiere*, negotiations were opened which subsequently bore fruit. At all events, the opponents of the Medici appear to have been the first who had no dread of employing foreign military power. Ercole of Este, brother of the Marquis Borso of Ferrara, was to march into the territory and upon the capital itself, while they were to attempt to take the life of Piero, whom Diotisalvi Neroni was to endeavour to lull into a false security. The [190] circumstance that Piero mostly resided in his villa at Careggi, from whence he, ill as he was, used to have himself carried in a litter to the city, seemed to favour the plans of the conspirators. The Signoria, which had entered upon office on July 1, with the Gonfaloniere Bernardo Lotti, were mostly favourable to them: they determined to make use of this opportunity, but, nevertheless, allowed many weeks to pass before proceeding to action.

Piero had meanwhile received warnings from two directions. Giovanni Bentivoglio, lord of Bologna, had informed him of the intrigues of Este. Niccolò Fedini, a notary whom the conspirators employed, revealed their intentions. Piero did not shut his eyes to the danger when he measured the number and importance of his opponents. He knew the fickleness of the city. He held it good to send his son, on whose skill he could rely in spite of his youth, to Naples. Lorenzo managed to strengthen King Ferrante in his inclination towards the Medici, while the King (as Jacopo Acciaiuoli, then in the above-mentioned town, wrote to his father),[128] believed that he could better make use of the Republic for his own purposes under the guidance of the Medici than under any other circumstances. The favourable impression which the youth made upon Ferrante is evident. Meanwhile the means of defence were deliberated upon in meetings with the most faithful and influential of his party. Both sides were arming; it is clear that the enemies of the Medici knew of their preparations, but they did not yet get to work, either because they were not ready, or because the characteristic dread which the Florentines had of beginning a revolution in the State with arms, restrained them. Piero had time to inform the Duke of Milan, through his ambassador, Nicodemo Tanchedini.

The villa of Careggi, the favourite residence of the elder line of [191] the Medici, lies a little more than two miles to the north-west of Florence, on the last southern spur of the Uccellatojo, of which the 'Divina Commedia' says that it surpasses the view of Rome from Monte Mario.[129] The name, once Campus Regis, is in harmony

with the fertility and beauty of the neighbourhood; for here the spectator, overlooking the whole valley of the Arno from the gently sinking slope, sees villa join villa, and splendid gardens in a thousand flowery colours stretch before him, besides vineyards and olive-tree plantations. The Medicean villa, private property for more than a century, preserves, like the Salviati villa, lying in the neighbourhood of the Fiesolan abbey, the form given to it in the first half of the fifteenth century—an immense cube, which more resembles a fortress than a country house, with jutting battlements and a quadrangular inner court. In the present day an intelligent owner, no Tuscan, but full of warm love for his second home,[130] has called up afresh the remembrances of ancient days, and again summoned hither the arts once native here. We can easily transport ourselves to the times of Cosimo and Lorenzo, so rich in intellectual creations, and feel inspired by the breath of Platonic symposia, and the statesmanlike consultations which guided the fortunes of Italy at a memorable epoch. The nearest way from Careggi to the city led to the Faenza gate, which was destroyed when the Medicean city was built, partly upon the pleasant hill of Montughi, already covered with villas, amongst which was that of Sant'Antonio, belonging to the archiepiscopal see.

On the morning of August 23, Piero de' Medici was about to have himself carried in his litter to Florence, when a messenger sent by his son hastened up to him. Lorenzo, who, after his return from Naples, was staying at the villa, had ridden out earlier, met [192] suspicious-looking people, and heard them inquire after his father. Already warned, he suspected the danger. Saying that Piero was following him, he commanded one of his men to return to Careggi in order to inform his father of the suspicious circumstance, and advise him to take another way, probably that leading to Porta al Prato. Perhaps Piero de' Medici owed his life to Lorenzo's prudence, for the villa of the archbishop was filled with armed men lying in wait for him.

Scarcely had he arrived in town when he summoned his chief partisans to him, and it was determined to be beforehand with the opponents. The decisive moment was come. The troops of Este stood already at Fiumalbo near the frontiers. A body of Milanese mercenaries were coming from Imola to Firenzuola to aid Piero. All the adherents of the Medici were in motion; Antonio Serristori collected together the same morning a number of country people in the neighbourhood. Lorenzo, supported by Antonio Pucci, was active with the young people. The Medicean party stood ready in arms before the others had come to an agreement with their four leaders, equal in power but different in disposition. When Piero sent to the Signoria, laid the letter of Bentivoglio before them, and pointed to the danger threatening the peace of the city, in order to excuse the speedy arming of his friends, the Signoria could not avoid taking measures. They sent Bernardo Corbinelli as commissary, to hinder if possible the passage of the Este troops over the frontier, and sought to oblige the parties to lay down their weapons. This was, however, in vain; the whole city was in such a state of excitement that the Signoria had the palace closed in their anxiety, and the guards strengthened. And the fear was not groundless. Niccolò Soderini had brought together and armed nearly two hundred in that part of his district on the left bank of the river inhabited by the poorer classes, and called the Camaldoli of San Frediano,[131] and in the [193] evening had marched with them to the neighbouring house of Luca Pitti. Here the chief adherents were assembled, but even now they could not agree. Some, Soderini at their head, advised them to seize the palace and summon a parliament, since the majority was favourable to them; others proposed to set the houses of the leaders of the opposition on fire, in order to strike terror into the crowd. But nothing was accomplished; the chiefs were irresolute. Diotisalvi, whose house lay near the Medici palace, was afraid lest, in case of an attack, the mob might get the better of the contending parties, and renew the scenes of 1378. Luca, usually impetuous, was undecided. Soderini said to him, bitterly, that they would both be ruined; he, because he had relied too much on Luca, Luca because he had heeded his advice too little. Neither did things proceed smoothly with the Medici. An attack was feared; in order to meet it, many wished to cross the river and give battle. On the other side it was confessed that an attack from the Medicean party this night would have given the victory into their hands. Piero and the more cautious were for waiting, as they were for the present stronger

than the enemy, and would hardly lose by the delay. Within a few days a new Signoria must enter upon office; and as the district of Sta. Croce had to appoint the Gonfaloniere, and here the adherents of the Medici preponderated, the circumstances could not but be more favourable.

They had not calculated wrongly. Already, on the following day, that of St. Bartholomew, negotiations between the two parties began. Luca Pitti is said to have been won by a prospect of the marriage of his daughter with Lorenzo de' Medici before a Signoria favourable to that family could be chosen on the 28th. Piero's [194] opponents had spread the report that he had secretly managed to remove all the names of those of whom he was not sure from the ballot-boxes, but no proof of this accusation exists.[132] The city was meantime filled more and more with armed men; from Volterra alone, where the Medici had strong adherents, 400 foot, well armed and provided with money, were obtained.[133] The retiring Signori wished to combine with the new to attempt a mediation, and summoned the heads of both parties to the palace. Luca Pitti appeared with many of his adherents; Piero de' Medici, who was ill in bed, sent his two sons with the most important of his party. A mutual understanding followed; they embraced, and promised to lay down arms. On the following day all the leaders of the Mountain party, Niccolò Soderini among them, repaired to the Medici palace. Piero received them in his bedroom; his speech was not without reproaches for those who, having become great through his father, had turned against him and filled the city with suspicion and dangers of war, which they now sought to lay to his charge. Luca Pitti threw the blame on misunderstandings and false representations, and expressed a hope that harmony would remain undisturbed for the future. He is reported to have been wavering again when Soderini reproached him with treason to his party, but to have finally yielded to Lorenzo's representations. It would indeed have been madness to resort to arms.

On September 1, the new Signoria, with Roberto Leoni, the new Gonfaloniere, at their head, entered upon office. From the moment when the Medicean partisans were sure of the victory, the idea awoke within them to render their most distinguished opponents harmless for ever. Piero would not consent to violent measures, but he would have been no Medici if he had despised so-called legal [195] means. Already, on the day after undertaking the office, the Signoria summoned a parliament, at which Luca Pitti and Diotisalvi Neroni appeared. On September 6, they announced their determination by the Balia elected by them: the Signoria should for ten years be appointed not by casting lots, but by nomination, and the heads of the Mountain, with the exception of Luca Pitti, were to go into exile. Niccolò Soderini, it is said, by the advice of Piero, who wished to protect an old adherent and the brother of his best friend from violence, had already retired to his villa, and from thence to Venice; there he was met by the decree which banished him and his son Geri for twenty years to Provence, where his father was born. Agnolo Acciaiuoli had quitted his house, and betaken himself to the Milanese ambassador, with whom he was very intimate, and who offered to intercede with Piero de' Medici for him. Had he waited for the result, says Vespasiano da Bisticci, referring to Piero's own words, no harm would have happened to him, for the latter did not bear resentment against him as against the others. But, full of anxiety, he hastened in the night to Certosa, the castle of his ancestors, from whence he went to Barletta, which was assigned him as his place of banishment. The real originator of the plot, Diotisalvi Neroni, was condemned to exile, with all his family; and the Neroni never again attained to power in Florence. The Archbishop left the city voluntarily, and went to Rome. The exiles were to bring their country into further grave troubles before they were forgotten by most, if not by the Medici, in the rapid change of circumstances. Luca Pitti met with a punishment of another kind. He remained in Florence, but seldom has the ostracism of public opinion been more harshly exercised towards a criminal. All turned their backs upon him; if he let himself be seen, he was received with insults and accusations of violence and covetousness. The workmen who were devoted to him in the days of his power, deserted him; his immense buildings, the palace as well as the villa, stood for [196] generations unfinished, till they fell into other hands—the palace to the grand-ducal line of the Medici, the villa to the Usimbardi family, and then to the dukes of Urbino. Presents were demanded back

again, as though they had been loans. He died a despised man—when is not known.[134]

CHAPTER III.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS. FRANCE, VENICE, ROMAGNA. WAR AGAINST COLLEONE.

Like every unsuccessful conspiracy, this also contributed to strengthen the power of those whom it was intended to ruin. In the proclamations of the Republic to foreign powers it was particularly emphasised, as we can well understand, that the freedom of state and city had been saved from great danger, and the rescue was of course acknowledged with praise and thanksgiving. 'Already,' wrote King Ferrante, on September 28, to Lorenzo de' Medici,[135] 'we loved you on account of your excellent qualities and the services done by your grandfather and father. But as we have lately heard with what prudence and manly courage you behaved in the late revolutions, and how courageously you placed yourself in the foremost ranks, our affection to you has grown remarkably. We wish, then, the illustrious Piero all happiness with so worthy a son, and congratulate the Florentine people on so eminent a protector of their freedom, and ourselves on a friend whose excellent gifts increase visibly every day. Perhaps it would be our wish to incite you to praiseworthy actions, but your noble and active nature does not need encouragement, not to mention that you have the example of your grandfather and your father constantly before your eyes.' The Republic had informed the French king of these events on September 28; the answer came from Bourges only on January 14 in [198] the following year, but it expressed Louis XI.'s friendly feelings.[136] It was very important to him to remain in good understanding with Florence. He was long in friendly relations with the house of Medici, and during his residence at Mont Luçon in May 1465 granted to Piero and his legitimate heirs the privilege of bearing the lilies in their coat of arms.[137] The blameless and well-deserved reputation, says the King, which the deceased Cosimo de' Medici had gained during his life by his actions and in all his transactions, which were conducted with prudence and virtue, gives his children and relations a claim to honourable consideration.

The influence exercised by Louis XI. on the development of the Italian affairs of his time makes it necessary to give a retrospect of the policy and situation of this monarch, under whom the French kingdom began to assume that form which was completed by Richelieu. Louis XI. had in 1461, on the death of his father, whom he succeeded at the age of thirty-eight, found the country freed indeed from foreign foes, after a hundred years' struggle, but loosely held together. For half the provinces of his kingdom recognised the King indeed as their supreme lord, but were independent of him with regard to their administration. They pursued a policy of their own, concluded alliances of peace and war, while, as in the case of the most powerful of these great feudatories, Charles Duke of Burgundy, the union of French districts with foreign territories belonging nominally to the German empire, constituted a power which, if they won over their neighbours to their interests, might enter the lists with royal France. Louis, as Dauphin, long at variance with his father and the government, had relied upon Duke Philip the Good. Under him the dukedom, comprising the greater part of Belgium of the present day, the Netherlands, with Burgundy, Artois, [199] Picardy, and Franche Comté, rose to the height of its prosperity and power. Scarcely had Louis ascended the throne, however, than he took measures against the great feudatories which kindled the war known under the name of the War of the Public Good (*Guerre du bien public*), in which Burgundy was also involved. This war was indeed terminated in 1465 by the treaties of Conflans and St. Maur, but only to break out afresh in another shape two years later, when Charles the Bold had succeeded his father on the ducal throne. Thus fully occupied at home and threatened in his own capital, Louis had closely connected his foreign affairs with his internal policy. At the commencement of his reign he had declared the pragmatic sanction of his father, which placed limits on the authority of the Holy See in his country, to be abrogated; nevertheless, when Pius II. refused to comply with his wishes in political matters, he permitted a contradiction on the part of his parliament which practically destroyed that authority. In 1462 he had allowed John of Anjou to be

defeated in the war against King Ferrante, and thus made enemies of this family, to whom Provence belonged, while he likewise estranged Duke Charles of Orleans by allying himself closely with Francesco Sforza, whose states, as we have seen, were claimed by the former on the ground of his mother's hereditary rights. The Duke of Milan had at least shown himself grateful by sending him, during his war with the allied princes, the auxiliary troop which Galeazzo Maria was commanding when his father's death summoned him home.

The year 1467 did not begin peacefully. It was very well known in Florence that the exiles, untaught by the failure of those who had made a similar attempt under far more favourable circumstances, after the fall of the Albizzi, had, for the greater part, quitted the places of exile assigned them, and retired to the Venetian territory. Here they tried every means of returning home with foreign assistance. Some applied even to the Venetian Signoria, and others to the General-in-Chief, Bartolommeo Colleone. [200]

Venice had no honourable excuse for breaking with the Florentines. Outwardly the two states were in harmony. In the beginning of January 1467, both had joined the defensive alliance concluded at Rome under the protection of Pope Paul II. which was to secure peace in Italy. Florence had accepted the conditions, stipulating that 'the French King, whose authority essentially aided the preservation of peace and the safety of the different states, should be permitted to join the alliance at his pleasure, with authority next to that of the Pope.'[138] This stipulation, however, did not appear to satisfy the Republic when, before long, the political sky was clouded, so that in the following March, Francesco Nori, a confidant of the Medici, was sent to Louis XI. to propose an offensive and defensive alliance, irrespective of their engagements with the other Italian powers.[139] The hostile disposition of Venice was unmistakable, although an open breach of the peace was avoided. The old grudge on account of the views on Milan, frustrated by the Medici, came again into the foreground. It was proposed to employ the hatred of the exiles in order to obtain in Florence a government with obligations towards Venice, and therefore dependent on her, and to overturn the power in Milan already shaken by Francesco Sforza's death. Bartolommeo Colleone was to be the instrument.

Whoever stands on the Piazza near the church of St. Giovanni e Paolo in Venice will be reminded of long-vanished times by an equestrian statue in bronze, almost more than by the surrounding buildings. A slight, graceful pedestal supports a war-horse in a quiet but powerful attitude, whose strong limbs do not prevent a mannerised treatment of the neck and head. Upon this, on a high saddle, and holding the richly-adorned bridle, sits the somewhat thick-set figure of a knight, clothed in mail from head to foot, and showing beneath the helmet a bold, marked countenance, which, slightly turned to the right, seems to challenge an enemy. Thus has a Florentine artist, Andrea del Verrocchio, depicted Bartolommeo Colleone, whose magnificence and wealth may be admired in his chapel built in the cathedral of Bergamo, which contains his tomb and that of his daughter Medea. Born within the territory of this city, and acquainted early in his paternal home with the miseries of war, Bartolommeo had earned his spurs in the Neapolitan wars, had fought under the unhappy Carmagnola for Venice, against Sforza for the Milanese republic, then in Venetian service against the same enemy, and after the peace of Lodi retired to his castle of Malpaga, in the valley of the Serio, enriched by his campaigns, a strong man, but resenting his fate, because, although the republic of St. Mark had chosen him as their captain-general amid great honours, and had paid him a considerable sum, there was no prospect before him of fresh laurels to be gained. The exiled Florentines now came to him, having already had connections with him, and excited his ambition. Diotisalvi Neroni was at Malpaga in October 1466, from whence he wrote to a confidant that great events were approaching; if he could be with him for two hours, he would tell him things to astonish him.[140] It seems that a prospect was held out to the *condottiere* of a dominion in the many-lorded and fickle Romagna—nay, of even gaining Milan itself. His old connections in various quarters, as well as the disturbances always prevailing under the minor dynasties, which gravitated now in one and now in another direction, would enable him to bring a considerable number of [201]

troops together.

In the Romagna—a name which is here employed in its widest signification for all the country from the Lombard frontiers to those of the march of Ancona, but which in a restricted sense comprises [202] Ferrara, Bologna, the exarchate of Ravenna and Romandiola—the abnormal state of things still prevailed to which Dante alluded when he answered the question of Guido of Montefeltro, in the lower world by saying, that in the hearts of his oppressors the land was never free from war, even if peace prevailed there for the moment. [141] On February 14, 1279, Rudolph of Hapsburg relinquished this province, which had been till then regarded and governed as a part of the empire, in favour of the Church, which put forward old claims to a part, and the inhabitants had promised to be true to the Roman Church as heretofore to the Roman Empire; they wished their allegiance to be measured by their former obedience to the empire, of which the Church was the rightful successor. But the Popes had from the beginning shared their authority with the great and small lords who ruled in the various cities, the propinquity of which only made the feuds of the Signori and citizens more frequent and bitter. When the poet mentions the Polentani of Ravenna and Cervia, the Ordelaffi of Forli, the Malatesta of Rimini, Mainardo of Susinana, in Faenza and Imola, these are only a few out of the great number of those who allowed only a general superintendence to the representatives of the Popes, the Counts of Romagna and the legates sent from Rome or Avignon, while they governed almost unrestrictedly in their cities and the counties appertaining to them. When Pope Clement VI. sent the Cardinal D'Albornoz as legate to this state, about the middle of 1353, Romagna was lost to the Papacy. Albornoz regained, partially reconquered it; but he left the domination of the different families mostly as he found it, taking into account the inclinations and traditions of the cities themselves, and contenting himself in most cases with restoring the Papal authority [203] as the supreme presiding power. In this way the municipalities retained their statutory rights and financial administration, were exempted from taxes and levies on payment of a very moderate feudal contribution, and chose their officers themselves, or, as happened with regard to the office of Podestà, presented the candidates to the Pope or to his legate. The position of the Papal plenipotentiaries was, however, all the more difficult when they took up their residence in great cities, where factions always prevailed; and the tedious insurrection which, actively participated in by Florence, spread itself over Romagna at the time of the last Pope in Avignon, Gregory XI., beginning at the Patrimony and Umbria, showed on what a weak footing the Papal power stood in the trans-Apennine provinces not long after the death of Albornoz.

In the time of which we are treating circumstances were very different in different parts of Romagna, not only from internal and local causes, but also in consequence of the interference of neigbouring powers. For as already, in the middle of the preceding century, Giovanni Visconti, Archbishop and Lord of Milan, had seized upon Bologna, so did Gian Galeazzo fifty years later. Central Italy was probably preserved only by the death of the most powerful of the Visconti from subjection to their supremacy; and subsequently the last of that ambitious house did actually get the great city, though only for a time, into his power. Venice had already begun to fix her gaze on Romagna, and had taken a firm footing in Ravenna in 1440, having declared Ostasio da Polenta, her former protégé, to whom Filippo Maria Visconti had also attached himself, to have forfeited the ancient inheritance of his house, and sent him and his sons prisoners to Candia, whence none of them returned. While the republic of St. Mark thus began to gain territory on the seaside, and pursued a policy which some sixty years later brought about a most dangerous conflict with the Papacy, Florence made an attempt on the side of the Apennines, just as if the land [204] was without a master. In various ways, by purchase and mortgage, by the subjection of petty lords such as the wide-spread Guidi, and the voluntary resignation by the communes of their independence (which happened with Modigliana in 1445), the Republic had extended its dominions more and more over the ridge of the mountain range, and created the territory, reaching far towards Faenza and Forli, which down to our day has borne the name of Grand-ducal Romagna. This was, however, not enough. The Accomandigia which has been spoken of in connection with the Tuscan lords and territories extended likewise to many in Romagna,

and formed a political connection which would have been in direct opposition to the Papal sovereignty had this sovereignty not been so loose in its form. The Malatesta of Giaggiuolo, the Manfredi of Faenza and Imola, the Alidosi of Imola and Castel del Rio, the Ordelaffi of Forli, the counts of Montefeltro and Urbino, were all Florentine Raccomandati, as was the case with many families of Umbria, bordering upon Romagna and partly dependent upon her—the Accoromboni, Brancaleoni, Gabrielli of Gubbio, the Vitelli of Città di Castello, the Fortebracci of Montone, and the Trinci of Fuligno. The duration of the Accomandigia was very various; it was concluded for a certain number of years, just like a *condotta* or mercenary contract, or for life. The renewal followed then generally after a fixed interval, or from the successors of the stipulating parties in the former manner. The lords in the States of the Church made the reservation not to be obliged to fight against the Pope or his vicars, the legates or governors; some of them even refused to fight against the Angevin kings of Naples or the Roman people. What difficulties and perplexities must therefore arise from the frequent contests between the Popes and their feudatories, or between the former and their neighbours, out of such associations, is evident.

The state in this province actually most independent of Rome was [205]
Ferrara.[142] In the beginning of the thirteenth century the Ferrarese had elected Azzo VI. of Este their hereditary ruler, and the investiture granted him by Pope Innocent III. of considerable possessions in Romagna, as well as in the province of Ancona, had given the house much distinction. A century later, in consequence of a family quarrel, Venice attempted to put forth her claims to Ferrara, and Pope Clement V. was obliged to give way. The attempt of the latter to hold the town in the immediate control of the Church, at first successful, soon failed, and the citizens in 1317 recalled the family of Este, who were eleven years later invested with town and territory by Pope John XXII. The imperial fiefs acquired by the lords of Ravenna, from which they received in 1452 the ducal title from the Emperor Frederick III., nineteen years before Pope Paul II. granted it to Borso d'Este for Ferrara, made their position more independent than that of the other Papal feudatories; but certain rights relating to the republic of Venice, as well as the not always friendly neighbourhood on the lower Po, gave rise to complications which might easily become dangerous. Far less great in territory and power were the counts, afterwards dukes, of Urbino;[143] they, with their little land, were in the same political circumstances between Tuscany and Umbria, Romagna and Ancona. Their family was invested by Frederick Barbarossa with the hilly region of Montefeltro, which afterwards formed the north-western part of their state. In the first decade of the thirteenth century they established themselves in Urbino, which was subject to the Papacy, and gradually extended their possessions on both sides of the mountains—to the south by the acquisition of Gubbio and Cagli, to the north at a much later time as far as the Adriatic sea. They were [206]
a warlike race which had once given to the contest of Guelphs and Ghibellines a courageous general in Guido of Montefeltro, and had now one of the best and most highly-prized *condottiere* in Federigo, who assumed the government in 1444, and for whom Pope Sixtus IV. afterwards renewed the ducal title which his brother and predecessor had borne.

The Malatesta, Ordelaffi, Manfredi, and Alidosi were legally dependent only on the Popes. But they were just the families who caused perpetual strife. The Malatesta had established themselves in Rimini in the latter part of the thirteenth century, and in the following century enlarged their possessions by talent and skilful use of circumstances, but had again weakened their power by dividing into several lines. The three sons of Galeotto Malatesta, of whom the history of the wars of Visconti and Albornoz has much to relate, formed the lines of Rimini, Cesena, and Fano, the second of which expired in 1465 with Malatesta Novello; while Sigismondo, the legitimised son of the lord of Fano, had after the death without children of his uncle Carlo lord of Rimini, become his successor, and Rimini remained the centre of the dominions of this family. Sigismondo is a prototype of the city tyrants of the fifteenth century—talented, active, enterprising, a good warrior, the patron of intellectual effort, but passionate and untrustworthy, and stained with faithlessness and cruelty in a measure unusual even in those wild times. In 1447 and again in 1451 he fought in the pay of

Florence against the Neapolitan Aragonese, then shared in Anjou's enterprise against Naples, and was so pressed by Federigo of Montefeltro that only the republic of Venice, which he had served in the Morea, saved for him the remnant of his possessions. Pope Pius II. prevented Rimini from falling into the hands of the Venetians by investing Sigismondo with the sovereignty of the town and a little territory, reserving its lapse to the Holy See in case of his decease without rightful heirs, as had happened at Cesena in 1464. In 1466 [207] Pope Paul II. endeavoured to persuade Sigismondo, on his return from the Morea, to relinquish Rimini, offering him the government of Spoleto and Fuligno—certainly a rich compensation, had not the intention too evidently been to weaken the Malatesta by detaching them completely from their native country and from the sea. His son Roberto, born like himself out of wedlock, but legitimised by Pope Nicholas V., had taken possession of Cesena in 1464, but was unable to retain it against the Papal strength, as the inhabitants, tired of the endless oppressions of the violent dynasties, rather surrendered themselves to the direct rule of the Church, which allowed them greater freedom in their movements and did not annoy them with taxes.

Confusion enough prevailed in the house of the Ordelaffi, who had taken a firm footing in Forli in the last decades of the thirteenth century, and at times ruled over Cesena. Albornoz had no worse opponent than Cecco (Francesco) Ordelaffi, whom only Venetian protection saved from complete ruin. His son Sinibaldo had returned by means of Florentine support in 1375 to Forli, where he fell, ten years later, a victim to a conspiracy of his two nephews. Antonio, the son of one of the latter, had joined the Florentines during the wars of the last Visconti in Romagna, and in 1441 they received him into their Accomandigia, and obtained for him the investiture of Forli from Pope Nicholas V. His two sons Cecco and Pino ruled at first together, but the latter in 1466 rid himself by violence of the former, who had been as bitter an enemy of Florence as Cecco was an ardent friend of the Republic. With the Manfredi too, who ruled in Faenza from 1314, there was nothing but quarrels and repeated changes of party. The towns of Faenza and Imola belonged in common to the different members of the family, and in such a manner that the eldest always conducted the government. But at the death of Guido Antonio, Taddeo Manfredi took possession of Imola in 1448, to the prejudice of his uncle Astorre, to whom the [208] administration should have passed, and a contest arose which Pope Pius II., Francesco Sforza, and Florence tried to appease, without however procuring a real peace. Taddeo passed from one side to another, fought first in Florentine, then in Aragonese, and then again in Florentine pay. His uncle was not more constant. He had taken up arms for the Visconti in 1440, had been taken prisoner in the battle of Anghiari, and brought to Florence. Freed from prison, he had murdered him into whose power he had fallen in the battle at Bologna, for which Francesco Sforza set a price of a thousand gold florins on his head. Yet he succeeded in reconciling himself with the Republic, in whose service he fought against the Neapolitans in the Chiana valley in 1452. Florence had repeatedly concluded defensive alliances with both lines of the Manfredi since the year 1384. The Alidosi, once reigning in Imola, which they lost now to the Church, now to the Visconti, and now to the Manfredi, had been obliged to content themselves with the little Castel del Rio in the territory of Imola, towards the mountains, with which in 1392 they had joined the Florentine Accomandigia. A younger family had associated itself with these elder dynasties. Alessandro Sforza, brother of the Duke of Milan, had in 1445 acquired the lordship over Pesaro, by the cession of Galeazzo Malatesta, maternal grandfather of his wife Costanza da Varano, and maintained it under many changes of fortune. Pope Nicholas V. had invested him with the government; he had been an essential support to his brother in the contest for Milan, and he afterwards performed mercenary service for King Ferrante and for Venice.[144]

Among all the towns of this province, Bologna was the largest, richest, and most powerful, and would have been destined to exercise the greatest influence on the fate of Romagna, had not irreconcilable factions weakened her internally, and robbed her of [209] the fruits of that heroic time in which she so gloriously conquered the Emperor Frederick II., and the lion of San Marco. The supremacy of the Church, which obtained greater authority here in proportion to the weakening of the civil constitutions of Lombardy

and the bordering countries, was not able to suppress the factions which in 1337 brought the Pepoli to power, and thirteen years later gave the city into the hands of the Visconti, from whom Cardinal Albornoz wrested it after a possession of ten years. Even then the quarrels did not cease, which in the beginning of the fifteenth century brought the Visconti back again, who were again expelled by Cardinal Baldassar Cossa, to return a third time in 1438 and assume the position beside the Bentivogli (who had risen to the first rank among the contending native families) which belonged to the Popes. The evident endeavour of Filippo Maria Visconti to convert this relation into unlimited power, soon led to war. Supported by Florence and Venice, who fought here in their own cause as well as in that of Bologna, Annibale Bentivoglio completely defeated the Milanese army, August 14, 1443, on the plain of San Giorgio, only to fall two years afterwards beneath the dagger of murderers of high rank who were in league with the Duke. It was especially important for the Florentines not to let a party serviceable to their hereditary enemy rise to power in a city which they rightly regarded as a protection against the power of the Visconti. The members of the Bentivoglio family were, however, either too young, or not in a position, or not inclined to take the lead. Under these circumstances they hit upon a peculiar idea. The exiled Count of Poppi, Francesco da Guidi, then in Bologna, is said to have related that a cousin of Annibale Bentivoglio had had a love affair with a girl in the above mentioned castle of Casentino, and had a son who lived there with his maternal relatives. Cosimo de' Medici, and, at his suggestion, Neri Capponi, who knew more about Casentino than anyone, took up the matter, and the end was that Sante, the nephew of Antonio [210] da Cascese, was recognised as Sante Bentivoglio, waited upon in Florence most respectfully by deputies from Bologna, who escorted him to their city, where he succeeded in maintaining himself till his death by prudence, not unmixed with acts of violence towards his opponents.

As the Florentines had done the most in enabling Sante Bentivoglio to seize on the power, so they made it easier for him to preserve it. The Bolognese ambassadors had represented how the position of the city was such that they must throw themselves into the arms of the Duke of Milan if the Holy See did not deal mercifully with them. 'Beg his Holiness,' so wrote the Signoria on February 3, 1446, to their ambassador to Pope Eugenius IV., Paolo da Diaceto, [145] 'to be gracious towards the poor Bolognese people, who have been so afflicted by oppression and misery, by fierce civil discord and strife, that it must move everyone to pity. The Bolognese hope from the gentleness of his Holiness, and the authority of the Republic of Venice, that it may be possible to discover some decent form of paying the Pope a reasonable tribute; but remaining otherwise in their present freedom, without Papal legates or other officers in the name of the Church. Do you make the observation that with people who are accustomed to bloodshed and full of suspicion, violence does not suffice; and that one must rather temporise in order to attain from them afterwards by love what violence cannot effect.' So much, indeed, Bologna did not attain in the agreement concluded at Rome with Pope Nicholas V. on August 24, 1447, for she was obliged to receive a legate who shared the administration with the senate and the city magistrates. But the choice of these bodies was free; the city had its own militia and unrestricted power over its revenue, while the Papal troops were bound to protect her from foreign enemies. It is clear that such a relation might easily afford an opportunity for difficulties, and it is [211] to be accounted a merit in Sante Bentivoglio that none arose under his government. When he died on October 1, 1463, his party appointed Giovanni, the son of Annibale and Donnina Visconti, then twenty years old, as his successor. By a treaty concluded with Pope Paul II. in 1466, the latter acquired a legal power such as none had had before him. This treaty secured him a seat and two votes in the Senate, which consisted almost entirely of his partisans and was renewed every six months, and thus placed him at the head of the citizens who, after Sante's death, had already shown themselves so complaisant that they had conferred upon the youthful Giovanni the dignity of Gonfaloniere, to which only men of mature age could usually attain. By his marriage with Ginevra Sforza of Pesaro, Giovanni Bentivoglio entered into relationship with Milan, in which he hoped to gain some support against any hostility on the part of the Pope. That he held fast to his friendship with Florence was, to

say nothing of the tradition of his predecessors, caused by his connections with Sforza. We have seen that it was he who gave Piero de' Medici information of the unfriendly movements of Ercole d'Este.[146]

This was the state of Romagna when the country became the scene of warlike events. The Florentines had not ceased to negotiate with Venice, but in vain. Only by assuming that this Republic wished to fish in troubled waters can we find a key to the events of 1467. The last Visconti had accustomed his neighbours to his sending his *condottiere* upon them without declaration of war, under the pretext of dismissing them from his service. Venice had, however, not yet given so bad an example. There was a pretence of pacifying Bartolommeo Colleone, whose mercenary compact was expiring; but the *condottiere* must have known better the real intentions of the Signoria, for he would hardly have entered upon a daring undertaking had he feared their serious displeasure, instead of [212] being certain of their opportune support, at least with money. When the Florentines saw that war was imminent, they concluded on January 4, 1467, at Rome and with Papal consent, the compact already mentioned with King Ferrante and the Duke of Milan. It was called 'for the preservation of peace in Italy,' and Venice acceded to it in due form; while Siena, Lucca, and the Margrave of Mantua were invited to join.[147] On the 18th, the alliance was proclaimed in Florence. An extraordinary tax of a hundred thousand gold florins was proclaimed to cover the first expenses of the war. In the preceding November the government had been already empowered by a special law passed in the Balia to enlist 1,500 horse and 500 foot, or, if necessary, twice as many; with power to raise extraordinary taxes, which excited violent complaints, as contrary to the freedom of the people and to good order,[148] for though they wished to be safe they did not like to pay. As the Duke of Milan had more troops than were necessary, two thousand of his cavalry were taken into pay. Donato Acciaiuoli had conducted the negotiations with Sforza. His cousin Agnolo was an exile, his sister-in-law a daughter of Diotisalvi Neroni; but his patriotism was trusted, and he deserved this confidence. Federigo of Montefeltro was appointed general-in-chief, and he accepted the offer, though Venice tried to turn him from it. Astorre and Taddeo Manfredi both took service with the Florentines. The Neapolitans, under the command of Napoleon Orsini, Count of Tagliacozza, crossed the Tronto in April, twelve squadrons of cavalry strong, and joined Federigo's troops in Romagna.

On May 10, Bartolommeo Colleone crossed the Po. The lords of Mirandola and Carpi, Ercole of Este, and the Count Deifebo of Anguillara, who had been banished by the Pope, and was son of the [213] old disturber of the environs of Rome, had joined him immediately. On his further march, the Ordelaffi of Forli and Alessandro Sforza of Pesaro came to him, the latter of whom, won over by Venice, opposed his own nephew; while Astorre Manfredi faithlessly turned his back upon Florence. Colleone's army soon numbered 8,000 horse and 6,000 foot. Galeazzo Maria Visconti, persuaded by the representations of the Count of Urbino, now first set out with his troops and marched against the Count by way of Bologna, from whence men were sent to reinforce the allies. The general of the latter, now of equal strength with Colleone, would willingly have given battle; but he, on the one side, true to the old system of marches and counter-marches, avoided a decision, and on the other the presence of the Duke of Milan, whose experience did not equal his rank and claims, hindered the allied commander in his movements. At last Sforza was persuaded to visit Florence, and yield the command to Roberto da Sanseverino. Meanwhile the Count of Urbino attacked the enemy on July 25 at Molinella, in the territory of Imola. From a skirmish of the outposts of both armies a general battle arose, which was all the more bloody because light field-pieces were employed, and a Milanese troop of horse was enticed into an ambuscade; whereon, the Count, whose horse had been killed under him, commanded that no quarter should be given. The fight lasted for seven hours, in which, according to one of the lowest estimates, 300 men and 400 horses were killed—a great number for Italian warfare at that time. At nightfall they ceased to fight on Colleone's proposal, and then the Count of Urbino and Alessandro Sforza, whose son Constanzo was amongst the prisoners, rode up to one another and shook hands.

The battle was, as we have said, undecided. The dread of the Venetians that their frontiers might be threatened—a dread which urged them to stir up Savoy and the Genoese exiles to make a diversion for the Duke of Milan, which was successful—shows on which side the advantage was. To this was added, that King [214] Ferrante, however much he longed for peace, for which he exerted himself to the utmost by his ambassadors, voted for energetic continuance of the war in order to bring peace, and sent considerable reinforcements through his son Alfonso. Those reinforcements were indeed outweighed by the conduct of the Duke of Milan, who, discontented that a battle had taken place in his absence, returned home notwithstanding all warnings, and called his troops home to protect his own country. Galeazzo Maria has left a sad name in history; but that he did not lack political insight is shown by the representations he made to a Venetian ambassador travelling through Milan, in respect to the policy of the Republic. 'You Venetians,' he said, 'who possess the most beautiful state in Italy, you are very wrong not to be contented with that, but to destroy your peace and that of your neighbours. If you knew how everyone is against you, your hair would stand on end, and you would leave all in peace. Do you suppose these Italian powers leagued against you really wish each other well? Not in the least. The necessity of protecting themselves against you has brought them together, and each one will do what it can to clip your wings. Do you think to have accomplished something grand by arming all Italy? Let others live! You have set everything in excitement by this Bartolommeo of yours; you will see how far it brings you profit. You have expended a quantity of money, and caused others great expense too; you preach peace and sow war. May you reap the result. At the death of my father, it seemed to me that a beautiful estate had fallen to me, and I thought of nothing but leading a pleasant life; you have obliged me to join King Ferrante, and to win my father's principal adherents who I formerly did not know. The Pope who has sprung from your nobility will act more against you than all the rest; and if the war lasts, he will demand Faenza, Forli, Ravenna, and Cervia back again. The King of Naples is your declared enemy; and if his power equalled his evil intentions, it [215] would go hardly with you. How Florence and Genoa are disposed towards you, you know, and it is not much better with the other Italian commonwealths. You throw your money away, and have nothing but disgrace from it; for it is said that, according to your custom, you wish to swallow everything. Now you are in pecuniary difficulties. I know with what pains you collect levies, and how your criers march through the whole town. I know that you have raised loans from banks and private persons which you will not be able to repay.' ('He spoke,' adds the ambassador, 'as if he had witnessed everything in Venice.') 'Ruling lords have one great advantage over republics—they act for themselves, and swiftly; while in these, the individual is always dependent on several. A Signor with fifty thousand ducats is worth more than a free State with a hundred thousand, because he can superintend the soldiers, and these act in his presence. It depends upon you to have peace or war. If you choose war, you will see all leagued against you, not only here, but beyond the mountains. Believe me, your enemies will not sleep. I know all that you have plotted against me with the Duke of Savoy and Fiesco, and the Archbishop of Genoa. I pray you, annoy no one: keep peace for your own advantage and that of Christendom.'[149]

Galeazzo Maria was right. His warning regarding foreigners referred to the French King, who directed a letter, written in an angry tone, to the Republic, saying that he knew of their machinations to disturb the peace, and entreating them not to cause the Duke of Milan any further annoyances in his territory, if they did not wish that he should regard their foes as his friends.[150] But Galeazzo Maria, on his side, had given Venice and Savoy much cause for suspicion and complaints, planning even then an attack upon Vercelli, the possession of which he had been promised at his [216] marriage by King Louis XI. as dowry.[151] So stood it then with Italian affairs and Italian princes. The Venetians, moreover, relied on the want of harmony among the allies, which the Duke could not deny. None trusted the other. It was the Florentines who principally held the league together. However much King Ferrante wished to agree with Piero de' Medici, and whatever the Republic might effect through her financial connections, she was yet too weak in military matters to exercise preponderating influence. Between the King and

Sforza distrust and aversion prevailed, and Ferrante said repeatedly that he suspected a separate peace with the enemy, in which he was not deceived. The Pope said neither Yes nor No. He had entered the league, but entrance into the league did not imply fulfilment of the stipulations. He wished to free Romagna from the war that desolated the country, but he had no inclination to make overtures to Venice, his native country; always put the tardiness of the Neapolitan's movements forward as a pretext; wished for peace after the battle of La Molinella, especially because he feared being drawn into the thick of the contest by the allies, and wished to prescribe the conditions of this peace, while he really did so little to bring it about. But beside this, the war had displayed more than any other the defects of the Italian armies, and from this point of view it deserves more attention than it would otherwise claim. When we consider that the two most famous generals of Italy at that day, Federigo of Urbino and Bartolommeo, stood at the head of a considerable army; that a Duke of Milan and Crown Prince of Naples were there; that the lords of Lombardy and Romagna, who passed their lives in arms, and the best Neapolitan warriors, the Sanseverini, Orsini, Davalos, &c., were in the field; when we consider, on the other hand, the miserable results of this eight months' campaign, we shall anticipate the approaching complete [217] decline of that system of war which Alberigo da Barbiano had inaugurated a century before, and which had passed through many glorious days of military art and valour, although an evil lay in the very existence of mercenary troops from which other countries had to suffer.

The Neapolitan troops were certainly not among the worst, and had practised leaders. And yet how did they prosper? Even before they had marched out, there were the most unfavourable opinions as to their quality and discipline. 'When you hear from ill-wishers,' wrote the King on February 10, 1467, to one of his agents, 'that our soldiers will run away as soon as they have passed the frontiers, you must not heed this, for, with God's assistance, we hope to send them out in such excellence and order, that they would rather attract others than go over to them.' But the result did not correspond with the expectation of the monarch, who, however, devoted untiring care to military affairs. The Duke of Calabria employed three months in crossing the Tronto and dragging his army through Tuscany and Umbria, while the enemy was in the heart of Romagna. The militia dispersed without fighting. 'It grieves my very soul,' wrote the King on August 1, 'this flight of a part of our men-at-arms. But as the fault lies in their badness and cowardice, and not in the treatment they had experienced from us, we will bear it more easily.' And on January 15, 1468, during the truce: 'Most of the soldiers leave the camp and return home, which does not promote the general good, and is highly displeasing to us.' The Duke of Calabria was amusing himself in the meantime in Florence and Milan, whither his consort had gone to sweeten for him the hard campaign, in which he never faced the foe. With the money advanced by the Florentine banks, those of the Medici, Strozzi, Gondi, &c., the desertion of the enemy's horse and foot was purchased, while the Neapolitans, as they remained without pay, acted in friendly countries, in the districts of Arezzo and Cortona, as if they had to do with their enemies.

Besides Louis XI., another foreign sovereign tried to put a stop to [218] a war so prejudicial to the common Christian interest in a moment when the progress of the Turks menaced both Italy and the Danubian provinces. It was Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, who sent George Hasznoz, afterwards Archbishop of Colocza to Venice, in order to bring about an arrangement.[152] The Hungarian envoy, getting nothing but empty words, went to Colleone's camp, and meeting there with the same ill-success, proceeded to Florence and Rome, to give an account of his negotiation. More than six months had passed since the day of La Molinella in useless marching and treating, in the midst of mutual reproaches and quarrelling. Tommaso Soderini at Venice, Otto Niccolini in Rome, acted with zeal and ability as Florentine ambassadors; the Marquis of Ferrara did his best as mediator; Florence itself had made many efforts, but in vain. At last, on Candlemas day 1468, Pope Paul II. proclaimed peace in the church of Sta. Maria Araceli, on the Capitol. The existing league, including Venice, was to be renewed. Bartolommeo Colleone was to be sent to Albania to fight the Turks, with an annual salary of 100,000 gold florins as captain-general,

after resigning the places in the Romagna held garrisoned by him. He had, besides, demanded thrice the sum as compensation for the expenses of a war which he had himself begun! King Ferrante protested four days later; shortly before, he had declared he would do the Holy Father's pleasure in everything reasonable, but he would rather lose everything than give Colleone a farthing. Galeazzo Maria was of the same opinion; he said his money should not serve for an attack upon his state. The Florentines seemed to have most wished to come to terms, and were much disturbed when the King, Sforza, and Venice took up arms again. Finally, the Marquis of Ferrara succeeded in reconciling the parties, though Pope Paul was very angry; and on April 25 the definitive peace was proclaimed at [219]
Rome, and two days later at Florence, in which Colleone was not mentioned, and every one was to receive his own again. In Florence the peace was solemnised by church festivals and illuminations. Bartolommeo Colleone, then seventy-five years old, but still in full strength, did not go to Albania, where the death of Scanderbeg, which had happened in the February of the same year, 1468, would have made a valiant general necessary, if the tactics of Italian *condottieri* had been suitable for such a land and such an enemy. A throne such as the Florentine exiles had placed in his view, he certainly was as far from obtaining as he was from reaping laurels in his last campaigns. But he enjoyed for seven years longer the highest honours paid to him by the Republic of Venice and foreign and Italian princes, in his castle, where he died February 1, 1475, having made a use of his colossal fortune which more honoured him than many of the means by which it had been brought together.

The ill-success of Bartolommeo Colleone's undertaking put an end of course to all the exiles' hopes of returning to their homes.

The biographer of Donato Acciaiuoli, Angiolo Segni, observes rightly, 'The war excited by the exiles was soon ended. Bartolommeo's army was not defeated in battle with the allies, but it was equally far from conquering, and the cause of the rebels was lost thereby. For those who ruled in Florence it was enough not to be defeated; not so with those in the field. Only by a victory could they expel their enemies, and regain their home.' All the distinguished men of the losing side had been with Colleone—foremost of all Diotisalvi Neroni and Niccolò Soderini, who in Venice opposed his own brother, whom Florence had sent thither as her representative. Agnolo Acciaiuoli joined them at last. Persuaded at length by the representations of his friends, he had quitted Barletta and gone to Naples; King Ferrante, who, remembering old connections, wished him well, vainly sought to persuade him not to [220]
trust to the matter, nor to break the exile pronounced on him. He went to Rome, and from thence to Romagna. When he saw the organisation of Colleone's troops, he is said to have anticipated the result at once. When peace was concluded, he was declared a rebel with all the others, his property confiscated, and a price put upon his head; he returned to Naples, where he lived on the support afforded him by the King, and passed his days mostly in pious exercises and the companionship of the Carthusian monks, whose order had stood in intimate connection with his family for more than a century. Niccolò Soderini went to Ravenna, where the Emperor Frederick III. made him a knight and Palatine on his second journey to Rome—cheap honours then, which could hardly have sweetened the exile in which he died, 1474. Niccolò, says Alamamo Rinuccini, was far more courageous than prudent; he did not know fear. Had his advice been followed when he wished directly to give battle, his party would not perhaps have had to submit, but Messer Luca, either cowardly or bribed, betrayed his party and himself. Diotisalvi Neroni, at first banished to the island of Sicily, saw sixteen years of exile pass away, and died in extreme old age at Rome, where his tombstone is to be seen in the Dominican church, Sta. Maria sopra Minerva, which contains many Florentine monuments.[153]

One event during the war shows how high the waves of party [221]
feeling rose. Lucrezia de' Medici was at the Bagno a Morba with her son Giuliano, the bath in the district of Volterra employed, perhaps even in the times of the Romans, for rheumatic complaints. It is a lonely spot on the southern side of the chain of hills which, separating the valley of the Arno and Elsa from the sea-shore, bears the old Etruscan town on its ridge. The retired situation had long attracted many a prowler, and made the desolate region unsafe. One evening a hasty messenger from Piero came to his wife with the command that she was to repair without delay with the youth to

Volterra, as it had been announced in Florence from San Gemignano that the exiles meditated a *coup-de-main* to carry off both mother and son, whom they needed as hostages. Giuliano had set off for Florence that same day; Madonna Lucrezia, ill as she was, was carried to Volterra, fifteen miles distant, in a litter by night, by the arrangement of the officials of the place and vicinity, and here she was in safety. After having rested here, where she was kindly received, she returned to her family.[154]

CHAPTER IV.

PIERO DE' MEDICI'S LATER LIFE. LORENZO'S MARRIAGE.

After the Colleonic war the Republic had peace for a time. For though she took an auxiliary part in the contest for Rimini, which broke out in 1469, her affairs were little influenced by it, and her territory not even touched. Sigismondo Malatesta, who had just been in negotiation with the *condottiere* of Bergamo, but had held aloof from the strife and entered the Papal service, died on October 9, 1468. When we review the variety of events that followed close upon one another in this man's life, and then consider that he only reached the age of fifty-one, we shall form some idea of the restless character of the epoch. According to the last stipulation, Pope Paul II. expected the reversion of Rimini, as Sigismondo had died without legitimate heirs, but his natural son Roberto, then only six and twenty, succeeded in taking possession of the city, and formed numerous allies, when the Pope prepared to expel him by force. When Alessandro Sforza undertook the siege of Rimini with the Papal army, Naples, Florence, Milan, and Urbino, came to the assistance of Malatesta, and on August 30, 1469, Sforza suffered a severe defeat, whereas the Pope's allies, the Venetians, did not appear till after the event. Paul II. wished at first to continue the contest, but resolved the following year to come to terms, a decision confirmed by his conviction that Venice thought more of extending her own power in Romagna than of supporting him, and also by the progress of the Turks, which caused serious anxiety, not only to [223] Venice, whose possessions in the Levant were threatened, but to all Italian powers. Paul's successor had, at a critical moment, no reason to regret that Roberto Malatesta remained in Rimini.

It was a fortunate thing for Florence that peace was concluded, for the expenses had long been enormous. The allies seemed to think that the Florentine purse was inexhaustible. When Galeazzo Maria arrived in July 1467 from the camp, he carried an open empty purse at his belt: they were obliged to pay him a large sum, says a contemporary, to enable him to return to the camp.[155] At the same time the sum of 1,200,000 gold florins was raised, partly by a property tax, partly by additional imposts, to which the clergy and those otherwise exempted from taxation were forced to contribute, while the half of their salaries was deducted from all officials outside the city. The heavy expenses of the war did not, however, hinder the expenditure of large sums for other purposes, as, for example, in February 1468, even before the peace was ratified, 37,000 gold florins were paid for Sarzana and the neighbouring castle, which the Genoese Fregosi sold to the Republic, a bargain which caused violent disputes afterwards. There was no lack of complaints of the great expenses. Even before the war numerous failures had taken place, and created a serious panic in the commercial world. The war had crippled industry and commerce. The government could not blind itself to the prevailing discontent, and if they sought to amuse the crowd by festivals in honour of foreign princes, and in other ways, they only increased the expenses of the city. The Duke of Calabria, who had his winter quarters in the Pisan territory, was twice in Florence in the autumn of 1467, where great honour was shown to the son of the most powerful of the allies. In the following May, after the peace, he resided in Pisa, and informed Lorenzo de' Medici, through Luigi Pulci,[156] that he thought of spending the festival of St. John at Florence, and [224] recommended him to see that it should be brilliantly celebrated.

Pleasure-making and expensive pursuits were certainly ill-adapted to the frame of mind which prevailed in Florence in the latter times of the war, and to the general condition of affairs. 'The whole city,' wrote Niccolò Roberti, the Ferrarese ambassador, to Duke Borso, on January 12, 1468,[157] 'is discontented and in the worst humour. Not only enemies, but even most friends, agree in the opinion, that if peace be not soon concluded, all must emigrate, or something new be resolved on, for it is no longer possible to bear the burdens. Few people work, and shops are daily closed. The one consolation is, that peace cannot be far distant. Three days ago a meeting of the council took place, and it was determined to collect

money for the equipment of twenty galleys, as it is said the Duke of Milan and King Ferrante intend to put a powerful fleet to sea, and attack Venice in the gulf, if she does not agree to peace. It is certainly whispered by some that if the money were to be had, Piero de' Medici would take it for himself.' So little satisfactory was the state of affairs, and so great the discontent. When peace was concluded after long uncertainty, a contagious illness tormented the citizens. 'The pestilence is in many houses here,'—thus writes the ambassador from Ferrara on August 12—'and although, on account of the imperfection of the statistical reports, the number of deaths cannot be ascertained, they are estimated at from six or eight daily. Piero de' Medici shuts himself up, and, it is said, will go to Careggi next week.' Public festivals were rather out of place.

Lorenzo was then nineteen years old. As his father was hindered by ill-health from appearing in public, or taking an active share in civic festivities, the gifted young man, who had shown in the Pitti conspiracy how ripe was his understanding, and how he could [225] combine forethought with prompt action, naturally was brought prominently before the public. In festivities he took the foremost place, as became the position of his family and his own inclinations. On February 7, 1469, a festival took place at Florence, which forms a brilliant page, not only in the history of Lorenzo de' Medici's life, but also in the history of Italian poetry of the time closely connected with it. Niccolò Machiavelli, in describing this tournament, accuses Lorenzo of having sought to amuse the people in order to avert their attention from his politics. Savonarola had expressed the same opinion long before. But it is unfair to ascribe the splendid tourneys of Lorenzo, the spirited amusements then common to high-born and vivacious youths, to indirect political motives. When in 1467 Braccio Martelli, the son of a distinguished family allied by friendship with the Medici, celebrated his marriage, there was a tournament, in which Lorenzo de' Medici took part. Among the young ladies present was Lucrezia Donati. The name of the ancient and ambitious race from which she sprang was mentioned in the first ranks of those who in the days of Guelphs and Ghibellines, and afterwards in those of the White and Black factions, filled the city with sanguinary quarrels. Dante Alighieri, who allied himself in marriage to that family without making peace with them, has bestowed on Piccarda, a daughter of the Donati—of whom he makes her brother Forese say, he knows not whether her beauty or her goodness is her greatest ornament—a crown whose glory far outshines historical fame.[158] In the introduction to one of his youthful poems, which will be mentioned afterwards, Lorenzo has described the object of his early love, whose name, never mentioned by him, has been made known by his friends and admirers. The story of the rise of his love is a mixture of truth and fiction, as he connects it with the death of a young girl who was beloved by Lorenzo's brother, a circumstance [226] which belonged, however, to a later time. We know nothing of Lucrezia Donati but what is said of her by the young poet—who at this tournament begged for a wreath of violets which she held in her hand, and promised to give a similar entertainment in her honour—and what his friends say of her, one of whom puts a verse into her mouth, in the pompous style of the stilted poetry of the fifteenth century which Lorenzo mainly contributed to do away with; while another seeks to persuade her to return the young man's love.

Nearly two years passed before Lorenzo could fulfil his promise at the wedding of Braccio Martelli. The times were not favourable for festivities. At length the Piazza Sta. Croce witnessed the brilliant spectacle. The Piazza differed from the present one in the appearance of the surrounding buildings, but its form was the same, and well suited for such purposes, so that many a grand pageant had been displayed here. Tournaments were in vogue then and at a much later period. And though they were mostly free from danger, they yet afforded opportunity to exhibit and to try knightly skill, while they led to a not ignoble expenditure of money, to the display of costly weapons and beautiful horses, and to an ingenious though sometimes affected invention of devices and emblems. Numerous were the distinguished young men who took part in the chivalrous games. Besides two stranger knights, Lorenzo's brother-in-law, Guglielmo Pazzi, and his brother Francesco, two Pitti, Donigi Pucci, Salvestro Benci, Benedetto Salutati, Braccio de' Medici, Carlo Borromeo, Piero Vespucci, and Jacopo Bracciolini, figured there. Who could have dreamed then that more than one of the combatants would be victims to a plot against that very Medici with whom all

seemed to be at peace!

The costumes and state of all who took part in this tournament were exceedingly splendid, and especially gorgeous was the array of [227]
Lorenzo himself.[159] Before him rode nine trumpeters, and a page bearing a red and white banner, and accompanied by two others. Next came two squires in full armour, whom the Count of Urbino and Roberto Sanseverino had placed at Lorenzo's disposition; twelve young noblemen on horseback, Giuliano de' Medici in a tabard of silver brocade with a silk doublet embroidered in pearls and silver, and a black velvet baret cap, adorned with three feathers made of gold thread, set with large pearls and rubies. The youth's attire was estimated at eight thousand ducats. Now came five mounted pages with fifers and drummers, and then Lorenzo himself. He wore a surcoat with a shoulder-piece of red and white silk, and across it a silk scarf embroidered with fresh and withered roses, and the device 'Le temps revient' in large pearls. On the velvet baret cap, adorned with a great number of pearls, he wore a feather made of gold thread, set with rubies and diamonds, and having in the centre a pearl of five hundred ducats value. The diamond on his shield, called 'Il Libro,' was estimated at more than two thousand ducats. The horse, a present of King Ferrante, which he afterwards exchanged for one sent him by Borso d'Este, wore red and white velvet housings, embroidered with pearls. When the tournament began he laid aside the velvet surcoat, and attired himself in another of Alexandrian velvet with gold fringes, and the golden lilies of France in an azure field, which he wore also on the shield; while he put on a helmet with three blue feathers, instead of the baret cap. Ten young men on horseback and sixty-four on foot, armed and helmeted, concluded the splendid procession, which, as we need not say, formed the climax of this brilliant tournament. Lorenzo has made the following note of the festivity and its result: 'In order to do [228]
as others, I appointed a tournament on the Piazza Santa Croce, with great splendour and at great expense, so that it cost about ten thousand gold florins. Although I was young and of no great skill, the first prize was awarded to me, namely, a helmet inlaid with silver and surmounted by a figure of Mars.' We see that it was only a step from citizen to prince. The court poet was not wanting. A long poem in eight-lined stanzas describes the festival and those who took part in it, with all the details and profuse display of mythological learning, and not without allusions to a yet more glorious future. Whether it is by Luca Pulci or by his more famous and talented brother, the poet of the Morgante, remains undecided. It is hardly worthy of the latter, although it is not wanting in poetical beauty; its chief fault lies, not in the poverty of separate parts, but in the trivial subject and the fulsome multiplication of details. Comparison with a later poem on a similar subject throws into relief the deficiencies of this.[160]

Long after the tournament at Sta. Croce had taken place, poets continued to celebrate the love of Lorenzo for Lucrezia Donati, and Lorenzo did not cease to record his feelings of joy and sorrow, hope and fear, as they rose and fell, in a series of sonnets and canzonets which have procured one of the foremost and honoured places among the poets of the fifteenth century for him in whose hand the fate of his native country lay for years. But while the poet occupied himself thus with the lady of his thoughts, the fortune of the man who was to be the head of his family and his state took a decisive turn. When he held the tournament he had been already betrothed for some time; indeed, the tournament was intended to celebrate his betrothal! Piero de' Medici did not follow Cosimo's principle of choosing for his son and heir a bride among the daughters of the land. He seems to have been indifferent to the aversion with which [229]
intermarriages with foreign baronial families were generally regarded at Florence. Corso Donati, the brother of Piccarda, had once aroused a rebellion against himself which cost him his life, by proposing to offer his hand to a daughter of Uguccione della Fagginola, the powerful partisan and friend of Dante. The news that Lorenzo de' Medici intended to enter into an alliance with one of Rome's oldest and greatest families was heard with displeasure at Florence, because the people suspected that the object was to raise himself above the ordinary position of a citizen, and to seek foreign support. Clarice degli Orsini[161] was the daughter of Jacopo, lord of Monterondo, and of his second wife, Maddalena, daughter of Carlo, lord of Bracciano, and sister of Napoleon, who gave this castle its present grand form, and of Latino, one of the most influential

cardinals of his time, whom Pope Nicholas V. adorned with the purple. Orso, Clarice's grandfather, had met his death at the battle of Zagonara, 1424, which was so disastrous for the Florentines, and in which he had fought under Carlo Malatesta for the Republic against the Visconti. Of her father, who possessed in common with a brother the castle of Monte Rotondo, which stands on a low hill, fifteen miles from Rome, commanding the Salarian road leading to the Sabine hills, there is little to tell, except that he founded a Minorite convent at this place, in Pope Nicholas V.'s reign. In the beginning of 1467, when Lorenzo was only eighteen years old, the negotiations had already begun between the two families; after the youth had seen Clarice, probably on the occasion of the journey to Naples as his father's representative, and, apparently, without her [230] or her mother's previous knowledge. The plan of the union had undoubtedly originated with a maternal uncle of the bride, Roberto, who took part in the Colleonic war, and fought at La Molinella. In March of the same year, Lucrezia de' Medici repaired to Rome, to conclude the affair with her brother Giovanni Tornabuoni, who seems to have conducted the preliminary proceedings. The letter which she addressed to her husband on her first meeting with her future daughter-in-law and her family[162] is a characteristic example of the manners of the time, as well as of the views of a family which combined the positions of citizen and prince in so exceptional a manner:

'I have repeatedly written to you on my way, and informed you of the state of the roads. On Thursday I arrived here, and was received by Giovanni with a joy which you may imagine. I have received your letter of the 21st, and it made me happy to learn your pain has entirely ceased. But each day seems a year to me till I am again with you, to your joy and mine.

'As I was going to St. Peter's on Thursday, I met Madonna Maddalena Orsini, the cardinal's sister, with her daughter, fifteen or sixteen years old. The latter was attired in the Roman style, with the handkerchief on her head, and appeared to me very beautiful in this costume, of fair complexion and tall; but as she was veiled, I could not see her so well as I wished. Yesterday I went to see the aforesaid Monsignore Orsini, who was at his sister's house, adjoining his own. When I had spoken to him in your name, his sister entered with the daughter, who wore a closely-fitting dress, such as the Roman women wear, and was without kerchief on the head. Our conversation lasted for some time, so that I had opportunity of looking at her. The girl is, [231] as I have said, above the middle height, of fair complexion and pleasant manners, and, if less beautiful than our daughters, of great modesty; so that it will be easy to teach her our manners. She is not blonde, for no one is so here, and her thick hair has a reddish tinge. Her face is round in shape, but does not displease me. The neck is beautiful, but rather thin, or, more properly, delicately shaped: the bosom I could not see, as they cover it entirely here, but it seems to me well-formed. She does not bear her head so proudly as our girls do, but inclining a little forwards, which I ascribe to the timidity that seems to predominate in her. Her hands are long and delicate. On the whole, the girl seems to be far above the ordinary type, but she is not to be compared to Maria, Lucrezia, and Bianca. Lorenzo has seen her himself, and you can hear from him whether she pleases him. I am sure that whatever he and you decide will be good. May God rule it for the best.

'The girl's father is Signor Jacopo Orsini of Monterotondo, her mother the cardinal's sister. She has two brothers: one has devoted himself to arms, and stands in good repute with the lord Orso; the other is priest and Papal sub-deacon. They possess the half of Monterotondo, the other half of which belongs to their uncle, who has two sons and three daughters. Besides this, three castles belong to them—that is to say, to the brothers of the girl, and, as far as I hear, they are rich, and likely to be richer. For, not to mention that they are on their mother's side nephews of the cardinal, the archbishop, Napoleon, and the knight, they are on the father's side cousins in the second degree to these lords, who have a great affection for them. This is about all that I have learned. If you decide to await our return before proceeding to other measures, do what seems good to you. I think of leaving on Monday week, and will write to you on the way. We shall be there at the time fixed. May God's grace lead us safely home, and preserve you in health. I do not write to Madonna Contessina because it seems unnecessary. Recommend me to her, and greet the [232] girls and Lorenzo and Giuliano.—Your

'Lucrezia.[163]

'Rome, March 28, 1467.'

In a letter addressed to Piero shortly before the departure she

says, ‘If you will hear my opinion at my return, I believe you will be satisfied, especially as the girl pleases Lorenzo. We have not seen her again, and I know not if we shall; but that does not signify. You say I express myself coldly; I do so in order to attain the end more certainly, and believe that there is here no marriageable girl more beautiful.’

The remainder of the year 1467, and the greater part of the following, was occupied in treaties. In November 1468 Filippo de’ Medici, Archbishop of Pisa, a distant relative of Cosimo’s line, went to Rome, in order to proceed to a conclusion, and the choice of a high prelate shows in itself what position the Medici took and meant to maintain towards the distinguished Romans. Piero’s brother-in-law at last came to an agreement with the Orsini with respect to the conditions. On November 27, the bride’s uncle, Cardinal Latino, wrote as follows to Piero de’ Medici:[164] ‘Magnifice vir, affinis tanquam frater carissime, salutem. With great joy have we ratified what Giovanni Tornabuoni conveyed to us on your behalf. Thank God, I hope it is concluded for the welfare of your house and ours, [233] for it is a joy to us old people as well as to the women and young folks. At Christmas we hope to see our nephew Lorenzo, or at least his brother. We shall organise festivities, brilliant, or modest, or simple, just as you like and will inform us, as all our thoughts will only be directed towards carrying out your wishes. Be assured all that we are and have is at your disposal. Take care, therefore, to preserve yourselves in health and joy, for you, like us, can need nothing else.’ On the same day the Archbishop of Pisa wrote to Piero, to announce to him the conclusion of the contract:[165] Clarice’s dowry was to amount to six thousand Roman scudi in gold and trousseau. Should she die childless and without a will, the dowry was to revert to her family. Otherwise the conditions were drawn up, half according to Roman and half according to Florentine customs. ‘I was present at the conclusion, and the compact seems to me honourable and reasonable. You do not need the possessions of others, and yours remain to you. Illustrious Piero, I esteem the new relationship very highly, much more that these (the Orsini) have shown themselves so willing and ready to ally themselves with you. This must be a great satisfaction to you, which, with God’s permission, will increase every day for you and us. With a hundred tongues I should not be able to express my joy to you.’ At the same time the Archbishop begged him to send the mandate of proxy for the marriage speedily, if Lorenzo could not come to Rome personally. No announcement had yet been made to the Pope, but the matter could not long remain a secret, as many, the Pazzi among others, knew of it.

Neither Lorenzo nor Giuliano went to Rome, and Filippo de’ Medici represented the former at the marriage. ‘I know not,’ he wrote to him,[166] ‘where I shall begin in order to inform your Magnificence that I have to-day espoused the noble and illustrious [234] Madonna Clarice degli Orsini in your name; according to my opinion, a maiden of such physical gifts, appearance, and manners, that she deserves no other bridegroom than him whom, I believe, heaven has destined for her. You must thank God for the protection which he has afforded you in this as in other things depending on good luck.’ The bride remained for a time with her parents, as was not unfrequent in such cases. Lorenzo seems to have had the intention of fetching her, an intention implied by a letter of his mother-in-law addressed to him at the beginning of March 1469. [167] What hindered him is not known; that the new relations should have wished to see him in Rome is very natural. Meanwhile, letters were exchanged between him and his bride. ‘Illustrious consort,’ wrote Clarice on February 25, ‘I have received a letter from you, which has given me great pleasure, and wherein you inform me of the tournament at which you won the prize. I am glad you are successful in what gives you pleasure, and that my prayer is heard, as I have no other wish than to see you happy. Recommend me to my father Piero and my mother Lucrezia, and Madonna Contessina, and all who are near to you. At the same time I recommend myself to you. I have nothing else to add.—Your Clarice de Ursinis.’ Rinaldo Orsini also congratulated his brother-in-law on his success in the tournament.

On May 15, 1469, Clarice left Rome, and on her arrival in Florence lodged at the house of Bernardo degli Alessandri, in the Borgo degli Albizzi.[168] The marriage festivity was fixed for Sunday, [235]

June 4. Two days before, all the cities and localities of the Florentine territory had sent presents to the Medici—food, sweetmeats, wine, and wax; among these, 150 calves, and more than two thousand pairs of capons and hens, a kind of tribute or donation brought to rulers on family festivals and other occasions. The present was divided between 800 friendly citizens. On the appointed day Clarice made her entry into the Medicean house; she wore a dress of brocade, white and gold, with a splendid mantle, after the Florentine fashion, and rode the horse presented by King Ferrante. Trumpeters and fifers marched in front, the bridesmen walked beside, and behind rode Messer Carlo and Messer Tommaso de' Medici, surrounded by their servants.

At the house, before which a splendid ball-room was erected in the Via Larga, thirty richly clad young girls and matrons received the bride, who was followed by an equal number, escorted by the bridesmen. When they arrived, an olive-tree was drawn up to the upper windows by a contrivance similar to that customary on the feast of St. John. Now began the banquet. The bride and about fifty young matrons dined in the loggia of the garden; in the colonnades enclosing the courtyard on three sides about seventy of the most distinguished men; in the hall of the ground floor about thirty-six young people; and in the hall of the first storey forty elder ladies with Madonna Lucrezia. On the whole there were about two hundred guests. Forty youths of good families served as stewards. The dishes were carried in preceded by trumpets at the large door on the street-side, and the arrangement was so perfect that they stood at the same moment on every separate table, the stewards directing the whole with the carvers and bearers. The number of dishes amounted to fifty, over each of which two carvers presided. The number of courses was not great, 'in order to give the citizens an example of moderation, which must not be forgotten at weddings.' At dinner soup, boiled and roast meat, cakes and [236] sweetmeats; in the evening jelly, roast meat, cakes and sweetmeats. The wines were Malvasie, the native light and somewhat sharp wine called Trebbiano, and several very excellent red wines. The quantity of silver plate was moderate, consisting of spoons, knives, forks, salt-cellars, great bowls for cooling the wine, and others for washing the hands. In the court, around the column which bears Donatello's statue of David, stood four tables covered with cloths, and upon these great brazen bowls with glasses, and beside these tables the cellarers, who offered wine and water to those serving at table. There was a similar arrangement in the garden round the fountain. So on Sunday, Monday, and on the forenoon of Tuesday, the banquets took place, in which, on the whole, about four hundred distinguished citizens shared. Beside these first tables, in the house itself, and at Messer Carlo de' Medici's, covers were laid for about a thousand guests, and all respectable persons who came to offer congratulations found a breakfast ready in the rooms adjoining the loggia. In the house of Messer Carlo a hundred casks of wine were daily emptied. Food, sweetmeats, and wine were sent to the citizens who had a share in the wedding gifts, as well as to several ecclesiastical orders. The quantity of sweetmeats was calculated at more than five thousand pounds. The guests assembled in the forenoon, rested for a time after dinner, and then danced on the boarded floor before the house, which we have mentioned, the walls of which were hung with embroidered carpets, and which was covered with large cloths, violet, green, and white, with the arms of the Medici and Orsini. Before the dance began, the trumpeters blew, and sweetmeats and wine were served. The weather was fine with the exception of the Monday, when a sudden shower of rain disturbed the pleasure and spoiled many a costly dress. When the bride, early on Tuesday, accompanied by all the bridesmen and bridesmaids, went to hear mass at San Lorenzo, all appeared in rich new costumes. About fifty more or less valuable rings were [237] presented to the newly-married pair, with a silver sweetmeat dish, a piece of brocade, and from Messer Gentile Becchi, an office of the Madonna of wonderful beauty, golden letters on an ultramarine ground, with miniatures, and a binding of crystal and silver, which is said to have cost 200 florins.[169] After divine service on Tuesday there was a joust of arms, after which Clarice once more rode to the house of the Alessandri in the same costume which she had worn on Sunday, and with the same escort.

Thus was the marriage of Lorenzo de' Medici and Clarice degliOrsini celebrated. In Lorenzo's oft-mentioned notices we find

the event spoken of in the following words:—'I, Lorenzo, took to wife Clarice, the daughter of the lord Jacopo Orsini, or rather she was given to me, in December 1468, and I celebrated the marriage in our house on June 4, 1469.' These words he wrote some months after the birth of Piero, who came into the world on February 15, 1471. A daughter had preceded him, for whom King Ferrante stood sponsor. She was named Lucrezia after the grandmother; it was at the same time the name of her who was the object of the father's poetical homage, years before. Clarice was again about to be a mother when the above named notice was written. 'God leave her long in our midst, and preserve her from all harm.' The words betray more feeling than the expressions about the wedding. But we should be mistaken if we regarded the 'mi fu data' as an indication of coldness. It would be a misunderstanding of the *naïveté* with which the events of life were judged and spoken of at the time. Lorenzo de' Medici saw no harm in simply mentioning the fact, as it was not only in his case but generally customary, as indeed it still is in Italy. The parents chose their children-in-law, and choose them still. And his friends saw as little harm in celebrating the bridegroom and husband of Clarice Orsini as the poetical admirer of Lucrezia Donati.

In July, Lorenzo, in company with his two brothers-in-law, [238] Guglielmo de Pazzi and Bernardo Rucellai, the chancellor Bartolommeo Scala, his former tutor, Gentile Becchi, Francesco Nori, one of the most zealous adherents of the family, and others, repaired to Milan, to stand sponsor in his father's name to the son (born June 20) of Galeazzo Maria Sforza, who had married, in the preceding summer, Bona of Savoy, the daughter of Duke Louis and Anna of Lusignan, and sister-in-law to King Louis XI.[170] The child was the unhappy Gian Galeazzo, who was destined to fall a sacrifice to family intrigues, which the Sforzas had inherited from their predecessors. Not only the child to whom Lorenzo stood sponsor had an unhappy fate; the father and mother also experienced vicissitude of fortune. But then all was brilliant and joyful, and the Medici appeared like princes. 'I was much honoured,' says Lorenzo, 'more than any of those who had come for the like purpose, even though they were above me in dignity. In order to do what was fitting, we presented the duchess with a gold chain and a large diamond, which had cost about three thousand ducats. The result was that the duke wished me to stand sponsor to all his children.'[171]

Immediately after his arrival at Milan, Lorenzo had written to Clarice. The letter[172] is simple, but warm. 'I have arrived here without any mishap, and am well. This, I think, will be more welcome to you than any other news, excepting my return, for so it is with me, who long for you, and wish to be again with you. Be good company to Piero, Mona Contessina and Mona Lucrezia. I shall finish my business here quickly and return to you, for it seems to me [239] a thousand years till I see you again. Pray God for me, and if you wish for anything from here, let me know it before I depart.—Your Lorenzo de' Medici.' The details wanting in this short letter were contained at full length in another addressed to Clarice by Gentile Becchi, enumerating all the civilities shown to Lorenzo during his journey, which took eight days, from Florence to Milan. Lorenzo de' Medici had scarcely returned four months, when the event occurred which placed him at the head of his family and the State.

'Piero our father,' so he writes in his notices, 'quitted this life on December 2 (3), 1469, at the age of fifty-three, after long rheumatic sufferings. He did not wish to make a will, but after his death an inventory was made which showed an amount of 237,982 scudi, as was proved by the memoranda made by my hand on p. 32 of our large green parchment-book. He was interred in San Lorenzo, where we are now erecting a tomb, as worthy as we can devise, for the reception of the mortal remains and those of his brother Giovanni. May God grant mercy to their souls. His loss was sincerely regretted by the whole town, for he was a just man and of great kindness of heart. The Italian princes, especially the greater ones, consoled us by letters of condolence and embassies, and offered their assistance for our protection.' The funeral procession was simple, as the deceased had wished it. Three years after his departure, the monument which the son mentions was set up in San Lorenzo, where it is let into the wall which separates the sacristy from the sacraments-chapel then dedicated to SS. Cosmo and

Damian. It consists of a tomb of red porphyry, resting on four lions' paws on a pedestal, and ornamented at the four corners and on the top with rich antique foliage and beautifully formed cornucopias of bronze. This sarcophagus stands in a round arched window niche, enclosed by an elegant railing, the upper part of which is occupied by net-like bronze interlacings, with artistically twisted knots. On the front we read in a full wreath of foliage and flowers, 'Petro et [240] Johanni de' Medici Cosmi P.P.F.,' and on the pedestal 'Laurent. et Jul. Petri F.' Andrea del Verrocchio executed this excellent work, which exceeds in artistic value many more splendid monuments by its tasteful simplicity.[173]

The opinions of contemporaries and later writers on Piero de' Medici are pretty unanimous. Donato Acciaiuoli, then captain of Volterra, wrote immediately after the event to Lorenzo.[174] 'When shall we find another so reasonable in council, so just, true, mild in character, so loving towards home, relations, friends, so worthy of respect, as your excellent father, who has been taken from us to our great sorrow. When we see the whole nation saddened at his loss—the neighbouring towns, ecclesiastics and laymen, people of every rank—how much must not you, his family, suffer, with myself and his other intimate friends, for whom the general loss was a personal one?' The high character of the man who wrote these words gives them a higher value than that of an ordinary letter of condolence. 'Florence,' says Machiavelli, in the seventh book of the Florentine History, 'could not perfectly recognise the value and kindness of this man, because he only survived his father for a few years, and this short time was occupied by internal difficulties of the State and his own illness.' In a similar strain Francesco Guicciardini[175] says: 'His death saddened the whole town on account of his reasonable and mild disposition. Of his zeal for the common good he gave proof in 1466, for he punished only where it was necessary, and would have proceeded still more cautiously had not many of his partizans urged him on.' To these opinions we can add that of a man in whom the Medicean family traditions of the older time still lived, which he had known through his parents, Alessandri de Pazzi, Piero's grandson. 'He was,' so speaks he of his grandfather,[176] 'rather a [241] good man and anxious for the good of all than the head of a party. Unfortunately, he was much troubled with rheumatism, and for some time nearly lamed by it. It thus chanced that his position was endangered in 1466. Not only were several friends from Cosimo's time already dead, but fresh accessions to their number was small, because the Medici did not take so much pains to conciliate as formerly.'

That Piero's relation to the distinguished and influential members of his party was not that of his father is evident. If his character had been different, his health stronger, and his action prompter, he would still have not attained to Cosimo's authority, the fruit of many years' experience and unusually favourable circumstances. It had even been difficult for Cosimo, with all his skill and activity, to attach permanently to him men who only acknowledged his supremacy because it was for their interest to do so. 'In Florence,' says Francesco Guicciardini,[177] 'the citizens love equality by nature, and yield unwillingly when they should acknowledge anyone as their superior. Besides this, our head men are restless and active, so that the few who guide affairs do not understand each other; and in the desire to surpass each other, one draws in one direction and one in the other, whence it naturally follows that the guidance is uncertain. This disinclination to the preponderance of others has for its result, that on the slightest occasion the existing government falls into ruin. For as the greatness of others displeases all who do not belong to their circle, so it cannot exist if it has not a sure foundation. But where shall this sure foundation be, when they who have the power in their hands at this minute are disunited?' If we could give full credit to Machiavelli, Piero de' Medici, uneasy at the increasing arbitrariness of his own partisans, after the failure of the conspiracy of 1466, and [242] urged by his conscience, was only prevented by his death from attempting to neutralise the influence of his overpowerful friends. In order to cover his responsibility, as he was no longer able to restrain their ambition and covetousness, he had called them to him in order to represent to them into what danger they brought the commonwealth by their appropriation of all offices and honourable positions, as well as by the heavy pressure exercised on all the

citizens. As his representations availed nothing, he determined to put himself into communication with the moderate among the opponents who were living in exile, and Messer Agnolo Acciaiuoli, the calmest and most reasonable of all, was secretly summoned to his country-seat, Cafaggiuolo, in order to consult with him. Had he lived longer, he would have recalled the exiles in order to put an end to the system of plunder of the prevailing party. It is as doubtful whether this information be correct as it is uncertain, in the peculiar position of the political parties, whether a measure of this kind, the carrying out of which would have dissolved the prevailing Medicean faction, would have been possible without a deep and dangerous convulsion. The Medici were too firmly united to their party to separate from it so easily, and to ally themselves with those who had just threatened to ruin them by conspiracy and war.[178]

Placed between a celebrated father and a more celebrated son, Piero de' Medici, who did not guide the State much above five years, stands necessarily in the shade. But it would be a mistake to believe that he was despised. The respect which so practised a politician as King Ferrante constantly showed him was not caused by interested motives only. In the Colleonic war, only Naples and Florence were [243] united, and Piero had actively influenced this good understanding: but for him the distrust awakened in the councils by the backward preparations of the Neapolitans would have prevailed.[179] The king attached great importance to Piero's approval, and repeatedly commissioned his ambassador as well as his son never to act otherwise than according to his opinion and sensible advice. When Alfonso of Calabria joined the army in August 1467 (when there was nothing more to do), he wrote to him as follows: 'If it appear fitting to the illustrious Piero that you go to Florence, we would remind you that you have to employ all industry and zeal, and to take all pains to do honour to yourself, and to appear a son worthy of us. Set all your ingenuity to work by means of expressions of kindness and politeness, such as are due to the friendship which the illustrious Florentine people has concluded with us.'[180] Beside Piero, the Duke was especially to consult Messer Tommaso Soderini and Antonio Ridolfi, and adapt himself so to the wishes of the Florentine government as if they were the commands of his royal father.

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CHAPTER V.

HOME AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE EARLY YEARS OF LORENZO'S GOVERNMENT.

'On the second day after my father's death,' so we read in Lorenzo de' Medici's memoirs, 'the most distinguished men of the State and of the ruling party came to our house to express their condolence, and at the same time to request me to undertake the conduct of affairs in the city and government, as my father and grandfather had done. As such a responsibility seemed too great for my inexperience (I was only twenty-one), and involved so much labour and so many dangers, I accepted it unwillingly and only for the sake of our friends and fortune, for those who are shut out from political influence have a bad position in Florence. Hitherto (the beginning of 1471) all has succeeded to the general honour and satisfaction, not in consequence of my wisdom, but by God's grace and by reason of the wise measures of my predecessors.'

These words show clearly how the matter stood, and justify the opinion which Francesco Guicciardini[181] puts into the mouth of one of his interlocutors. 'The government of the Medici,' says Bernardo del Nero, 'was a party government, usurped by the party, preserved by tyranny, neither violent nor cruel, except in a few cases in which they were constrained by necessity, but founded upon the policy of favouring the lower classes, uniting the interests of the stronger with their own interests, and suppressing all who [245] seemed inclined to go their own way. As the power passed from father to son, the memory of ancient rivalry and enmity lived on. The Medici had always more their private advantage at heart than the general good. But as they had neither any position nor Signoria abroad, their interest was generally one with that of the commonwealth, whose glory and fame were likewise theirs. But even with so keen-sighted a man as Lorenzo, such a position might easily lead to errors, and we shall see what mistakes he did make in important cases to the great disadvantage of the State, either by allowing himself to be carried away by passion or by regarding only his personal position and advantage, always under the pretext that his greatness and that of his family was necessary to the common good.

Lorenzo had taken so large a share in the conduct of affairs in his father's last years, and displayed such capabilities, that we need not be surprised if, after the authority of the Medici had been acknowledged now for two generations, all eyes should have been directed towards him, notwithstanding his youth, which excluded him from offices of State. Without an understanding between the heads of the party, however, he could not have been offered the responsible position of which he has told us. Piero had, on his death-bed, recommended his two sons to his brother-in-law, Tommaso Soderini, on whose prudence and attachment he placed great reliance. Since Tommaso had essentially contributed to save the cause of the Medici in the conspiracy of 1466, he had been in constant activity. He had not been able to persuade the Venetians to hinder Colleone's proceedings, but, as member of the magistracy of war, and during the fourth year that he was elected Gonfaloniere in 1467, he had exercised a favourable influence on the conduct of affairs, and honestly exerted himself for the restoration of peace with Borso d'Este, first in Venice and afterwards in Milan. The opinion of him was so high in Florence that he could easily have [246] raised himself to the leadership of the ruling party. But whether it was that he would not betray the confidence reposed in him, or that he was of opinion that the preservation of this family in the position they had held now for thirty-five years was at the same time the preservation of the peace and safety of the State at home, as well as of its connections with foreign states, he abstained from following Diotisalvi Neroni's example. Immediately after Piero's death, on the evening of the day when he had been interred, Soderini summoned to him all the distinguished citizens attached to the existing government. More than six hundred, 'the flower of the city,' assembled in the convent of Sant'Antonio, in the neighbourhood of Porta Faenza. It was here determined to preserve unity and the present state of affairs, and to leave Piero's sons in their father's position. 'Messer Tommaso Soderini,' writes the Ferrarese

ambassador, ‘took the word as eldest, and explained how Piero had left his sons already grown up and gifted with good judgment and intellect. Out of regard for their predecessors, and especially Cosimo and Piero, who had always been friends, protectors, and preservers of the commonwealth and benefactors of the State, for which reason they had taken the first rank and borne the whole weight of government wisely and with dignity, always displaying courage and mature judgment, it seemed to him that they should leave to Piero’s family and sons, notwithstanding their youth, the honourable position which he himself and Cosimo had enjoyed. He added that he saw the two no less considerate and desirous of winning the good opinion of the commune, and of all the Florentine citizens, than their grandfather and father. This was confirmed by three or four of those present, by Messer Manno, son-in-law of Messer Luca Pitti, who was not himself present, by Messer Giannozzo Pitti, and Domenico Martelli. The last two remarked that a master and a head was needed to give the casting-vote in public affairs.[182] The whole city,’ adds Guicciardini, ‘agreed to this, chiefly through the exertions of Messer Tommaso Soderini, who at that time enjoyed more authority than any other citizen, and was, perhaps, the wisest of all. He thought that Lorenzo, on account of his youth, and because he owed his position to him, so to speak, would allow himself to be guided by him; in this, however, he was mistaken.’[183]

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That Lorenzo considered the favourable opinion of himself as by no means sufficient to secure his authority, shows on the one hand how he, young as he was, had sounded the unsteady basis on which the whole fabric of the State rests in a commonwealth of this kind, and on the other hand, how his thoughts were immediately directed to gaining a position no longer dependent upon internal agitation, such as had disturbed his grandfather’s administration and endangered the life of his father. A report of the Ferrarese ambassador plainly shows how the heads of the ruling party hoped to conduct affairs after Piero’s death. ‘They are agreed that the private affairs of the Signoria shall pass through Lorenzo’s hands in the same manner as previously through those of his father, for which purpose his friends will take care to procure him credit and reputation from the beginning. They can easily do so, for they have the government in their hands, and the ballot-boxes at their disposal. Others with whom I have spoken are of a different opinion, and think that within a few days all affairs will again be disposed of in the palace (*i.e.* by the magistrates themselves). If, however, they guide the bark rightly at the beginning, and while they can influence the election of the magistrates, I believe they will reach the desired haven, for the philosopher says, “Principium est plus quam dimidium totius.”’ The ambassador was right; he could not, however, foresee the measure of Lorenzo’s personal share in this gradual change of a republican constitution into one that was guided by the will of a single man. He had scarcely attained the head of the State when he began the work which he brought to a termination ten years later, after the violent storm which had threatened his life.

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The deliberation of September 6, 1466, had placed the election of the highest magistrates for ten years in the hands of electors appointed by the Council of a Hundred. The heads of the party were accustomed to decide upon the names of these electors in an extraordinary meeting, and to lay them before the said council, which usually accepted them without further scruple, since only those not unfavourable to the party, even if they did not belong to its actual partizans, sat in this council. Sometimes, however, it occurred that the candidates were not all accepted, so that anxiety arose in the minds of Lorenzo and his confidants lest electors disagreeable to them might some day be appointed, and their influence over the Signoria and other high magistrates be thus limited. This seemed serious to them. However large, too, and constantly increasing an authority might be which was independent of the responsible magistrates forming the fabric of the State, the respect for forms was equally great, and is indeed a characteristic feature of these Italian communes; and their endeavour was to give to measures which gradually destroyed the spirit of the constitution the appearance of legality. In the summer of 1470, the Signoria, which was entirely subject to the Medici, made the first attempt in this direction. They proposed to the Council of a Hundred to form out of all the electors from the year 1434 who were still living, forty

in number, and five new ones, a College of Electors. From this for the next sixteen years five might be annually drawn, with power to appoint the Signori and Gonfaloniere out of the lists or ballot-boxes [249] containing the names of the citizens capable of office. The opposition to a measure which would have placed forty-five tyrants over the people was, however, so strong that the Signoria judged it advisable to withdraw the proposal. Six months later, in January 1471, something similar was, nevertheless, carried out. Instead of leaving the electors to be appointed by the Council of a Hundred, the Signoria sitting in July and August, together with the electors acting for the current year, agreed that they should appoint the new ones, the Council of a Hundred only confirm them, and a single voice above the half of the members present should give the casting-vote, whereas a majority of two-thirds of voices had previously been requisite. The same thing happened in the following July, and when the votes were collected it naturally followed that only the names of persons considered reliable came upon the electing tickets, so that the threads of the whole administration were more than ever confined to a few hands. Immediately after Piero de' Medici's death, under the plausible pretext that the war occasioned by the Malatesta affair was not yet at an end, an extraordinary tax of 300,000 gold florins was levied, so that the government was provided with funds for all emergencies.

'By such measures,' remarks Francesco Guicciardini, 'Lorenzo de' Medici began to gain firm footing in Florence. The prevailing party strengthened itself, and he obtained influence and reputation. So he began to wish to be lord and master. Instead of allowing himself to be guided by others, he took care that Messer Tommaso and the others who enjoyed high influence, and had a large number of relations to support them, should not become too strong. Although he never refused to send them on embassies, and confer on them the highest honours and offices, he held them within bounds, frustrated their intentions in several cases, and brought forward others who caused him no anxiety, as at first Messer Bernardo Buongirolami and Antonio Pucci, afterwards Messer [250] Agnolo Niccolini, Bernardo del Nero, Pier Filippo Pandolfini, &c. He was accustomed to say that if his father had done so, and somewhat restrained Messer Diotisalvi and his companions, he would not have been in danger of losing his position in 1466.' Another measure was taken with the evident intention of withdrawing the government of the city by degrees from all other influences than those of the Medici and their confidants. This time it concerned the lower classes, as that just mentioned did the higher. On September 20, 1471, the Balia appointed in July to superintend the new elections, reduced the number of smaller guilds from fourteen to five, so that there should be altogether only twelve guilds; but the property of the dissolved corporations should serve to form a new credit-fund for the salaries of the officials. But this measure, which had a wider significance than people seemed inclined to attribute to it in the first moment, was never carried into practice.[184]

When Piero died, foreign affairs were by no means secure. The dispute about Rimini was not terminated. Pope Paul II. was extremely indignant at the assistance which Florence and Naples had given his disobedient vassal, and by means of which this vassal had been able to oppose him successfully. He indulged in the most violent expressions against the Medici, even before the assembled Consistorium. His rage against Ferrante even led to action. The old quarrel between Rome and Naples on account of the feudal relation injurious to both, but still legal, had also come to an outbreak between Ferrante and Paul. The king did not pay the tribute, and, when enjoined to do so, was always ready with one excuse or another. Now it was the embarrassment into which troubles at home had plunged him, now it was the expenses for the aid granted to the Church in the contest with the restless counts of Anguillara. If pressed, he answered by claiming Benevento and Terracina and places in the Abruzzi, claims which were not always unfounded, in [251] consequence of the complicated and wavering connections of the empire with the Church. At last, when all seemed to be peacefully settled, a quarrel broke out between the Pope and the Orsini, on account of the rights claimed by the latter over the Alum district of Tolfa, which Paul had contested with force of arms, while the king defended them in like manner. It went so far that Ferrante threatened to league himself with the Turks; the Pope, however, answered him by not only threatening to drive him from Naples, but

by actually planning a new campaign against the Aragonese with John of Anjou. This happened just after the affair with Malatesta had ended, and who knows what intrigues would have been begun, had not the war of the Catalans against the Aragonese, in which Anjou commanded, occupied him till a higher hand interfered?

Under circumstances of this kind, the necessity of attaching themselves as firmly as possible to Naples and Milan was made clear to the people of Florence, and as long as Lorenzo lived this necessity always remained uppermost with him, even through momentary fluctuations. The conviction that no firm reliance was to be placed upon the two other great powers of Italy, Venice and the Pope, made the Florentines regard such an alliance as the salvation of Italy. Venice could not be trusted because her thirst for Italian conquest was proportionate to the danger of her Levantine possessions; nor the Pope, because the papal policy changed with every new ruler, nay, it altered several times under the same ruler. When the Pope, displeased with the Venetians, began to lean towards reconciliation, these natural allies determined to agree beforehand on the position to assume towards him. Plenipotentiaries from Naples and Milan came in the spring of 1470 to Florence for this purpose. But when difficulties arose, the consultation was transferred to Naples, whither Otto Niccolini went on behalf of Florence. On July 12 the news reached Florence that the alliance between the three states was prolonged for fifteen [252] years, reserving the power of bringing about a general alliance of the Italian powers beside this special one—a piece of news which was celebrated with festivals and bonfires. It was indeed high time to unite. On the same July 12, the Turks took Negroponte. The besiegers suffered severe losses, but they avenged themselves by a fearful slaughter among the inhabitants and the garrison, and the Venetians had to expiate heavily their neglect in defending one of their most important fortresses. On August 7, they heard of the sad event through an announcement of King Ferrante’s. From all sides unity was now urged, in order to resist the formidable enemy, before whom the whole Archipelago, the Ionian Sea, and the entrance to the Adriatic, lay open. The Pope summoned an assembly of plenipotentiaries of all the Italian States to Rome, while at the same time he determined to compose the Malatesta contest by mediation. To effect an understanding was, however, difficult, because the three powers reserved their separate alliance, and Paul consented to this very unwillingly. Nevertheless, the treaty was concluded at Rome on December 22, express emphasis being laid on the article that the new league should rest on the basis of that which had been agreed upon at Venice at the end of August 1454, by the active mediation of Pope Nicholas V., when the conquest of Constantinople had first brought the threatened danger home to all. During the seventeen years which had elapsed since then, affairs had only grown worse. The Pope, the King of Naples, the Duke of Milan, the Republics of Venice and Florence, and Borso of Este, to whom the title of Duke of Ferrara had not long been granted, joined the alliance, which was to be extended over all Christendom, for which purpose Paul II. appointed the Cardinal of Siena, Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini, as legate to the Emperor and Empire. Jacopo Guicciardini had concluded the treaty on the part of Florence.

But this time also the result by no means corresponded to the [253] general expectation. Sforza did not ratify the treaty, because the purport of the document did not suit his wishes in some important particulars. Although the Signoria of Florence sent in their ratification, Guicciardini suppressed it, because Lorenzo de’ Medici, who wished to hold with Milan, had given him secret instructions not to sign, so that things remained unsettled. In Germany and Hungary, where the Pope and Venice placed their chief hopes on King Mathias Corvinus, it was not much better. After the sanguinary Bohemian war, which the latter had waged against George Podiebrad, had weakened their strength on both sides, and the Turks, pressing on from Bosnia through Croatia and Carniola, had already set foot on the soil of the empire, and roused Emperor Frederick from his sleep, still nothing could be really effected by the Ratisbon Congress in the spring of 1471. As the princes here were dilatory and the towns disinclined for action, quarrels began anew in Italy. Not to mention the contest between Pope and King, disagreeable communications passed between the former and Florence. The Florentines were willing indeed to furnish subsidies

for the Turkish war, but insisted upon including the clergy in the taxes, which the Pope refused to permit.

While this was proceeding, Paul II. died in the night between July 25 and 26, not fifty-four years old, and apparently in the enjoyment of perfect health. At a time when Christendom was everywhere torn by factions and threatened from without, when Italy saw herself exposed to the attacks of the infidels, as in the ninth century, the unity of her states being always problematical, the election of a Pope was of more importance than ever. Shortly before, several princes had passed away who had exercised more or less influence on the course of affairs—George Podiebrad, King of Bohemia, Borso of Este, John of Anjou, who concluded a life more eventful than successful at Barcelona, having only attained the age of forty-five years, and carrying with him to the grave the hopes of his old father René, and of his house. In him, a still numerous party in the south of [254] Italy lost their head; yet they could not make up their minds to give in their allegiance decidedly to the Aragonese government, which seemed daily to grow stronger by its activity, talents, and alliances.

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CHAPTER VI.

POSITION AND CONNECTIONS OF THE MEDICI.

The house of Medici seemed to be blind to the gravity of the situation, to judge by their outward behaviour. The days were passed when an experienced man like Cosimo weighed everything with anxious deliberation, and was afraid to show how high he stood in city and State, or when his son was led to a retired life by illness and inclination. A young man, brilliant, talented, self-conscious, early called into active life, and who had grown up in a prominent position, stood at the head of the State, and was determined to enjoy life. A second was growing up, perhaps less gifted, but yet a genuine son of a house in which intellectual capacities and the wish not to hide his light under a bushel already appeared hereditary, powerful, splendid, a born leader of youth. It was only natural that the youth of Florence thronged around Lorenzo and Giuliano. The house and household in the Via Larga were already grown beyond the modesty of the citizen. The large income of the family derived from banks, trade, farming, estates, made great expenditure possible; and if expenses of the most various kinds, for public and private ends, perhaps began to exceed the income, no one troubled himself about that. Lorenzo once expressed himself concerning the considerable sums which were expended, especially in his grandfather's time, for churches and convents, for houses and villas, on scientific and artistic objects, for household and social expenses, in such a manner as to show how high he placed the gain resulting from it. 'I find,' he says in his notices,[185] in an extract of the [256]
accounts, 'that we have spent a large sum of money from 1434 to the end of 1471. This sum appears incredible; it amounts to 663,755 gold florins for benevolent purposes, buildings and taxes, not to mention the other expenses. I will not complain of it. Although many may think it would be better for us to have a part of it in our purse, I feel satisfied that this outlay does great honour to our position, and the money is well spent, so that I am quite content.' No house in Florence was furnished with objects of art, antiquities, and luxury like that of the Medici. When princes arrived in Florence for whom the quarters of the popes in the convent of Sta. Maria Novella seemed too austere, or when illustrious ladies came on a visit, they generally alighted at the house of the Medici. In Florence men were accustomed to see them do the honours; the Signoria needed only to provide for the suite, which was then exceedingly numerous, even with princes of the second rank.

Of Lorenzo's daily intercourse with scholars and artists, and of their share in his domestic life, we shall speak further on. A learned education was, however, so common in Florence, and the citizens, who divided their time between commerce, State business, and literary or scientific pursuits, were so numerous, that beside those who made learning their calling as teachers, authors, collectors, there existed a whole class of men whose learning, especially in ancient literature, was as profound, while their views were much widened by active business life, and by missions that carried them beyond the narrower circle of the philologists and book-learned. Many of these have been already mentioned; others we shall meet hereafter. Nearly all belonged to the Medicean circle. It is evident that from such a centre a powerful influence must be exercised over the whole of society. It also contributed to raise Lorenzo into the [257]
princely position which he assumed more and more, and to establish him there. It effected also at the same time the dissemination of that higher culture, the combination of intellectual with material interests, which have spread a glory which cannot be pronounced deceptive over a state of things which had its dark side, and over tendencies which were dangerous in many ways.

The Italian princes had already accustomed themselves to reckon the Medici among their own class. The greater ones regarded them almost as their equals, while the smaller ones looked up to them. Great and small, the Aragonese and Sforza not excepted, needed Florentine money, and knew that they could not obtain it without their intervention, either from the State or from the banks. Even the Medici did not always succeed in obtaining grants from the State; as in the spring of 1471, when a loan requested by King Ferrante of 20,000 gold florins, not a very large sum, was not granted, on

account of the opposition of the Gonfaloniere Bardo Corsi, who drew upon himself thereby the ill-will of those in power. This, however, was an exceptional occurrence. Most of the petty princes and Signori depended on the protection of the Republic, as we have said, or took mercenary service under her, so that they naturally sought to retain the favour of the heads of the Government. From all sides and in affairs of every kind, recommendations, proposals, requests and representations were sent to Lorenzo and his brother. [186] Most numerous of all are the letters of Galeazzo Maria Sforza, who never ceased to address to Lorenzo recommendations for the transfer of offices which were filled by foreign nobles. When the command of the Milanese troops was granted to the Marquis of Montferrat at the beginning of 1474, he hastened to notify it to Florence. 'I consider it my duty to inform Your Magnificences of the [258] matter, as I am convinced that you take interest in all pleasant and honourable things which befall me, as becomes the fraternal sympathy and friendship which have always existed between us.' When the same marquis sends his seneschal and councillor, Pietro de Tebaldeschi, to Rome, he recommends him to the Medici. Ercole of Este and his consort, Lodovico, Federigo, Rodolfo Gonzaga, Leonello Pio of Carpi, Jacopo Appiani, the Sanseverini, with King René and his son, Duke John, all turn to the Medici; King Edward IV. of England applies to them in mercantile affairs; Ferdinand of Aragon and Sicily recommends to them a nobleman who had conducted the administration of Corsica, and who wished to be Podestà in Florence. Numerous are the letters of Federigo of Montefeltro, whether they concern the settlement of his pecuniary affairs, or his recommendation to offices, or the like. 'I know well,' he writes in a letter addressed in April 1476 to Lorenzo, on behalf of M. Francesco da Sassatello, 'that it is unnecessary to recommend to you such as your friends and servants, especially when I also am interested in them.'

Most numerous of all, however, are the communications with King Ferrante and his family, after the year 1471. There are requests of every kind, recommendations of Florentine merchants settled in Naples, or Jews from Nola and Salerno, imprisoned in Florence, for whose loyalty the king pledges himself. We find also intercessions for Madonna Selvaggia, wife of Piero Gambacorta, of the family who formerly ruled in Pisa, but had removed to Florence on account of a lawsuit; for Raffaello Acciaiuoli, Agnolo's son, who, like his father, was sentenced to banishment in consequence of Diotisalvi Neroni's conspiracy, for the Abbot of St. Paul's at Rome, and for numerous Neapolitans, who had interests or business in the territory of the Republic. 'If we,' writes the king to Lorenzo on July 12, 1476, 'wish to obtain any kind of favour from the illustrious Republic, we long for no other mediator and representative than Your Magnificence, as your great authority is known to us, and we [259] have always known by experience how readily you fulfil our wishes.' In September 1473, Ferrante begs him to charge his business correspondents in Lyons and Vienne to forward the despatches of the Neapolitan ambassador at the court of King Louis XI. with their own communications. And so one letter follows another. The same relations continued with the king's sons, especially the two eldest, Alfonso and Federigo. We have already spoken of the personal connections of both with Lorenzo, and their repeated meetings; their epistolary correspondence answered to this friendly relation, and the sons added their recommendations to their father's.

The Duchess of Calabria, Ippolita Maria, always counted on the friendship which united the Medici with the house of Sforza. That intellectual and highly cultivated woman who once greeted Pope Pius II. at the Congress of Mantua with a Latin speech, always kept up communication with Lorenzo. Even in the lifetime of Piero de' Medici, in 1468, when she, three years after her marriage with the Aragonese prince, was on a visit to Milan, she was already corresponding with Lorenzo, and recommended to him a knight well known to her for the office of Podestà in Florence. In 1473 she wrote to him concerning Florentine merchants who had had a great quantity of coarse woollen cloth (it was called Perpignano after the town where this kind was first made) woven at Capua, and sought permission to import it. On March 8, 1478, shortly therefore after the outbreak of the eventful dissensions of which we shall speak in the course of this history, she interceded with Lorenzo for the liberation from prison of Lorenzo Cavalcanti, a man of an old noble family, describing to him the poverty and distress of his family. Four

years before, she had requested of him a loan; her letter is a characteristic proof of the position which the citizen and banker held towards the princes, to whose circle he indeed belonged without the external insignia. ‘Illustrious and mighty and paternally [260] respected lord,’ so wrote Ippolita Maria d’Aragona Visconti on July 10, 1474, from the Castle of Capuano, then the residence of the Neapolitan heir-apparent,’the old existing kindness and intimate friendship between the family of Your Magnificence and our late illustrious parents, and your especial affection for our most illustrious brother, the Duke of Milan, assure us, and fill us with the certain hope, that you will support us in our great embarrassment, for which we shall ever owe you gratitude. We beg you, therefore, to lend us 2,000 ducats gratis for a time to be fixed by yourself, we promising its punctual repayment on the word of an honourable woman (“a fede de leale madama”). For the sake of the affection that Your Magnificence cherishes for us, as well as the dear remembrance of our parents, and your friendly relations with our brother, we hope that you will readily fulfil our request. Should you, however, not have the sum ready to hand, we beg you to use your influence with your friends and adherents to procure it for us. As deposit we will send some of our jewellery corresponding in value to the sum mentioned, and be ever grateful to you for this service, according to our own character and our hereditary custom. When Your Magnificence sends the sum we will deliver the jewels to the messenger, or send a special messenger to you with them, in case you should prefer it. So we beg you to send a kind and speedy answer by the messenger who brings this, and recommend ourselves to you as always ready for your service.’ We shall speak further of later communications between the Duchess and Lorenzo, who received perfumed waters from the Castle of Capuano.

If the Neapolitan Crown-Princess thus wrote, it is no wonder that one of the victims of Mohammedan conquest and Christian feud which the East then sent to Italy, Caterina, Queen of Bosnia—the most unhappy of queens (‘omnium reginarum infortunatissima’), as she called herself—adopted a yet humbler tone. From Rome, where the unfortunate princess had found refuge in 1466, and, like so [261] many princely exiles before and after, lived by the Pope’s support, till, after twelve years, she was buried in Sta. Maria Araceli, she turned on January 28, 1472, to Lorenzo and Giuliano, with whom she had already been in communication for two years. The Medici bank in Rome was charged with the payment of her annual pension; she begged for cash, instead of being obliged, as frequently happened, to take payment in kind. She also appealed to old connections of the Medici with her family, which might have been through the mediation of Mathias Corvinus, and to the universally famed magnanimity of the brothers, which befitted their position. At the same time she recommended herself and her interests to their mother, ‘the illustrious lady whom she loved as a sister’—expressions which the Duchess of Milan, Bianca Maria Visconti Sforza, had employed seven years before in a letter to Madonna Lucrezia.

While Italian and other princes stood on this footing with the Medici, their clients must have been numerous in Florence itself. It is a proof of the tact with which they understood how to manage their fellow-citizens, that while making use of them they never forgot their equality of rank, but treated them as confidants as well as friends. In the first rank of these was Luigi Pulci, whom we have already known as court-poet and *protégé* of their mother. In the autumn of 1470 he accompanied Madonna Lucrezia to Fuligno, from whence he proceeded to Camerino, lying in the mountains between Umbria and the border land, to execute a commission given him by Lorenzo to Giulio Cesare Varano, lord of the little town and state. The Varani had risen in the latter times of the Hohenstaufen dynasty, and had gradually, as usual, by the administration of civil offices, attained a lordship restricted by the church, and often endangered by quarrels and insurrections. From the fourteenth century they had repeatedly entered the Neapolitan service.

In the Malatesta war, the lord of Camerino had fought on the [262] Papal side; he had an intention of breaking with the Florentines. When Lorenzo sent Luigi Pulci to him, with what commission is not known, he received him with the greatest deference. ‘He assured me,’ wrote Pulci to his patron,[187] ‘that there was no one in all Italy for whom he would do what he would for you. Your father had once procured him a Florentine condotta, and he was much indebted to

yourself.’

From Umbria the poet and man of business repaired to Naples, proclaiming on the way, as he writes, ‘from Monterotondo, and in Rome and Bracciano and wherever there were Orsini, the wonders of Madonna Clarice, so that her picture will be hung up everywhere.’ When Lorenzo needed a man of heart and tongue to be with the king and duke, he might rely upon him. ‘All the world speaks here of you, your position, your demeanour, and holds you and us in high honour. In especial, you are a favourite of the king.’ The king sent Lorenzo two beautiful horses, and a third to Guglielmo de’ Pazzi; the Duke of Calabria wished much that the Medici would set up a bank in Naples, like the Strozzi, &c. True, Florentine affairs were not quite satisfactory. ‘They are arming here with all their might against the Turks, but the ambassador of the king announces that little assistance is to be expected from you. I hope God may convert you during this Lent, and that you also may wish to be Christians’ (1471). But more serious affairs ensued. Galeazzo Maria Sforza, of whom more will be said presently, tried to use his familiarity with Lorenzo to obtain his assistance in a treacherous attack on the lord of Piombino, and it is not to Lorenzo’s honour that he consented to give it. The intrigue failed, but it created discontent both at Naples and at Venice. The intimacy between the Duke of Milan and the Medici continued. In the month of March 1471, Galeazzo Maria paid a visit to his Florentine friends. [263] He was in every way dissimilar to his father, who had been fully acquainted with the serious side of life before attaining to sovereignty over a large city. As he was of a coarse sensual nature, and regarded neither right nor law where it concerned the gratification of his desires, so he also showed a childish love of pomp and splendour, even far beyond his means and those of his country, although he oppressed the inhabitants with taxes. However much we must guard ourselves in judging of the luxury and expenses of former days, from giving implicit faith to the complaints of contemporaries (the Milanese complained, for instance, of the heavy burden laid upon them by the paving of the streets), yet the details which we possess respecting Galeazzo Maria’s and his consort’s journey to Florence, show that all reasonable measure was exceeded. Never had Florence witnessed similar pomp. The duke’s suite was endless. Vassals and councillors accompanied him, all clothed in gold and silver cloth, and with numerous servants, the courtiers in velvet and brocade, the chamberlains in rich embroidery, forty of them with gold chains of honour, the least of which was worth a hundred gold florins. Fifty grooms appeared in costumes of cloth of silver, partly of silk brocade; even the kitchen-boys glittered in velvet and silk; fifty war-horses with saddles of gold brocade, gilded stirrups and silk embroidered bridles, each one led by a groom in rich livery with the Sforza-Visconti arms on his doublet. The guard was formed of a hundred heavily-armed knights, each with the rank of captain, and 500 select foot. No less splendid was the suite of the Duchess Bona. Fifty palfreys with gold and silver saddles and trappings were led by richly clad pages; twelve transport waggons, with coverings of gold brocade, adorned with coats-of-arms, contained mattresses and cushions covered with crimson silk and gold embroidery, and were brought over the mountains by mules. The entire suite needed 2,000 horses and 200 mules, whose drivers wore new liveries. On all sides only gold and silver cloth, velvet and silk, were to be seen. The ducal party was [264] followed by a numerous troop of hunters, with dogs, falcons, sparrowhawks, forty trumpeters and pipers, musicians and merrymakers. The cost of the equipment was calculated at 200,000 gold florins. No emperor had travelled as did the son of a condottiere of Romagna, who called himself duke of the Imperial fief of Milan, in defiance of the powerless emperor and empire.

When the procession approached the Porta San Gallo—it was on March 15—many distinguished men and youths went to meet it, accompanied by various bands of young men in various costumes, with women and maidens singing songs in praise of the eminent guests. The duke rode in front, the duchess slightly behind him, and on they went through the crowded and decorated streets to the square of the Signoria, who awaited them at the Ringhiera, in company with many illustrious citizens. When the duke drew near he dismounted, while his consort did the same, and the Signori, the Gonfaloniere, Gino Capponi, Neri’s son at their head, came to meet him, and all gave one another their hand. The Gonfaloniere said a

few words bidding them welcome, which Galeazzo Maria answered, upon which the ducal pair mounted again, and the Signori returned to the palace. The new-comers now rode to the church of the Annunziata, to perform their devotions in the chapel built by Piero de' Medici, and from thence by the square of San Marco to Via Larga, where they were lodged in the house of the Medici. They had chosen to reside here, while their suite was provided for in the city, and entertained at the public cost, which was no trifle. Whatever splendour Sforza might be accustomed to, he was yet astonished at the immense wealth of the house where he lodged—at the number of paintings, sculptures, antiques, and the large and rare vases and other objects of precious kinds of stone, partly from distant countries, at the medals, carved stones, jewels, rare and rich manuscripts—in short, at a quantity of things he had never seen [265] before in such abundance, as he confessed. Everyone flocked to do the guests honour, and as Galeazzo Maria showed himself friendly and conciliating, displayed great liberality, remembering the long-standing connection of his father with the city and the Medici, and had enjoined his followers to avoid everything which could excite displeasure, affairs went off to the general satisfaction.

On the day after his arrival the duke made a visit of ceremony to the Signoria, accompanied by many distinguished citizens, after having announced himself, and expressed the wish to meet the most illustrious men of the State. The Signori went across the Piazza to meet him, and escorted him into the festively decorated council-hall, where all took their places, Galeazzo Maria beside the Gonfaloniere. The Duke now spoke in detail of recent events, explained and justified his conduct at and after the conclusion of the general confederacy, offered to maintain the number of troops for the Republic which she had bound herself to keep up, and declared his readiness to go with the Florentine people in everything. On the following day the Signori repaired with him to the house of the Medici. The exclusiveness imposed upon the members of the highest magistracy during their term of office did not hold good in such cases. To celebrate the visit the city caused three sacred dramas to be acted in churches. In San Felice the Annunciation was given, in Carmine the Ascension, and in Sto. Spirito the Descent of the Holy Ghost. Unfortunately, fire broke out during the last festival, which seriously injured the interior of the beautiful church, and necessitated a restoration, for which the duke expended two thousand gold florins. The visit of the Milanese prince and the Florentine festivals were much spoken of at foreign courts; Giovanni Bentivoglio and the lords of Romagna were expected, but did not appear. The duke and duchess, after eight days' residence, left the city and the hospitable house with gratitude and affectionate remembrance, and went to Lucca, where they were also received [266] with rejoicing. The Lucchesi actually made a new gate in the city wall, in eternal commemoration of so great an event! Sforza's all-powerful private secretary, Cecco Simonetta, received the right of citizenship. It was very important to the little Republic to remain on good terms with the son of the man to whom they owed perhaps the maintenance of their existence as a state, and they had willingly taken part in the new confederacies. The ducal pair returned to Milan by Genoa.[188]

For the sake of contrast, after the extravagant pomp of a duke belonging to a family which had just arisen, may be mentioned the simplicity with which a Northern sovereign appeared in Florence three years later, by no means to his prejudice in the eyes of reasonable men. It was King Christiern,[189] with whom, in 1449, the house of Oldenburg ascended the Danish-Norwegian throne. The wars for Sweden, which had withdrawn from the Colmar union of the three kingdoms, the difficulties with the dukedoms of Schleswig and Holstein, which he did not succeed in uniting to the Danish throne, and the disputes with the Hanseatic League, which had the trade of Norway in its hands, had preyed upon the king's strength and courage, when at the age of fifty he resolved upon a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Through Spain, where he had visited the shrine of San Jago di Compostella, and Milan, where he had been entertained by the Duke Galeazzo Maria, he reached Florence on the afternoon of March 29, 1474. His suite consisted of about a hundred and forty riders, mostly noblemen and prelates, with but little baggage; he had accomplished a considerable part of the way on foot. At the gate [267] of San Gallo he was met by the Signoria, with the Gonfaloniere, Donato Acciaiuoli, at their head, as was the custom with crowned

heads; but the king would not advance under the canopy offered him, nor enter the city before the magistrates and government had returned to their palace. He also refused a guard of honour as he rode through the streets. On the following day he inspected the city, paid a visit to the Signoria, and begged to be allowed to see the Greek manuscript of the Gospels, which had been brought from Constantinople, and the Codex of Pandects preserved at Pisa. He regarded these books with veneration, and said these were the true treasures for princes, which was thought to be an allusion to the extravagant splendour at the court of Galeazzo Maria. Christiern was a grave man, with a long grey beard, and his whole bearing was calm and sensible. In Rome, where Pope Sixtus presented him with the golden rose, and released him from the vow of pilgrimage to the Holy Land, he remained for several weeks, greatly honoured. On May 3 he came again to Florence, and was once more received by the Signoria, but declined all ceremonies. In Sta. Maria Novella, where he was lodged, the priors, with the Gonfaloniere, Maso degli Albizzi, visited him. On the 6th he quitted the city, pleased with the reception accorded to him here, and rode to Bologna over the Apennines. One result of his residence at Rome was the founding of the University of Copenhagen, for which he had obtained Papal privileges. There is no mention of a meeting between the king and the Medici in the records of the time.

How the Medici stood in relation to the lords of Bologna we have already seen. Giovanni Bentivoglio, who held a similar position to that of Lorenzo, not only shared his preference for domestic splendour, but surpassed him in his love of tournaments and festal processions; and if these are not so celebrated as those of Florence, it was not because they were less splendid. It was because the blind [268]
poet, Francesco, a Florentine residing in Cento, who celebrated the tournament at Bologna, in 1470, in 200 stanzas, which unite Madonna and the saints with Mars and Minerva, was neither a Pulci nor a Politian. As well as the Varani and the Aragonese, the poet of the Morgante counted also Bentivoglio among his patrons, and was repeatedly with him from 1473 to 1475. Lorenzo seems by no means to have been always on friendly terms with his Bolognese friend. Pulci was once charged to declare to the latter that he (Lorenzo) would do all that lay in his power for him, but could not prevent his being himself censured in Rome as well as Florence, as the city had always been jealous of her freedom.[190] This probably referred to a vexatious circumstance in Bologna, in which Bentivoglio had come out rather too arrogantly as an arbitrary ruler.

The most telling proof of the princely esteem which Lorenzo enjoyed, even in his youthful years, was afforded by the mediation sought by King Louis XI. respecting the marriage of the Dauphin. Louis d'Amboise, the king's councillor, and later Bishop d'Albi, brother of the Cardinal-Archbishop of Rouen, who was all-powerful under Louis XII., and even believed the dignity of pope to be within his grasp, had been in Florence on his return from Rome, and seems to have described Lorenzo's position—it was after the events which will be alluded to presently—in the most glowing colours. On June 19, 1473, the king addressed a remarkable letter from Amboise to the Florentine. He had heard, he writes, that King Ferrante intended to marry his eldest daughter to the young Duke of Savoy, under guarantee of a dowry of 300,000 ducats. It seemed to him, however, more suitable to mutual interests that an alliance between the princess and his son, the Dauphin of Vienne, should be brought about. The amount of the dowry might be fixed by Lorenzo, in case [269]
Ferrante should be at all inclined to accede to the proposal. The family connection should go hand in hand with a political league; friends and foes should be common to both monarchs. The Neapolitan king would be aided by the league against the house of Anjou; he, Louis, against the ruler of Aragon. If Lorenzo would take the matter in hand, let him send a confidential messenger to France, to consult with himself about the matter, to the exclusion of all princes of the blood and other distinguished men, while royal ambassadors would proceed to Florence. Ferrante's answer to Lorenzo, dated August 9, from Castel Nuovo at Naples, was a decided refusal. He recognised with due appreciation the good intention of Medici, as he esteemed the advantage and honour which would arise to him and his house from a connection with the most powerful king of the world. The conditions, however, he added, were contrary to his honour. Neither against his uncle of Aragon nor his ally the Duke of Burgundy would he ever act, and respecting

Anjou, King Louis must judge himself what chastisement he had to inflict on one who was his own enemy. He was not to take it ill that he, Ferrante, was determined to preserve his honour and knightly word as well as the best of his family, instead of drawing distrust and contempt upon himself. He ought to be content with his beautiful kingdom, and thank God that it was at peace, instead of longing for the possessions of others. If Lorenzo could make more honourable conditions, acceptable to the king, he would be well inclined to accede to such.[191] The affair went no farther. By Louis XI. the proposal could hardly have been seriously intended, but was only a feeler. That he exposed himself, however, to such sharp observations as those of the Neapolitan might excite surprise, were it not that the language adopted in the diplomatic writings of the time, and the communications of princes with one another, was not [270] particularly measured or courteous.

While foreign rulers had such intercourse with Lorenzo, his fellow-citizens did not yield to strangers in the honours they showed to him. They were accustomed to the pre-eminence which he and his house assumed. In December 1470, the Commune determined to bestow the dignity of knighthood for services to the State on the Gonfaloniere, at that time Bongianni Gianfigliazzi, an elderly man, of an illustrious and rich family, whose houses, near the bridge of Sta. Trinità, enclosed the church of the same name on both sides; and Lorenzo was chosen, notwithstanding his youth, as syndic of the people, according to custom, to perform the ceremony, which was usually done either by princes of reigning houses or by wise and distinguished men who were themselves knights. When the same distinction had been shown the year before to the retiring Gonfaloniere, Jacopo de' Pazzi, uncle of Lorenzo's brother-in-law, Tommaso Soderini, upon whom Pope Paul II. had conferred this dignity, represented the Commune, and the ceremony took place in the Baptistery, on a scaffolding built over the great font, well known from Dante's time downwards. House and villas were always full of guests. Lorenzo divided his time between his residences in the city and the country, especially Careggi and Cafaggiuolo, which was the most agreeable residence in the hot summer on account of its high situation and shady woods. In Piero's lifetime we already find him and his brother in the grey mountain convents, whose natural beauty was enhanced by the historical reminiscences of the founders of Holy Orders—in Vallombrosa on the Pratomagno, the foundation of St. John Gualbert; and in Camaldoli in the Casentino, which St. Romualdo of Ravenna founded in the days of the Emperor Otto III. and Henry II. Of the visit of the last-mentioned a literary trace has remained in the Camaldulensian conversations of Cristoforo Landino.

It is unnecessary to say that the members of his family shared in [271] the honours shown to him. In the spring of 1472 Madonna Clarice visited her Roman relations, and among her escort was Luigi Pulci, who had also resided in Umbria shortly before. One of his letters to Lorenzo[192] describes most delightfully the visit which Clarice made in May at Fuligno to the daughter of the despot of Morea, Zoe Palæologus. This man's father, Thomas, a brother of the last Greek emperor, after unhappy quarrels in his own family, not silenced by the threatened danger from the Turks, had lost his possessions to Mohammed II. In the spring of 1461 he came to Rome, where a tabernacle, with the statue of the Apostle Andrew, in the vicinity of the Milvian bridge, indicates the spot on which Cardinal Bessarion, in the name of Pope Pius II., received the head of the saint from his hands. Thomas died four years later at Rome, where his three children were educated under Bessarion's superintendence, as their mother, Caterina Centurione, of a Genoese family transplanted to the Levant, had died before him. There was abundant opportunity in Italy of becoming acquainted with distinguished Levanters; and yet their appearance and demeanour always appeared singular to the Italians, as is shown, among others, by Pope Pius II.'s description of Charlotte of Lusignan, who yet appears to have been very much Europeanised in comparison to the Princess Palæologus. 'I saw a mountain of fat before me,' writes Pulci. 'Never should I have thought that there was the like in Germany or Sardinia. Her two eyes might do duty for four, and a little mouth lay between fat red cheeks.' The figure was equally striking to our Florentine. This Oriental beauty married not long afterwards a Muscovite grand duke, who promised to reconquer the Morea for her brothers, one of whom died in Rome, and the other escaped from the executioners of

his imperial uncle. A few days later Pulci wrote from Rome as follows: ‘We have spent some time at Monterotondo, where we were truly received most brilliantly. Yesterday (June 5) we arrived at Rome with about eighty horses. Our Madonna Clarice has done you honour everywhere, and has not herself been neglected. I go in two days to the frontiers, and then back to you. The residence of your wife here will be short, for there is no wedding taking place just now, and the little Lucrezia and Pierino are strong magnets for their mother.’ [272]

The health of Lorenzo’s mother made repeated journeys to baths necessary, which seem to have led her mostly, if not always, to the Bagno a Morba. She carried on a constant correspondence with her son, and her letters to him show equally her sincere affection and a certain deference to the head of the family and the State. In June 1477, she wrote from Bagno,[193] which she had reached not without difficulty on account of the badness of the roads. ‘Hail to you, my dearest son (Salvus sis mi suavissime fili)! To-day the letter written in your name has reached me; and it has been a joy and consolation to me to learn that you are well, and, with you, your whole family, for which God be praised. With the greatest satisfaction I received the news of the betrothal of Cosimino Rucellai with the daughter of the Marchese Gabriello, which was for me most unexpected news, fresh as the coin from the mint.[194] I think it is a happy event, the result of which will justify the good beginning, and which we will celebrate here joyfully with the whole society of the place. God give His blessing! Now to other matters: I am well, Heaven be praised, and the baths are doing me good. If God will, I purpose setting out on the 21st inst. and passing the night at Madame Tita’s, the widow of Martino Cortesi, at San Gemignano. She stayed here several days in order to beg me to do so, and then sent her son, who has gone away early this morning, to obtain my certain promise, which I could not refuse to repeated requests, and, as she is a wife and widow, without offending you. So we have agreed to make a short stay without ceremonies, in order to be in Florence on Monday, the eve of the feast of St. John. I shall not come before, because I am rather weak and languid from the bath. Should it be necessary, however, for me to come earlier, tell me so, and I will leave all else. Send me the horses when you like, so that they arrive here on the 19th, and may rest on the 20th, as we think of setting out on the 21st, as I have said. We need seven horses; nothing else. I commend myself to you.—In haste, on June 9, Lucrezia, in the Bagno a Morba.’ [273]

Cosimo’s widow lived in the house of her grandson till the autumn of 1473. Luigi Pulci, who had been to Bologna on an errand for Lorenzo, wrote from Florence, to Madonna Lucrezia at Careggi, on October 26,[195] ‘I have returned and found our Madonna Contessina no more. This grieved me much. Would that I had at least been permitted to see her once more! I pray God to receive her soul to His mercy, and preserve those left, whom I enjoin to submit with patience.’ How much this woman had seen in the fifty-nine years since Cosimo de’ Medici, her husband, had accompanied Pope John XXIII. to the Council of Constance!

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CHAPTER VII.

LORENZO DE' MEDICI IN ROME—PRATO AND VOLTERRA.

We must now return to the events belonging to the summer of 1471. A fortnight after the death of Pope Paul II. the Cardinal of S. Pietro in Vincoli was chosen as his successor. Francesco della Rovere, who took the name of Sixtus IV., was descended from an obscure family in the market-town of Albizzola, near Savona. Their possible relation to the Piedmontese Della Rovera, lords of Vinovi, was first claimed when the tiara had lent a splendour to the name far outshining that of ancient nobility. He belonged to the Franciscan order, and had dedicated his years to the study and teaching of theology, as well as to disputation and preaching, before Paul II. granted him the red hat, and thus fixed him at Rome, where he became one of the most active and influential members of the sacred college. He continued to lead a monastic life even in the cardinal's purple. In his lodgings at the Esquiline, near the church which gave him his title, and whence he overlooked a great part of the ancient and modern city—which last had not then encroached upon those heights, with their grand ruins of baths and temples—scientific and ecclesiastical questions were discussed, while politics were excluded. And yet this Pope, who had grown up in the cloister, went farther than any of his predecessors in secularising the pontificate, and drawing it into the whirl of a restless policy. Under Sixtus IV. nepotism began to assume a form of aggrandisement, which, instead of being, as hitherto, restricted to the bestowal of fiefs and personal property, [275] extended to the formation of sovereign States, dependent on the Church only in name.

Lorenzo de' Medici was one of the embassy which the Florentine Signoria sent to congratulate the new Pope. The other ambassadors were Donato Acciaiuoli, Agnolo della Stufa, Bongianni Gianfigliazzi, Domenico Martelli, and Piero Minerbetti, the first of whom was spokesman. Martelli and Minerbetti were knighted in Rome. 'In the month of September, 1471' so we read in Lorenzo's memoirs, 'I was sent as ambassador to Rome on the occasion of the coronation of Pope Sixtus, and was received very honourably. I brought from thence the two marble busts of Augustus and Agrippa which the Pope presented to me; and besides a chalcedony vase, and many cameos and other things purchased by myself.' The Pope's affection and confidence were shown in various ways. The Roman Depository, *i.e.*, the Receiver's office, was handed over to the Medici, with the permission to choose as their representative Giovanni Tornabuoni, director of the Roman bank. New privileges were also granted to them in connection with their share in the farming of the alum-works of Tolfa. It was an important concession. In the days of Pope Pius II., Giovanni di Castro, son of the famous jurisconsult, Paolo, the principal co-operator in the revision of the Florentine statutes, (finished in 1415), discovered alum-deposits in the rock while making geological investigations in the hilly country between Civita Vecchia and the territory of Viterbo, in the vicinity of Tolfa. He instantly perceived the importance of his discovery, which promised to free the West, hitherto poor in this mineral, from a tribute to the distant East, made more inaccessible by the Turkish conquests. In fact, the produce soon amounted to 160,000 gold florins; and it is well known what sanguine hopes Pius II., whose eyes were directed towards the East, indulged, that this new source of revenue would aid his enterprises. Genoese houses had employed themselves with the alum-trade till the Medici concluded a contract with the Papal [276] exchequer, which afterwards gave rise to many unpleasant misunderstandings with the financial department.

However brilliant and cheerful things might look in Florence, and however bent the people seemed to be on enjoying the fruits of peace, warnings were not wanting that their security rested on a false foundation. In the year 1470 a sudden tumult, to which the exiles of 1466 were no strangers, had created momentary anxiety in the town of Prato, but order had been soon restored. A much more serious case was the rebellion which two years later took place at Volterra, as it not only was a source of misery for the town, but cast the first real shadow on the reputation of Lorenzo de' Medici.

Volterra, as has been already remarked, had, like all the larger

communes of Tuscany, with the exception of Siena and Lucca, come under the supremacy of Florence. It was due partly to powerlessness against complications from without, and partly to repeated and often violent and bloody attempts of individual citizens to establish a monarchy, that the most clear-sighted were brought to a determination to sacrifice a portion of their independence, endangered now from without, and now from within, in order not to lose domestic security and peace together with independence. In the autumn of 1361 the Florentines had gained firm footing in the town (which was suffering under the tyrannical rule of the Belforti family), the civic guard being entrusted to them at first for ten years, and then permanently. Though Florence appointed the Capitano, the Volterrans elected the Podestà and their magistrates as before, and retained the administration of their extensive territory—which could be viewed in all directions from the loftily situated town towards the Maremma, as well as down the valley of the Elsa and Arno. There was no lack of misunderstandings, and the worst was that which arose at the beginning of 1429 on account of the introduction of the registry of land (Cadaster). When the [277] Florentines prepared to crush the insurrection, and no help appeared, it speedily ended with the murder of the originator, but deprived the town of the choice of its Podestà and other rights, which were only regained later. During the miseries which befell these regions of Tuscany about the middle of the century from the Neapolitan campaigns, Volterra remained faithful to the Florentines. The cause of the new disturbances came from a direction whence it was least expected.

If we descend from Volterra to the south, cross the Cecina, which flows in a deep valley to the not far distant sea, and follow the road leading by Pomarance to Massa di Maremma, we reach after a few miles Castelnuovo, which occupies the sides and summit of a hill, and is called Di Val di Cecina, to distinguish it from several other places of the same name. It is now one of the centres of the great industry which, by obtaining borax from the vapours rising from the hot springs and Solfatari (Lagoni) of this district, so rich in volcanic phenomena, has brought undreamed of wealth and a beneficial activity to Volterra. Four centuries ago another mineral production was in question, namely, alum, which had been worked for 200 years already, and, therefore, long before Tolfa was discovered, without apparently having yielded much. In 1471 Benuccio Capacci, of Siena, made a proposal to the Signoria of Volterra regarding the farming of these alum-works, which proposal was accepted after a short consultation by the just retiring magistracy, and, as it would appear, through the mediation of the chancellor, Antonio Ivano, although from the first a strong opposition had been raised in the city, and a reconsideration of the question by the newly appointed magistrates was demanded. Next came the charge that the rights of the commune had been infringed by the contract. The contractors, that is to say, Benuccio and his partners, among whom were several distinguished Florentines, insisted that the commune was bound by the contract; the commune objected that the contract was not only a [278] gross violation of the interests of the whole body, but was also illegal because the votes had not been unanimous, as was prescribed in every case of the sale or lease of the common property —a position which the opponents could not dispute, although it was shown to be fallacious in practice. During this quarrel the contractors had taken possession of the mines, and worked them with great zeal, without troubling themselves about the protest. But, as they could not conceal from themselves that the matter caused great offence, they offered to pay a higher lease, whereupon the commune appointed a commission of eight citizens, which, however, could not come to agreement with Benuccio and his companions. The Volterran Signoria seem now to have lost patience. They appointed a new commission of twelve members, and these sent an armed force to Castelnuovo, who took possession of the mines, and violently prevented the continuance of the works.

Hitherto the controversy had been confined to the town of Volterra and the contractors. Now came the interference of Florence. Two of the shareholders, Paolo Inghirami and Benedetto Riccobaldi, men of good family, had repaired to Florence. It was all the easier for them to procure a hearing, as distinguished Florentines, Gino Capponi, Antonio Giugni, and Bernardo Bonagiusti, belonged to the trading company with which was also connected Lorenzo de’ Medici, whom we already know as a chief

contractor in the alum-trade. A plenipotentiary went to Volterra to obtain the restitution of the mines to the company. When he met with opposition, the Podestà removed first four, and his successor several other citizens, who were to remain under supervision at Florence. The contractors were at the same time reinstated, and Lorenzo de' Medici entrusted with the final decision. However much the excitement increased at Volterra, the Signoria of the town persuaded the exiles to yield, so that a composition might have been possible, had not Paolo Inghirami after his return excited so much bitterness by his arrogant proceedings that an insurrection broke [279] out. Paolo and several of his friends who had taken refuge in the palace of the Podestà were besieged there by the furious people; two were killed, the others escaped with difficulty, and the Podestà found protection in the palace of the Signoria. As the matter had gone so far, a magistracy of ten was appointed, as in times of war, to undertake the guidance of affairs, with the reservation, however, that nothing should take place which was contrary to the duty of the town towards the Florentine commune. An embassy went at the same time to Florence to explain the state of the case.

Here opinions were divided. Tommaso Soderini stood at the head of the few who entertained the opinion that a fire must be avoided at home; the Volterrans should be punished, but not driven to rebellion; while no ground of complaint or interference should be given to the Pope and other neighbours; and that they should proceed cautiously in this doubtful question. Lorenzo de' Medici was of another opinion. He remembered the repeated insubordination of the Volterrans, and concluded that their pride must be broken for ever. Unfortunately he prevailed. Of course the extreme party in Volterra now gained the upper hand, and action commenced on both sides. On April 26, 1472, the Volterrans who were in Florence were brought as prisoners to the palace of the Priors, and war was declared. A Balia of twenty citizens was appointed, and the sum of 100,000 gold florins set apart for the equipment of the army. Volterra appealed to King Ferrante and Galeazzo Maria Sforza against Florentine violence; but the Duke of Milan and Pope Sixtus IV. sent reinforcements to the Florentines, and Volterra only obtained assistance from Siena and the Appiani of Piombino, who, on account of the attempt of the previous year, had no reason to be on friendly terms with Florence, and especially with Lorenzo. But only about a thousand foot-soldiers assembled in the town, while the Florentines entrusted the generalship to the most capable warrior of [280] his time, the Count of Urbino; and he, supported by the counsel of the two commissaries, Bongianni Gianfigliazzi and Jacopo Guicciardini, advanced into the Volterran territory with at least 5,000 foot and 500 horse, and, defenceless as the land was, easily took possession of it and began the siege of the town.

Volterra is a town whose position would have enabled it to hold out for months against the military science and artillery of those days. But the foreign garrison was discouraged and undisciplined, the citizens were divided, and the presence of many country people, who had the ruin of their possessions before their eyes, did not contribute to strengthen the defence. The unexpectedly prompt attack had, moreover, prevented a sufficient provisioning of the town. For five-and-twenty days the Volterrans held out against the cannonade, which seriously damaged their old walls. They then opened the gates, after having concluded a treaty with the commissaries, according to which the possessions, honour, and life of the citizens should remain uninjured. On June 17, Federigo di Montefeltro rode into the now pacified town. Scarcely had he, however, reached the square before the palace of the Signoria with his troop than there arose a disturbance through the insolence of a soldier, who attacked and robbed a councillor who was going home. This led to a general sack, and filled the unhappy town with all the horrors which could be expected after a conquest by storm from a licentious soldiery. The dreadful treatment of Volterra has left a dark stain on the otherwise honourable name of the Count of Urbino and on the reputation of the Florentines.

Though on the side of the latter it has always been asserted the affair happened without their knowledge and against their intentions and interests, the Volterrans have never been convinced of this. In a letter of thanks to King Louis XI., who not only inquired of the Republic with great interest as to the course of events, but informed the Milanese ambassador that he would, if necessary, [281] himself assist against the rebellious town, the Signoria satisfied this

friend of theirs, whom they styled ‘Father of our city,’ that there was now no longer any cause to be anxious respecting them and their valiantly defended honour, and they could only wish him similar success under similar circumstances.[196]

Francesco Guicciardini and others inform us that the news of the sack of Volterra aroused the most lively displeasure in Florence; but this pretended displeasure did not prevent them from rewarding the conqueror and making use of the victory. That the Count of Urbino, when he returned, was highly honoured was a matter of course. He was presented with a banner and a silver helmet, besides the right of citizenship; and that the last might not be a mere form, he received as a location Luca Pitti’s villa at Rusciano. The success of the enterprise was very welcome to Lorenzo de’ Medici, for the victory was specially ascribed to him. One of his confidants said to [282] Tommaso Soderini, ‘What do you say now that Volterra is taken?’ To which he replied, ‘It seems to me that the town is lost. Had you compounded on reasonable terms, you would have preserved an advantage and security. But as you must now maintain it by force, it will create weakness and embarrassment for you in case of war, and expense and injury in time of peace.’ But the Government took care to weaken Volterra, so that the defiant spirit of its citizens was broken. The Signoria were obliged to give up their palace to the Florentine commander; the church of San Pietro and the bishop’s lodging in a high-lying part of the town were pulled down to make room for a new fortress; a number of citizens were banished, and many who had refused to keep within bounds were outlawed. The administration of the district was taken away from Volterra. Lorenzo himself proceeded to the humbled town, and sought to arouse a more favourable feeling by liberality and fine words. He caused 2,000 gold florins to be distributed in the name of the Florentine Signoria. But what was all this in comparison to the misery which he, before all others, had brought upon the town? When we read the letter which the Pope’s private secretary, Antonio Inghirami, a member of a family always attached to the Medici, writes to Lorenzo from Rome on March 10, 1473, we see from the tone that he was already considered the ruler of Florence, while the sad state of the ill-used and oppressed town penetrates through the flattering phrases. ‘The visit of Your Magnificence to Volterra was a real consolation to me, for you will have far better recognised how things stood by seeing them than by mere hearsay. You will be able to measure our sufferings and misery, public and private; you will yourself have found your old faithful adherents and servants deprived of all their property, oppressed, confused, and, as it were, distracted, by the terrible pillage which has swept away everything. As you must have been moved to pity and compassion at sight of this, so will your coming have lifted up and consoled those for whom [283] it was a last hope.’[197] If we consider what great misery was caused by this conflict, and that the expedition cost 100,000 gold florins, which had to be borrowed from the credit-fund for wedding-gifts, we shall be astonished when we read that the alum-mines, which were afterwards worked at the expense of the Florentine woollen-guild, lay neglected as unproductive before a century had passed.

In the meantime the progress towards arbitrary government became daily more apparent. The elections to the communal offices, as well as to those of the towns and places of the territory, were entirely in the hands of a party, and even in those cases in which the members of the Balia were not all adherents of the Medici, means were found to get what they wanted. Instead of two of the primitive councils, those of the commune and of the people, a new one composed of 200 members, called the larger council (Consiglio Maggiore) was for a time instituted for the sake of the elections. The property of the magistrate of the Parte Guelfa and of the merchants’ office was sold to assist the public finances, which did not prevent customs and taxes from being increased. The ancient office of the Capitano del Popolo, once the political and military chief of the armed citizens, was done away with, and replaced by a common judge. The Podestà had lost his former dignity and power, though the office was still eagerly sought by foreign noblemen. The executor of the laws against the nobles (*ordinamenta iustitiæ*) was now a captain of the police. All affairs of importance were treated by a small number of men kept together by interest and common dependence.

CHAPTER VIII.

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POPE SIXTUS IV., KING FERRANTE, AND THE MEDICI.

Pope Sixtus IV. was disposed most favourably towards the Medici at the beginning of his reign. We have heard in Lorenzo's own words how well he was received in Rome in 1471. The friendly relation was strengthened by concessions which afforded essential advantages to the Florentine mercantile house. The Pope was ready moreover to fulfil a wish which Lorenzo already cherished at that time; granting the cardinal's purple to Giuliano. From a letter addressed by him to Sixtus on November 21, 1472,[198] we see that he had already spoken to the Pope of the matter, and that the latter had given him a promise. The whole plan gives us an insight into Lorenzo's thoughts. To have a member of the family in the Sacred College was advantageous for a family which was on the road to princely power, especially in a city and a State which stood in a thousand connections with Rome; and what Lorenzo subsequently attained through a son he wished now to effect for and by a brother. To withdraw this brother from the circle of domestic and political affairs, to guide the State without a partaker if not rival in power, this was the principal thing. Giuliano was the born leader of the youth of Florence, eighteen years old, strong, lively, and a friend to pleasure; the matter might become serious, though hitherto, and indeed up to the death of the younger brother, the best terms [285] existed between the two, as once between Cosimo and his brother Lorenzo.

The first creation of cardinals of Sixtus IV. took place on December 15, 1471, four months after his election; only his two relations were elevated by it, Pietro Riario and Giuliano della Rovera. Lorenzo waited nearly a year before he reminded the Pope of his promise, and commissioned his uncle, Giovanni Tornabuoni with the affair, after Sixtus had in the meantime given him a fresh proof of his friendly feeling in the case of Volterra. On April 25, 1473, the cardinal of Pavia, Jacopo Ammanati, who had maintained various connections with the Medici and Tuscany in general from the days of Pope Pius II., wrote to him that they would at all events receive a cardinal's hat; but he, Lorenzo, ought to consider whether he would not prefer to bestow it on some one else, for instance, the Bishop of Pisa, instead of his brother, who could not be immediately created one without passing through certain preliminary ecclesiastical dignities. Immediately afterwards, on May 7, ensued the second creation of eight cardinals, including Italians, Frenchmen, and Spaniards. Eight days later Ammanati, after having consulted with Giovanni Tornabuoni, wrote again to Lorenzo. He gave him to consider that the entrance of his brother into sacred orders, if it promised advantages on the one side, might, on the other, greatly harm the position of the family and the party if God should call him away, and he should leave four children of tender age. If, however, he persisted in his intention, the matter could only advance by degrees. 'It would be first necessary to appoint Giuliano as protonotary, and allow him to fill this office for at least a month. For to raise a layman directly to the dignity of cardinal none of us would consent. I would advise, however, that he should receive no ecclesiastical consecration before our object is attained, so that in case of failure he may return to his former position, as many have done in my days, without exciting censure. His household must then represent the half of a cardinal's—that is to say, an escort of four to [286] six chaplains, and eight grooms. For though he might develop greater splendour according to his position, a modest appearance here makes a favourable impression. For the rest, Messer Gentile (Becchi) and I would regard him as a son, and would so instruct him that he could only obtain praise. His creation is certain to me if the Pope remains alive, and I trust to be able to effect more than one. Be not offended that several cardinals have been appointed in these last days, for several must soon follow, for the Emperor and King Ferrante, for Rome and Florence.' At the same time he advised him to sound the views of the Duke of Milan. From such a purely business point of view did even a grave and pious man like Ammanati regard the nomination of a member of the highest ecclesiastical senate; which indeed had long consisted of two classes—the learned and spiritual members, and the great lords and

politicians. The Pope then promised the republic to appoint one of their fellow-citizens on the first opportunity; while the Cardinal of Pavia announced in his name that the granting of bishoprics in their territory could only take place after an agreement beforehand with the Signoria.

The relations between the Pope and the Medici were still undisturbed when, after the death of Giovanni Neroni at Rome in 1473, the former appointed his nephew, Cardinal Riario, to the archbishopric of Florence. This young man suddenly became, from an obscure Franciscan monk, the all-powerful favourite of the supreme pontiff, and though not deficient in intellect and subtlety, was so devoid of moderation and sense of fitness that he gave scope to his love of luxury and extravagance, to a degree that was unusual even in Rome, notwithstanding the wealth of such cardinals as Guillaume d'Estouteville, Latino Orsini, Olivieri Carafa, &c. How far his foolish extravagance was carried is seen by the festival which he gave in the spring of 1473 at his palace near St. Apostoli to the newly-married Duchess of Ferrara, Eleonore of Aragon, King [287] Ferrante's daughter, a festival which excited great displeasure everywhere. Florence also had to see something of the bridal procession of the Duchess. At the end of April the duke's brother, Sigismondo d'Este, who went to fetch his future sister-in-law, arrived at the city with a suite which required no less than four hundred horses and seventy-seven mules; he stayed there two days, and then continued his journey towards Rome. He rewarded Florentine hospitality by circulating false money bearing the stamp of the Republic, and he was convicted of it, but allowed to escape. On June 22, Eleonore, who had left Naples on May 26, arrived at Florence. Duke Ercole, who had informed Lorenzo of his betrothal in the preceding November, had announced the arrival of his consort to him on June 4. She had passed the preceding night in San Casciano, on the Sienese road, only eight miles distant from the city. Her suite, consisting partly of Neapolitans and partly of Ferrarese, numbered no fewer than 1,400 men on horseback. She rode towards the Piazza, where the Signoria received her on the Ringhiera, she exchanged a few words with the Gonfaloniere, and then proceeded to the Medicean palace, where she lodged. Her whole suite was entertained at the cost of the commune; the expenses in the city and territory were reckoned at about ten thousand gold florins; 'Money thrown away,' Alamanna Rinuccini adds. The journey was continued through Marradi and Faenza.[199] Eleonore's consort and father expressed their thanks for the reception. 'Illustrious lord and beloved friend,' wrote the king to Lorenzo on July 7,[200] 'through letters of our daughter, Duchess of Ferrara, and our ambassador, we have heard of the reception she met with from you, and of the proofs of friendship and festivals which you gave her with equal kindness and magnificence. We must express our unbounded [288] gratitude for this; and, although the love we bore you seemed as if it could have been little, if at all, increased, we assure you that it has been augmented in such a manner that we shall ever be under obligation to you. We shall endeavour in time to prove our gratitude for the pleasure you have given us.'

Two months later Pietro Riario came to Florence. The ostensible aim of the journey was to take possession of the archbishopric, but it was more important to him and to the Pope to assure himself of the intentions of the Duke of Milan; in which he succeeded so well, that the story went that in Milan, where the Cardinal was in September, they had made an agreement about the royal title of Lombardy, to which the vain Sforza aspired, as the ambitious Visconti had done eighty years before. Pietro Riario's presence in Florence was a new cause for festivals and expenses, at a time when the people were suffering from dearth. The eulogistic verses, exaggerated to the most excessive bombast and profanest idolatry, with which Angelo Poliziano (who was then certainly very young and very needy) celebrates the unworthy nephew of a pope, who was indulgent to culpable weakness towards his relations, are one of the numerous proofs which afford an insight into the public and moral conditions of the time. The early death of Pietro Riario, which happened in the beginning of 1474, put an end to various plans, and to a scandal which surpassed all that had been seen before. That there was no lack at the time of half ironical observations on the growing luxury in Florence, is shown by a letter addressed, on January 22 in the year just mentioned, to Duke Ercole d'Este by Niccolò Bendedei.[201] 'There is nothing new here, except that in the

neighbourhood of Pisa, where the illustrious Lorenzo is hawking with King Ferrante's men, two of the ten falcons sent by His [289] Majesty, and those the best, are lost. Your Excellence must not wonder that I speak of such things, for I only follow the example of others. Idleness has so gained the upper hand in Italy that, if nothing new happens, we shall have more to say about the slaughter of fowls and dogs than about armies and deeds of war. For the rest, I am of opinion that those who have to govern Italy in peace will not reap less fame than those who kept her at war. For the object of war is, after all, peace, and the only consideration is that it should be a permanent peace.' But this never entered the minds of those who were all too ready to lavish the fruits of peace.

The first cause of mutual distrust between Sixtus IV. and Lorenzo seems to have been the Pope's endeavour to obtain estates for his relations in Romagna, a matter in which the Florentines were not free from blame. In contemplating the fate of this province, the family of the Manfredi, their disunion among themselves, and their connections with Florence, have already been mentioned (p. 207). From the proximity of the territories of Imola and Faenza, it was by no means indifferent to the Republic in whose hands they might be. After several changes and family feuds, Imola had fallen, in 1473, into the hands of the Duke of Milan, from whom the Florentines tried to obtain it. Their wishes were, however, thwarted both by the King of Naples and the Pope, naturally averse to the extension of the Florentine territory in Romagna, and at last Sixtus IV. bought Imola for 40,000 ducats, and bestowed it upon Girolamo Riario, the cardinal's brother, to whom at the same time the hand of Caterina Sforza, a natural daughter of Galeazzo Maria, was promised.[202] The journey of the cardinal to Milan was undoubtedly connected with this affair. After the death of the latter, Girolamo took the first place in his uncle's favour, and soon began to exercise an influence on affairs which could only be injurious, on account of his restless ambition and violent nature, while it was to be foreseen that the [290] constant dissensions, and often wild enmities in the neighbouring families—the Manfredi of Faenza, as well as the Ordelaffi of Forli—would afford material enough for new anxieties and troubles.

Almost immediately afterwards another circumstance disturbed the good understanding even more seriously. Città di Castello, lying in the Upper Tiber valley, on the frontier between Umbria and Tuscany, and not wholly unimportant, shared the fate of all neighbouring towns and localities, which became the nurseries of excellent condottieri and soldiers, but at the same time the scenes of permanent civil disturbances, and often of the bloodiest family feuds. In 1440, Vitelozzo Vitelli, the head of a family frequently mentioned after the end of the twelfth century, had received from Pope Eugene IV. the vicegerency of his native town; but another family, that of the Giustini, disputed the pre-eminence of the Vitelli, and in the spring of 1468 occurred one of those scenes of horror which are by no means rare in the history of Umbria. Niccolò Vitelli, who had attained the upper hand after Vitellozzo's death, managed to bring about a reconciliation with Pope Paul II., who invested him with the vicegerency in 1470; but in the beginning of Sixtus IV.'s reign, his accusers, especially Lorenzo Giustini, the head of the opposing party, influenced the Pope against him. As things were in Città di Castello we cannot blame the latter if he wished to set bounds to the violent state of things, which hindered every proper exercise of law and administration, and always allowed one part of the citizens to be oppressed by the other. But it was suspected that Sixtus IV.'s only object was to transfer the supreme power to a nephew. Events in other parts of Umbria followed. In Todi a violent feud had arisen between the factions which still called themselves Ghibellines and Guelphs. The inhabitants of Spoleto had joined in the dispute, and procured the preponderance for the anti-papal party. Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere had been sent with troops [291] against both towns. He had pacified Todi and forced Spoleto to yield; on which occasion the same thing happened as at Volterra from want of discipline in the troops, all the more unfortunate because an ecclesiastical prince was at the head. Niccolò Vitelli was accused of having assisted the inhabitants of both the rebellious towns; and now his turn was come. Giovanni Antonio Campano, the statesman and historian, was sent to make terms with him; he refused to retire from the administration, or even to re-admit the exiles, well knowing that this would be the end of his own authority.

As treaties were fruitless, the siege of Città di Castello began.

Niccolò defended himself valiantly, and inflicted great injuries on his opponents, who, about six thousand men strong, far exceeded his forces. It was said that Florence and Milan had supported him in his opposition. It was certainly the interest of Florence not to let a State of doubtful proclivities rise up so immediately on her frontiers. In the middle of July the determination was taken to enlist 3,000 horse and as many foot for the protection of the territory, and to send Piero Nasi as commissary to the neighbouring Borgo San Sepolcro. At the first voting the resolution passed with a large majority. The Pope took the demonstration very ill. At last the Vitelli saw themselves obliged to come to an agreement, especially after Federigo of Montefeltro, on whom Sixtus IV. bestowed the title of Duke of Urbino, threw his great military authority into the scale in favour of the Pope, a movement to which King Ferrante assented. The conditions were extremely favourable to the town, but Niccolò Vitelli was obliged to quit it; and though he was honourably received in Rome, and obtained from Feltrier, a no less honourable position in Urbino, his power was at an end. An attempt made in the following year to regain it by force made his situation worse, as he was now obliged to flee, and his rival, Lorenzo Giustini, it is true under a papal governor, assumed the highest rank among the [292] citizens.[203] The Cardinal della Rovera openly accused the Republic of Florence[204] of having assisted the Vitelli against the Pope, increased the vigour of his opposition, and thus led to a capitulation, of which Cardinal Ammanati, notwithstanding his attachment to Florence and the Medici, wrote that it was a disgrace for the victors, for not they, but the vanquished, dictated the terms.

While Ammanati was at Siena, where Lorenzo de' Medici visited him, he said to the latter that, by his openly favouring the Vitelli, he had himself made it impossible for the Pope to employ the mediation of the Republic instead of the Duke of Urbino in composing the difference. The Pope also complained in a brief addressed to Florence of the assistance which had been given to Vitelli, and of his remaining in the territory of the Republic, from whence a new attempt against Città di Castello might be easily made. Lorenzo de' Medici answered that all had been done that was compatible with the freedom and honour of the State. With Niccolò it had been agreed that he should take up his residence in the neighbourhood of Pisa, and not seek to approach Città di Castello, and his Holiness might be as much at peace respecting him as if he were in the castle of St. Angelo. 'Be assured, Holy Father,' he added,'that I am going to work with perfect honesty, and the intention of deserving no just reproofs nor displeasure from you. I reckon the favour of your Holiness among the greatest of my treasures, and I have no desire to lose it for the sake of Messer Niccolò or anyone else.'[205] We shall see, however, how, at the time when the breach was complete, Sixtus IV. made their behaviour in these matters a crime on the part [293] of the Florentines, and how they could only faintly defend themselves from such reproaches.

That Federigo of Montefeltro, on whom the Republic believed they could rely, joined the Pope, was a heavy blow to them. Feltrier, a man of spirit and culture, and a good master of his little state, was too weak to pursue an independent policy, and followed the lead of circumstances, while the condottiere-nature preponderated in him. He had truly served the Republic in the Colleonic war, and opposed the Pope in the Malatesta feud; he now passed to the other side. King Ferrante, who well knew the military skill of Federigo, had attached him to himself, Sixtus having aided him. During the siege of Città di Castello, on August 23, 1474, the ducal dignity was conferred on him. It did not end here; the new duke was entirely attached to the Papal interest. By the acquisition of Imola, Sixtus IV. had begun to gain a firm footing with his relations in Romagna. He now smoothed the way for a connection with one of the oldest families in the province by obtaining from Federigo the promise of the hand of his eldest daughter, Giovanna, for his nephew, the brother of Cardinal Giuliano. The importance of this connection was evident. The duke had by his recently deceased wife, Battista Sforza of Pesaro, an only son, Guidubaldo, a delicate child only two years old. If he should not survive his father, the inheritance would pass to the daughters. Guidubaldo did survive his father, but was always sickly; he died childless in the time of a second Pope belonging to the Della Rovere family, and Montefeltro and Urbino, as Sixtus IV. had secretly hoped, came into the possession of a son of his sister who had married, in 1475, Giovanni della Rovere, on whom his

uncle bestowed the vicegerency of Senegallia with Mondavio, and not long afterwards the dignity of a prefect of Rome. The Pope's nephews were on the high road to greatness.

[294] Considering the intimacy between the King of Naples and the Medici, it appears strange to find him thwarting their designs. The real ground was the leaning of the Florentines towards the Venetians, who were always mistrusted by the King, on account of their desire to extend their dominions on the coasts of the Adriatic, and to obtain complete possession of Cyprus, where Caterina Cornaro, the widow of the last of the Lusignans, was a mere vassal of the Republic, whilst the eyes of the Aragonese of Naples, as well as those of their Norman and Angevin predecessors, were always turned towards the East. The dangers Venice was threatened with on the Dalmatian side contributed to keep up a sort of outward understanding; but suspicion was growing on both sides, and the increasing friendship between the Pope and the King found its counterpoise in the alliance of Florence and Venice. On September 20, 1474, the alliance was proclaimed in Venice which the Republic had concluded with Florence—for whom Tommaso Soderini conducted the negotiations—and Milan. According to the form, it was a renewal of that of Lodi in 1454, and was to last for five-and-twenty years. Common defence against any attack whatever was the object; the Pope and the King of Naples were given the option of joining, though no one thought they would, and the Duke of Burgundy was summoned to take a share in the Turkish war. On the 4th of November the news of the alliance had already reached Florence, and was greeted with bonfires and great festivities. After the ratification, the solemn proclamation was made on the 20th amid banquetings and illuminations. The miraculous picture of the Madonna of Sta. Maria dell' Imprimeta was on this, as on all occasions of joy or sorrow, brought into the city, and borne in procession. The joy of the citizens was indeed damped by a new tax. 'They proceeded by such means,' remarks Alamanno Rinuccini,[206] [295] 'in a violent manner, and the heads of the civic government excited hatred enough; but as the people were enervated, they were obliged to endure this and many other attacks that were worse.' The Pope as well as the King refused to accede to the alliance, and concluded a close treaty with one another, under the promise to have the same friends and foes. As Rome celebrated the jubilee in the following year, it was a desirable opportunity for King Ferrante to draw the ties of friendship tighter by a personal interview with the head of the Church. On February 25, 1475, he entered Rome with a brilliant suite, where he showed himself more liberal than it was his nature to be. He resided in the palace of the Vatican, and had full time to discuss all political affairs of the day with a Pope who, grown to manhood in a convent, had been drawn, at the approach of old age, into a whirl of business and difficulties which have given a most unenviable reputation to his pontificate, otherwise not without its good sides. The history of the city of Rome preserves the memory of this visit of Ferrante of Aragon, who, by his observation to Sixtus IV. that he could not be master of Rome so long as it was impossible to move freely in the streets, is said to have induced the Pope to widen them by removing the balconies and outbuildings, which had sometimes also served military purposes.

There were now two leagues, which divided Italy geographically into two halves; but for the present they stood rather beside than opposed to one another. The whole political state of the peninsula in the fifteenth century had the characteristics of condottiere war in it, in the motives as well as in the forms, in the rendezvous and the evolutions, in the mutually dubious and bargaining demeanour to friends as well as foes. They formed alliances to injure those with whom an old alliance still existed; ambassadors were with those against whom they went to war; private persons were attacked before the war had broken out; the leaders were enticed away alternately by this party and by that, even after they had taken pay. [296] In November 1475 the ambassadors of Venice, Florence, and Milan, went to Rome, summoned by the Pope, to take part in the congress convened on account of the Turkish danger. The imposing expedition of 1472, commanded in the Pope's name by the Cardinal Olivieri Carafa, had obtained but slender results. The loss of Caffa, which had ensued in 1475, the ancient Genoese depôt on the Black Sea, was not only heavy in itself, but also because the connection with Persia, which alone still resisted, was threatened by it. The negotiations lasted for months; what they effected is seen by the

fact that not long afterwards Turkish stragglers reached Friuli. While they thus remained in continual connection with the Pope, the friendship between the Medici and King Ferrante was outwardly undisturbed. In the summer of 1477 it would still have been held to be complete. The king, who had been for twelve years the widower of Isabella di Chiaromonte, and long a grandfather, determined to marry again. The ground was of a political nature. King Juan of Aragon and Sicily had never forgiven the separation of Naples from his brother's dominions. Alfonso of Aragon had, indeed, thought he could proceed with Naples as with a conquered country; but on the side of Spain it was objected that Naples and Sicily were Hohenstaufen inheritance, and rightfully accruing to the house of Aragon through Manfred's daughter, although in consequence of the Anjou usurpation it had long been lost to them. The mystery of Ferrante's birth, who was said by some to be the son of a barber's wife, and by others that of Alfonso's sister-in-law, the consort of his brother the Grand Master of San Jago, was opposed to this in the king's family. At the time we have mentioned, when the Neapolitan line of the Aragonese seemed fully secured by children and grandchildren as well as by investitures and alliances, new claims appeared, nevertheless, in Spain. The means of resisting these was a union of the two lines: Ferrante married his uncle's daughter, Juana. On June 11, the Duke of Calabria quitted Naples to fetch his future stepmother. Several of the great barons of the empire [297] accompanied him. Received at Rome with great splendour, he landed on the 29th at Piombino, where a wooden mole had been built, forty feet long, and covered with branches and flowers. On July 1 he reached Pisa. Lorenzo de' Medici, who towards the end of May had received the Duchess of Ferrara at his house in this town—when she was on her way to her father, and, passing through Lucca, arrived here—and had splendidly entertained her till she embarked at Leghorn,[207] had come down the Arno in two great barques to meet the duke, and escorted him to a palace fitted up for him, where he resided for three days as the guest of the Republic. Lorenzo failed not to give rich presents on this as on all similar occasions. On July 9 the duke was in Nice, on the 25th in Barcelona, from whence, on September 11, the new queen reached Naples, where Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia, as Papal legate, performed the marriage ceremony and the coronation.[208] Bongianni Gianfigliazzi and Pierfilippo Pandolfini presented the newly-married pair with the congratulations of the Republic. Not much above a quarter of a century later this queen shared the complete ruin of the house which she now entered, a ruin in which her own brother aided by lending a hand to the successor of him with whom King Ferrante had refused to ally himself, when he rejected the proposals made him by Louis XI. to the disadvantage of his Spanish relations.

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CHAPTER IX.

MILAN, GENOA, AND SIENA.

During these events, which, however, promised no quiet time, the inhabitants of Florence had lived for long years as merrily as if their state and all Italy were secured against foreign enemies and internal dissensions. One could see that a young man held the rudder, however much political affairs and plans and party questions might claim his attention. In respect to his intellectual pursuits, no time was so rich in fruits as this. His style of living became more and more splendid. The many visits of princely personages, for whom his house served as a lodging, led him to incur expenses of various kinds, in purchases of works of art as well as for his daily requirements, while they were an encouragement to luxury for the distinguished citizens who could not let the Medici act as sovereigns, and accustomed the people to pastimes and good living. All this had its dark sides. The income of the Medici was all the more insufficient because strict supervision was lacking; their foreign business was too widely spread and dependent on conjunctures of the moment. The waste of public money, which afterwards was so prevalent, had already begun. Everything seemed allowable when it was a question of satisfying ambition.

To this time belongs the tournament of Giuliano de' Medici, which was still more famous than that of his brother, because the most gifted poet of the Medicean circle, Angelo Poliziano (not sixteen years old, as has been believed in consequence of a [299] chronological error, but still only two-and-twenty[209]) sang this knightly diversion in the renowned verses which he dedicated to Lorenzo. This tournament took place on January 28, 1475, probably in the square of Sta. Croce. Giuliano, who rode a horse named Orso, and wore a rich suit of armour, obtained the prize. When we consider that he was powerful and practised in knightly dexterity, an accomplishment which then belonged to the education of distinguished young Italians, even if he had not devoted himself to the art of war, as the Florentines seldom did, one need not suppose that this victory was agreed upon beforehand. Already, when a boy of twelve, Giuliano had wished, much against his father's inclination, to show his prowess and skill at the time of the visit of the Duchess of Calabria. Giuliano's arms and helmet were beautifully wrought by Michel Angelo of Gaiole, father of the sculptor Baccio Bandinelli, a clever goldsmith, who during many years served the Medici with equal zeal and fidelity, and was employed by Lorenzo especially in setting his gems and other precious stones.[210] Poliziano's mythological poem does not, like that of Pulci, give us a description of the event, nor the names of the combatants; and if we hear much in praise of both brothers and of the whole Medicean house in their harmonious but somewhat pedantically antiquated octosyllabics, they teach us little which can give a knowledge of the time or of the persons. Fifteen months after the tournament, the lady of Giuliano's heart, Simonetta, the nymph of the poem, died; it was in the night from April 26 to 27, 1476, while Lorenzo resided at Pisa, where he continually received news of the course of the illness and the end of the beautiful girl who had charmed his brother and whom he himself lamented. Neither he nor [300] Giuliano dreamed what cruel fate should befall one of them and threaten the other on the same day two years later.

Another terrible fate was rapidly approaching, which did not immediately concern the family of the Medici, but exercised a decided influence on the political position of Italy; and which when Lorenzo had scarcely quitted the world's stage, overthrew in its results the edifice which he had reared and watched over with such care.

On St. Stephen's day in 1476, Galeazzo Maria Sforza, at the age of thirty-two, fell in the church of the saint to whom the day was consecrated, beneath the daggers of three Milanese noblemen, inspired by indignation against the cruel and immoral reign of the degenerate son of an excellent father, who had oppressed the people with taxes in order to support a luxury, which had bordered on madness. The deed was tyrannicide after the old classical style; and as the conspirators had no ulterior projects nor any support or

adherents among the people, the most distinguished councillor of the deceased, Cecco Simonetta, succeeded in preserving the people in their devotion to their ducal house, and proclaimed the son of Galeazzo Maria, Gian Galeazzo, then six years old, as duke, under the guardianship of his mother Bona. How some of the Florentines judged of the matter may be seen from the words with which Alamanno Rinuccini, a distinguished man, accompanies the news of the event recorded in his notices. 'It was a worthy, laudable, manly deed, which should be imitated by all who live under a tyrant or anything similar. But the cowardice and depravity of the men were to blame, that the example bore little or no fruit, and those who had acted well must suffer death. Nevertheless, they freed the earth from the most worthless monster, who was stained with more shameful sins than any in his time and long before.'[211] But that Lorenzo de' Medici, who received the first news of the event from [301] Tommaso Soderini, at that time ambassador in Milan, was much struck by it, is easily understood. He had made the policy of his grandfather and father his own in reference to the Sforza family, and connected himself closely with them. The league of 1474 had drawn the tie still closer. An understanding with Venice was always precarious; that with Milan seemed certain. It was now threatened with sudden dissolution, for even if they could rely upon a regency, the duchess was in various ways dangerous; especially under the family circumstances known to all. Lorenzo must have perceived all this in a moment, and could not be without serious apprehension. 'I have heard of the duke's death,' wrote Luigi Pulci to him from Mugello, where he was residing on his estate, on January 3, 1477.[212] 'I am sorry, imagining that you are so. I have not been in the city, for I fear that it would avail nothing. Wherever I may be, you know that you have a servant who is always ready to obey you; and if you wish that I should go to our lord Roberto (Sanseverino), or elsewhere, I will mount at the first signal. In many respects I think it well that the aforesaid lord is there; he cannot want for ways and means. All the better am I pleased, therefore, that he is quite in your interests, and you can dispose of him there or here as you will.'

In regard to this last, however, Luigi Pulci was much mistaken. Roberto da Sanseverino, who had exercised so great an influence on the development of Milanese affairs, was not the man Pulci thought him. He was descended from one of the most illustrious families of Naples, that of the Princes of Salerno and Bisignano, who had made themselves a name on other fields than those of policy and war. He was the son of Leonetto da Sanseverino and of Lisa Attendolo of Cotignola, daughter of Sforza, the famous condottiere, a woman who had inherited the heroism of her father, and he was born about the year 1420. Trained to be an excellent soldier under his uncle, [302] Francesco Sforza, he rose quickly to a position of distinction, when the former had become Duke of Milan. When in the barons' war against Ferrante of Aragon, he led a Milanese auxiliary corps to Naples, the king made him Count of Cajazzo, in gratitude for his services. He was a man of restless mind, to whom the confusion, more personal than political, which had ensued after Galeazzo Maria's death offered a wide field of activity. It was he who had principally assisted in disturbing Lorenzo's Milanese policy. This policy tended to support the duchess-dowager and preserve the existing government. For this purpose Messer Luigi Guicciardini was commissioned to be active. He had been sent to Milan immediately after the duke's death, where, with Soderini, who afterwards remained alone there, he was of great service, from the authority of the Republic and his personal distinction. Bona of Savoy saw her position soon endangered by her brothers-in-law and their party. Galeazzo Maria had left no less than five brothers, Sforza, Filippo, Lodovico, Ascanio, Ottaviano. Except the second, who had a taste for cultivating science and a quiet life, they were all characters calculated to inspire the head of a newly-risen family with anxiety. Ascanio dedicated himself to the ecclesiastical order and became apostolic pronotary, but this did not restrain the restless ambition which made the life of this man, afterwards so much spoken of, a chain of negotiations, intrigues, and vicissitudes of fortune. Sforza, who had inherited from his father the dukedom of Bari in Apulia, granted him by King Ferrante, and Lodovico, who obtained an inglorious celebrity under the surname of Il Moro, had been banished to France by the suspicious duke. From thence they returned as soon as they heard of his death, in the hopes of obtaining a share in the government. Simonetta managed to make

them harmless beforehand by transferring to them the presidency in the senate of justice, and setting a considerable sum apart for all the uncles of the heir-apparent. Nothing, however, but the representations of the Marquis of Mantua and the foreign [303] ambassadors persuaded the ambitious young men to comply with this arrangement, and it was to be foreseen that affairs would not remain so. Events in Genoa soon lent a pretext for executing the plans of the malcontents.

The history of Genoa is the counterfoil to that of Venice. Since the end of the thirteenth century, peace and stability at home and great territorial and political power, long secured for the latter; while for the former, constant and sudden changes, which must have had an unfavourable effect on the position obtained abroad in the days of maritime greatness; the Genoese power on land being restricted to a narrow strip of coast, partly fertile indeed, and rich in good mariners, but mountainous and inaccessible. The Genoese could not even retain their national and political independence. Weakened by foreign wars and internal feuds, they had acknowledged first the supremacy of France, then that of the Visconti, and, having rebelled against both, they had submitted to Francesco Sforza, who, after having come to an understanding with King Louis XI. in 1464, united all Liguria to the Duchy of Milan. But even then the Genoese did not remain quiet, and after Galeazzo Maria's death the faction of the Fregosi and Fieschi brought on a new insurrection, in consequence of which only the fort called Castelletto remained in the hands of the Milanese troops. But it served as a central point for the attack, when 12,000 Milanese troops advanced against Genoa under the command of Roberto da Sanseverino, with whom were Lodovico and Ottaviano Sforza. A defeat of the rebels soon led to a pacification, as the city was, as usual, divided. On April 11, 1477, Prospero Adorno was acknowledged as governor, and peace was restored. In Florence, where Milanese affairs were watched with great excitement, this result awakened great rejoicing. The Signoria had the bells rung and bonfires lighted on April 14, as if for a victory of the Republic. [304] [213] But things soon took another turn: Lodovico, Sforza, and Ottaviano could as little remain quiet as the Genoese, and their influence in the army threatened the government itself immediately after their return. On command of the regent, one of their confidants, Donato del Conte, an old companion of Duke Francesco, was taken prisoner. The attempt of the brothers to liberate him by exciting a rebellion in Milan was defeated. Roberto Sanseverino, for whom had been destined the military management of a conspiracy which was to place Lodovico in his sister-in-law's place, fled to Asti. Ottaviano Sforza was drowned on his flight in the Adda. The other brothers submitted, and were pardoned. But when the trial of Donato del Conte had brought the full extent of the conspiracy to light, they were banished from Milan, Sforza to Bari, Lodovico to Pisa, and Ascanio to Perugia. This was at the beginning of June 1477.

For the time the duchess-regent retained the power in her own hand. But it was clear that the foundations of her government were weak, while such dissensions prevailed in the ducal family, the nominal ruler being a feeble child, and those nearest the throne ambitious young men with many adherents at home and abroad. Lorenzo de' Medici saw this clearly, and strove to support the regent from the beginning. But it is entirely incomprehensible how, in such a critical moment, while his hold on Milan was so uncertain, he could think of giving neighbours whom he already knew to have a grudge against him cause for complaint. And yet he did so. The discontent of the Pope he increased in a twofold manner. Filippo de' Medici, Archbishop of Pisa, who was entirely devoted to the interest of his relations, had died in 1474. Instead of consulting with the Republic respecting a successor, Sixtus IV. had made a new choice, of a Florentine indeed, but a man certainly not very agreeable to the [305] party then prevailing, and of whom little is known before the catastrophe which cost him his life. That Sixtus IV. made choice of him with the intention of insulting the Republic and the Medici, cannot be supposed; but that he knew it was unwelcome to them we see from a letter of the Cardinal of Mantua to Lorenzo, in which Salviati is recommended to the latter, and it is emphatically added that the promotion was not meant to be displeasing to his Magnificence.[214] That the Pope held fast by his new appointment was in accordance with the principles and proceedings of the Holy

See. The opposition to the Medici faction is explained by the fact that, in consequence of the special circumstances of Pisa, they thought they required a trustworthy and devoted man there. The new archbishop moreover had been very serviceable to the State, and as regards family and position, nothing was to be said against Francesco Salviati. The part acted by him in 1478 has justified the accusations of his enemies. But we must not forget that he was then embittered by years of opposition, and allowed free course to evil passions at a time when so many prelates preferred secular to sacred pursuits, and seized the sword instead of the crozier. What incited Lorenzo against him is unknown; Angelo Poliziano had once appealed with most abject flatteries to the protection of a man against whom he afterwards hurled the severest and most insulting accusations.[215] Lorenzo had twice thwarted him. When Cardinal Riario died, Francesco Salviati had sought to obtain the archbishopric of Florence, but was obliged to yield to the brother-in-law of the all-powerful Rinaldo Orsini. It was said in Rome that the Pope, who had presented Count Girolamo with the rich possessions of his brother the cardinal, and yet was obliged to pay his debts, had offered his benefices, among which was the archbishopric, valued at [306] three thousand gold florins, to the highest bidder, by which means money was raised. This, however, was not to be regarded as simony.[216] Francesco had only received the lesser consecration, and may have had no vocation for the priesthood; but this was not the objection raised against him in Florence, and the man preferred to him did not do his spiritual dignity the least credit. When, therefore, the Pope invested him with Pisa, the most important and wealthy bishopric of Tuscany, the Republic refused to allow him to assume it for three years, and he nursed his hatred in Rome, where soon others shared it with him. That this hatred was personal and directed against Lorenzo de' Medici is easily to be understood, and even excusable under existing circumstances. They had accustomed themselves to regard Lorenzo as the head of the State, and to ascribe good and evil to his influence.

Another complication arose, all the more serious because, not to mention pope and king, whose suspicions it increased, it excited another and a neighbour state against the Republic.

The old connections of the Fortebracci of Montone with Florence have been mentioned. In the first times of the rise of the Medici, Braccio Fortebraccio had been the favourite hero of the Florentine people, who, on his account, had deeply insulted Pope Martin V. His son Oddo had been killed in the Visconti wars in the spring of 1425 by the peasants of the Val di Lamone, who, seventy years before, had made short work of the wild freebooters of the so-called Great Company in their mountain passes. Another son of Braccio's had remained, Carlo, still a child at his father's death. Having grown up in military service in Piccinino's troop, he had attained the reputation of a skilful captain, and lived in the pay of Venice, which always needed numerous troops for Italy, as well as for her possessions in the Levant. He was striking in appearance; at the age [307] of fifty-five he seemed to have renounced all ordinary habits of life, wore a long beard, forbore to change his clothes, and slept without a tent under the open sky in the fields.[217] When his *condotta* came to an end, instead of beginning another he determined to carve out his fortune in his own home. His father and brother had once ruled over Perugia; he therefore relied upon the old attachment of a part of the citizens, and the love of novelty which was never extinguished in those half-free cities. In the spring of 1477 he set out with a considerable troop of mercenaries for Umbria. Such private enterprises of *condottieri* were nothing new in Italy; Jacopo Piccinino had attempted something similar twenty-two years before, but had been defeated and driven to the coasts of Maremma. Carlo Fortebraccio had, however, chosen an unfavourable moment, for peace prevailed in the whole of Central and Southern Italy, and the governments were on their guard on account of Milanese affairs. To the Florentines, in spite of their ancient friendly connections with the Fortebracci, the intended attack upon Perugia was most unwelcome, not so much on the Pope's account, as because they were endeavouring to draw the town into their own league. They therefore hindered the *condottiere* by strong representations from making an attack on Umbria. They could not, however, prevent him from falling in old freebooter fashion upon the neighbouring territory of Siena. He set up as a pretext old demands of his father, who had been dead more than half a century, and, like Piccinino,

began to plunder and raise black-mail in the Arbia valley.

The republic of Siena had always been a battle-field for factions which weakened it within and made it powerless abroad. The old jealousy of the Florentines had made it always easy for every power possessing the preponderance in Italy for the time being to plot [308] against Florence from thence. Thus it happened in the present case, and not without the fault of Florence. The Sienese were taken by surprise by the attack of Carlo Fortebraccio. Long at peace with their neighbours, a peace which was not disturbed by occasional quarrels between places on their frontier in the Chiana valley, they had but a small armed power to oppose to the freebooters. They complained bitterly to the Pope and the King of Naples of the wrong done them, and sent ambassadors to Florence to beg the intervention of the Republic, whose connections with the mischief-maker were no secret. The Florentines, when called upon to put a stop to the favour shown to Carlo by their subjects on the frontiers and to keep honest neighbourliness, gave at first an equivocal answer. They had, they said, nothing to do with the matter, and if Fortebraccio should find support with the Sienese emigrants, it was not their doing. They did not escape the suspicion of having acted in this affair with the same want of sincerity as that shown the Venetians in the Colleonic troubles. Sixtus IV. resolved to be no longer a mere looker on.[218] He remembered that the father of this man had once said that he would bring Pope Martin to read twenty masses for one Bolognino. The Duke of Urbino, captain-general of the Church, caused Antonio di Montefeltro to march into the Sienese territory; everything was in movement in the patrimony, where men were enlisted both for and against the cause. 'It seemed,' says the chronicler of Viterbo, 'as if men were weary of the long peace and took the field for little money.' The attack on Fortebraccio was unsuccessful, so that the duke himself set out, marched into Perugia, and invested the castle of Montone, which yielded after thirty-three days' siege. Neapolitan troops received commands to march through Romagna; in short, a general conflagration seemed about to break forth. This calamity was averted for the time by the departure of the leader of the [309] disturbance, who, threatened by the danger of being cut off, and urged by Florentine representations, quitted the Sienese territory and re-entered the Venetian service. On his return to Romagna, he attempted again to take possession of Montone, but the Sienese razed the castle for fear he should again establish himself firmly there in the neighbourhood of their frontiers.[219]

The political results of this division were evident in the following year. The Florentines had only to thank themselves for it. Towards the end of June, the Chancellor, Bartolommeo Scala, had given Lorenzo de' Medici information of the complaints of the Sienese ambassadors. In the following month the Pope had himself complained bitterly to the Signoria of the assistance given to the *condottiere*, and the wrong done to their neighbours.[220] What made the position worse for the Pope was the circumstance that the old Roman disturber of peace, Count Deifebo of Anguillara, served under Fortebraccio. Most unpleasant to the Florentines had been the Neapolitan intervention, which, indeed, could no longer leave them in doubt as to the position of affairs.

It is hard to recognise the caution and political sagacity hitherto displayed by Lorenzo in these proceedings. His biographer, Niccolò Valori, who is inclined enough to defend him where he cannot praise, does not venture to reconcile his behaviour towards the Pope with the claims either of policy or gratitude, and resorts to an ambiguous reflection. After having enumerated what Lorenzo owed to Sixtus IV. for the extraordinary furtherance of his private interests, whereby he and his relations, especially Giovanni Tornabuoni, had acquired great wealth, as well as in the affair of Volterra, &c., he continues,[221] 'After the Pope had overwhelmed Lorenzo in public and private matters with proofs of the greatest [310] favour, and dismissed him with the highest honours, he did not long remain in the good graces of his Holiness. Thus it happened that many began to doubt his constancy and wisdom. I believe all happened through the will of destiny, in order to bring his great qualities more clearly into view in the midst of untoward events.'[222]

THIRD BOOK

CONSPIRACY OF THE PAZZI
WAR WITH ROME AND NAPLES

CHAPTER I.

THE PAZZI CONSPIRACY.

As the year 1478 approached, suspense became intense, in consequence of the events already described, and a political entanglement of some kind became more and more probable. No fear was entertained of intrigues at home. Eleven years had passed since the attempt to ruin the power of the Medici. The leaders of the Opposition were either dead or entirely powerless; a new generation was springing up, whose interests were mostly identical with those of the ruling family. All the modifications of the constitution had contributed to concentrate the power in comparatively few hands; those who longed for honourable posts and outward splendour obtained them according to their desire, while the money-makers never wanted means to enrich themselves, nor did the people lack diversions and the appearance of freedom; the system of taxation was so managed that those of whom the government did not feel certain were kept down, without a pretext being afforded them for opposition to an overstrong system. Lorenzo de' Medici at this time was in his thirtieth year, and had ruled the state for nine years. All went its usual course: signorie, magistrates, and councils negotiated, concluded, and voted, as in former times; and a number of distinguished citizens conducted the business of every-day. But the leadership was always in one hand. Those who had insight into the state of home affairs and those abroad were by no means deceived regarding them. Lorenzo believed he should be left undisturbed. His brother does not seem to have been a hindrance to him. The plan of making Giuliano a cardinal had been given up, and an alliance with the daughter of the seigneur of Piombino and Appiani had been spoken of. Letters and petitions from abroad were addressed to both brothers, but we never hear of Giuliano's interfering in affairs of State.

The danger arose from a combination of home and foreign affairs. Like his grandfather, Lorenzo had always been careful not to allow any of the families attached to him to become powerful enough to cause him anxiety. It may be easily understood that this constant endeavour to gain the upper hand, although it secured his position, gave rise to disaffection and hatred. Thus it was with the Pazzi. We have seen how this family, who at first did not find it easy to obtain popular favour, rose to high honours, and how closely they were allied to the Medici. Guglielmo de' Pazzi had for years always been present at the tourneys, fêtes, and amusements of his brother-in-law. But in his case as in others Lorenzo does not appear to have deviated from his usual policy. He avoided allowing the Pazzi any part in such public offices as they might well claim, considering their position, and at times he appeared almost envious of the rising wealth of this family. Still, for several years harmony was preserved between them. Two letters directed to Lorenzo in 1474 by Jacopo de' Pazzi, then at Avignon, professing gratitude for services rendered to him, and the hope of future good understanding, are preserved in the archives of the family. This, however, could not last long, nor was the fault all on the Pazzi side. In the year 1476, Lorenzo caused a law on the inheritance *ab intestato* to pass, which deprived Giovanni de' Pazzi of the rich Borromeo succession to which his wife had a claim. Giuliano warned his brother, but in vain. Francesco de' Pazzi, Jacopo's nephew, who resided in Rome,

considered himself ill-used by the magistracy of the Eight. Still it is hardly to be believed that the Pazzi would have put themselves at the head of a perilous enterprise in their native town, if complications in Rome had not brought on a crisis. In the ensuing [315] tragedy, the Pazzi appear as chief actors, but it is more likely they were merely the instruments of Girolamo Riario.[223]

The connections between the Florentine family and the Pope arose from pecuniary affairs. We observed before how the money matters of Rome were chiefly in the hands of the Florentines, and, from the time of Pius II., in those of the Sienese. The Via de' Banchi, leading to the bridge of St. Angelo, was filled with their counting-houses, and the names of the Altoviti, Niccolini, Strozzi, Chigi, still exist on the houses and various other buildings of that part. The Pazzi had also their banks in the vicinity of the bridge, and the then director was Francesco the nephew of Jacopo. The principal occasion of the misunderstanding between them and the Medici was afforded by the sale of Imola. Lorenzo was said to have attempted to render it impossible for the Pope, who had no spare cash, to raise the sum necessary by gaining over the other banking-houses to his interests. With the Pazzi, however, who had at first also consented, he could not succeed in the end, and by means of 3,000 gold florins advanced by them Girolamo Riario had become master of Imola. That this circumstance, if really true, must have led to a closer connection between the latter, is clear. When the relations between the Pope and Florence were disturbed by political events, the former took from the Medici the management of the finances of the Curia, the so-called 'Depository,' and handed over the business to the Pazzi. Sixtus IV. afterwards declared, when he reproached the Medici for their ingratitude, that it was through him that they had amassed wealth. It is uncertain whether, apart from the above circumstances, the adverse reports of the pecuniary position of the Medici, which had lately spread and were not groundless, and more especially of the bad state of their banking business in Flanders, were the real cause of this measure, so keenly affecting them and so [316] hurtful to their credit, or whether they were a mere pretext for its adoption. Certain it is that thenceforward the Pazzi were closely attached to the Papal interest, and to that of Girolamo Riario, which was in this case identical with it. It is, however, evident from the whole course of events that the Medici, notwithstanding these circumstances, felt no distrust of their fellow-countrymen. Girolamo Riario had long been aware that the Florentines would constantly oppose his attempts to extend his dominion on their frontier. To them he ascribed the turn which the affair of Città di Castello had taken, which made it difficult, if not impossible, for the Pope to support his intentions with regard to that town. He did not think himself safe in the possession of Imola, so long as a good understanding lasted between the Republic and Taddeo Manfredi. After the death of the Duke of Milan, who had kept him in a sort of imprisonment, Manfredi had gone to Venice, and there openly complained of the violence which had been done him in the matter of the cession of the above named city to Sforza. Girolamo foresaw that his projects of annexing other possessions of the Manfredi, and his subsequent intentions on the Ordelaffi vicegerency, would meet with like obstacles. He erred in supposing that such plans would succeed better if an end were put to the influence then dominant in Florence; for the effects which he attributed to the special action of that influence were merely in accordance with the traditional maxims of Florentine policy. It was even a political necessity as long as the old system of balance of power existed, which, in regard to Romagna and Umbria, only ceased with the death of its last representative, Lorenzo de' Medici. But it lay in the character and position of an upstart like Girolamo Riario, who knew that his rise and fall depended on the duration of one life, that of the Pope, to confuse what was nearest and most palpable with conditions which were dependent on individual persons and expressions of their wishes.

We shall certainly not be mistaken if we suppose that the Pope's [317] nephew first entered into connection with Francesco de' Pazzi, who superintended the finances in Rome, and that both succeeded in gaining over the Archbishop of Pisa, who, having only entered upon office the preceding year, was just then in Rome. The removal of Lorenzo de' Medici proved the turning-point of the whole undertaking, in what way appeared indifferent to the accomplices. That they could not reach him by so-called legal means, such as

served in Florence to rouse a spirit of rebellion, must have been clear to them. Force must therefore be employed. The three were probably from the first agreed upon this. It was only a question of how and where. It was of importance to ascertain how the Pope would regard the plot, for without his consent nothing could be done. This was all the more necessary because Jacopo de' Pazzi, when Francesco first revealed to him in Florence the plan of overthrowing the Medicean supremacy, did not show the least desire of taking part in such a venture, and it became clear to the others that they would achieve nothing by themselves. That Sixtus IV., in his irritated feeling towards Lorenzo and the Republic, would willingly offer a hand in the attempt to remodel affairs in Florence, was not to be doubted. But Girolamo Riario was also obliged to confess that his uncle would lend himself to no undertaking which would leave any stain on the honour of the Papacy. It was necessary, therefore, to keep a free hand for a revolution in Florence, and not to let the Pope see through their plans, and at the same time give him a false impression of the feeling prevailing in the city with regard to the Medici and the support they might expect. The nephew undertook this, and succeeded in it with a man whose many praiseworthy and even brilliant qualities were not sufficient to keep him out of the power of those who eventually brought dishonour on his name.

One of the difficulties of the undertaking consisted in being obliged to secure both brothers at the same time, for they perceived [318] that the thing would fail if the possibility were afforded to the younger one of treading in the other's footsteps. The attempt was first made of enticing Lorenzo to Rome, as, in his absence, they hoped to make away with Giuliano more easily. 'That my wish may be fulfilled,' wrote Girolamo Riario to him on January 15, 1478,[224] 'that the public and private affairs of your Magnificence take a prosperous course, and it is known to me that various things have happened between his Holiness and the illustrious Signoria, in which your Magnificence, as the most distinguished citizen and head of the State, have had occasion to share, and which have somewhat disturbed his Holiness, it would please me much for the State and on account of your personal position if your Magnificence would resolve to come to Rome and present yourself to the Pope for the removal of all misunderstandings and doubts. I do not in the least doubt that the Holy Father would receive you with joy; while I, with the affection which I owe you from our mutual friendly relations, would behave so as fully to satisfy your Magnificence, and all considerations of grievance which may have arisen from the afore-named events would vanish.'

Lorenzo did not say No. He had no particular grounds for believing in the asseverations of Riario's friendship, for his conscience told him he had not deserved them. But he might well wish to settle differences with the Pope while it was yet possible, he therefore had no desire to refuse the hand apparently extended for reconciliation. Owing to the uncertainty of his coming, his opponents resolved to be beforehand at all events, and prepare the means for executing their projects. For this it was certainly important to secure trusty adherents in Florence, to entrust a soldier with the guidance of affairs, and to take measures on the frontiers so as to follow up the advantage, if the *coup* succeeded, by advancing immediately an armed force. The leader, who could only [319] be selected from Riario's intimate friends, must at the same time make preparations in Florence. Giovan Batista da Montesecco, a captain of Abruzzi in the service of the Count, was the man who was considered suitable for the execution of this plan.[225] He was not unknown to the Medici. On September 24, 1477, he had communicated with them from Imola, regarding the soldiers of Marradi, who had announced themselves for service with Riario.[226] The first negotiation between the latter, Francesco de' Pazzi, and the *condottiere*, took place in the Archbishop's residence after Montesecco had sworn to betray nothing that might be confided to him. Salviati revealed to him that it was in the matter of a revolution at Florence that they counted on his support. When Montesecco, who was apparently a sensible and quiet man, remarked that he was not his own master, and could not undertake anything without the permission of the Pope and his nephew, he was answered that everything was undertaken not only by the consent of the latter, but precisely for the preservation and strengthening of his position; for if things in Florence remained as they were then, Riario's rule

would not be worth powder and shot on account of Lorenzo's enmity, which, after the Pope's death, would set everything in agitation to take from him his little state, as a quarrel had long existed between the two. The captain only answered that he should be ready for everything which should suffice to the honour and advantage of the Count and themselves, but all depended on the first step. Thus they parted to consult over the matter further on a suitable occasion. This was soon found. The Archbishop and Montesecco met in Riario's house. A revolution in Florence, they said, was necessary, in order to secure the Count from Lorenzo's evil intentions; but this revolution would be impossible if both Medici were not got rid of. The families of Salviati and Pazzi were so influential that half Florence would adhere to them; troops must be held ready near the frontiers in order to advance immediately on the city. Montesecco expressed concern. 'My lords,' he said, 'see what you are bringing upon yourselves. Florence is no trifle, and, according to what I hear, Lorenzo has powerful adherents.' Riario replied, 'Others say the contrary; they are disinclined towards him, and the people would thank Heaven if both brothers were made away with.' 'Gian Batista,' interposed the Archbishop, 'you have never been in Florence, and we know better than you how it is with Lorenzo; that is our affair. It is only necessary to agree upon the method of proceeding. Above all, it is necessary to warm Jacopo de' Pazzi, who is like a block of ice. If we are certain of him, we cannot doubt the result.' 'All very well,' remarked the captain, 'but our master, the Pope, what will he say to the matter?' 'Our master,' replied the other two, 'will always do what we advise him, and he also is prejudiced against Lorenzo, and wishes this more than anything.' 'Have you spoken with him about it?' 'Certainly, and we shall so arrange it that he will speak to you about it also.' Upon this, measures were debated as to the time for drawing troops together in the Papal territories adjoining Florence, which were to be employed in a given case against the city,and to support the [320] projected movements within her walls. Napoleone Orsini was to [321] hold himself ready in the territory of Todi and Perugia; Lorenzo Giustini, the enemy of the Vitelli, in Città di Castello; Giovan Francesco da Tolentino in the district of Imola.

Soon afterwards Montesecco was summoned to the Pope, and there, in the presence of Francesco Salviati and Girolamo Riario, the Florentine affair was discussed. In the collection of paintings in the Vatican, a fresco may be seen (formerly in the old library hall, now transferred to canvas) by the hand of Melozzo of Forli, representing Pope Sixtus IV. on his throne, Bartolommeo Platina, the new keeper of his literary treasures kneeling before him, in the background Girolamo Riario and others of his family and court. The scene which now passed in the Pope's chamber was very different to this peaceful one. It was a question of overthrowing the Medici and their Florentine government. The Pope declared his consent to a revolution in the State, but he demanded that it should not be a sanguinary one. And when Montesecco remarked, 'Holy Father, it is difficult to execute such an intention without the death of Lorenzo and Giuliano, and several others perhaps,' Sixtus replied, 'In no case will I have the death of any one; it is not my office to cause the death of a man. Lorenzo has behaved unworthily and badly towards us, but I will not hear of his death, though I wish for a revolution in the State.' Girolamo Riario interposed, 'We will do our best that no one may fall a victim; should it, however, be unavoidable, your Holiness will pardon him through whom it happens;' on which the Pope answered, 'You are a villain; I tell you I will have no one die, but only the government overthrown. And to you, Giovan Batista, I say that I wish the revolution to proceed in Florence and the government to be taken out of the hand of Lorenzo, for he is a violent and bad man, who pays no regard to us. If he were expelled, we could do with the Republic as it seemed best, and that would be very pleasing to us.' 'Your Holiness speaks the truth,' said Riario [322] and the Archbishop. 'If you have Florence in your power, after it has come into the hands of others, your Holiness can soon prescribe laws to half Italy, and everyone will be desirous to assure himself of your friendship. Be then satisfied that we shall do all in our power to attain this end.' Whereupon Sixtus said, 'I say again, I will not. Go and do what you will, but no lives shall be lost.' As he now dismissed the three, he gave his consent to the employment of arms. Salviati said in going away, 'Holy Father, be satisfied that we guide the bark; we will steer safely.' The Pope answered, 'I am content, but

give heed to the honour of the Holy See and the Count.'

After the audience the three repaired to Riario's lodging, where the latter and the archbishop came to the conclusion that without the death of the two Medici, the thing could not succeed. A high aim could not be reached with insignificant means. It was now resolved to make preparations for executing their design. Francesco de' Pazzi had, as we have already seen, repaired to Florence, it was said on account of business, but in fact to note the inclination of the people better, and to sound his uncle Jacopo. Riario and Salviati now considered it necessary to send Montesecco thither in order to make himself better acquainted with persons and places. A pretext for the visit was afforded by a dangerous illness of Carlo Manfredi of Faenza, a part of whose possessions at his decease Riario wished to unite with his own. This he pretended to wish to arrange with Lorenzo. Lorenzo had no idea of what was passing, and seems, instead of hindering the intentions of the Pope's nephew in any way, to have, on the contrary, embraced the opportunity of settling former differences with him by furthering his plans and wishes. But Montesecco had yet another errand; that of concerting with Jacopo de' Pazzi and taking measures for the intended warlike operations. The latter came to him at the inn—his nephew Francesco happened to be in Lucca—where the captain delivered to him letters from the archbishop and the count. But still Jacopo did not show the slightest [323] wish to enter into the matter. 'I will have nothing to do with the project,' he declared. 'They will only run into danger. They wish to be masters of Florence, but I understand matters better than they. Do not speak to me about it again, for I have heard enough.' But then, as Montesecco informed him of the conversation with the Pope, he was undecided. 'Go to Imola,' he said, 'and come again on your return; Francesco will have returned in the meantime, and we can consult further about the matter.'

It had thus been introduced, and Jacopo was half-won over. Montesecco went to the Romagna to watch over the interests of Riario, and as he met Lorenzo at Cafaggiuola on his return from Florence, he gave the latter an account of his mission, and received from him repeated assurances of his readiness to be useful to the count. In Lorenzo's company Montesecco rode towards the city, where he had another conversation with the two Pazzi by night. Jacopo had allowed himself to be persuaded by his nephew; but their views as to the execution of the plot were very different, especially as to whether it were not advisable to kill the brothers at once and in Florence itself. Both gave it as their opinion that the archbishop must come to the city under some pretext, in order to take part in the execution. Montesecco now returned to Rome, where the resolution was taken at Riario's that Francesco Salviati should repair to Florence, but that the captain should lead all the mercenaries of the count who could be spared in Rome to Romagna, and hold himself ready. Various circumstances, however, hindered the speedy decision. A chance absence of Carlo Fortebraccio in Florence made it seem dangerous for the conspirators to venture the blow at that moment. Then it was said that Lorenzo intended to go to Rome at Easter, which caused fresh indecision. When this did not happen, the conspirators recognised the necessity of acting, in order not to expose a plot in which many were now initiated to the danger of discovery. The amassing of troops at Imola must rouse [324] suspicion if they delayed longer.

It was in April 1478 that Francesco Salviati came to Florence in order to execute an errand with reference to the affairs of Romagna. Everything was talked over in the houses of the Pazzi and in their villa at Montughi. The number of accomplices was so considerable that we can hardly understand how the project never came to the hearing of the Medici. A nephew of Girolamo Riario, Raffaello Sansoni, was studying at the time at the university of Pisa. Sixtus IV. had granted, on December 10, 1477, the cardinal's purple to this youth of sixteen, who was not exactly distinguished by brilliant intellectual gifts, still less by learning. The young man, who henceforward bore his mother's name, began his long career as ecclesiastical prince, a position for which he was but little suited, among circumstances the memory of which was revived when he, as an aged man, was again involved in an intrigue against the Medici. Girolamo caused his nephew to be summoned to Florence, in order to employ him in the execution of the plot as a tool without a will. The other instruments were of a different kind. Jacopo Salviati followed the inspirations of his brother, the archbishop, with whom

two other relations were associated. Jacopo Bracciolini, the son of Poggio, a clever literary man, forgot the old connections of his father and his own with the Medici in order to join with their enemies. He had come to Florence in the second half of January, and delivered a letter from Riario[227] to Lorenzo, which said that the writer had chosen this learned, virtuous, and upright man for service with the young cardinal, to instruct the latter in moral conduct, and begged Lorenzo to grant him full confidence in all that regarded the aforesaid cardinal, and support where he needed it. Of Antonio Maffei of Volterra, the brother of the learned Raffaello, it is said that no personal motives led him to take part in it, but sorrow [325] over the misfortunes of his native city, of which he regarded Lorenzo as the destroyer. Bernardo Bandini, the descendant of an ancient family, son of a man who under King Ferrante had presided over the first Court of Justice in Naples, is said to have been induced to join by the ruinous state of his fortune. The clerk Stefano da Bagnone had served Jacopo Pazzi as scribe, and was then pastor at Montemurlo, in the territory of Pistoja, the castle which nearly sixty years later was celebrated by a defeat of the Strozzi and their friends in a battle against Cosimo de' Medici, the second Duke of Florence. Another accomplice was Napoleone Franzesi, of San Gemignano, belonging to a family which had attained no enviable fame at the beginning of the fourteenth century, through that Musciatto who, with Guillaume de Nogaret, organised the attempt against Pope Boniface VIII., and was also one of the most important tools in some of King Philip the Fair's dishonourable money transactions. All were ready to strike the blow when the young cardinal was residing at the Pazzi villa, from whence he kept up a friendly intercourse with Lorenzo and his brother, and among other things recommended to the latter a priest for the vacant dignity of the Prior of SS. Annunziata.[228] An invitation of the Medici brothers to visit them at their villa, whose pillared halls overlook the rich and beautiful country from a lovely hill in the immediate neighbourhood of Fiesole, seemed to offer the suitable opportunity for carrying out the conspiracy; but a delay ensued, because an indisposition of Giuliano hindered him from taking part in the festival, and the conspirators did not deem it advisable to seize the brothers separately. It was then determined to proceed to action on April 26. It was the Sunday before Ascension day. The cardinal was made to announce his intention of visiting the Medici in their palace in the city, and at the same time of being present at high mass in the [326] cathedral near by. He did not dream of the project in which a sad though inactive part was thus assigned to him.

The brothers prepared to receive the Pope's nephew worthily. The rich art treasures of their house, silver-plate and costly furniture, were exhibited in honour of their guest. A brilliant company was invited, consisting of the ambassadors of Naples, Milan, and Ferrara, Marino Tomacelli, Filippo Sagramoro, and Niccolò Bendedei, and various knights such as Antonio della Stufa, Antonio Ridolfi, Bongianni Gianfigliazzi, Luigi Guicciardini, Piero Betti, Bernardo Bongirolami.[229] With a few companions, the archbishop and Montesecco being among them, the cardinal rode from the villa to the city, the others, mostly in rich dresses, followed on foot.[230] Giuliano was still unwell, and sent a message to say that, if he did not appear at the banquet, he would certainly not fail to be in the church. This news caused an alteration in the plan; instead of attacking the brothers at the banquet, the house of God was chosen for the scene of the murder, and the most solemn moment, the elevation of the host, was to be the signal. But another alteration was the result of the first. Giovan Batista da Montesecco had, not without resistance it seems, declared himself ready to deal the blow against Lorenzo, but he declined to desecrate the church with bloodshed. As he persisted in his refusal, Antonio Maffei and Stefano da Bagnone offered to take his place—two priests felt no dread of that which a soldier declined to do. The ill-success of the plot is principally to be ascribed to this circumstance. Francesco de' Pazzi and Bernardo Bandini were to seize on Giuliano, the archbishop to surround the palace of the Signoria, and Jacopo de' Pazzi to proclaim the freedom of the city. The cardinal had changed his dress at the Medici's house, and was just descending the [327] staircase when he met Lorenzo, who had already heard mass, but returned with his guest to Sta. Maria del Fiore. The archbishop accompanied them to the church door, and then withdrew under pretext of visiting his mother. All the others entered the church.

Within the choir, which is beneath the dome of Brunellesco, the cardinal took his place opposite the altar, his suite, the friends of the Medici, the accomplices in the plot, churchmen and laity, stood partly in the choir, partly round it. The mass and singing had already begun when the conspirators remarked that Giuliano was missing. The two who had undertaken to murder him hastened to the Medici's house and persuaded him to follow them; taking him between them, they ascertained that he wore no shirt of mail beneath his doublet. Giuliano entered the choir, Lorenzo standing outside. The change of the wafer was said to be the signal agreed upon. As the priest elevated the host, Bernardo Bandini plunged a short sword into the breast of Giuliano, who stood together with Giovanni Tornabuoni and Francesco Nori. The wounded man made one step forward and then fell; Francesco de' Pazzi dealt him one blow after another with a dagger in such blind fury that he severely wounded his own thigh. At the same time Stefano and Maffei attacked Lorenzo, but, unaccustomed to deeds of blood, they missed their aim. Maffei's dagger, which was to pierce the throat of Medici, only wounded him in the neck. With swift presence of mind, the wounded man tore off his mantle, wrapped it round his left arm, seized his dagger with the right hand, sprang into the choir, and hurried past the altar to the sacristy. At the same moment Bandini, seeing what had happened, rushed to Lorenzo, threw Francesco Nori, who tried to interpose, to the ground,[231] but could not prevent others springing to the assistance of the intended victim, who hastened with him to the new sacristy, the bronze doors of [328] which were closed by Angelo Poliziano before the pursuers.

All this was the work of a moment. 'Nothing but noise,' writes Filippo Strozzi, 'prevailed in the church. I was just standing in conversation with Messer Bongianni (Gianfigliazzi) when a general terror seized the knights and all present. One fled here, another there; the followers of Pazzi had all weapons in their hands.' Only those who stood next the choir could see what passed; those more distant only saw the tumult and men running hither and thither. Some even thought that the dome was about to fall in. The truth soon became clear. While the conspirators fled in all directions, Guglielmo de' Pazzi loudly asserting his innocence, the friends of the Medici crowded together and hastened, some to the choir, some to the sacristy, to surround Lorenzo. Several members of the families Martelli and Tornabuoni were the first who pressed into the church. Those in the sacristy were still uncertain how things stood until Sigismundo della Stufa ascended the gallery of the organ and saw their victorious friends.

The cardinal had taken refuge at the altar, where several ecclesiastics surrounded him and led him to the old sacristy. He declared his complete ignorance of the plot; two of the Magistracy of Eight, who came up, conducted him to the palace in safety. Lorenzo now first learnt the death of his brother; the corpse he did not see. A number of friends accompanied him home.

Meanwhile, with a band among whom were several emigrants from Perugia, the archbishop repaired to the palace of the Signoria, where the Gonfaloniere, Cesare Petrucci, was dining with the prior. When the latter was informed that the prelate wished to speak with him on urgent matters, he rose and caused him to be led into his reception-room, while Salviati's companions entered an adjoining chamber of the secretary's in order to wait for the signal agreed upon. The Archbishop began by saying he had a commission from [329] the Pope which he must fulfil with the Signoria; but his words were so confused and his demeanour so uncertain, that the Gonfaloniere immediately suspected something wrong, and his suspicions were increased by his visitor continually looking towards the door as if he was expecting some information. Petrucci deciding quickly, hastened out, met Jacopo Bracciolini coming towards the door, seized him by the hair, threw him to the ground, and called in a loud voice to the guard. When Salviati's companions heard the noise they would have come to his assistance, but were unable to open the lock of the door, which was provided with a mechanism known only to the household, in order to catch intruders. The whole palace was alarmed. After a great deal of opposition, the archbishop and his followers were taken prisoners; every corner was searched and the gates shut. Even the kitchen utensils had to serve as defence. The square was filled with uproar; adherents of the Pazzi broke open the palace gates and pressed into the interior; but Petrucci and his men defended the staircase to the great tower into which the prior had

retreated, and they succeeded in capturing some of the assailants and obliging others to take to flight.

Jacopo de' Pazzi had not, from the beginning, deceived himself as to the difficulties of the undertaking. But it was he who showed the most determination. He hastened to the square of the Signoria with a company of about a hundred armed men, summoning the people to regain their liberty. It was his men who succeeded in penetrating into the square. But they were soon thrust out again, and none dared to approach any more, as they were threatened with stones thrown down from the battlements, this final attempt of the conspiracy was speedily ended. The streets around were filled with men. 'Palle! palle!' 'Death to the traitors!' This was the answer to Pazzi's summons. Stones were hurled against the band, who tried to keep the square occupied, but were threatened on all sides. There was no time to be lost. The people already began to hew down the [330] armed men who tried to escape. Messer Jacopo secured first the Porta la Croce, and then hastened to his house, where his nephew Francesco, severely wounded by his own hand, lay concealed in the bedchamber, after he had vainly tried to mount on horseback and ride to the square. No one could stay; the streets were fast filling; bleeding heads were carried about on pikes, with wild cries for vengeance. He saw that all was lost, and two hours after the occurrence, he rode with a band of his followers, through the gate we have mentioned. As the people of their own accord executed judgment, and killed even priests in Salviati's suite on the square, the cruel work began in the palace. No sooner had the Signoria heard of Giuliano's death, than they determined to hang Jacopo Bracciolini. This was done before the eyes of the crowd, at a window of the principal storey. Jacopo Salviati met with a like fate. Meanwhile, Francesco de' Pazzi had been discovered and dragged into the street. He arrived at the palace half dead; it was a wonder that the furious crowd had not torn him to pieces. But no word could be extracted from him about the conspiracy and his accomplices; he expired at a window with the expression of the wild passion which inspired him still on his features. Beside him, the archbishop met a similar end in his ecclesiastical robes; in his last agony he is said to have torn Francesco's breast with his teeth. The prisoners in the palace were hewn down without mercy. In all the streets bleeding heads and torn limbs were to be seen, the ghastly tokens of wild popular justice and no less wild party hatred. Thus passed the Sunday before the Feast of Ascension of 1478.

The following days things were no better. Many more of the suspected were still discovered, and, guilty or not, killed. The number of victims amounted to about eighty. Jacopo de' Pazzi, with a little band of armed men, was on the road to Romagna when he was detained by the peasants of the village of Castagno, whom the news of events in Florence had reached. This was in the [331] neighbourhood of the Falterona, where the Arno rises, after he had passed the Mugello and Casentino. In vain he begged that they would kill him. They would not listen, but gave him up to the Signoria. After a painful trial, he was hanged at the palace windows; the palaces seem, indeed, to have been the scene of executions. His body was interred in the family vault in Sta. Croce; but the superstition of the people or the hatred of his opponents left him as little rest there as in a grave in unconsecrated earth at the town walls before the Porta della Giustizia, from which a crowd of boys drew the half mouldering corpse and dragged it through the streets with frightful jests in order to throw it into the Arno. As if he had had an anticipation of his fate, the day before the execution of the plot he put his property and business affairs in order, and satisfied all those who had any claim on him. The whole family was ruined by subsequent penal measures, which exceeded all bounds. Renato de' Pazzi, a quiet man devoted to study, and who had declined all share in it, was punished by death because he had not disclosed the conspiracy. Some others were executed or condemned to imprisonment in the fortress of Volterra. Only Guglielmo, Lorenzo's brother-in-law, escaped with an exile that assigned to him a villa as a residence at a considerable distance from Florence. We shall speak of the legal measures which afflicted the family still further, later on.

The other partizans of the conspiracy fared no better.[232] Antonio Maffei and Stefano da Bagnone had taken refuge in the Benedictine abbey. For two days they were vainly sought for by [332] crowds of people, who when they discovered them, mutilated their

noses and ears and then killed them. The monks were preserved with difficulty from ill-treatment. Giovan Batista da Montesecco was seized in flight on May 1. A long trial was begun of the man who was not groundlessly suspected of knowing a good deal about the connections of the accomplices at Rome. In this the judges were not deceived, for the revelations which Batista made of the consultations of the Pazzi and the archbishop with Pope Sixtus and Girolamo Riario, enable us to perceive the truth and falsehood in the unmeasured accusations hurled against the Pope by the Florentines, as they furnish the proper preface to the conspiracy as it has been represented above. Had Pope Sixtus IV. played another part in this story, and stooped to what was ascribed to him, Montesecco, who must above all have sought to diminish his own guilt, would certainly not have kept silence upon the subject. In spite of these revelations, which bore the visible stamp of truth, which have been half taken in their real sense and half arbitrarily construed, it has been the fashion, even to the present day, to accuse the Pope of a share in the guilt of the murder. That the evil effect of the revelations was feared in Rome, is seen from a subsequent letter of the Florentine ambassador, Pier Filippo Pandolfini, who advised their dissemination in order to oppose the Roman accusations. On May 4, Montesecco was beheaded in the court of the palace of the Podestà. Eighteen days later Donato Acciaiuoli, Napoleone Orsini, and the Archbishop Rinaldo Orsini, who had witnessed the bad effect produced in Rome by the trial and execution, advised that Batista's property should be restored to his brother Leone, who was residing there.[233] Napoleone Franzesi fled with the assistance of Piero Vespucci, who dearly paid for the aid he afforded him. Bernardo Bandini, who had at first concealed himself in the tower of [333]
the cathedral, reached Constantinople, was given up by command of the Sultan, and in 1479 shared the fate of his accomplices during Lorenzo's absence. Antonio de' Medici, a distant relation of Cosimo's line, had been sent to Constantinople to thank Mohammed II., and bring the prisoner home in chains. The deliverance of Bandini, more, perhaps than any other circumstance, contributed to increase the idea of Lorenzo's greatness in the eyes of his fellow-citizens.

Lorenzo de' Medici must have feared somewhat that his adherents would go too far, rather than that they would do too little. The whole city assisted him. Many who were, perhaps, disinclined in their hearts to the family and their supremacy, showed themselves as their friends when they knew how the wind blew. In the first moment a pole with a decapitated head had been erected before the Medici's house, partly to serve as the signal for all to flock around one whose life had been preserved in such a wonderful manner. A numerous crowd of people soon filled the street, and all called for Lorenzo. Notwithstanding his wound, he appeared, and was received with acclamations. In his speech he first complained of the envy and hatred of those who, instead of opposing him in open fight, attacked him unawares. His own safety was nothing to him where it was a question of the dignity and position of the State, for which he would be willing to give up his position and submit to all. He was most sincerely grateful to those who had protected and saved him; but the avenging interposition of the people must now be restrained in order not to afford the enemies of the Republic a pretext for complaints and attacks. Insurrections and internal party-strife were bad, but some good results sprung therefrom. When ill-intentioned citizens had the worst of it, secret evils were disclosed; yet, in punishing and suppressing wrong-doing, they must not exceed due measure, but reserve the fulness of their anger for foreign foes who threatened the frontier. The words had their desired effect; Lorenzo [334]
was famed for his moderation, while he might be certain that, even without his aid, everything would happen which could promote his aims.

When the wild justice of the crowd had sacrificed their victims, and their passions had had time to calm in some degree, a decree of the Signoria, May 23, promulgated by the Gonfaloniere Giacomo degli Alessandri and the priors, disclosed the penal sentence against the Pazzi.[234] The name and coat-of-arms of the family should cease to exist; the localities distinguished by the former should be changed, and the latter should be erased from all houses and churches; new names and new insignia to be introduced into the register of the rebels, and everyone punished who should even pronounce the old name. The property of the family was confiscated.

Whoever should marry into it should be excluded from public offices. The old ceremony of the Colombina should cease in respect to the family. Thus ran the sentence. Many of its provisions were never carried out on account of their exaggeration, and others only too well. The arms of the Pazzi—two dolphins in a field covered with crosses—are still seen on many houses in the Borgo degli Albizzi and elsewhere, which still partly belong to the family; the name has remained with the beautiful chapel in the cloisters of Sta. Croce; and the intersection of the streets at the Palazzo Quaratesi, which once belonged to Messer Jacopo de' Pazzi, is still popularly termed the Palazzo della Congiura. But a considerable part of their possessions fell into strange hands—this same palace, for instance, and the villa of Montughi, which will be spoken of later.[235] Another decree of the Signoria ordained, according to the custom in such cases, that the sharers in the conspiracy should be painted on the wall of the tower of the Podestà, as hanged men with their heads downwards.[236] On the other hand, life-size statues of Lorenzo, with the head and hands of wax, in his usual dress and strikingly resembling him, was set up in SS. Annunziata and the convent church in Via San Gallo, as well as in the Madonna degli Angeli below Assisi. Andrea del Verrocchio furnished the drawing for the figures, which were executed by a clever sculptor in wax called Orsini. The figure in Via San Gallo was attired in the robes which Lorenzo had worn when he appeared in his wounded state before the crowd.[237]

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The solemn interment of Giuliano had taken place on the fourth day following the deed in the church of San Lorenzo. His mortal remains rest in the porphyry sarcophagus which had received those of his father and uncle and were destined to contain his brother's. The corpse showed nineteen wounds. The grief at his loss was unfeigned, especially among the young men, and many wore mourning. Giuliano de' Medici left one son, respecting whose birth and origin different reports have been circulated. Many assert that he came into the world after his father's death. According to others, Antonio da San Gallo, the architect, is said to have informed Lorenzo shortly afterwards that his brother had a son, who was now about a year old, by a girl of a burgher family, whose house was opposite his own in the Borgo Pinti. Lorenzo, so it is said, repaired to the said house, and, listening to the entreaties of the mother, took the child home with him and had him educated with his own sons. When Giulio de' Medici, which was the name of the child, who afterwards became the head of the family, was raised by his cousin Leo X. to the archbishopric of Florence, the Pope granted him a dispensation for his lack of the legitimacy required by the canon. But when, shortly afterwards, he received the red hat, witnesses appeared who declared that his mother Fioretta, the daughter of one Antonio, had been united to Giuliano by a marriage of conscience. In 1487 Lorenzo wrote a letter to the ambassadors in Rome, with the consent of King Ferrante, to recommend the boy, then ten years old, for the rich priorate of the knights of St. John in Capua, remarking that his mother had been unmarried.[238] But in the time of Lorenzo de' Medici nothing else was known of Giulio de' Medici than that he grew up with his cousins a grave, well-educated boy. Later on, Florentine history learned to know him only too well.

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CHAPTER II.

ALLIANCES AND COUNTER ALLIANCES. PREPARATION FOR THE CONFLICT.

In the speech which he addressed to the people after the murder of his brother, Lorenzo alluded to the danger then threatening the Republic from foreign enemies. His anxiety was only too well founded. Girolamo Riario had taken measures to support the enterprise of the conspirators. Giovan Francesco da Tolentino advancing with a band of a thousand foot from the district of Imola, had already passed the Florentine boundary, and Lorenzo Giustini had set out from Umbria with an equal number of armed men. Lorenzo's first thought was to cover the passes of the Apennines, thus rendering any attack on that side very difficult for the enemy, as the German freebooters experienced to their misfortune about the middle of the fourteenth century. However, the first news of the events in Florence sufficed to induce the intruders to retreat. But Lorenzo was not at ease. The revelations of Montesecco had fully explained to him Riario's fierce hatred and the Pope's dangerous indulgence towards his nephews. It was necessary to prevent future plots, either by reconciling opponents or by rendering them harmless, and to gain friends abroad Lorenzo spared no labour. The city was provisioned, the guards at the gates were strengthened, and a sharp eye was kept on all who passed in and out. A band of armed men whom Giovanni Bentivoglio caused to advance as far as the Mugello, for the protection of Florence, secured the Apennine [338] side from a sudden attack. Lorenzo took care to win over those who belonged to families involved in the plot, and who were in continual dread of discovery. He calmed and assured by friendly advances Averardo Salviati, a near relation of the archbishop, who kept hidden from fear.

His chief cause of anxiety was Sixtus IV. A cardinal was in the palace of the Signoria deprived of his freedom. An archbishop had been shamefully killed without a trial, and several ecclesiastics had lost their lives.

When the news arrived in Rome Donato Acciaiuoli was there as ambassador of the Republic.[239] It was the second time that he had represented his native city under Sixtus IV., and his caution and shrewdness seem to have succeeded in restoring a tolerable feeling between the two neighbours when this new complication arose and threatened a dangerous crisis. Acciaiuoli, to whom Riario's plans had remained a secret, saw the danger immediately, but he was not prepared for the violence to which the Pope's nephew resorted. When the latter heard what had happened he flew into a great rage. Exasperated at the ill-success of his enterprise, and the insult done to his family, he urged the Pope and the Sacred College to violent measures. He then hastened, with a company of 300 mercenaries, with halberds on their shoulders, to Acciaiuoli's lodging, and summoned him to follow him. Donato answered that he was much surprised at a demand which insulted both himself and the Republic he represented, which was contrary to all custom, and the respect befitting foreign ambassadors, so that he could not believe that it had happened with the knowledge of the Pope and the College of Cardinals. He, the count, might go wheresoever he pleased: the Signoria would know how they ought to avenge a slight shown to them in the person of their ambassador. Girolamo Riario in his rage scarcely deigned an answer, so that Acciaiuoli, to guard against worse violence, commissioned his chancellor to bring the ciphers [339] and important papers in safety, and instantly to inform those at home of the occurrence; after which he prepared to leave. Surrounded by armed men, he reached the Vatican, where he demanded an interview with the Pope. Before the Holy Father he complained bitterly of the undignified proceeding, and then turned to Riario: 'Count,' he said, 'I am astonished at the insolent daring with which you came armed to my residence, the residence of the Florentine ambassador, and led me like a criminal through the city to the palace. I declare to you that the insult done me is so great that the Republic will not rest till you have been brought to reason.' Hereupon he represented to the Pope that His Holiness had done wrong in allowing such a thing, contrary to all custom and the respect due to all foreign ambassadors. Sixtus protested with an

oath it had happened without his knowledge, and that he regretted the event, upon which he dismissed Donato to his lodging in the city.

The latter was so affected at the insult to himself, the slight cast upon his native city, and the prospect of irremediable evils, that he fell into a dangerous illness, from which he never recovered. He immediately wrote to Florence an account of what had happened, and urged most pressingly that the cardinal should be set at liberty without delay. The Signoria had announced to the Pope that he had been brought to a safe place to protect him from the popular fury, and was now at the disposal of his Holiness. The ambassador confirmed this statement, and urged his government to fulfil it, if they did not intend to plunge him into still greater difficulties. King Ferrante commissioned his ambassador to the Republic to act in a like manner. But in Florence they seem to have listened to other counsels from Rome than these commendable suggestions, and only increased the seriousness of the situation. The execution of Montesecco, and the disturbance made about his revelations, irritated the Pope and Girolamo as much as the imprisonment of the [340]
Cardinal. The demand of the former, that Lorenzo should be banished and complete satisfaction given for all that had taken place, a demand which seems to have been supported by King Ferrante, added fuel to the flames in Florence. It is said that the Pope intended to put Acciaiuoli in the castle of St. Angelo, and the reason it was not done was that the Venetian and Milanese ambassadors declared they would share the fate of their colleagues. Certain it is, that the Florentine feared to leave his house, and as matters grew daily worse he soon begged permission to quit a post in which he could no longer work for the good of his native place. But it was only towards the end of June that he reached Florence, seriously ill.

What had been threatened against the ambassador actually happened to the other Florentines in Rome. Many of the merchants and bankers were taken to the Castle and had their property confiscated in order to prevent them leaving the city with it, according to a summons which they had received from home. A migration like that would have excited public attention and brought serious loss to many persons of the Pope's court, who had deposited considerable sums in their banks. Scarcely, however, had they been shut up when the matter was reconsidered, and the prisoners set at liberty again, on their promising not to leave Rome. Thus four weeks slipped by without either party arriving at a decision, one way or the other, while they naturally irritated each other more and more. On May 24 the bishop of Perugia was sent to Florence to fetch the cardinal and accompany him to Rome, and he delivered a letter addressed to Lorenzo by the Cardinal Camerlengo Guillaume d'Estouteville, Archbishop of Rouen, who knew Florence and the Medici well, since Cosimo's time, and had gone in person to Castle Sant'Angelo to effect the liberation of the prisoners. The letter announced that the Pope and College of Cardinals had determined to proceed to measures against the Republic if the cardinal of San Giorgio (Riario) were not immediately set at liberty, and a commission consisting of five cardinals had already been appointed [341]
to commence legal proceedings. Lorenzo might thus, in order to avoid anger and injury, use his influence to a conciliatory purpose. The imprisonment and liberation of the Florentine merchants were explained by the circumstance mentioned above, and would, it was said, give the Republic no cause to complain.[240]

In Florence they were by no means inclined to push matters to extremes, because the Venetian Signoria, when asked for advice respecting the cardinal, gave it as their opinion, on May 22, that his captivity not only served no purpose, but afforded the enemies of the Republic ground for accusation, and that it would be most rational to announce at Rome that from respect to His Holiness and the Sacred College, they had protected the cardinal from popular fury, and would leave him entire personal freedom.[241] Ample time had been afforded them to convince themselves of the innocence of young Riario. On June 5 he quitted the palace and repaired first to the Servite cloister by S. Annunziata, from whence he addressed to the Pope, on the 10th of the same month, the following letter which may have been dictated to him, but which did not describe the situation of affairs incorrectly. 'A few days ago I informed your Holiness that perfect freedom over my movements had been granted me. Besides this, I said how much I was obliged to the

Government here, and especially to Lorenzo de' Medici for their great kindness to me. Finally, I begged your Holiness to grant the Florentines some favour in return for the benefits shown me in your name. My hope has, however, been bitterly disappointed on learning that Lorenzo and the Florentine people have been laid under an interdict; and I, unhappy man that I am, expected and wished that good might befall them, whereas the contrary has happened. But I cannot say, Holy Father, how much it grieves me that my requests [342] have so little weight with your Holiness, and that I should appear ungrateful towards those to whom I owe so much, and it seems to me not fitting I should leave this city before such a sentence should be reprieved. Were the attachment of this people to the Medici fully known to your Holiness, you would not hate them as you do. As I rejoiced when your Holiness granted me the cardinal's dignity, just so and even more will I rejoice if I hear that these men, who have deserved so much from us, have received grace for my sake. I shall then believe that I am in favour with your Holiness when this senate, and Lorenzo above all, have a share in your favour. From the cloister of S. Annunziata, June 10, 1478.'[242]

On June 12 Riario set out on his journey to Siena. A Sienese chronicler relates that the cardinal reached the city June 13th, and alighted at the house of Messer Tommé, bishop of Pienza, more dead than alive from the terror he had undergone, which was still so bewildering in its effect that he thought he felt the rope round his neck.[243] The scene of which he had been an involuntary spectator, and the danger which he had incurred of being seized by the furious crowd, had made the deepest impression on him. If it is true, as some say, that he never recovered his natural spirits, his whole later life proves at least that his frivolous disposition suffered no change; for forty years he lived in a turmoil of gaiety, splendour, and luxury, occupied with the execution of works of art, and sharing in amusements and intrigues which, towards the end of his worldly career, involved him in a far worse complication than did the conspiracy of the Pazzi.

Four days before Riario's liberation on June 1st, Sixtus IV. had published the bull of excommunication against Lorenzo de' Medici who, according, to the usual style of such documents, was termed 'iniquitatis filius et perditionis alumnus.' His adherents and the [343] members of the government were included. The bull begins with the enumeration of the old differences existing between the Pope and Florence, the protection afforded to Niccolò Vitelli, Carlo Fortebraccio, Deifebo dell'Anguillara, the attacks on the Papal territory in the valley of the Tiber, the hindrance to those journeying to Rome, whether they came to the city by land or by water, and the refusal to allow Francesco Salviati to take possession of his archiepiscopal chair. It then passed on to mention recent events, the murder of the archbishop and other priests, and the imprisonment of the cardinal on account of civil and family feuds, which had arisen because the Medici and their party had seized all power for themselves and had exercised it to the prejudice of others with severity and despotism. On these grounds the ban of the church was pronounced against Lorenzo, the priors, the Gonfaloniere, and other magistrates, and everyone who should afford them assistance, or had done so, as against traitors and desecrators of the Church. They were declared to be deprived of all possessions, all honours and offices, and the capability of bequeathing to their heirs. All their male descendants were included in this sentence. If Florence did not deliver up Lorenzo and his fellow culprits within a month, she should be deprived of her archbishopric, and with her entire territory, and those of Fiesole and Pistoja, be placed under an interdict.[244] It is a singular fact that, even after the publication of the bull, Cardinal d'Estouteville wrote to Lorenzo to acquaint him with the Papal grants of tithes in the territory of the Republic.[245]

Thus war was declared. On both sides it was necessary to collect forces and gain allies.

The history of the events of the last years has shown how intimate the connection of King Ferrante and his family was with the [344] Medici. Outwardly this connection was still existing when the strife between Florence and the Pope began. In November 1477, the Duke of Calabria, when he wrote to Lorenzo, styled him 'my dear and most beloved;' the Neapolitan ambassador, Marino Tomacelli, had the best position in Florence; the king sent horses and falcons to Medici, and entrusted Giovan Batista Coppola, on March 23, 1478,

with a mission, the aim of which is unknown. A letter of April 30 of the same year, four days, therefore, before the terrible event, begins with the words: 'Illustrious lord, dearest friend and gossip.' But there was no lack of grounds for displeasure and disunion. Ferrante, who was as shrewd as he was ambitious, soon discovered that Lorenzo stood in the way of his endeavour to attain the preponderating influence in Italy, and if he had earlier sought to use the position of the Medici for his own purposes he easily offered his aid to overthrow them when he found them to be no mere tools of his. There is no record that he knew of Riario's plans; but we know from Sixtus's own words that he not only agreed to the enraged Pope's proposal to proceed against Florence, but fomented his hatred of her. Causes easily to be understood contributed to render a change in Florence desirable to the king. Whether the supposition be true or not, that Ferrante had once projected a marriage between his second son and the duchess dowager of Milan, but that the plan was frustrated by Lorenzo, cannot be decided. But other facts are undoubted. It was the ancient policy of the rulers of Naples to employ the Sienese against their neighbours. Even King Manfred had pursued this. Ferrante, and still more his son Alfonso, cherished the secret hope of gaining firm footing in Siena, which wavered like a reed in every wind, and thus keeping Florence in check. By her very dubious conduct in the predatory attack of Fortebraccio, of whom it was supposed that, had he succeeded in getting possession of Siena, he would have delivered it to the Florentines, the latter had played their enemies' game. We shall see how it was by the merest chance that the plans of the Aragonese were not realised. [345]

The result of such mistakes was that the connection between the Sienese and the King and the Pope became closer, and the confirmation of the alliance between them had been published in Siena on February 8, giving general satisfaction. It may be easily understood that Ferrante made use of these circumstances, and after the Duke of Calabria had arrived at Rome on May 12 to consult with the Pope and his captains respecting military measures, the valley of the Chiana was chosen as the basis of the operations which should receive support from Umbria. The Duke of Urbino, as captain-general of the church, undertook the chief command in conjunction with the Neapolitan prince. Not only the military skill of Federigo di Montefeltro, but the affairs of Romagna, rendered his accession important.

We have already pointed out the disturbed state of this province, and the different interests which prevailed among its dynasties. Several of these remained faithful for a long time on the side of Florence, others only waited for an opportunity of declaring themselves for the Republic. Sixtus IV. fully perceived how serious was the position of affairs. Bologna especially inspired him with anxiety, on account of the friendship of the Bentivogli with the Medici, so that he sent thither the legate of the city, the Cardinal of Mantua, as Francesco Gonzaga was commonly called, in order to win and preserve them in fealty to the Holy See. The instructions that he gave him plainly betrayed his anxiety as well as his consciousness of the bad impression which the events at Florence had produced. After he had spoken of his duty to watch over the whole State, and especially over a city which was the first and most illustrious after Rome, and exhorted its inhabitants not to waver in their fidelity nor allow a passage to hostile troops which might be intended to attack the Papal army, but to abstain from all communications with the Florentines, he continues thus: 'That on the first news of the Florentine disturbances our Bolognese assisted their neighbours, has not been taken amiss by us, nor blamed, but we have regarded it as an act of sympathy, as they had as yet done nothing against the dignity of the Church, and we, too, lamented the first occurrence, to which we testified in a letter to the Florentines. But as the latter subsequently showed such unworthy slights and insults to the ecclesiastical order, every honourable ground has been removed for the Bolognese assisting a people obstinately offending the dignity of the Holy Roman Church, and rightly condemned by her on account of public crimes; for aid to them would be rather a personal insult to us.' If any projects for aid were in progress the legate was first to exhort paternally, and if this did not avail, to excommunicate the offenders, and, in the last extremity, to lay the city under an interdict and shake the dust from their feet. In like manner he was to proceed with Giovanni Bentivoglio, who, as he took a privileged position in the city with [346]

Papal consent, was especially bound to the Holy See as feudatory and vassal. But the Pope hoped that the inhabitants would show themselves good and loyal sons.[246]

If Sixtus IV. found allies, his opponents did not lack them either. In the foremost ranks were Venice and Milan. The Republic had already, on April 28, despatched a letter of condolence to Florence, [247] at the same time announcing that they had immediately resolved upon decisive measures if necessary, in concert with the ambassadors from Milan and Ferrara. Giovanni Emo arrived in Florence with the commission, to confirm these friendly intentions and inform himself of the position of affairs. Serious representations were made in Rome, first in order to hinder the Pope from giving free course to his rage against the Florentines; and, secondly, in order to persuade him to retract the bull. When both failed, the Republic assumed a decided tone of command. 'Because his [347] Holiness,' so she wrote to her ambassador, 'on the urging of others, and to satisfy their unjust demands, attacks the Florentines with spiritual and temporal weapons, we wish that the Holy Father should know that we, of one accord with them, and the state of Milan, will defend the possessions, honour, and dignity of our ally in spiritual and temporal things. The Holy Father must not flatter himself he can conceal the purpose of his evil thoughts by asserting that he does not fight against Florence only, but against Lorenzo personally, for we all know perfectly well that this attack is not only upon Lorenzo, who is entirely innocent of the false accusations heaped upon him, but the present form of government in Florence, which they wish to overthrow, and change according to their will, with the whole of Italy. We wish, also, that the Holy Father should be assured henceforth that if he does not recall the ban, and refrain from warlike preparations, but continues his attack, we three will recall our ambassadors, and take such measures that he shall soon perceive that we have said the truth respecting our intentions, and that whoever causes him to take hostile steps deceives him in order to make him the instrument of views which are in themselves shameful and dangerous to the States of the Church, and especially to his Holiness.'[248] That the duchess-regent of Milan, guided by Simonetta, in whom the tradition of Francesco Sforza's policy lived, acted in concert with Venice, is proved by this declaration. On the side of Savoy there was as little to fear as from Ferrara, for although the duke was son-in-law of the King of Naples, he was yet entirely powerless in the presence of his neighbour, even if he had intended to obey Ferrante. Thus it stood with Upper Italy. Abroad the Florentines could likewise count on allies; the most important of whom, if not in reference to actual assistance, yet on account of his position, was the French king.

We have remarked before upon the intimate connections of Louis [348] XI. with Florence and the Medici. But it was not only the wish to preserve connections which were beneficial to his country which induced the king to take the side of the Republic. The strange mixture of bigotry and gross superstition with extreme contempt for the persons connected with the Church, even her highest dignitaries, which certainly never existed in such a degree as with this prince, are here revealed. The man who had faith in amulets and portable altars, who, as the Bishop de Seyssel informs us in his panegyric, knelt from time to time before lead and tin figures of the Madonna fastened to the brim of his hat, so that the people thought him mad, allowed the disputes of his clergy to grow to a schism when he found them opposed to his projects, or thought them connected with the attempts at conspiracy by which he constantly believed himself threatened. Wherever his authority was questioned, he regarded the Pope and clergy as hostile powers, and their conduct unfortunately often added strength to such views. When he confined the Cardinal La Balue in an iron cage, which still may be seen in the castle of Loches in Touraine, the latter had deserved severer punishment for his dishonourable treason. Just at this time many reasons combined to irritate him, and the accusations hurled against him in the sermons preached at Paris by the Franciscan Antoine Fradin, which found their echo in popular tumults, did not help to pacify him.

Louis XI.'s relation to Pope Sixtus IV. had always been uncertain. The king had, from the beginning of his reign, held out the Pragmatic Sanction and the Council as a bait and a terror. He had not even always observed outward respect; anger and sorrow at the

slighting treatment shown to him during his French legation, had shortened Cardinal Bessarion's life. He was on the verge of open hostility when the Pope appointed Giuliano della Rovere legate of Avignon, which dignity was filled by Charles de Bourbon. The king [349] accused the new legate of being implicated in Réné of Anjou's plans, who, at variance with Louis XI., hoped to obtain the county of Provence for the Duke of Burgundy. After appointing his only remaining nephew, Charles, Count of Maine, as his heir, the old king entered into an agreement of the kind with Charles the Bold in 1474, who by this means, and the reviving of the superannuated royal title of Arelat, hoped to attain the dignity, for the grant of which he had vainly negotiated with the Emperor Frederick III. Louis XI. had formerly garrisoned the province of Anjou, and taken the precautions necessary to hold both Charles and Réné in check. Towards the end of the winter of 1476 the terrible defeat of Charles at Granson left the hands of Louis free, and he immediately commenced a trial against Réné in Parliament for high treason, and forced him and the other branches of the house of Anjou at Lyons to cede all rights and claims to him. Réné, who was then sixty-eight years old, still retained the government of his States, but the king took precautions against future vagaries by fortifying and by gaining over to his side the principal councillors of his wavering and incapable cousin, precautions which future events proved useless.

The influence on the destinies of Italy of this transferring of the claims on Naples from a weak collateral line to the royal house of France, need not be indicated here. In order to punish the Holy See for the share ascribed to her legates, the king had an idea of garrisoning Franche Comtois, Venaissin and Anjou, and he refrained only because Charles the Bold, who had speedily collected his army, threatened to advance into Provence in case the Pope were annoyed in his French possessions.

It was his relationship with the Duke of Burgundy which so violently excited Louis XI. against Sixtus IV.'s ally, the king of Naples, and this was the foundation of French policy towards the Aragonese. It has been observed already that King Ferrante declined Louis's proposals of a family alliance, out of regard for his connections with Spain and Burgundy. He held firmly to his alliance [350] with the latter, even when, after the battle at Granson, Milan and Savoy turned aside from the vanquished party and joined the king. In the autumn of 1474 Ferrante had sent his younger son Federigo to the duke to deliver to him the order of the Ermine, and the prince had married a daughter of the duke of Bourbon, Charles the Bold's adherent, and had only returned home two years later. Among his companions was the same Cola di Campobasso, who remained in the duke's service, and exercised, by his shameful treason, only too great an influence on his tragical fate.[249] In April 1475 the Bastard of Burgundy, Antony, brother of the Duke, was in Naples, where he lived in the house of Diomed Carafa, and was most honourably treated by the King.[250] Charles the Bold's death, in the battle near Nancy, January 5, 1477—an event which made Louis XI. entirely master of France, although it did not diminish the discontent excited by his covetousness, cunning, and cruelty—was a heavy blow for Ferrante's entire policy, and later forced him into compliance when affairs in Italy also took a turn not in accordance with his expectations.

From Arras, which the king had taken May 4, 1478, in war against Mary of Burgundy, Charles's daughter, by means of a capitulation which seemed concluded only to be broken, Louis XI. addressed a letter to the Florentines, May 12, in which he expressed his sorrow and indignation at what had occurred, and announced the arrival of an ambassador: 'Our regret is as great as if the matter had concerned ourselves, and our honour is as much insulted as your own, the Medici being our relations, friends, and allies. We hold the attempt against you, and the murder of our cousin Giuliano, [351] as equal to an attempt against ourselves, and we consider the Pazzi as guilty of high treason. On no account do we wish that their crime go unpunished, but desire with all our heart that a chastisement may be inflicted which shall serve as an example for ever. Thus we have determined to send our beloved and faithful chamberlain to your Excellencies, the Lord of Argenton, seneschal of our province of Poitou, at present one of the men who has our complete confidence, in order to make known our intentions to you. He will inform you of various things concerning these matters.'[251]

It was no unimportant man whom the king sent to Italy. Philippe de Commines delineates in his memoirs an ambassador as ‘a complaisant man, who takes liberties with things and words in order to attain his end.’ It was he who wrote thus, whom Louis XI. selected. During the days of Peronne, when the king had voluntarily put himself in the power of his mighty opponent, Charles the Bold, he recognised Commines’ acuteness and knew his obligations to him, so that when the duke in his inconsiderate haste was plunging himself into destruction, the king employed every means in his power to gain over this most capable councillor. The youthful companion and confidant of Charles went over to the enemy’s camp in 1472, and his new master so overwhelmed him with honours and gain that the motives of his change of party and faithlessness now seem even worse than they perhaps really were, however unfavourable certain expressions attributed to him on other occasions may appear. When the Duke of Burgundy at last met before Nancy, the death he had challenged so often, the king dreaded to employ Commines to execute his plans against Flanders; he employed him first in Burgundy itself, and then entrusted him with the Italian embassy. Florentine affairs formed only a part of his mission. A question arose concerning the intentions of Sixtus IV. and his predominating influence in Central Italy, limiting the ambition of the Aragonese who promoted these views for the time, [352] and thus forced Florence, as well as Savoy and Milan, to adhere closer to the French interest.

In the middle of June the lord of Argenton—Commines bore this title after his marriage with Hélène de Jambes, heiress of Ortes—arrived at Turin. The duchess of Savoy, Jolante, widow of Amadeus IX., regent for her son Philibert I., was the King’s sister, and he had always managed to make use of the relationship more in the French interest than in that of the little neighbour state. He must have repented frustrating Philibert’s marriage with Mary of Burgundy when the archduke Max obtained her hand. He promoted the betrothal of the latter with Bianca Sforza, who was destined in later years to become the consort of the Emperor. Commines was to negotiate this affair in Milan with Bianca’s mother, Bona of Savoy. He repaired thither after two days’ halt in Turin. The promise of the renewal of the investiture of Genoa and Savona, in favour of Giovan Galeazzo Sforza, was to ally the regent of Milan more closely to France, and confirm the common alliance with Florence. The Italians soon observed, however, how the matter stood respecting the king’s intentions towards the Holy See, even before Commines expressed himself on the subject to Bona of Savoy. On June 16, during Commines’ residence in Turin, Antonio d’Appiano, Milanese ambassador at the court of Guglielmo Paleologus, marquis of Montferrat, wrote from Casale to the duchess, ‘The marquis imparted to me to-day that the French king has long been labouring to produce a schism in the church. What has occurred in Florence seems to afford him a suitable means to this end; on which account he sends the lord of Argenton to the duchess of Savoy, to your Excellence, and to Florence. To Venice he will not go, because the king is certain that, in respect to the alliance entered into, a simple letter will suffice to persuade the Republic to comply. The purpose is to complain of the Pope, because, instead of protecting Christendom against the Turks, he thinks of nothing but elevating [353] and enriching his relations, by suffering all wickedness and treasons, and allowing them to be carried out without hindrance, as is the case in Florence. For this reason he wishes that the Duchess of Savoy, your Excellency, and the Venetians may let none pass to Rome from beyond the mountains. Without taking up arms against the Pope, he wishes thus to awake in him bitter repentance for his errors, and to proceed gradually, day by day, according to circumstances and information and careful calculation.’ It was said the Bishop of Clermont was to go to Rome to make representations to the Pope and to threaten Riario personally.[252]

On June 22 Commines left Milan with a suite of twenty-five horsemen. ‘The lord of Argenton,’ thus wrote the duchess to her ambassador in Rome, ‘leaves us to-day for Florence. He is commissioned to persuade all the powers to withdraw from their obedience to the Pope, the king of France deeming it necessary for the weal of Christendom to assemble a general council as soon as a disposition favourable to it evinces itself. His Majesty will immediately summon one in the kingdom.’ Three days before, Lorenzo de’ Medici had thanked the king for his sympathy, and

given him information of the excommunication proclaimed against him and the strife in prospect. ‘God is my witness that I am conscious of having done nothing against the Pope but that I live, that I did not allow myself to be killed, that grace from above protected me. This is my sin; this my crime for which I deserve destruction and exclusion from the Church. But we have the canon laws, we have natural and political justice, we have truth and innocence, and we have God and man.’[253]

The lord of Argenton, who had obtained auxiliary troops as well from Savoy as from Milan, was received at Florence with open arms. [354] ‘We went to meet him,’ wrote the Milanese ambassadors,[254] ‘with the deputies of the league and many citizens, with the Lord Lorenzo, Lorenzino his cousin, and a troop of armed men for his guard.’ Commines found the city in the midst of preparations for war. He offered the assistance of the king against the Pope’s measures, both spiritual and military. In his memoirs he does not say much of this embassy. ‘The favour of the king was useful to them in some measure, but not so much as I could have wished. I could offer them no army, and had nothing excepting my suite.’[255] Of his journey to Rome and the affairs there, he says not a word. That they were not without fear in high ecclesiastical circles is shown by a letter addressed to the Pope by the Cardinal of Pavia on July 16, from San Lorenzo alle Grotte on the Lake of Bolsena, in which he speaks of the opposition extending within and without Italy, and gives the advice to gain time till the cardinals were again more numerously assembled in Rome. ‘Certain intelligence has reached me that the French king is sending an ambassador to us, a man of high standing in France, who has received peremptory instructions. If the ban against the Florentines be not removed, if the sharers and accomplices in the murder of Giuliano de’ Medici be not punished, and if peace be not restored, the king will have no scruple in pronouncing the withdrawal of obedience, and appealing to the council.’ When the cardinal wrote thus, Commines must have been long in Rome, as he passed through Perugia on July 9, accompanied by the Florentine ambassador Guid’Antonio Vespucci. Of the negotiation with the Pope nothing is known. That Sixtus IV. did not allow himself to be frightened by the king’s threats is shown by the fact that the war began at once. That the circumstances of the Papal States made no unfavourable impression on the ambassador is proved by his remark that the Popes were prudent and well-advised, [355] and the inhabitants of the States would be the happiest people in the world but for the quarrels of the Colonna and the Orsini, for they paid no taxes nor any impositions worthy of consideration. After a few days, Philippe de Commines was again in Florence without having accomplished anything. We shall speak of his later activity further on.

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CHAPTER III.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1478.

When the Florentines saw that war was inevitable, they appointed, on June 13, the magistracy usual in such cases, the Ten of War, among whom, beside Lorenzo de' Medici, were Tommaso Soderini, Luigi Guicciardini, Bongianni Gianfigliazzi, &c. At first the opinion prevailed that it would be advisable not only to put the frontier in a state of defence on the side of Siena and Umbria, but to make a dangerous diversion for the enemy by an attack on Imola, the city and territory of Girolamo, a plan, however, which they were compelled to abandon by the swift and powerful inroad of the enemy in the Chiana valley. They were not prepared for war, and had to provide for everything in a hurry, and were thus unable to gain an advantage over the enemy. It was to Lombardy that they turned for leaders and men, and also for horses and all materials for war. Among the captains chosen was Niccolo Orsini, Count of Pitigliano, who in later years made himself a name in the service of the Republic of Venice, which he retained even after the defeat at the battle of Ghiaradadda in the war of the League of Cambray; Rodolfo Gonzaga, brother of Federigo, Marquis of Mantua, with two of his sons; and several others. Venice and Milan sent auxiliaries, the former under Galeotto Pico, lord of Mirandola; those of Milan under Gian Jacopo Trivulzio, who, then thirty-seven years old, was destined to become a celebrated leader in the transformation of Italian tactics, Alberto Visconti, and Giovanni Conti. The assistance [357] of Milan was far less than had been hoped for in Florence, owing to her own need. King Ferrante managed to make a formidable diversion for the duchess-regent. Even before the present complication began, he seems to have been gained over by Sforza Maria, Duke of Bari, who had been in Naples since the November of the preceding year, while the Duchess of Calabria took part with her brothers against her sister-in-law, so that when the war against Florence began, the king, with the aid of the exiles, attempted a new enterprise, which we shall soon describe more fully, against Genoa, the weakest point of the territory of Sforza. An enterprise so well begun must have been the cause of very great anxiety and fear to the regent, and made the Florentines tremble for their frontier on the side of Liguria, where Sarzana might be exposed to an attack; and to be prepared for this the Marchesi Gabriello and Leonardo Malaspina were sent thither with a squadron of soldiers.

One other means was tried to withdraw the Milanese regent from the Florentine-Venetian alliance. The Duke of Urbino endeavoured to effect a change of opinion and bring about an alliance with Naples. In a long letter addressed from Gubbio to his agent in Milan, Ser Matteo,[256] he commissioned him to labour for this end with Cecco Simonetta and Gian Jacopo Trivulzio. He was to represent to them that Venice was the natural enemy of Milan, from whom danger was always threatening, and that Lorenzo was a most untrustworthy ally. 'It cannot please me in the least that Milan relies upon her own strength or the friendship of Lorenzo de' Medici. For in herself she is not secure, but endangered, and we cannot at all depend on Lorenzo's friendship. We have always seen, and still see plainly, that he neither desires the peace nor safety of that State. Had he ever wished it, or did he care for it now, he would not have chosen Messer Tommaso Soderini as ambassador immediately on the death of Duke Galeazzo, for the former is a [358] thorough Venetian and more inclined to the Signory of Venice than any one in the council. Lorenzo would not by means of this man have urged so strongly the renewal of the bond between Venice, Milan, and Florence, adding the declaration that the latter state would always go hand in hand with Venice, and objecting to an agreement with the king's majesty. He would not twice have hindered my appearing in Milan when he was certain that nothing was so dear to my heart as the honour and advantage of that state. He would not have constantly formed plots against the Milanese government with the brothers of the deceased duke and Lord Robert (Sanseverino). He would not have taken the trouble to lull the suspicions of the king, who desired the renewal of the alliance with Milan and Florence, or pretended that it was not the fitting time at present, and that it would be better to wait and see how

matters would arrange themselves at Milan. He would not have behaved as he did lately in reference to Lord Robert, by undertaking his defence in Florence, accusing Messer Cecco, seeking to gain the commander over to Florentine pay, and when this failed, recommending him to the Venetians with the same intention (Messer Cecco may be certain of it), so that he may guide affairs there according to his will, as long as men remain in dread of the Turks. Had he known how lovingly the Pope behaved to the serene Duke and Duchess of Milan, he would not have acted towards his Holiness in the manner he did. For he has often stirred up the count (Fortebraccio) against Perugia, and then irritated him against the Sienese, without considering how dangerous it is for that state (Milan) to enkindle war in Italy, especially by an old opponent of the house of Sforza, like Count Carlo, whom he has in a certain way restored from death to life. He would, on the contrary, have preferred the friendship of the king before every other friendship, not only because it is more sincere, but also on account of his relationship and greater power. If Messer Gian Jacopo says that he [359] suspects Lorenzo of sinning against the Holy Ghost, I am of the same opinion, and think that he doubts God's mercy. As he has most indecorously insulted the king and me, who am, indeed, nothing but a poor nobleman, he will never again trust the former, and has therefore thrown himself into the arms of the Venetians.' The letter finishes with the proposal that Milan should conclude a secret compact with the king (of Naples) in order to assure himself of his assistance in case of need. The king's interests were identical with those of the house of Sforza, the rivals of Venice. Only by being in league with Naples could they oppose Florentine machinations with decisive effect. 'The safest way seems to me not to wait till things have taken a turn that may allow of no alternative. I have repeatedly remarked to Duke Galeazzo that the state of Milan is so composed that with the first buffet of fortune, whether coming from Lodi, or Cremona, or Ghiaradadda or elsewhere, his power may be said to come to an end.'

Feltriers, who knew Tuscan affairs as well as those of his own little country, and who was by no means a man given to violent impulses, explains in a letter the frame of mind which Lorenzo's policy had produced in King Ferrante and Sixtus IV. even before the late events. The principal matter, Medici's behaviour and feeling towards Milan, may have been falsely represented. Some facts may have been imagined—and even a certain amount of justification is not to be denied to some of the accusations—and who knows if, as the duke suggests, Lorenzo was not conscious of it himself. However, the letter produced no result, for the insufficient number of troops which came from Milan arose, as we have said, from other causes. Even the preparations of Florence were insufficient. In order to cover the expenses, the Ten levied taxes and borrowed money from the banks, without, however, obtaining what they required. The clergy were exhorted to a contribution of 50,000 gold florins, at which the monasteries broke forth into endless complaints. On the enemy's side they were ready first, and the [360] promptness with which Siena promoted the designs of the Duke of Calabria, as well as the docility of the Perugians, who, at the Pope's command,[257] dissolved the compact concluded with Florence, afforded the opponents a great advantage. Alfonso of Calabria led twenty-five squadrons, and five hundred select mercenaries (Provvisionati); Federigo of Montefeltro twenty squadrons of heavy cavalry, each consisting of twenty men-at-arms and forty archers, with the attendants mounted on auxiliary horses. The attack was expected in the Val di Chiana.

This valley is an inland province of Tuscany, stretching from north to south, its length, from the southern slopes of the Casentino above Arezzo, to the southern end of the Lake of Chiusi, some forty miles, and its greatest breadth between the suburbs of Cortona and the Poggia di Sta. Cecilia, where a chain of hills descends along the Sienese valley of Ombrone, about five-and-twenty miles. The Arno, coming from the Casentino, touches the north-western end of this valley, where, instead of pursuing a southward course seemingly prescribed by the nature of the ground, it 'contemptuously turns its back,' according to the poet's expression,[258] on the town of Arezzo, and by a sharp turn, created possibly in old times by an artificial cutting, takes a direction almost parallel to its earlier one and flows towards Florence in the north-westerly direction. At a small distance west of Arezzo it unites with the principal Tuscan

branch of the river, which gives its name to the valley watered by it along its whole length, the Chiana or Clanis of the ancients, the original form of which is still an unsolved riddle, for it presents the singular appearance of its course and falls being divided between two larger streams, the Tiber and the Arno, to both of which it bears [361] its waters, the drainage of the flat valley being now facilitated by hydraulic works. It is these works which have entirely altered the appearance of this valley in the present time, and created a flourishing fertile land where, throughout the Middle Ages, the miasma prevailed so terribly that the poet was reminded of its misery in his wanderings through the place of punishment for the makers of discord.[259] When we view the wide plain from the loftily situated Cortona, the horizon of which is bounded by a chain of hills, above which on the south rise the volcanic peak of Radicofani and the immense trachyte mass of Montamiata, a splendidly green and excellently cultivated fertile land lies before us. There are numerous hamlets mostly elevated on the western hills, at the southern end, where two small lakes seem to announce the neighbourhood of the greater Trasimene—Chiusi, Chianciano, Montepulciano, Torrita, Asinalunga, Fojano, Lucignano, Marciano, Monte San Savino. Three states join here: the State of the Church, with its province Umbria; the land of Siena, with the valleys of Orcia and Ombrone; and the Florentine territory, to which by far the greater part of the Val di Chiana belonged. From the most ancient times this Val di Chiana has always been chosen as a battle-field, on account of its situation and uncertain boundary, as well as on account of level suitable for military operations.

About the middle of the fifteenth century, in the Neapolitan war with King Alfonso, this place was celebrated, as also a century later, when Siena fell in the heroic defence of her independence.

On July 11, the enemy crossed the Florentine frontiers, and encamped two miles below Montepulciano.[260] This lofty town was safe from sudden attack, but the surrounding country had to suffer heavily from the troops, who destroyed the mills, drove away the cattle, and made numerous prisoners, spreading terror around. The [362] principal force of the Florentines encamped farther north, between Arbia and Chiana. Scarcely had the news of a foreign inroad reached Florence, when a trumpeter of the Duke of Calabria brought a brief from Sixtus IV., dated July 7, and addressed to the Republic. The Pope declared that for a long time he had been unable to endure the insults offered by Lorenzo de' Medici to the Holy See, and that at last he had resolved on war, in order to liberate Florence from a despotism which would make it impossible for him to devote himself to the crusade conjointly with the other princes, who had already once before been prevented by this man's fault. He hoped, therefore, that the Republic would take reasonable measures; he demanded nothing from her but that Lorenzo should be removed, with whom alone he was at enmity. Only the cessation of such shameful servitude was the goal towards which he strove; and only from these measures could he or any clear-sighted person expect safety. Lorenzo knew the prevailing feeling too well to be seriously alarmed at a move which sought to check him personally. But he was obliged to bring the matter to instant decision. After the brief had been read aloud in the Senate, he begged to be allowed to speak to the people. Before an assembly of citizens called together in the palace, he declared he was ready to make any sacrifice whereby the safety of the State could be purchased, either by his banishment or death, as their interests had always been as near to his heart as they had been dear to his father and grandfather. He would not go over the past nor seek to justify himself or accuse others, as the Republic had already sufficiently displayed her sentiments on these points. But he could not refrain from remarking that it was strange that the vicegerent of Christ should think it right at such a time of anxiety and care to show hatred to a single man by inflicting ruinous war on a peaceful and flourishing neighbour. In such a condition of things he did not know if his gratitude towards heaven for the affection shown him should be greater, or sorrow for [363] the variously threatening ills which without his fault had already befallen them. He hoped that the assistance of God, and the activity and prudence of numerous citizens, would help the Republic to save her honour and preserve her fame. If his life would better serve the attainment of this end than his exile or death, he offered it and his family and possessions willingly and joyfully. As we can easily understand, all declared themselves of one accord with him. The

result of the Pope's letter was that all Florence declared that it regarded Lorenzo's cause as its own, and gave the threatened man a guard of twelve men to protect his person.

Several great canonists and others learned in the law were questioned as to the validity and effect of the Papal censures, and gave their opinion that the Republic, by appealing to the future council, was, notwithstanding the interdict, justified in letting divine service be celebrated in the city and territory as before. The storm raged high; the Pope and the Florentines mutually excited one another. On June 20, the bull with which Lorenzo and the Republic were threatened was enforced; commerce with them, and service under their flag were forbidden.[261] A letter written on July 21 by the Signoria to the Pope[262] contains expressions which scarcely keep within the limits of deference to the head of the Church, making accusations against the Senate, and appealing to the protection of the French king. It was not calculated to soften Sixtus IV. Neither did it stop here. The uncontrolled passion of the Pope and that total want of moderation which made him seize the weapons of the world in order to attack his enemies and enkindle a terrible war, affected not only the Florentine laity, but the clergy also. Again was repeated what had been experienced a century before under the reign of the last Pope of Avignon, that is to say, a part of the clergy took part with the state. A synod in Sta. Maria del [364] Fiore was to investigate the facts of the case, and the question of right in the Pazzi affair, and publish its decision. Whether the assembly really took place is questionable; a rambling document from the hand of Gentile, Bishop of Arezzo, the head of the clerical opposition to the Pope, certainly would lead us to suppose that the synod was convened.[263] But the tone of this composition is so violent, the accusations against Sixtus IV. are so immoderately passionate, exaggerated, and irreverent, the temper is so unworthy a society of clericals and sons of the Church assembled for a serious deliberation, that we must, for the honour of the Tuscan clergy, believe that we have here a sample of individual invective merely. The signature 'Given in our cathedral of Sta. Reparata on July 23, 1478,' which only befitted the Archbishop of Florence, Rinaldo Orsini, whose name is not mentioned in this confused epistle, confirms this supposition. In any case, such a declaration in a cause which it was to defend would do far more harm than good. That even the mere mention of the council, and especially of the council of Bâle, embittered and disturbed the Pope, is shown from the impression made upon him by a subsequent and most unimportant attempt to revive once more that ecclesiastical assembly, the constant terror of the successor of Eugenius IV., to kindle its ashes into flame, and effect on the other side of the Alps an opposition to the unspiritual tendencies of the Holy See which became more and more apparent. The official defence which the Republic caused to be drawn up by their chancellor, Bartolommeo Scala, on August 10, seems dignified and moderate beside such attacks. The principal contents are the declarations of Montesecco, which the composer of the letter above mentioned had also seen, and which are followed by a short account, limited to facts, of the events at Florence; while the assistance of the Emperor Frederick III. and King Louis XI. is [365] appealed to against the threatened violence. The emperor is especially reminded that it concerns his most faithful city of Florence and her people, always devoted to his sacred majesty.

After receiving the Florentine answer on July 21, the Pope addressed an autograph letter to the Duke of Urbino, in which he remarked that the tone and contents of the answer had not alarmed him, but had only shown that God, to punish his enemies for their sins, had deprived them of their understanding. His cause was just. He demanded nothing but the punishment of Lorenzo, who had behaved inimically towards God and His church, and ungratefully to the Pope, who relied upon the duke's valour and devotion, and that of the Neapolitan prince. He had answered the Venetians, God would chastise them if they acted wrongly. He had sent Nuncios to the emperor, the Kings of France, Spain and Hungary, to justify himself. The bull was printed; everyone would know of it. French ambassadors were announced, and he hoped that God would inspire him with a proper answer. They threatened disobedience and schism; it would be as God wished; it would at all events serve some purpose, if he, the duke, would write to the King of England, King Ferrante, his ally, and Louis XI.[264]

They did not content themselves with writing; the Pope must have perceived that a dangerous contest had begun. Guid'Antonio Vespucci was sent to Rome in order to show that they would not submit to the interdict. The government reckoned on support from the French side; not one of the Italian allies joined the demonstration. Donato Acciaiuoli, who still resided at home, received a commission to repair to France to keep the king favourably inclined. He had never really recovered from the excitement which the events in Rome had caused him, and undertook the commission very unwillingly. As Vespucci was to thank the Perugians, who seemed to wish to join the Florentines [366] again, for their friendliness, Acciaiuoli received a command to negotiate in Milan regarding further action in common. Scarcely arrived, he fell ill, and died on August 28. It was a heavy loss for the Republic, who honoured his memory, as Florence possessed few abler or more respected citizens. The moment when he arrived in Milan was not a fortunate one, for the revolution had already taken place in Genoa, which immediately produced a reaction on the Tuscan war, as a part of the troops in Tuscany were called home. King Ferrante had managed the matter more cleverly. Not only, as was easy for him, did he stir up the brothers Sforza and Roberto Sanseverino against Genoa, but succeeded in reconciling for the moment the chief of the great parties in the city to one another; and meanwhile he won over Prospero Adorno, who governed Genoa for the duchess, in order to bring thither the former doge, Lodovico Fregoso, who lay in wait at Piombino. The Milanese garrison held out with difficulty against the city, which had declared itself free, and had received from Naples artillery, munitions, and men. The Duke of Atri, Giulio Acquaviva, sailed from thence on July 22, and when a Milanese army approached, it was completely defeated on August 7 by Sanseverino. So far all things had prospered according to King Ferrante's wish. But the quarrels which never ceased to divide the nobility came to the aid of the regent, who, in order not to leave the city in the hands of her brothers-in-law and their faction, secretly negotiated with Battista, one of the Fregosi, and caused Castelletto, still garrisoned by her troops, to surrender to him, on which he took possession of the city, which proclaimed him doge, and if not subject to Milan, was as little dependent on Naples.[265]

Meanwhile the campaign had begun in a manner which showed beforehand that, even without decisive battles, the Florentine territory would be ruined. The enemy was three times as strong as [367] the Florentines, who were unprovided in many ways, but whose most serious deficiency at the beginning of the war was that they had no captain-general, and consequently failed in unity of leadership and a plan of war. The troops were in a bad condition. The reports sent to Milan by Gian Jacopo Trivulzio show a sad picture of the circumstances. Having set out from Milan with a hundred men-at-arms, he had come by Pontemoli into Tuscany, and at length reached the Aretine territory. There, at Olmo, three miles from Arezzo, at the entrance to the Chiana valley, where the roads divide to Cortona and Siena over Monte Sansavino, he halted and awaited the Florentine army. His people produced a favourable impression on the Florentine commissaries, but not so those of the allies on him. 'The Florentine troops,' he writes on July 16,[266] 'passed in such a wretched state that I was disgusted—without order or connection, the different troops mingled together, so that I could not distinguish them, one squadron half a mile distant from the other.' In the camp there was similar disorder; only a few infantry, and those badly armed, and no sappers and miners. Besides this, insufficient means for provisioning, so that the Milanese *condottiere* complained that the government only seemed to think of their own advantage, and not of the welfare of the troops. No prices were fixed; they opened door and house to the usurers, and sought by the taxation of imported provisions to procure money, instead of providing for the first necessities. Under such circumstances, it availed little that illustrious men arrived in the camp, among them Ghiberto da Correggio and Teodoro Trivulzio, Gian Jacopo's cousin, and, like him, afterwards Marshal of France. The two commissaries of the army, Luigi and Jacopo Guicciardini, with whom the Venetian ambassadors Giovanni Emo and Bernardo Bembo were associated, could not hide the want of united military guidance, a want which remained perceptible even when a [368] commission of four captains was entrusted with the representation for the time of the captain-general. These were the Count of

Pitigliano, Galeotto Pico, Gian Jacopo Trivulzio, Alberto Visconti.

The enemy had quitted Montepulciano and turned northward, with the evident intention of gaining the road to Florence. Without venturing a battle, the Florentines slowly retreated, at first towards Arezzo, then, as they saw the enemy take the direction to Siena, to cover the Elsa valley, in which they set up their camp on the Poggio Imperiale on a broad and flat hill overlooking the whole district by Poggibonzi, which once bore the old castle destroyed by the Guelphs, where the Emperor Henry VII. spent the last years of his life. Without being molested, the enemy took in the meantime several small places situated in the neighbouring province of Chianti, some of which offered a gallant resistance. The open country suffered dreadfully from the destruction of the mills and of such provisions as the soldiers could not carry away. The havock made in the Sienese territory and an attempt of the Florentines to win over Perugia so exasperated the Pope as to make him publish, from the Orsini castle of Bracciano, on August 10, a new and stronger bull against the Republic. It was on the same day that Commines paid a visit to the Florentine head-quarters at Poggibonzi.[267] Here at last they got a captain-general, Ercole d'Este, Duke of Ferrara. Though son-in-law to the King of Naples he accepted the command of the Florentine and Milanese troops, and arrived at Florence on September 8. The Venetians were displeased at this choice, and had protested against it in Milan and Florence without avail. On the same day with the duke the Marquis of Saluzzo had arrived, with nearly two hundred foot, at Pisa. It was high time. The duke stayed four days in the city, which received him with great distinction, and presented him with the house of Renato de' Pazzi, [369] the most innocent victim of the conspiracy. On the 13th he set out for the camp. Before the staff of command was delivered to him, which was done for the Republic by Lorenzo, for Milan by Gian Jacopo Trivulzio, the stars were consulted by an astrologer according to the fashion of the times, and the afternoon of September 27 declared favourable. It might have been expected that a more active prosecution of the war would now begin. But the new captain-general ventured as little as his predecessors to attack the enemy, notwithstanding his augmented forces; and when the former considering an advance upon Florence unadvisable, gave up his position in Chianti, and, turning again to the Chiana valley, began the siege of Monte San Savino, it needed the most express commands of Florence to persuade Ercole d'Este to break up his head-quarters and approach the enemy.

The slowness of his movements and the numerous difficulties that were raised showed how little he was disposed to advance. When the armies had approached one another the Royalists proposed a truce of several days, which the duke gladly accepted, and when the truce was over, Monte San Savino capitulated on November 8. From its protected situation and the easy provisioning of the place it was not unimportant, and the Florentines felt the loss severely. For as at the same time an attempt to reconquer Castellina by surprise failed on account of the unskilful leadership of the army, the Chiana valley and the Chianti were exposed to the devastations of the enemy, and reprisals on the Sienese domain afforded but slight consolation. They were not without anxiety either for other parts of the territory. In Pistoja a project was discovered to give the town into King Ferrante's hands, who longed to compete with the Florentines with the help of the Genoese and to take possession of their trading ships. Lucca was not considered safe either; Piero Capponi represented here the interests of the Republic. So ended the year 1478, a fruitful but unhappy year. The war had consumed much money, ruined the country people in flourishing districts, [370] much injured a number of villages, and produced not one warlike deed.

Things could not continue thus. If Milan and Venice did not fulfil their duty to their allies better, Florence, which was in such a bad military condition and had the war in her territory, could not offer resistance to her enemies. Bernardo Bembo, a respected and business-like man whom the Republic of Venice had sent as their permanent representative, might well see the situation of affairs without being able to cause a more energetic interposition, for they were always negotiating with the Pope, while the Papal and Neapolitan troops made daily progress. Tommaso Soderini went to Venice to represent to the Republic the state of affairs. Girolamo Morelli did the same in Milan. The Florentines proposed to attack

the King of Naples by invading his shores and summoning the Angevins once more to Italy, and at the same time to disturb the Pope in his own states in Romagna as well as in Umbria. But in Milan, however good the will might be, little was to be gained, because of their own embarrassments. The Swiss, misled by Papal and Neapolitan intrigues which broke the treaties confirmed at Galeazzo Maria's death, marched once more against the frontiers of the Alps, overran Bellinzona, and defeated the ducal troops. At the same time, on account of Genoese affairs and disturbances in the reigning families which will soon be mentioned, the Venetians were opposed to the removal of the war to Romagna. The other projects seemed too complicated and uncertain. After long negotiation, it was agreed that the Marquis of Mantua should strengthen the army of the Duke of Ferrara and that Roberto Malatesta of Rimini, who had dissolved his connection with the Church and passed over to the service of Florence, should make a strong diversion in the territory of Perugia with Carlo Fortebraccio. At the same time, the treaties with Louis XI. had arrived at a conclusion which, though not all that could be wished by the allies, certainly promoted their cause.

CHAPTER IV.

LOUIS XI. AND SIXTUS IV. SECOND YEAR OF THE WAR.

Philippe de Commines returned to Florence after a short, and, as we must suppose, fruitless residence in Rome. That he returned thither on July 25 is seen from a letter to the Milanese ambassador, who informs us that they had not failed in accordance with the admonition they had received to attend upon him and show him all honours.[268] His visit to the camp and his presence served, at all events, to strengthen the belief in the French king's friendship. But the impressions which he received from this visit were not favourable, and are expressed in the opinion he gave of things. 'The Florentines,' he observes,[269] 'might consider it good fortune that they were not defeated on all sides, for as it was long since they had been engaged in war, they could not measure the danger in which they were. Lorenzo de' Medici, who guided affairs in the city, was young, and influenced by young people. His opinion was held in high estimation. They had few leaders and a small number of troops. The enemy took all the places which he besieged, but not so quickly as is usual with us; for in a war of fortresses they are not so skilful either in siege or defence, while in the formation of a camp and the preservation of good order and all the requisites necessary for provisioning, and in all the arrangements of a campaign, they surpass us.' To judge from the last words, the condition of the camp must have improved since the time when Gian Jacopo Trivulzio described it. On July 28 Commines obtained the royal warrant which empowered him, in conjunction with Lorenzo de' Medici, 'nostre très-chier et amé cousin,' to conclude the alliance with the Duchess-regent of Milan, which made the investiture of Gian Galeazzo Sforza with Genoa and Savona one condition.[270] On the following day he showed Bona of Savoy and her private secretary the commission he had received. On August 18, Lorenzo and Commines concluded an alliance[271] with the Milanese ambassadors in Florence, Gian Angelo de' Talenti and Filippo Sagramoro. Six days later Commines quitted Florence and repaired to Milan, where, in the king's name, he invested the young Duke in the person of his mother with the two towns and their territory. In his Memoirs he only mentions this occurrence in a few words, but there are detailed accounts of how Bona of Savoy, representing her son, kissed the document of investiture and then gave the oath of fealty for him with her hand on the Gospels, to be a true vassal of the French king, to have friends and foes in common with him, and conform to his will in peace and war.

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Commines writes respecting his departure from Florence, 'I was excellently lodged by the inhabitants and at their cost, and more liberally on the last day than even the first.' That means that the Republic sent him silver-plate of fifty-five pounds weight, while the Signoria expressed their gratitude to the king for sending such a distinguished man, and expressed hopes of his favour, 'surrounded as they were by cruel enemies, who had already caused them many losses, as they had been attacked unprepared.' According to the Milanese ambassadors, the value of the presents offered to him was between four and five hundred ducats, to which Lorenzo added jewels worth about three hundred. 'We are continually,' writes Lorenzo de' Medici to Louis XI., 'at war with our opponents, who seek to defeat and humiliate us. The lord of Argenton will inform you by word of mouth what has happened, and in what state he leaves our affairs. I beg you all to believe what he says on my part, as if I myself spoke to you. To-day, as always, I think I shall need the assistance, favour, and protection of your Majesty, to whom I shall turn in confidence for all that concerns me, as to my true lord, protector, and patron, my hope and my refuge.'[272]

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During Commines' Italian embassy Louis XI. had not been inactive. On August 16 he had published an *ordonnance* at Blois, by which, in regard to the Pope's behaviour in the Pazzi affair, he declared that French money should not serve to promote such things, and had strictly forbidden all remittances of money to Rome for the fulfilment of expectations and other things. An assembly meeting at Orleans in September was to ratify this decree, but it

restricted itself to leaving the king free either to call a Gallican national council at Lyons in the following year, or to persuade the Pope to summon an œcumenical council. Louis XI. considered it best to try the latter. He had his hands full at the time. His sister of Savoy died before Commines returned, and it was most important for him firmly to establish the Government in the duchy, and to get the duke, then twelve years old, into his power, in which he succeeded. He sought to make a diversion for the King of Naples in his own house, by enlisting his younger son Don Federigo in his interest through a marriage with his niece of Savoy; while on the other hand he kept alive the Angevin claims on Naples as a means of terrifying Ferrante. It was under such circumstances that the [374] unfavourable news from Tuscany, which Philippe de Commines confirmed, hastened his determination to attempt to influence the Pope.

From Plessis-les-Tours, Louis XI. had announced to Lorenzo de' Medici on November 1 that an embassy consisting of six members, the chamberlain Guy d'Arpajon, viscount of Lautrec, the president of the Toulouse Parliament, Antoine de Morlhon, and others, would repair to Italy, in order to effect a union for the purpose of a war against the Turks. Soon afterwards the instructions for the treaty with Sixtus IV. were drawn up. The ambassadors were to represent to the Pope how the advance of the Turks in Greece and Bosnia, on the Hungarian and Polish frontiers, and in the Venetian possessions, threatened the whole of Christian Europe, and made indispensable their union against the common enemy, and the summoning of a general council to consult upon all spiritual and temporal affairs. Lyons would be the most suitable place for such an assembly, and this praiseworthy and sacred purpose was hindered by nothing so much as by the war which had broken out in Italy between the Pope and Naples on the one side, and on the other the league of Milan, Venice, and Florence. The king wished to fulfil his duties on both sides—the duty of a devoted and faithful son of the Church, and that of a warm friend of the Florentines, who had always shown themselves true and loyal adherents of France. The Pope, as vicegerent of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, was called especially to mediate and restore peace. If he had laid city and Republic under an interdict with penalties and confiscations on account of what had happened in April in Florence, the king certainly did not wish to defend a crime against the Holy See and the Pope, nor interpose between his authority and his rights. But they must investigate the matter well, and see what had caused those events, and whence the attack had proceeded. The other side must be listened to. If the Florentines were in the wrong, the king would endeavour to bring [375] them to reason. If the wrong were on the side of the representative of the Holy See, the Holy Father must grant redress. The king could not believe that the attempt of Count Riario against the Florentines had taken place with the knowledge and consent of the Holy Father, for it was a breach of the general Italian league, a disturbance of peace, an aid to the enemies of Christendom, a summons to bloodshed, to which, in the king's opinion, the Pope must have been averse. If matters had proceeded too far to allow of the conclusion of peace at once, a truce might at least be permitted, that the proposals might ripen which the council would bring up for consideration.[273]

Sixtus IV. had had time to look carefully into the situation of affairs. The king's proceeding did not find him unprepared. The Cardinal of Pavia had above all pointed out the necessity of no over-haste and the wisdom of letting the storm spend itself. The Cardinal of Mantua, who has been already mentioned, went as legate to the Emperor Frederick III. On January 10, 1479, the French ambassadors reached Florence, where they made a solemn entry, and were welcomed joyfully. On the 16th they continued their journey to Rome, after having consulted about everything with the Signoria and magistracy of war. Two days after them, ambassadors from the Emperor Frederick also arrived and repaired to Rome on the same errand. On January 27 the Pope received the ambassadors, who fulfilled their commissions, and then delivered in writing the demand for summoning a council. In his answer, Sixtus contested the right of the French king to give an opinion on a matter decided by the Pope, and held up to him the example of Charlemagne, from whom he boasted his descent. The Pope was not obliged to answer for his decisions. The fate of the Archbishop of Pisa had shown how little spiritual immunities were protected by temporal magistrates. [376]

A council would preserve the rights of the Church, but it could only be summoned by the Pope in agreement with the emperor and other kings; its assembly did not depend on the sovereign of France. Councils were generally summoned for three objects—for the extinction of heresies, the restoration of peace among Christian powers, and the reform of manners. There were no heresies now. And that mediations had sometimes more hindered than promoted peace had been shown by the Synod of Constance, while much that was annoying, and especially disadvantageous to the princes, would come to light. The summoning of the council would be a glorious thing, but for the reasons mentioned he must against his will decline it. If the renewal of the Pragmatic Sanction were threatened, it was really a question of the king's honour and conscience. The summons to the French prelates was unlawful. If Lorenzo de' Medici would acknowledge his sin before God and man, and endure with a penitent heart the punishment laid on him, all the rest would be easily adjusted.[274]

For the rest, Sixtus IV. expressed himself willing to treat, and ordered for this purpose a commission of ten cardinals who should investigate the matter. Of the demand for Lorenzo's banishment nothing more was said, but from the beginning it was plain how far asunder the two parties were. Matters did not proceed till, in the middle of March, a rumour spread in Rome that Louis XI. intended to summon the council at Lyons in a month's time if the Pope did nothing for the restoration of peace. An English embassy had also arrived to support the demand of the friendly States. On April 4, Sixtus IV. ordered a suspension of the spiritual ban and a truce to hostilities for the time. Negotiations for peace were to be carried on at Naples. Not without difficulty had they obtained this concession, nor until the ambassadors of Florence, Milan, and Venice, supported by the rest, had declared that, if no measures were taken, they [377]
would protest solemnly, appeal to the council and quit Rome. Venice had exerted herself most in this affair. After all representations to the king had been unavailing, the Republic had taken steps with the emperor and French king in order to bring Sixtus IV. to a better mind by threatening him with a council, and when the ambassadors of both those powers went to Rome, the Venetians sent thither Sebastian Venier, to support their petition.[275]

So much was accomplished; but the demands of the Pope to the Florentines did not afford a prospect of quieting the strife. The Republic was to humiliate herself before the Holy Father, beg for forgiveness of her sins, celebrate a solemn service for the reconciliation of those killed in the Pazzi conspiracy and give alms for their souls, and destroy all libellous pictures painted to commemorate the events.[276] They were to expel Niccolo Vitelli from their territory; deliver to the Holy See the fortresses of Borgo San Sepolcro, Modigliana, and Castrocaro; pay compensation for the war, and engage never again to undertake an attack on the Papal territories. On the side of Florence the demand of a public service to acknowledge their guilt was refused, on the ground that such a revival of the memory of the sad event would prejudice the dignity of the state. The destruction of the paintings was agreed to, the expulsion of Vitelli refused, but it was promised that they would prevent him from attempting anything against the States of the Church. In respect to the places mentioned, it was answered that these had nothing to do with the questions on hand, and they could only treat for the restitution of such as had been garrisoned in the course of the war. Thus not even a basis for treaties was obtained.

Affairs dragged on hopelessly. What passed meanwhile outside [378]
Rome contributed still more to this state of hopelessness. Things could not remain thus. On May 18, a command was given to the ambassadors of the allied states to leave Rome, if the work of peace were not begun within a week. On the 31st the Pope summoned to him all the foreign plenipotentiaries who had a share in the negotiations. On the question addressed to the representatives of the three allied states, whether it were the intention of their governments to begin the campaign against the Turks immediately upon the conclusion of peace, the Venetian ambassador answered that his Republic had maintained for seventy years a cruel and exhausting war against an enemy that daily became more terrible. At length she had concluded a compact with them which was advantageous for Christianity, and this compact she should keep to the best of her power. He referred to the most fatal agreement,

perhaps necessary under the oppressions that then prevailed, which Venice had concluded on January 25, 1479, with Mohammed II., and published three months later; by which, among other places, Skodra, which had been so long and valiantly defended, was lost with others in the Morea, and considerable sums besides accorded to the Grand Turk.[277] The deputies from Florence and Milan agreed to this declaration. But when the Pope announced that under such circumstances he would decline to treat, the Venetian ambassador made a protest and appealed to the council. The moment the French ambassador began speaking, Sixtus IV. dissolved the meeting. It was evident, that his one desire was to gain time. The three ambassadors then repeated their protest on leaving Rome, and summoned the prelates belonging to their territories to take leave of St. Peter's Chair.[278]

In this manner the winter and time of truce passed without [379] bringing matters to any agreement. If the position of their opponents was in some degree more favourable than that of the Florentines and their allies, yet it was at the same time such that this agreement must have been most desirable to them. In the Papal Neapolitan army there prevailed a great dearth of provisions. Long processions of mules with flour and bread traversed the Patrimony and Siena, and their guards were not always able to repulse hostile attacks. When the troops went into winter quarters, the greatest disorder prevailed; and had not the weather been very mild, the evils would have been felt still more. As the Neapolitan troops were quite in rags, the king sent a number of articles of clothing, while he caused great quantities of corn to be bought up in Piombino and the port of Telamone. The Pope commissioned the Commandant of Sto. Spirito, the great Roman hospital, with the provisioning of the camp. Two hundred mules from the Papal court were continually passing through the territory of Viterbo, to bring provisions to Acquapendente and the district of Siena. It may be easily understood that the cost was immense; and Sixtus IV. was compelled to borrow money continually, and mortgage a number of places to the rich cardinals and others. The parts of the Florentine and Sienese territories adjoining the States of the Church suffered severely from the march of the troops and scarcity of provisions, though not immediately touched by war.[279]

The announcement of the armistice being ended was not necessary to make the combatants take up arms; for though in the Chiana valley, and from Urbino, nothing was undertaken against the enemy on the part of the Duke of Calabria, everything was in preparation in the western districts of the Republic. The increasing annoyances here were connected with the insurrection of Genoa and the Milanese troubles. Roberto Sanseverino, compelled to quit Genoa, had repaired to France and put himself in communication with Louis XI. for the purpose of enlisting an Italian corps of [380] mercenaries for the Burgundian war. At the end of January 1479, he had arrived at Asti, in order to effect enlistments there, but the Duchess-regent of Milan, rightly dreading the proximity of this restless man, forbad all her subjects to take service with him; a prohibition in which Venice, Florence, Mantua, Ferrara, Bologna, in short the whole league, joined. In vain did the king mediate with his sister-in-law. Roberto could not obtain what he desired, but he was all the more confirmed in the scheme, which seems to have been the real ground of his proceedings. At the beginning of February the report had already been spread that the Duke of Bari and Ludovico Sforza had appeared in the Lunigiana, in order thence to operate on the one side against Florence, on the other against Milan. It soon proved to be no empty rumour. In the neighbouring district of Parma, seditious proclamations of the two Sforza were soon spread; they wished, they said, to liberate their nephew, the young duke, from the servitude in which he was held. Among the Milanese mercenaries alarming movements were observed. At the end of February, the brothers, with Roberto, set up the flag of rebellion, and immediately afterwards the latter appeared with 400 foot and 500 to 600 horse, mostly people from the Genoese coasts, before the gates of Pisa.[280] The attack on the town failed, but he devastated all the more unsparingly the whole country round, while a Neapolitan corps advanced through the Cecina valley. Without the aid of the Lucchese, who were ill disposed towards Florence, it would have been impossible for Sanseverino to carry out his plans. The disinclination of the people in Lucca to their neighbours was,

however, so great, that Piero Capponi, Neri's energetic grandson, who was there as the Florentine plenipotentiary, had some trouble to hinder a formal alliance of the Republic with the enemies of Florence, and was in danger of his life when the mob, in defiance of the warning of more sensible people, stormed his house.[281] The [381] Duke of Ferrara was obliged to come to the assistance of the threatened province with a portion of the troops encamped on the Poggio Imperiale; and as the Duke of Calabria meddled in the affair from the Riviera, it would have been a most dangerous diversion, if the fear of being cut off by the Milanese troops had not induced Roberto to withdraw about the middle of April.

It was high time; for scarcely had the termination of the armistice been published when the hostile leaders stood in the Chiana valley with their armies reinforced. This time the Florentines showed no lack of sensible dispositions. From Poggio Imperiale to the frontiers, their corps were so stationed that it would be difficult for the enemy to break through. On the side towards Poggio, where the head-quarters were, stood the Marquis of Mantua, and Deifebo dell' Anguillara; while from the Romagna, Roberto Malatesta was marching towards Perugia, where Carlo Fortebraccio was to support him. They relied much on the latter, on account of the old connections of his family with Perugia; but he fell ill on the road, at Cortona, where he died on June 17. Meanwhile his son Bernardino had taken his place, and the troops had crossed the Papal frontiers on June 9. The treaties with Perugia with a view to her joining the league did not affect their purpose. The enemy had had time to send a considerable number of troops, chiefly cavalry, under the command of Matteo da Capoa and the prefect of Rome, to Umbria. On June 27 they met Malatesta between Cortona and Perugia, in the neighbourhood of the lake of Trasimen, where Hannibal had destroyed the Roman army. The little town of La Magione reminds us of one of the most eventful occurrences in the history of Cæsar Borgia. Here they were entirely defeated. But this advantage led to nothing but a renewal of plundering and depredations from which the country suffered severely, from the gates of Perugia to the [382] valley of the Tiber towards Città di Castello on the one side, and the Chiana and Arno valleys on the other.

The miserable management of the war, which cost the Florentines more dearly than their enemies, because their territory, more than any other, was the theatre of war, avenged itself in another way. In the Florentine head-quarters nothing but discord prevailed, and the more incapable and irresolute the captain-general showed himself, the higher rose the insubordination of the officers. The old quarrel between the Sforzas and Braccios, which had once divided the Italian mercenaries into two camps, broke out here among the Florentine troops, which were composed of the two factions. During the skirmishes in Perugia, whither a considerable part of the hostile army had marched in order to avenge the repulse they had received, and hinder Malatesta's further progress, the Florentine army advanced, and stormed and plundered the little Sienese town of Casole. Here the troops of the Duke of Ferrara and those of the Marquis of Mantua quarrelled so fiercely over the division of the booty, that the Florentine commissaries with difficulty separated and pacified them. On the other side, Roberto Malatesta and Costanzo Sforza were so much at enmity that it was not possible to leave one in the neighbourhood of the other. Thus a union of the hostile powers was not to be thought of. But now another and more serious complication arose. In Milan the crisis happened which had long been threatening. Roberto Sanseverino had, after quitting the territory of Pisa, kept himself till the summer in the Val di Taro, whence he continually annoyed Parma. He had then, believing he could not advance, and seeing that he was hindered by Gian Jacopo Trivulzio, turned to Liguria, where the Duke of Bari died after a short illness. When it was felt in Milan that they might at last give way to a feeling of security, the warlike Roberto, with Lodovico Sforza, who now bore the title of Bari, descended the inaccessible pass of the Apennines, Le Cento Croci, [383] which was unguarded because it was held impracticable for great bodies of troops, into the valley of the Po, and on August 23 seized Tortona, where Lodovico had partisans. The greatest alarm arose in the capital. An army of 12,000 men was despatched to Tortona, whither the Marquis of Montferrat also hastened. It did not seem enough to oppose the formidable enemy. The Duke of Ferrara and the Marquis of Mantua were recalled from Tuscany with a part of

the Milanese troops. On September 2, Ercole of Este arrived at Parma with 400 horse and 200 foot, whence on the following day he advanced to Piacenza. He had not yet crossed the Po when, at Voghera, the Marquis of Montferrat's men fell in with those of Sanseverino, and inflicted severe losses on them. From Venice came the news that the Republic would send 1,000 horse and 2,000 foot to their assistance, but at the same moment, when the affairs of the Milanese Government seemed about to take a favourable turn, an unexpected mischance occurred. On September 6 a bonfire was lighted in the rebel camp, and joybells rang. In the ducal camp appeared a trumpeter of Sanseverino, with the information that peace was restored, and Lodovico Sforza, invited by the regent was on his way to Milan. The Duke of Ferrara had urged Bona of Savoy to reconcile herself with her two still remaining brothers-in-law. To her misfortune and that of the state, she had complied, in opposition to her trusty counsellors, who plainly foresaw the result of such a step. On September 7, Lodovico had arrived in Milan, and was joyfully received by a crowd of people. On the following day the duchess received him; he begged her pardon for the past, and promised allegiance. Immediately afterwards he was appointed governor-general of the duchy. The first thing which then happened was the arrest of Cecco Simonetta. The regent was obliged to put her signature to the decree which sent him, to whom more than to any one she owed the preservation of the state after her husband's death, into a prison at Pavia, while the mob plundered his and his [384] friends' houses in such a way that even window-shutters and iron bars were carried off.[282]

The Tuscan war felt the reaction of these events, even before they were fully developed. Sigismondo d'Este had undertaken the supreme command for his brother, the duke. But the men were not only diminished in number, they were also careless in service. This was not unknown to the enemy, and he availed himself of it. The Duke of Calabria selected the most skilled among his captains, Matteo da Capoa, Giulio Acquaviva of Atri, Gentil Virginio and Giordano Orsini of Bracciano, &c., in order to attempt an attack on the Florentine side. From Chiusi they marched through the Arbia valley to Siena, and surprised Mont'Imperiale at the dawn of September 7, the day on which Lodovico Sforza entered Milan. The attempt succeeded perfectly. The confusion soon became so great that, notwithstanding the natural strength of the place, no one thought of serious opposition. Every obstacle was scattered in the shortest possible time. Most sought their safety in hasty flight. Of the combatants some were slaughtered, some captured; among the latter Galeotto Pico, Rodolfo Gonzaga, Niccolò da Correggio, and other captains, and about a hundred and fifty men-at-arms. Costanzo Sforza, pursued by Jacopo Appiano, lord of Piombino, on the road to San Gemignano, not only took his pursuer captive but saved the large banner of the Republic, and assembled in San Casciano as many as he could of the fugitives and those who had dispersed.

It was a severe blow. Florence saw herself threatened by the enemy, who took the castles of the Elsa valley one after the other, and attacked Colle, the most important place in this province, with greatly superior forces. Roberto Malatesta was ordered to protect Arezzo and the Arno valley. Costanzo Sforza covered the capital on the Sienese side, and drew reinforcements to himself from all quarters. In Poggibonzi and the lofty San Gemignano smaller corps [385] were stationed. But all this only just sufficed to turn aside the most threatening part of the danger. Colle defended itself heroically, and did much injury to the Duke of Calabria, who conducted the siege in person, but the capitulation took place on November 14. Malatesta, who had quitted Umbria, where he expected the fall of Perugia, was displeased at the conduct of the war, the misfortunes of which he ascribed more to the constant interference of the Ten than to the captains or men, and employed the time of inaction which followed the taking of Colle to repair to Venice and withdraw from the Florentine service. The foreign affairs were not more consolatory. Little confidence was felt in Milan. Venice, whither Luigi Guicciardini went as ambassador, in order to represent the oppressed state of the Florentines and to entreat more powerful assistance, showed itself lukewarm, and was more disturbed by an attack of the Turks on Hungary than by the threatening of Florence by the Pope and Naples. If the season had been more favourable, the position might have become still worse. But even the enemy

needed rest. The Duke of Calabria was in Siena; Urbino, aged and sick, in Viterbo. On November 24 a trumpeter of the former entered Florence with the offer of a truce. Two days afterwards it was proclaimed.

CHAPTER V.

FLORENCE AND HER ALLIES. LODOVICO IL MORO.

The moment for decision had arrived. It was acknowledged in Florence that matters must come to a crisis one way or the other. A considerable part of the territory was in the enemy's power, the valleys of the Chiana and Elsa terribly wasted. The chief portion of the army, demoralised by the late losses, was driven back the small distance of seven miles from the city. From one of the allies no active help could be expected, and the other was already in treaty with the enemy.

Since the defeat of Poggibonzi, Lorenzo could no longer deceive himself respecting the position of the Republic or his own. He knew that all sources of help were exhausted. He knew also that Florence could obtain peace without any difficulty if she would consent to sacrifice him, and he understood the position of affairs too well not to foresee the result of the struggle. During the whole course of the war, in which, being no warrior, he naturally held aloof, the best of the illustrious citizens who were devoted to him went as commissaries to the army, and gave him ample opportunities of studying the state of feeling at home, and the possibility of a compromise.

His industry had been great and various. On account of the sickness prevailing in Florence, which swept away thousands, he had, soon after the outbreak of hostilities, sent his wife and children first to Pistoja, and then to his villa Cafaggiuolo, under the protection of his uncle Giovanni Tornabuoni. This left him free to act [387] as he liked, and he did not quit the city, where there was enough for him to do. Since the conspiracy, the administration of affairs was more than ever in his hands, for a constitution which had such a complicated machinery made a safe and consistent guidance more necessary than ever in those stormy times. During the first year of the war, notwithstanding the greater numbers of the enemy, they could still hope for success from the languid manner in which the contest was carried on. The second spring brought no decision, for the successful skirmish at Trasimene was more than outweighed by the occurrences in the Elsa valley. Lorenzo was forced to think of negotiation, if he would not expose himself to the danger of having to conclude a treaty disadvantageous to himself. For while so little was accomplished with weapons, there was not much more to be hoped for from diplomatic arrangements. The slight advance negotiations had made in Rome we have already seen. It was not to be expected that a more favourable result would occur, when the allies were at such decided disadvantage from a military point of view. They had never ceased to intrigue with Louis XI.; Milan through Carlo Visconti and Giovann'Andrea Cagnola, Florence through Francesco Gaddi, who belonged to a family which had always remained in friendly relations with the Medici. The French king was the only one who received these two members of the alliance with warmth—he had often differences with Venice. But he had other things to disturb his peace of mind, and the war in Picardy and in the Franche Comté with the heiress of Burgundy, and partly, also, the feuds in Milan and Piedmont, afforded him the wished-for opportunity of allowing his own intriguing spirit full play, whatever might be the end of negotiations with the Pope. During those negotiations he had a real pleasure in expressing his grudge against Sixtus IV. and King Ferrante. At the end of December 1478 he said to the Milanese ambassadors that he would himself head an enterprise against the Turks (the usual assurance and bait of [388] princes in the fifteenth century) if Italy were in peace, 'and especially if they had a Pope as he should be.' 'Upon this he indulged in a flood of evil words against the Pope, King Ferrante, and Count Girolamo, speaking for two hours with such a flow of words, that we were obliged to restrict ourselves to listening, and it seemed unadvisable to us to touch upon anything else.' Even in the presence of Don Federigo d'Aragona, who was then in France, the king did not moderate his expressions 'de mala natura' against the Pope and Ferrante, the latter of whom he spared no humiliation. After having once said to the Neapolitan ambassador that his master interfered in matters more than he ought, he asked, 'Your king, such as he is, do you then believe him to be King Alfonso's son?'[283] Such

things certainly could not surprise a sovereign who before a foreign ambassador could insult his own good and patient mother by saying he did not know whose son he was.

Nevertheless Louis XI. was resolved not to leave Milan and Florence to the will of their opponents. He remained firm to his old affection for the Medici. Even after he had resolved to leave the hands of Cecco Simonetta's enemies free, whereby those who caballed with King Ferrante must cling to the rudder, he held firmly to Lorenzo. 'For nothing in the world,' wrote Philippe de Commines on October 3, 1479, from Plessis to an agent of the king in Italy, Pietro Palmieri, at a time when the Milanese affairs were still undecided—'would the king allow the Florentines, and especially Lorenzo de' Medici's person, to come to harm. If they decided in the enemy's favour at Milan, the king would assist the Florentines and Lorenzo with all the means in his power.' In June the Pope had proposed to the French ambassador, who was still staying with him, to leave the settlement of their differences to a council composed of Edward IV., king of England, and a legate *a latere*. A courier was [389] despatched to France, where an ambassador of Girolamo Riario was active against Lorenzo de' Medici. The Milanese ambassador suspected that the French diplomatists in Rome were to be won by gold. But Louis XI. would know nothing of the matter; he answered that in case the position of umpire were offered to him, in conjunction with king Edward, he would perhaps accept it, although he was occupied enough. The joy at the advantage gained by the Florentines at Trasimene was cooled by the loss of the battle of Guinegate, near St. Omer, where, on August 7, Maximilian of Austria defeated the French. The president of the Toulouse parliament and head of the Roman embassy had returned shortly before. The king had received him very badly; Commines and others were obliged to mediate to obtain a hearing for him. The Pope represented himself as not disinclined for mediation, and Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere confirmed this, but for the present those in Rome attempted to prolong the matter in order to tire the Florentines. At the end of August a Papal plenipotentiary, Giovan Batista of Imola, came to the French court. Philippe de Commines received him by command of the king, who at first would hear nothing from him. The conference took place in the presence of Don Federigo d'Aragona.

Sixtus enumerated once more all the complaints which he had against Florence and Lorenzo. The principal cause of war, he said in the brief he had given to his ambassadors, was not to be sought for in the events of April 1478, but in what had preceded them, in the affairs of Città di Castello and Faenza, in the personal position of Lorenzo de' Medici. He could not agree to the proposals of accommodation hitherto made. The restitution of the places taken would imply a self-accusation, as though he had begun an unjust war. He must demand a guarantee for the Sienese before his troops and those of the Neapolitans could evacuate the Florentine territory. A treaty respecting Genoa could only begin with the [390] consent of the Genoese themselves. The Pope was nevertheless inclined to leave the decision to the king, with a reservation of the aforesaid points, and deliver up to him the occupied castles. Louis XI., by whom the ambassador was personally disliked on account of matters which had taken place formerly, received these advances very coldly. He suspected that the Pope wished to sow discord between him and the English king, who had already been publicly designated as umpire. He repeated his former demands, a formal abrogation of the spiritual interdicts, evacuation of the territory, and restitution of the fortresses.[284] The Papal negotiator departed with this unsatisfactory demand. Francesco Gaddi had been present at the whole of this interview; the Milanese ambassadors, summoned to Orleans from Paris, had arrived too late, but were acquainted with all that had taken place. Then followed the events unfavourable to the allies in the Elsa valley. Even if the Pope and Ferrante had intended to resume negotiations with France, it would have been impossible to expect any good result from them. Lorenzo de' Medici was obliged to make a direct compromise with at least one of his enemies.

The choice of this one could not be difficult. If the Pope himself had been personally less irritated, the hatred of Girolamo Riario against the Medici, a hatred which still found vent in low intrigues[285] in the summer of 1479, would have made a negotiation difficult. It was otherwise with King Ferrante. He had

done everything, military and diplomatic, to conduct the war with energy. The Duke of Calabria, who had hoped to fix himself as firmly in Tuscany as the Angevins once had done, had supplied the majority of the troops; the rising in Genoa, the attack on Pisa and the Lunigiana, were his work. In France no less than four [391] Neapolitan ambassadors were active in persuading Louis XI., in which, however, they did not succeed. But Ferrante was acute enough to see that nothing but an agreement with Florence could calm Italy, and only the authority of a capable man, which Lorenzo showed himself to be more and more, could give permanence to this agreement, while the Papal policy was too changeful to offer security. Lorenzo had known for some time of the king's inclination to treat. But it was distasteful to him to meet his advances, not because he suspected personal danger therein, but because he saw that an agreement with King Ferrante would have political results for Florentine affairs which must have seemed important to him. He said to himself that his position would be quite different if he could begin the treaty from a more favourable point, and only the powerful support of his allies could help him in this, especially the mediation of Lodovico Sforza, who, since he had become Duke of Bari, had entered into still closer connections with the ruling family in Naples, to which his sister belonged. With Lodovico, who was daily obtaining greater influence in Milan, Lorenzo now stood in constant communication direct and indirect. His opinion on the position of affairs is expressed most clearly in a letter which he sent to Girolamo Morelli at Milan, on September 25.[286] 'The observations made,' he says in this letter, after mentioning the proposals in regard to the Pazzi, 'can only proceed from an ill opinion which is held there of our affairs; and although what has happened partly justifies that opinion, the matter does not stand as is believed there, but the unfavourable opinion is explained by a misunderstanding which you yourself hint at. I wish to impress this truth on Lord Lodovico, when I show him how our position will be strong or weak at his lordship's will. For here at home there is not one who will raise a finger; and even if they do leave us there in the [392] lurch, I have little fear respecting the direction of affairs. But I fear that if our forces cannot make head against the enemy, it will be necessary to take steps contrary to our freedom, and allow to others an influence in our government which will first of all be injurious to us, and then give others cause of alarm. If, therefore, apart from old friendship and good services, his lordship is of opinion that our preservation is of use to himself, he might take measures to this end, for I do not doubt for one instant that we shall only thus attain what we desire, if our enemies perceive that they can do nothing against us, while we have proofs enough of their will. Although I have received many friendly words from the Duke of Calabria for many months, and much encouragement to throw myself into the king's arms, he attempting to show me that only in this manner can I save myself and the state, a penny from you would be worth more than a florin from the others. It is good that Lord Lodovico should know these things, and that if he wish to save us, he must take up the matter with more energy and act with more decision. If he does this, I have no anxiety respecting affairs here; if this, however, does not happen, he will see how it will be with our cause, and partly also with his own. For if nothing else should occur he will give into other people's hands the reins of Italy, which are now in his, as I wrote to you in my long letter, which is so long that I do not believe he has read it in the midst of his many employments, and which I beg you to deliver to him again, for I have continually more than enough to do.'

In this letter the position of affairs was clearly indicated. But Lorenzo deceived himself when he hoped that Lodovico Sforza would agree to his views and seek to withdraw him from the necessity 'of throwing himself into the king's arms.' Whether the will or ability were here wanting may remain a question. Lodovico approached the goal of his desires. His nephew, Gian Galeazzo, was crowned duke with great solemnity while yet in exile, on April 24, 1478, but the government had of course remained with his mother, [393] from whose hands Lodovico now took it more completely, having at first employed a favourite of the duchess, a Ferrarese named Antonio Tassino, to make her agree to his plans. He soon became even to foreigners the lord of Milan. From his early years his subtle nature showed itself, although his character was only fully developed under the influences of the changing fortunes of his busy

life.

Lodovico il Moro—a name which Sforza received in youth on account of his dark complexion, and continued to bear in later years, so that it became the war-cry of his partisans—was no ordinary man. Born at Vigevano on August 3, 1451, after his father had ascended the ducal throne, a circumstance from which he seemed inclined to claim a right of succession to the prejudice of an elder brother and his son, he was in his eight-and-twentieth year when he attained to power in Milan. Galeazzo Maria had never trusted his restless ambition, for indeed he never ceased to conspire in one way or the other till he was lord of Milan; and even then he continued to weave intrigues against enemies when he could not reach them otherwise, against friends when his plans crossed theirs. He could not live without plotting. An ally was never safe with him, and in time he wove a net which not only extended through Italy but through Europe, and in which he himself was taken. Of moral courage he was exceedingly destitute. 'The aforesaid Lord Lodovico,' says Philippe de Commines, 'was very clever but very timid, and extremely subservient when afraid, of which I can speak fully from personal knowledge, as I have had much to do with him. He was besides destitute of truth and faith where he thought to gain an advantage by breaking his word.' This passion for intrigue became his own ruin and that of his country and Italy, for the confidence which inspired him, his reliance upon fortune, whose son he called himself, and his measurement of matters according to a mere calculation of their advantage, darkened in time a perception which was otherwise not deficient in acuteness, while his entire [394]
want of moral consciousness falsified his judgment. This confidence he had never so naively expressed as in 1496, when, after Italy had been evacuated by the French, the Emperor Maximilian married to his niece, Venice allied to him, and Florence crippled, he fancied he held the fate of Italy in his hand. 'The Duke of Milan boasts of having at present a chaplain, a *condottiere*, a chamberlain, and a courier, who are all at his service. The chaplain is Pope Alexander, the *condottiere* Maximilian, the chamberlain the Signoria of Venice, which freely expends what he orders, the courier the French king, who comes and goes at his good pleasure.'[287] 'It is terrible to think of,' adds our informant. He knew no scruples where there was a question of satisfying his selfishness. The slow torture inflicted on his unhappy nephew, and his treatment of his consort, are among the most fearful episodes of a time which abounded in wickedness. In order to attain to power he had employed other rebels; when his end was attained he discarded them, especially Roberto Sanseverino, and sought to make friends with the opposite party, hoping thus to render them harmless.

As a ruler, not to speak of his vivid interest in art and intellectual efforts generally, which he shared with most princes good or bad of his time, Lodovico Sforza had some praiseworthy qualities. He was neither a profligate like Galeazzo Maria, nor cruel from an inhuman pleasure in other people's sufferings, nor a wild spendthrift like him. He was active, watchful, clever, considerate of the material welfare of the country which he carefully governed, fostering rather than exhausting her resources, while his own treasuries were always filled, so that he could dispose of considerable sums for political and military purposes. Commines, it is true, accuses him of fiscal oppression, and traces the popular discontent to this. 'I have never seen more beautiful and fertile land than this duchy. If its master [395]
were content with drawing 500,000 ducats from it annually, his subjects would remain wealthy and the master would live in security, but Lord Lodovico makes from 650,000 to 700,000, which is a real piece of tyranny, so that the people only long for change.'[288] This is, however, only applicable to later times, and even then il Moro had always a strong party, which the misgovernment of the French strengthened, though they succeeded in expelling him with the help of his enemies from Milan. Giovan Pietro Cagnola, who belonged, indeed, to the unconditional adherents of the Sforzas, and dedicated his history to il Moro, is never tired of praising his wisdom and ripe judgment—how he had brought the state into such excellent order, how he had enlarged and enriched it in extent and respect, had cherished peace, regained Genoa without arms, and protected the country on the side of Switzerland.[289] He was vain, not of mere show like his brother, but of position and name, and he sunned himself in deceptive appearances of good fortune, when his praise resounded day and

night in the people's voice and the poet's mouth as that of the dictator of the fate of Italy. His own unscrupulousness caused him to judge all others in the same light, and the times were such that he did not always deceive himself. He bought people in Rome as well as in France. Can we blame him from his point of view when a man like Commines, of so much higher intellectual standing, though stained with many of the sins of his century, mentions the bribing of Etienne de Vescq and other councillors of Charles VIII. with 8,000 ducats, with the cold remark, 'If they were obliged to take money, they might have demanded more.' Commines apparently was of the opinion that perjury was only wrong when it was unprofitable.

Many years afterwards, when his equally ambitious and no less clever consort, Beatrice d'Este, had been taken from him in the [396] bloom of life—a loss which he felt severely even in political affairs—Lodovico il Moro drew up a political testament for his son and successor in case he should come to the government in early youth, respecting all branches of the administration.[290] 'As our first command since all power and dominion are given by God, we wish and appoint that those who have to conduct the government after us, and be entrusted with the education of our son, should instruct him in religion and teach him to recognise his Creator as the giver of all good bestowed on him upon earth, as also that they should show him that, with the reservation of the respect due to his Papal Holiness as vicegerent of Christ, he has to consider the Holy Roman Empire as the authority set over him in all devotion and affection, especially the person of the Most Serene and unconquered Lord Maximilian, the Roman king, or in case he should no longer live, he who has succeeded him, for so commands our duty to His Majesty and the Holy Empire, through whose goodness we have obtained our dukedom.'

Such was the man who was then but at the commencement of his great political career, and to whom Lorenzo de' Medici, a little older than he, and connected with the house of Sforza by inherited ties, saw himself principally referred by the conjunctures of the time. Lodovico had on November 12 caused Niccolo Martelli,[291] then in Milan, and a friend of Lorenzo's, to disclose to him Ferrante's inclination to treat, and to impress on him not to refuse the proffered hand. He was to take the whole situation of affairs into consideration, forget the past, and seize the opportunity without delay. It would be important to decide what conditions the Republic would make or accept respecting the places occupied, the dynasties of Romagna, and Count Girolamo. It might be good to send his eldest son to Naples (Piero was then only eight years old). Above all [397] he advised him to hasten the matter; 'for the hand of dark fate hovers between cup and lip.' He might cast the die. Ten days later Lodovico renewed his representations to the ambassador of the Republic, Piero Filippo Pandolfini. They would accomplish nothing by persisting in the beaten course at Florence, as announced by the Milanese ambassador, Filippo Sagramoro. They should look into the matter closely and not irritate the king by defiance. They must not rely on Venice, for when she could defend her own interests, she would not think of Florence. From Milan little was to be expected on account of its own troubles: he said so openly that they might not have to rue it too late. If they agreed, he was ready to mediate in Naples, but if they should not come to a resolution, or should make unacceptable conditions, he must lay the responsibility on the Republic.[292] It was clear that Sforza acted in concert with Ferrante. The offer of the truce, which followed two days afterwards, showed that the king was in earnest in his wish for reconciliation. We shall soon see that Sixtus IV. did not deceive himself in respect to the feeling of his allies, however displeasing to himself.

On the same day on which the trumpeter of the Duke of Calabria entered Florence, a distinguished Florentine set out on a confidential mission to Naples. It was Filippo Strozzi, who had long lived in business at Naples, and whose connections with King Ferrante were known. In his memoirs of the events connected with the Pazzi conspiracy he mentions this mission.[293] 'The situation of affairs appeared serious to all, especially to Lorenzo de' Medici, on whose account, as they said, war was made. The aforesaid Lorenzo sent me to Naples. On November 24 I set out, to say to the king's [398] majesty, he threw himself entirely into his arms, and would willingly agree to that which his majesty wished, whether the king should

decide on high or low, within or without, provided he restored peace to the city and gave up the places he had taken. I found the king hunting at Arnone (at the mouth of the Volturno). After I had delivered my message, he answered me that he had later news: Lorenzo would come in person, and so we must wait to see what will result from his visit.' Shortly after Filippo's departure, Lorenzo made up his mind to go himself, a determination to which the revelations of Lodovico Sforza, which took away all hopes of a powerful support from Milan and Venice, undoubtedly contributed. He acted quite independently, and though he took counsel with his confidants, he only imparted the matter to the official representatives of the Republic when he was himself resolved.

On December 5 he caused an assembly to be summoned by the magistracy of Ten, of about forty of the most respected citizens, in the palace of the Signoria. He said he had called them together in order to inform them of a resolution he had taken without asking their advice. He had considered how much the city needed peace, as it would be impossible to defend her alone against such powerful opponents while her allies would not fulfil their obligations. But as these opponents always asserted they had more to do with him personally than with the city, and the king in especial always declared he was no enemy to the latter, but loved her and desired her liberty, and sought to secure her friendship by redressing her wrongs if every other way were closed to him, he had determined to go to Naples. This seemed to him the best in all cases. If the enemy wished for him only, they should have him in their hands and need not molest the city further. If they did not wish for him, but the friendship of the city, this would be the means of coming to an understanding sooner, and obtaining more favourable conditions. If they wished something else, he should learn it and obtain the possibility of protecting their freedom and the city better. He knew [399] that he was going into danger, but he considered his own welfare less than the common good, and the duty of any citizens to the fatherland less than his duty, for none had attained to favour and respect as he had. But he hoped the citizens here present would preserve his position for him, and commended himself, his family, and his house to them. But, above all, he hoped that God, in consideration of the justice of his cause and his good intentions, would promote his purposes, and that a war begun with the murder of his brother would be ended by his endeavours.[294]

Lorenzo had announced from the first that his resolution was taken. Many might think this resolve daring, but they knew that persuasion would avail nothing. It was natural that King Ferrante's reserved character, which had not yet revealed itself as it did in the second barons' war, should frighten many who remembered the fate of Jacopo Piccinino, whose bleeding ghost pursued the king to his end. But Lorenzo, though he might not be quite without anxiety, appreciated too well the distinction between his position and that of a wandering *condottiere*, and trusted also to the real love of peace of the Aragonese. The armistice offered by the Duke of Calabria was a favourable sign.[295] He set out without delay. From San Miniato on December 7 he informed the Signoria of his resolution, which he founded on the same reasons which he had given to the assembly before his departure.[296] He added that if he had not revealed his intention before, this was not from pride, but because it seemed to him that in the straits in which the city now was, action was more [400] necessary than speech. As the city needed peace, and the means employed for attaining the same had proved ineffective, it seemed better to him that one should run into danger than that the whole people should be exposed to it. On the preceding day he had already sent a confidential man, Baccio Ugolino, to the Duke of Ferrara, to give him information of his resolution,[297] and at the same time announced his approaching departure to the Dukes of Calabria and Urbino, and told them that M. Francesco Gaddi would present himself before them, and if they thought fit would proceed to Naples.[298] At Pisa he received a letter from the Signoria which empowered him to act as ambassador to King Ferrante. Bartolommeo Scala, who had drawn it up, on sending it to him, added, 'All rely upon your wisdom and your authority. But they do not judge of the king's inclination by the present condition of things, but looking back on our former relations by the sympathy which he once showed to us and the service he already has rendered us.'[299]

CHAPTER VI.

LORENZO DE' MEDICI IN NAPLES. PEACE WITH THE KING AND WITH THE POPE.

On the evening of December 10 two Neapolitan galleys arrived at the little port of Vada, not far from the mouth of the Cecina in the Pisan Maremma, having on board Gian Tommaso Caraffa, son of the Count of Maddaloni, chief counsellor of the king, and Prinzivalle di Gennaro, the confidant of the Duke of Calabria. On the following morning Lorenzo entered Vada. 'Pray God,' he had written from Pisa to the Ferrarese ambassador,[300] 'I may journey there and back in safety, and my purpose may be attained.' On the afternoon of the 18th, a Saturday, the galleys ran into the port of Naples. Informed of his approaching arrival, the king not only sent vessels to meet and welcome him, but his son Federigo and Ferrandino, Prince of Capua, were on the landing-place to receive him. A great crowd had assembled to see the man whose name had long been in the mouths of all. The house of Pasquale Diaz Garloni, Count of Alife, opposite the Castelnuovo, the usual residence of the king, was destined for the guest.[301] The reception was honourable, and the first meeting with the king very cordial.[302] Ferrante could not shake off the impression which Lorenzo made on him personally. It must have been clear to him that if he made it up with this man who exhibited [402] in his youth so much shrewdness and skill, and such great political sagacity, he could rely directly on the Republic; and, while securing Lorenzo's authority at home by peace and by alliance, he would be strengthening and establishing his own influence on Italian affairs. Thus far it must have been easy for Lorenzo to persuade the king, who was not expected to give the preference to a popular form of government. But a number of the most varied considerations had to be weighed by Ferrante. He had to consider the Pope, of whom he was not fond, and whom, remembering the position of the Holy See at Naples, he did not trust, but whom he neither dared nor wished to offend on account of this very position. The Venetians had to be considered; they were dangerous neighbours for him as well as the Pope, on account of their constant endeavours to extend their dominion on the Adriatic coasts; while a good understanding with them was all the more uncertain because their policy was mostly determined by conjunctures which were foreign to the relations of the other Italian States. Siena, too, must not be overlooked, which the king and his son had their eye upon; nor Milan, where a change was in progress the extent of which could not be appreciated. All this, combined with the traditions of the policy of the times—namely the policy of a ruler surrounded by foreign and domestic difficulties from the beginning of his reign—must have caused Ferrante to hesitate long. Besides, it cannot be doubted that he wished to see what turn Florentine affairs would take in Lorenzo's absence.

From various causes things were still unsettled in Florence. Lorenzo's determination and sudden journey had not made the same impression on all the allies. Lodovico il Moro had assisted in it, and the Venetians were taken by surprise. They expressed their distrust and vexation in plain language. The Venetians, relates Francesco Guicciardini,[303] persuaded themselves that peace had been [403] concluded between Naples and Florence; that Lorenzo had only gone thither for the ratification of peace, and that they were left at their enemies' discretion. But in order to hinder the treaty in case it were not yet concluded, or, in other words, to secure themselves, it seemed necessary for them to be as well armed as possible. They recalled their troops from Tuscany, but at the same time offered to Milan and Florence a renewal of the compact hitherto existing. The news had spread as far as Rome and elsewhere that this alliance had been dissolved on account of non-fulfilment of the conditions, so that it seemed necessary to renew it formally. In order not to render the negotiations with Naples more difficult, the offer was declined in Florence. When the Venetians offered the command of their troops to Roberto Malatesta—who would have been unable to accept it without the consent of Florence—permission was granted him by the latter, though unwillingly, in order not to offend Venice. 'The ambassadors of our allies,' wrote Bartolommeo Scala, on January 4, 1480, to Lorenzo,[304] 'give us trouble enough. They have become

suspicious, but I do not believe they are agreed among themselves. They besiege us daily, officially and privately, in order to obtain news. It will not be easy to come to an understanding, especially with the Venetians; but we must keep to that which was given to you at your departure. The affair has its difficulties, and it will be best to conclude it with your aid. Now when you are far away, we, like the fools we are, have learnt to know you better.' The Venetian ambassador in France expressed the same anxiety that in the new alliance which Lorenzo was endeavouring to effect at Naples, Venice would not only be excluded, but would have to suffer herself. [305]

That the most varied tendencies were manifested at home was [404] but natural. Not only the ancient opponents of the Medici raised their heads but even a few of their own party showed themselves lukewarm or disaffected. The heavy losses made the game easy for the former. It was said to be time to change a system which had lasted so long, and united all political power in the hands of a comparatively small number of families. Offices as well as burdens should for the future be no longer dispensed at the will of these few, but be granted and distributed by the old councils. The uncertainty of Lorenzo's fate gave this party courage, while it made many of his adherents inclined to come to terms with them by a compromise. It seems, indeed, that they thought of choosing Girolamo Morelli, the former ambassador in Milan, as a new leader. The friends of the Medici thought they had gained much if they prevented a change till Lorenzo's return. Piero Guicciardini, the historian's father, was one of those most active in his behalf. The unfavourable position of foreign affairs had been rendered still worse at the moment of his departure. Without regarding the armistice still existing, Lodovico and Agostino Fregoso had by a *coup-de-main* seized upon Sarzana, which had been only eleven years in the possession of Florence. When the Republic complained to the leaders of the Neapolitan and Papal army, these expressed themselves angry at the breach of peace by the Genoese, and commanded them to leave the city. But they were not expelled; and the Florentines suspected, certainly not without ground, that the Duke of Calabria had had a hand in the game, in order to increase, for his advantage, the number of claims in the forthcoming treaties of peace. The military situation was likewise much injured by the departure of the Venetians, and the exhaustion and disunion of the Florentines gave no prospect of improvement.[306]

The connection with the lords of Romagna was also uncertain. As [405] may easily be understood, the latter followed the negotiations of the Florentines with their former enemies with the greatest anxiety, for their very existence depended on the result. This was particularly the case with Galeotto Manfredi. After the defeat at Poggio Imperiale Costanzo Sforza had marched to Romagna with as many men as could be spared, in order to protect his own territories and those of the Malatesta and Manfredi from an attack which was most to be dreaded by the latter if it came from Imola. But the precaution was not sufficient to pacify Galeotto. On the other side the Florentines could not submit to the capture of their best general Roberto Malatesta, so they ordered an ambassador and 200 men to Faenza in order to protect its master. Gismondo Manfredi, Taddeo's son, remained in the service of the Republic, and also Antoniello Ordelaffi, Cecco's son, the rightful heir to Forli, which was withheld from him by his uncle Pino, whom the Pope favoured. Costanzo Sforza felt safer than the other petty lords on account of the Milanese relationship; but a real mutual confidence was not to be thought of, even here.[307]

While affairs were in this state in Florence, Lorenzo de' Medici was occupied with troubles of another kind.

His appearance in Naples was exceedingly distasteful to the Pope. From the first Sixtus had perceived the king's inclination to agree to favourable terms, the final result of which he easily foresaw. But, if powerless to prevent an understanding, he would at least have a personal share in it, and insisted that Lorenzo should come to Rome. However, the latter showed no inclination to take the journey, and was strengthened in his objection by Ferrante.[308] Lorenzo Giustini, who had been deputed to Naples by the Pope, left no argument unused to persuade him. When all this resulted in [406] nothing, and the treaty between the king and Florence seemed to take a favourable course, Sixtus IV. despatched a special

plenipotentiary Antonio Crivelli. The detailed instructions given to this man put the whole course of affairs and the relations of the Pope and king in the clearest light. ‘After the events in Florence had taken a course so displeasing to the Church,’ says the Pope in this remarkable document,[309] ‘we held it best to hear the king’s opinion of the imprisonment of the cardinal and other things; and, as his Majesty by several writings not only agreed with us, but called upon and encouraged us to take up arms, with the offer and promise to make every exertion and put his son’s and his own life at stake, in order to avenge this insult shown to the Holy See, it was unanimously determined to begin the war against Lorenzo and his adherents as the stumbling-block and disturber of the peace of Italy. At the same time the freedom of Florence must be restored, to which we and the king’s Majesty have pledged ourselves by autograph and other documentary writings, being moved thereto by Lorenzo’s evil proceedings and the disturbances caused by him in Italy. Lorenzo likewise has endeavoured to sow dissension between us and the king, and to dissolve the alliance in favour of one drawn up by himself.’

After the Pope had remarked that the ingratitude of Lorenzo was all the greater because he had won treasure by means of the Holy See, he expatiated on the course of the war, which was only begun when spiritual weapons availed nothing, on the attempts of foreign powers to terminate the strife with due respect to the Holy See and the king, and the great advantages obtained in 1479. When peaceful overtures were made by Milan, the king declined them. At the time it had been remarked by several cardinals that he only did this in order to transfer the negotiations to Naples, and be able to ascribe [407] all the merit to himself, and likewise to negotiate with Lorenzo without any regard to the Holy See, as at present was actually the case, according to the report of the royal ambassador. While the Pope was led to believe that the king agreed with him in views and treatment of affairs, the latter had let a number of other considerations influence him. They had decided to insist upon Lorenzo’s banishment from Florence; and then came the king’s doubt as to whether it would be possible to attain this, and whether there was not danger of his returning like his grandfather Cosimo. Little as the Pope believed in the validity of the reasons urged, as he thought that the principal end of the undertaking was overlooked, and that Lorenzo, having shown himself to be so bad when they were doing him good, would be found still worse now that he was irritated, he had yet persuaded himself to agree to a reconciliation with Lorenzo as the king wished, if the conditions demanded by him through his ambassador could be obtained, while, if this did not happen, the war should be continued. The king had commanded the captains of his army to continue operations although they thought of pacification, and on the showing of the Duke of Calabria the prospect of reconciliation offered by the enemy diminished the prospect of success. He had answered that by negotiation he would neither tie his own hands nor those of the army. Even then the Pope had complied with the king’s wishes, although his son’s opinion had seemed to him correct.

‘Scarcely had this occurred,’ continued Sixtus, ‘than the armistice followed, which filled us with surprise and displeasure, and confirmed us in the suspicion awakened. Therefore we refused decidedly to acknowledge it, and only yielded to the ambassador’s urgency, and because we perceived that we could not continue the war alone; under the express stipulation, however, that, if the conditions of peace should suffer thereby, we should never pardon the king for it. We made a virtue of necessity, but to our serious displeasure, for we saw how we missed the victory while we were [408] deprived of the satisfaction of liberating Florence from these tyrants, and restoring freedom and quiet to her and peace to all Italy. The hope still remained to us that as the king had turned us whither he wished, he would at least conclude peace on the conditions mentioned, and would have some regard to the honour of God, the Church, and himself. Lorenzo went to Naples. The king announced to us he knew nothing of his movements, but in spite of all, if Lorenzo should refuse to accept the stipulations agreed upon, he would dismiss him. In a case of this kind we must stake the tiara and the whole States of the Church, and his Majesty would venture the crown and ten kingdoms, if he had them, to effect Lorenzo’s expulsion and complete ruin.’ The Pope had demanded that Lorenzo should come to Rome and beg for forgiveness, and that the lords of

Romagna, who were guilty of rebellion, should do the same. Lorenzo so decidedly declined the former, that the king requested the Pope to withdraw this demand. He, Sixtus, refused this, however, for it was a point which the king disregarded—the only satisfaction he would receive in the whole affair. Respecting the lords of Romagna, the king desired that time might be afforded to them to fulfil their obligations, if the Pope would not leave it to the king to arrange the matter with them. Both conditions were refused, as also the proposal to send ambassadors to Milan at the same time as the king, to settle the other conditions of peace. The Pope had repeatedly shown that the king had it in his power to terminate the matter by force of arms if he fulfilled the conditions of alliance; and as Lorenzo was in his power, and would yield to him whether willing or not, he might also be induced to negotiate. Instead, however, of breaking with Lorenzo as he had hinted he should in case the latter refused to accept the conditions offered him, he treated him more kindly every day he was in Naples. The Pope wished for peace. In order to attain this peace he had begun the war, which had already cost him a heap [409] of money. But he would purchase no peace with his dishonour.

The position of affairs is rendered quite clear by these instructions. Ferrante was inclined to come to terms with Lorenzo, but the Pope's representations could not fail to make some impression on him. Lorenzo did not conceal this from himself, though he appeared content and cheerful before others, but when alone he had many heavy and anxious hours. His letters to the Ten prove this, by the manner in which he describes the rising and falling of his hopes. The affairs of Romagna increased the difficulties considerably; for if Ferrante believed that he had freedom to act in regard to Florentine affairs, inasmuch as he had not to pay attention to Siena, he found himself tied here towards the Pope. Florence did not cease to urge including the dynasties of Romagna in the peace. 'The lords of Romagna who are in our pay,' wrote Agnolo della Stufa on January 4, 1480,[310] 'are warmly commended to you for our own honour's sake. For if they are left to the will of the Pope, I consider them as lost, for I know how the priests act. No one will believe in our protection any more. If the king, as I hope, receives us as his devoted sons, he must be also careful to preserve us this reputation as long as he can.' No less skill was needful to continue the negotiation, as the Duke of Calabria, who speculated on the weakness of the Florentines, was exceedingly disinclined towards it. Perhaps Lorenzo's aim would not have been attained had he not won over the most distinguished counsellor of the king, Diomede Carafa, Count of Maddaloni, son of that Malizia Carafa who had been so active in the cause of King Alfonso of Aragon. In the endless street which the people had named Spacca-Napoli, near the Dominican convent, is the palace where he resided—a building of architectural value. In the court of this house, once adorned with the colossal antique horse's head, the arms of the city, King Ferrante had on one occasion stood waiting for the faithful servant [410] who was to accompany him. Diomede Carafa was a man of distinction. He had served under King Alfonso, aided in the conquest of Naples, and penetrated within a few miles of the capital in the Florentine war of 1452. As superintendent of finance he had great influence on the administration—an influence which brought him into violent opposition to the king's private secretary, a quarrel the fatal ending of which cast a dark shadow on the later period of Ferrante's reign. With the king and his children, especially the second son Don Federigo, he stood in the most intimate connection. He shared Lorenzo de' Medici's interest in literature and art; and, if he was far from rivalling him in his high literary gifts, he showed in several smaller works of a didactic kind, in books on war and courtlife, in the rules of behaviour for the king's daughters Beatrice and Eleonora, a practical understanding, knowledge of business, and experience of the world that was very rare.

The Count of Maddaloni was not the only one whom Lorenzo gained over to his interest. Naples at that time was a city full of busy life and varied culture, which had been promoted first by King Alfonso and then by his sons, in which Lorenzo must have felt himself all the more at home as the literary connections with his native city were various, and many of the artistic circle which had been so intimate with his family for three generations, beginning with Donatello, had laboured here, while the Florentine banking-houses had the greater part of the money matters of the Neapolitans in their own hands. From the royal family, members of which had

repeatedly been his guests, to the citizens and country people, increasing affection was shown him, as Pope Sixtus had said. The Duchess of Calabria, remembering old friendship, became, as the king expressed it, his fellow-ally, and reminded him in later years of their wanderings at the villa—probably that near the Riviera di Chiaja of the present day—between the banks and the heights of Vomero, then with a free prospect over sea and shore, which is now [411] changed into the Ferrandina palace with the adjoining gardens and buildings. 'The present letter will not be one of those which refer to alliance and State affairs, but will merely bring to your remembrance that we always think of you, although we are by no means certain that you often think of our garden, which is now most beautiful and in full bloom.'[311] The century was not wanting in highly-cultivated women, but Ippolita Maria, who excelled so many in grace, also exceeded the ladies of her time in literary knowledge; and as her familiarity with Cicero's writings was praised, so did she also shine in her knowledge of Greek, in which Constantinos Lascaris had been her teacher. Her learning did not diminish her womanly charm.[312] Lorenzo lived in Naples *en grand seigneur*, spared no expense, gave banquets and made presents, and dowered poor girls who came to him from the provinces. He purchased the freedom of a hundred galley-slaves, and gave them new clothes.[313] But that he urgently wished to attain his purpose and be able to return home may be well understood, for the ground under him was not safe either here or there. When the king presented him with a beautiful horse, he remarked, in thanking him, that the man who would be the bearer of good news needed indeed a swift steed.

At length the main conditions of the treaty were agreed upon, and without having come to a formal conclusion Lorenzo deemed it possible to quit Naples, and to leave further steps to the Republic. At the end of February he departed by sea as he had arrived. Three months had passed, a time full of doubts and fears, but crowned with success. 'He landed,' says Niccolò Valori, 'in Livorno, from whence he went to Pisa. In the harbour and town he was received with such a manifestation of joy, with such signs of attachment and [412] shouts of applause from the whole population, that the place itself seemed to join in the rejoicing. But it is impossible to describe how he was received at his entry into Florence. Young and old, men and women, flocked together. The people and the nobles rejoiced together to see him return safely. To all he gave his hand kindly and gratefully. The people embraced each other for joy.' But a reaction soon set in. On the evening of March 17 a compact was published, which had been concluded on the 13th at Naples by Agostino Biliotti and Niccolò Michelozzi in the name of the Republic.[314] They had made peace; but the conditions were not easy, and the suspicion arose among the people that the most oppressive articles were kept secret. If all the circumstances are considered, however, the conditions were supportable. The Florentines had been conquered, and from whatever point of view the cause of the war might be judged, the fact of defeat could not be denied.

On March 25, 1480, the feast of the Annunciation, peace and alliance were formally proclaimed throughout Florence, and a grand procession took place headed by the statue from Sta. Maria dell'Impruneta, which was brought into the city for the purpose. The two opponents bound themselves mutually to defend their states; the occupied places should be restored to the Florentines, but at the king's own time, and with the exception of Castellina and a part of the Chianti, which was to be given to Siena. The Duke of Calabria was to be paid a salary under the name of *condotta*. The Pazzi imprisoned in the tower of Volterra were to be restored to freedom. The lords of Romagna were not included in the treaty of peace but the king pledged himself to preserve their interests. Lorenzo had exerted himself in vain in this respect. Ferrante out of regard for the Pope was not to be moved. The dynasties, with the exception of the Ordelaffi, had not to complain later, as we shall see. Efforts on [413] behalf of the Chianti had likewise been fruitless. Lorenzo endeavoured to show how advantageously it would affect the future connections of the Republic with the king if their territory remained undiminished.[315] It offended the Florentines most of all that they did not even receive a promise respecting Sarzana, the restitution of which they had tried to obtain during the negotiations, in order to diminish the number of claims of compensation from their opponents. The demand of payment to Girolamo Riario which had

been threatened them, and would indeed have been an insult, was allowed to remain in abeyance. ‘The conditions,’ remarks Francesco Guicciardini, ‘were not unfavourable to the vanquished.’ But the populace in Florence were not of the same opinion. That they were not satisfied with the demeanour of Lodovico Sforza and his influence on the negotiation is shown by a letter of the Duke of Ferrara to his ambassador, wherein he requires him to represent to Lorenzo that he would do well to go as much as possible hand in hand with Milan, even if some things in the compact were displeasing. He was not to forget that Florence and Milan were two states whose interests coincided, and whose true union would be useful to both, as it had been before.[316]

At Rome and Milan the compact was made known on the same day as at Florence. In the presence of the Pope and his cardinals, Ambrogio Cerano, general of the Augustinians, announced peace[317] from the pulpit in Sta. Maria del Popolo, where the Papal service took place on the feast of the Annunciation.

The position with regard to Sixtus IV. remained, however, as uncertain as before. Scarcely had Lorenzo left Naples when the king received through Lorenzo Giustini, new proposals of agreement [414] which appeared to him of sufficient importance to justify his sending after Medici, and requesting him to return from Gaeta or Pisa in order to effect an agreement with Sixtus. The latter, so wrote the king, had displayed the greatest readiness to agree to the proposals made by Florence and Milan; and as Girolamo Riario had expressed himself in like manner, Lorenzo’s return appeared to him highly desirable to bring the matter to a conclusion, all the more so as the Pope had regarded his departure as a sign of ill-will. He, the king, had indeed answered that this departure had been caused by affairs at Florence; but he advised him to announce at home that bad weather had hindered him on the way, and as, meanwhile, the Papal decision had arrived, he had considered it necessary to return in order not to delay the complete conclusion of the affair. In this manner he would render the League and Milan a real service, put an end to the Pope’s suspicion, recover his affection, and promote the king’s interests also. The negotiation could then proceed without delay on the part of the Milanese ambassadors, who had a time of departure appointed them, and he would return with the fame of having completed his work.[318] In this suggestion a cunning intention has sometimes been suspected, as if the king, enticed by the new proposals of the Pope, had repented his compact with Lorenzo, and tried to get the latter into his power again in order to dictate his will to him. Ferrante’s whole subsequent behaviour affords no ground for such a suspicion. But that Lorenzo did not accede to the king’s wishes is explained sufficiently by the painful suspense in which the Papal policy had kept him so long, and by the necessity of his presence at home. Probably, too, the king expected no result from this step, which he was obliged to take for the sake of the Pope. Sixtus IV. did, indeed, ratify the peace, as we have seen; but he was very ill satisfied with the whole course of the matter, and Lorenzo Giustini, who had conducted the negotiation, lost the [415] confidence of the Pope and his nephew, which he had long enjoyed.[319] Antonio Ridolfi and Piero Masi were sent to Rome to defend the cause of the Republic. They accomplished little. The Pope demanded that Lorenzo himself should come to Rome, for which the latter showed no inclination, and which was also advised against by others, Ferrara for example.[320] Sixtus complaining that the agreement and new alliance were to the disadvantage of the Church, allied himself with the Venetians, who regarded their ancient relation to Milan and Florence as dissolved, and left the Florentines still under the pressure of the interdict laid upon them.

Evils soon followed this policy in Romagna. Costanzo Sforza was in a difficulty, but his powerful relations came to his aid this time also against the plans of the Pope’s nephew. In Forli, on the other hand, affairs took a turn very unfavourable for the Republic. Pino degli Ordelaffi, whom we saw in 1466 violently freed from his brother Cecco, almost the only one of these lords of Romagna who took the side of Sixtus IV., had died on February 10, worn out by his dissipated life, which made it impossible for him to support the fatigues of a short campaign, which did not tax him heavily. In 1473 be had obtained from the Pope the renewal of his vice-regency for his own natural descendants, to the exclusion of his nephew Antonio or Antoniello, to whom, according to previous family statutes, the

joint government of Forli belonged, and who, like his father, held to Florence as firmly as Pino to the opposite party. The natural son of the latter, Sinibaldo, a boy of thirteen years, had been acknowledged by the inhabitants of Forli as his successor. His stepmother and guardian, Zaffiera Manfredi, soon made herself so hated that an insurrection broke out as early as the beginning of July, in consequence of which Antoniello on the 8th entered Forli. Here the people were still fighting the mercenaries of Sinibaldo, [416] who had sought protection in the fortress of Ravaldino. Sixtus IV. took advantage of this opportunity. The Duke of Urbino received a command to march to Forli; Antoniello was declared deprived of all his rights, and as the boy Sinibaldo died about this time—how is unknown—the Pope granted Forli to Girolamo Riario as a lapsed fief. The citizens at first showed themselves willing to defend the cause of the rightful heir; but when the duke approached the city, and a few skirmishes had ended unfavourably, neither provisions nor money for a longer opposition were existing, and Antoniello recognised the impossibility of maintaining himself. On August 8 he quitted Forli and repaired to Florentine territory, and on the following day the Papal army entered, and Riario was proclaimed lord of Forli. How displeased they were in Florence to see these embittered enemies at their frontier with increased powers, may be understood. Two conspiracies in favour of the Ordelaffi, which broke out in the course of the year, failed, and Antoniello, who remained in the service of the Republic, awaited better times.

Far more serious cause of anxiety was afforded by affairs in Siena. Peace had been proclaimed on March 25 at Siena, but the Duke of Calabria made no sign of evacuating the territory of that Republic. During the winter he had been frequently in the city, and he managed to make himself beloved by the inhabitants. They gave him festivals in the palace, balls, banquets, and masquerades; and in return he bestowed knighthood, stood sponsor for children, and was present at the election of magistrates. In February he had been with troops in the Maremma, whence an attack from the Duke of Lorraine was feared. Three days after the proclamation of peace Alfonso went to Viterbo in order to consult with the Duke of Urbino, who was taking the baths there; and when he returned, the city sent him to Buonconvento, where the greater part of his troops were encamped, to meet three illustrious citizens with the ostensible object of welcoming him, and inviting him to Siena—in reality, to [417] discover his intentions. For suspicion was already roused regarding Neapolitan affairs, and not without reason. Twice already in King Alfonso’s as well as in Ferrante’s days, the Aragonese had sought to gain ground in Siena. The discord which had always prevailed more in this city than in any other offered frequent opportunity for intervention. One happened at this very time. The Duke of Calabria, who had a residence in Siena, although he was chiefly in the camp, had put himself in communication with the disaffected of the aristocratic party, the Monte de’ Nove, the heads of which had lived in banishment since 1456 or stood aloof from government. His repeated endeavours to obtain the recall of the exiles had remained without result. It was now attempted in another way. On the morning of June 22, the friends of the duke, with the help of some of his troops, who were secretly admitted into the city, seized on the piazza and palace of the commonwealth, summoned a council of the people to which only their own adherents were admitted, abolished the government which had existed hitherto, and excluded its heads and partisans from office, appointing for the next two months a new magistracy composed entirely of members of their party. Without violence or bloodshed, an entire faction of the citizens which had ruled the city for seventy-seven years was expelled from home and position.

The duke was in Buonconvento when this revolution took place, either in order not to seem to countenance it, or to avoid danger in case the citizens rose in favour of the government, as they had done once before in the Emperor Charles IV.’s time. He calculated that the victors would call upon him, if only to accept the military aid without which they were too weak to maintain themselves permanently—and he calculated rightly. The Signory and magistrates went to meet him at the gates on his entry; and during his stay of several days the people were so amused by festivities that the new rulers had time to recall the exiles, and weaken their [418] enemies by banishment and fines. All this was of a kind to inspire the Florentines with the most serious anxiety; for if the Aragonese

obtained a firm footing in Tuscany, their own independence was much more endangered, for late events had shown how inferior their military power was to that of the king. ‘Suspicion,’ remarks Machiavelli, ‘seized not only the people, but the heads of the State likewise;’ and it is considered that the city had never been in such danger of losing her freedom. This suspicion was strengthened by events on the Ligurian frontier, in which from the first the Duke of Calabria’s hand had been recognised. Sarzana was not only not given up to the Republic, but the garrison disturbed the neighbouring territory so that Giovanni Aldobrandini, commander of the fortress of Sarzanello, received commands to repel force by force.

Such was the position of affairs when an unexpected occurrence produced a decided reaction in the political situation of Central Italy. The quarrels of the Christian princes, which armed Louis XI. against Maximilian of Austria, and Mathias Corvinus against Ladislaus of Poland, the Tuscan war, and the Venetian peace, had been very advantageous for Mohammed II. The aged sultan wished to crown the series of his conquests with a brilliant feat of arms. The Sicilian coasts had been threatened in 1479. In May 1480 a numerous Turkish fleet attacked Rhodes. The heroic courage of Pierre d’Aubusson and his knights saved the island, which was held to be the bulwark of Christendom. Returning from the fruitless siege, a part of the squadron took a westerly direction, and, sailing by the Venetian islands of the Ionian sea, landed a considerable number of troops—about seven thousand men—on the southern coast of Apulia (July 28), where, after a terrible slaughter of the neighbouring population, the blockade of Otranto began. On August 11, after a hard struggle, the town fell into the hands of the inhuman opponents of the Christians.

[419] The blow was stunning. The whole of Italy was in a flame. The threat of Mohammed to plant the Crescent instead of the Cross in Rome was remembered. It is said that in his first terror the Pope thought of quitting the city and retiring to Avignon. But Sixtus IV. was not a man to lose courage. He wrote to all the Christian princes, representing the urgent danger to them. Cardinal Gabriele Rangoni went to Naples, Cardinal Savelli to Genoa, to mediate between the disputants, Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini to France and England. A French fleet was to combine with the Neapolitan. The first result for the Florentines was the return of the Duke of Calabria to Naples. On August 1 the king had received news of the Turks, and he immediately recalled his son.[321] The advantage accruing to the Florentines from the new position of affairs was so great and so evident that many voices were heard accusing Lorenzo de’ Medici of having encouraged the sultan to attack Apulia. The friendly relations with Mohammed II., which had been proved at the Pazzi conspiracy, must have likewise afforded grounds for such an accusation, the influence of which is, however, not discernible in the subsequent attitude of the king.[322] On August 7 the duke quitted Siena. If he accused fate of wresting from him the fruits of his two years’ exertions in Tuscany the very moment he believed himself certain of success, he caused those to complain who had calculated on his assistance, and now feared having to yield for want of it. The same Prinzivalle di Gennaro who had accompanied Lorenzo was entrusted with the superintendence of the place which, for the present, was to remain in the king’s hands, and be given back to the Florentines at the end of March of the next year. The reconciliation of the Republic with the Pope could be no longer delayed. It must [420] have been especially important to him to leave no cause for discontent in Florence when such danger threatened Christendom.

At the request of King Ferrante, the Signoria, who had conducted the government during the two last months of the year 1480 with the Gonfaloniere Bernardo Rucellai, appointed a solemn embassy which should request Sixtus IV. to revoke the spiritual interdict. The most distinguished men of the city undertook the mission: Francesco Soderini, Bishop of Volterra, and afterwards Cardinal, Luigi Guicciardini, Bongianni Gianfigliazzi, Piero Minerbetti—who all three possessed the dignity of knighthood—Guid’Antonio Vespucci, Maso degli Albizzi, Gino Capponi, Jacopo Lanfredini, Domenico Pandolfini, Giovanni Tornabuoni, Antonio de’ Medici—names some of which have already appeared in the course of this history, others yet to be seen. Antonio Ridolfi, who was in Rome holding the office of regular ambassador of the Republic, was to join

them. The instructions given to the deputies[323] were conciliatory, but moderate and dignified. ‘After the disturbances permitted by God,’ it says, ‘which have been principally pacified by the grace of his Holiness, peace and quiet never appeared so sweet to us as at present, for the true peace of our people devoted to the Holy See depends on the right understanding with him whom Divine Providence has placed there, and appointed vicegerent of Christ and successor of Peter. We know that in public and private we have committed various errors from human weakness, which the Holy Father has perceived better than we, and therefore send you to entreat pardon for the same and acknowledge our guilt, and commend our city and citizens, clergy and laity, to his protection for the future.’ But the ambassadors were at the same time recommended to watch over the honour and interests of city and State, to give way in reasonable matters, to refuse unreasonable and dishonourable demands prompted by secret motives, whether [421] they referred to a public demonstration of obedience, payments of money, or other things; they were to depart with their protest in case it should not seem suitable to send for fresh instructions. The affairs of Lorenzo de’ Medici were to be included in the general instructions; for special cases Antonio de’ Medici was to represent him. The Archbishop Rinaldo Orsini, residing at Rome, should be informed of all, and his mediation with the Pope claimed.

Sixtus IV. had long resolved on reconciliation. On St. Catherine’s day, November 25, the ambassadors arrived at Rome, welcomed only by their adherents in the State and friends, as the interdict was still in force. Two days later they were admitted to the secret consistory, where the Bishop of Ferrara made a suitable and well-composed speech. On the first Advent Sunday, December 3, the solemn abrogation took place in the portico of St. Peter’s. Before the closed bronze gate of the central nave of the basilica, seated on a throne covered with purple silk, surrounded by the cardinals, prelates, and officers, and in presence of a great crowd, the Pope received the ambassadors, who kissed his foot, and on bended knee besought his forgiveness in the name of the city, and promised to fulfil the conditions prescribed. Luigi Guicciardini, an aged man, spoke, but his address was brief, and difficult to be understood from the noise. An apostolic notary then read aloud the conditions in the presence of the fiscal advocate and procurators, to which the ambassadors bound themselves by oath. The Pope then addressed them, reproved them briefly for what they had done against the Church, and then declared them free by touching the shoulder of each lightly with a staff such as penitents were accustomed to carry, with the words ‘Miserere mei Deus,’ to which the cardinals responded. Hereupon the ambassadors again kissed the Pope’s foot, and received his blessing, after which the gates were opened, and Sixtus IV. being raised on his throne, all went into church, and high mass was celebrated.

Peace was restored. Most of the members of the embassy [422] returned immediately to Florence. Only Francesco Soderini and Guid’Antonio Vespucci remained in order to arrange matters. They also quitted Rome on December 18 with small pomp and suite, and by no means in a cheerful frame of mind. For among the conditions imposed on them by the Pope was the one that the Republic should furnish fifteen galleys for the war with the Turks;[324] a severe condition considering the depressed position in which Florence found herself at the end of a war which had required the hardest pecuniary sacrifices, and desolated a great part of her territory.

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[423]

FOURTH BOOK.

THE MEDICI IN THEIR RELATION TO LITERATURE AND ART.

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FIRST PART.

THE HUMANISTS AND POPULAR LITERATURE TO THE SECOND HALF OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

COMMENCEMENT OF HUMANISM. COLUCCIO SALUTATI AND POGGIO BRACCIOLINI. THE BOOK TRADE.

During the first half of the fifteenth century the great revolution was accomplished which introduced a new era. The antique classical world entered the lists against the Middle Ages. The contest had already begun before events which properly extended beyond the learned circles produced a swift and irresistible reaction. At a time when ecclesiastical schism was already throwing its dark shadow over the general disturbances in Western Christendom, two great poets, Petrarch and Boccaccio, died, after having brought the ancient world, of which they themselves possessed but an imperfect view, closer to their contemporaries and those who followed them than had been the case during the eight centuries which had elapsed since Theodoric the Ostrogoth. Between the first humanists who pursued the road taken by these writers and the faction who held fast to ecclesiastical and learned traditions, a contest had arisen which, properly speaking, never ceased in life and literature, however different might be the forms under which it was designated. The Florentine chancellor, Coluccio Salutati, to whom in [426] the latter third of the fourteenth century the first place belongs in State documents and learned treatises, had displayed more Pagan learning than Christian views in his book ‘De Fato et Fortuna.’ The Dominican Fra Giovanni Dominici, afterwards cardinal of Ragusa, in his treatise on family life,[325] spoke against a school which made youths, nay children, ‘rather heathen than Christian, taught them rather of Jupiter and Saturn, Venus and Cybele, than of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; would poison the tender and helpless minds by sacrifices before false Gods, and train Nature’s apostate from the truth in the bosom of infidelity.’

Another contest was beginning now. The Latin language asserted an exclusive pre-eminence in the learned world. It had discarded the ungainly form of preceding centuries; but although it claimed to emulate Cicero and Virgil and renew the Augustan age, many decades were to pass before learning clothed itself in the originality of a living idiom. The authors of the time we are now considering, however high they stand above those of the preceding epoch, among

whom only Petrarch possessed a shadow of true Latinity, were never otherwise than imitators. Their true services are not to be sought for in their own intellectual work as poets, rhetoricians, historians, or letter-writers. While they retarded, if they did not prevent, the development of the vulgar tongue, they created nothing new in the direction they themselves pursued. The last third of the fifteenth century was the first to witness the sudden and simultaneous revival of Latin and Italian poetry. The first assumed a peculiar tone, while the latter rose to a lofty flight by an independent use of the models of its grand youth and a liberal appropriation of new elements. The literature of the first epoch of humanism had played its part then. Its importance did not so much consist in original productions as in the ground it prepared and fertilised, in the ideas it smoothed the way for, the intellectual [427] material which it collected, and in the superannuated things which it abolished for ever. This limited and conditional recognition, which its representatives would have proudly repelled at a time when they thought they governed the world, and really did so in certain respects, includes both praise and blame. For while the revival of classical spirit and forms called forth in the plastic arts great works which will endure through all centuries by their own merits, it left not a single independent typical monument in literature.

To Florence belongs the praise of being first in this field as well as the other. Her inhabitants were not able to attach to their city Francesco Petrarca, who was not only the greatest poet, but the greatest connoisseur and most passionate worshipper of antiquity in his time; but his spirit seems to have remained with them. At a time when in general the sciences were strictly separated from literature, properly speaking, they were here united in many cases in a harmonious whole. Lapo da Castiglionchio and Luigi Marsigli, in the latter part of the fourteenth century, were brilliant examples of this. [326] The first, a scion of a noble family, united to the most thorough knowledge of the law, especially the canon-law, extensive scientific learning, which was of great use to him in learned intercourse and literary work, as well as in his commissions from the State. After having seen his house burnt to the ground in the anarchy of 1378 and himself sentenced to exile, his misfortunes procured him an honourable reception in Rome, where he became senator, and played an important part under Pope Urban VI. With Luigi Marsigli begins the illustrious series of men who did not limit their usefulness to their own achievements, but formed a centre of learning for their contemporaries, especially the younger ones, [428] which was most fruitful in results. Having entered the order of the Augustinians when young, he was sent to Padua to complete his studies, where Petrarca looked forward for him with the brightest hope, and encouraged him to cultivate science as well as theology, since it formed, as he said, the proper complement to this study. How he entered into the ideas of his renowned countryman is shown by the extensive knowledge he attained of Latin literature and most branches of learning, according to the testimony of his contemporaries, many of whom owed to him their first encouragement and guidance. His monk's cell at Sto. Spirito was a place of meeting for all who had any share in intellectual attainments. The Republic was accustomed to seek his counsel in numbers of difficult questions, especially during the Great Schism which gave the State authorities so much trouble, and on his death on August 21, 1394, it was determined to honour him by a monument.[327] His collection he bequeathed to the convent in which he had spent the greatest part of his life.

Luigi Marsigli was teacher of theology at the Florentine university, the fortunes of which often varied, but which from the middle of the fourteenth century till near the end of the fifteenth exercised a powerful influence on the revival of scientific life. The first idea of the foundation of a university, *studio pubblico*, seems to have arisen in 1321.[328] Thirteen years later we find Cino da Pistoja, the celebrated poet, as teacher of law; but it was in the late autumn of 1348 that the institute was really founded, full ten years after Pisa had given new provocation to the jealousy of the Florentines by a revolution in her own college.[329] [429] Matteo Villani, who begins his chronicle with the year just mentioned, observes that the Government, being satisfied of the extinction of the great pestilence, had intended thereby to attract new inhabitants, to increase their fame and glory, and afford the citizens an opportunity

of gaining knowledge and skill. Eight of the most illustrious citizens were chosen as superintendents of the new institute, and a site selected between the cathedral square and that of the Signoria, which, as already mentioned, is now occupied by the Collegium Eugenianum. Among the superintendents we find Tommaso Corsini, Jacopo degli Alberti, Bindo Altoviti, Giovanni de' Medici, men of illustrious names, and the first of whom, the teacher of law, had already made himself of use in various embassies and public offices, for at all times we meet with a combination of official activity and learning which was profitable in both ways.

That it was prohibited under heavy fines to resort to foreign universities, is a proof of municipal exclusiveness increased by hatred of their neighbours. Pope Clement VI., who indeed needed the Florentines, was more liberal-minded than they, and granted from Avignon on May 31, 1349, the privileges of Bologna to the new university. At first they seem to have cherished the hope of gaining Petrarca for the university; and when, in order to win him over, they redeemed his confiscated paternal inheritance (a tardy restitution), Boccaccio was sent to him at Padua. The matter remained without any favourable result, probably on account of the disinclination of the celebrated man to bind himself to permanent residence there, although the customs of university life at that time, which allowed the teachers to withdraw after a short interval, would still have left a wide scope for his wandering propensities. The first period did not fulfil the hopes which had been entertained. The plan seems to have [430] met with many opponents; while even the payment of the subvention of 2,500 gold florins seems to have fallen very hard on the city, then in its first contests with the Visconti and the mercenaries. The school revived in the autumn of 1357. Lapo da Castiglionchio gave lectures there then, and three years later we meet with the first Greek teacher, the Calabrian Leonzio Pilato, who had been drawn thither from Venice by Boccaccio and remained three years. In 1364, Piero Corsini, Tommaso's son, and Bishop of Florence, obtained from the Emperor Charles IV. imperial privileges for the school. The residence of the most celebrated legal teacher of his time, Baldo of Perugia, was but a short one. In 1368 the number of the teachers amounted to seventeen. The disturbances leading to the mob-rule of 1378 seem to have resulted in closing the university anew. Among those who taught after it had been re-opened in 1385 was Francesco Zabarella of Padua, subsequently Bishop of Florence and cardinal, an influential member of the Council of Constance. About the same time Pier Paolo Vergerio, of Capo d'Istria, then a young man, but afterwards renowned as a legal scholar and humanist, lectured on dialectics. Two years later the school received its statutes under the name of *Ordinamenta Studii Florentini*, from an assembly of superintendents, professors, and students in the Benedictine abbey. In 1397, Florence gained two men who powerfully contributed to the revival of classical literature. The one was Giovanni Malpaghini of Ravenna, who had been Petrarca's companion for fifteen years, and who taught the Latin language and literature for many years with great success; the other, Manuel Chrysoloras, with whom a branch of classical knowledge hitherto neglected began to develop with great vigour.

The study of the Greek language and literature began at Florence with Manuel Chrysoloras, and through her and Venice, always intimately connected with the Levant, it spread over the rest of Italy. Petrarca and Boccaccio had rather followed the Greek authors with a longing gaze than been able to appropriate them; and though [431] the poet of the 'Decameron' transplanted, as he boasted, the Homeric poetry to his native land, yet several decades passed after his death before these isolated endeavours gained any real influence. Leonzio Pilato's activity was but transitory. Manuel Chrysoloras, who had originally come to Italy on a diplomatic mission for John Paleologus, the oppressed Emperor of the East, laid the foundation of the earnest and successful studies which, as it were, opened a new world to the West. For it was these studies which led to the living fountain of Hellenic intellect men of mature age as well as aspiring youths, who had hitherto only moved within the beaten track of the university instruction of that time, and the still narrow circle of classical literature. The fate of Greek writings is essentially different from that of the Latin. The dark ages passed over the East also. Even before the end of the Western Empire Greece was heavily visited, its people mixed with foreign elements, its language corrupted, and much of its great literature lost. But

when Rome relapsed into barbarism, Constantinople remained the centre of an ancient but decaying civilisation which was never thoroughly extinguished.

Manuel Chrysoloras, who publicly taught in Rome, Venice, Milan, and Padua, found the most fertile soil for his teaching in Florence, whither he was summoned towards the end of 1396 at the suggestion of Messer Palla Strozzi. It was he who undertook to satisfy the desires awakened by Petrarca and Boccaccio by a thorough knowledge of his mother-tongue, and by an introduction to the works of the great classic authors and fathers of the Church, which he gave to eager scholars. By his Greek grammar, the 'Erotemata,' as the title names it, first printed at Venice in 1486, and introduced by Reuchlin, during the latter years of his life, at the Tübingen University, he prepared the way in the West for a scientific treatment of the language. When, accompanied by Demetrius Cydonius, he arrived at Venice on his second Italian journey, with the intention of giving lectures on the language and [432] literature of his native country, two Tuscans, the Florentine Roberto de' Rossi, and Jacopo Angelo of Scarperia in Mugello, repaired thither to enrol themselves among his students. The latter then himself visited the East. Coluccio Salutati, who still belonged entirely to the school of the times of Petrarca, but who felt strongly the strivings of the new spirit, wrote at that time to Demetrius:[330] —'Still more than at your greeting do I rejoice at the favour of heaven shown to us in your arrival. When the study of Greek was, so to say, extinct among us, you and Manuel have appeared like light in the darkness. God has led you to Latium. By receiving and instructing Roberto so kindly, you have inspired many with a desire to know Greek, and I already see in spirit what a crowd of eager students of Hellenic literature will have gathered together in a few years. Happy I, if happiness be yet reserved for a man at my age (to-morrow I complete my sixty-fifth year), if I am yet able to see the fountain-head, the source of all the knowledge of Latium! Who knows if I be not destined, like Cato, to obtain a knowledge of Greek literature in my old age, and unite the fruits of this study to my native learning!'

It is a characteristic feature in the history of the revival of classic literature generally, and especially of Greek, in Italy, and above all in Florence, that so many men and youths of the higher classes devoted themselves to such studies. Classical literature was not a mere ornament and secondary matter, nor was it restricted to schools and convents or to the purposes of self-maintenance. It was used in the palaces of the commonwealth as well as in ordinary business. To many it was the companion for life in fortune and misfortune—a cheering friend at home, a consoler in the gloomy days of exile. Florence can boast of a whole series of statesmen who were intimately acquainted with the Greek classics, whose works [433] they translated in their leisure hours. Among Chrysoloras' scholars were men of the first families, and many men who rose to the most important offices of State. Palla Strozzi was himself one of them, and in his banishment he never ceased to enjoy the fruits of his studies in earlier years. Roberto de' Rossi instructed a number of younger pupils. Leonardo Bruni of Arezzo, for many years chancellor of the Republic, was among those who attained the most thorough knowledge of Greek. In Florence they did not wait till the fall of Constantinople scattered the ruins of the Grecian world over Italy to become intimate with Greek literature, to attract Greek teachers, and to purchase Greek literary treasures. Many went to the East not only to collect manuscripts, coins, works of art, and inscriptions, but also to study the language and literature in the country itself. Even Pope Pius II., in the speech by which he announced the plan of the crusade, testified that Constantinople had, till the day of the conquest, proved itself the monument of antique wisdom, the seat of science, and the stronghold of philosophy; the Italians had only thought they could attain the palm of excellence when, as the Romans did in Athens, they had pursued their studies in Constantinople, whence so many excellent works of antiquity had come to the West, and others were still to be expected. That the Byzantine school exercised as much influence on Italian travellers as the later Athenian did on the Romans is evident; the humanistic rhetoricians and philosophers retained some habits of mind which profound and extensive study of the great authors was not always able to overcome. But the good of a wide diffusion of classical learning outweighed the disadvantages. The rapidity of its

dissemination in a short time was astonishing. The Greek fathers assembled at the Florentine conference were not a little surprised to find men among their native colleagues who knew far more of Greek language and literature than they did.

Cosimo de' Medici was in the prime of life when this great [434] revolution passed through its first stage. It was the epoch in which Greek literature broke like a mighty wave over Italy, while the limits still restricting Latin were broken through as with an enchanter's rod. The Council of Constance, which restored peace and unity to the Western Church, opened also the libraries of German and French convents, in which numerous treasures, especially of Roman literature, lay unread and long forgotten. Poggio Bracciolini,[331] born at Terranuova, in the Upper Arno valley, in 1380, was thirty-five years old when he accompanied Pope John XXIII. to Constance. He was the most successful discoverer the world has known in the field of literature, which he has enriched in an undreamt-of manner. Nor was he merely a discoverer, but also one who could turn these treasures to good account—learned, skilful, acute, witty; a true child of his age in the literary quarrels which often degenerated into mere janglings, in the slander, equivocal wit and anecdotes, in the restlessness and disquiet which seemed to have seized the humanistic class generally. The papal treasury, to which he was attached all his life long without forfeiting his attachment to his native land, appointed him her chancellor, when he already numbered seventy-three years. Of no pre-eminent importance as an historian and antiquarian, he had that lively feeling for the grandeur and glory of the Roman epoch which had inspired Petrarca, and in him it was united with a wider view and surer knowledge of the monuments which had emerged from the mediæval world of fables. It was Poggio above all who abolished the Rome of the Mirabilia. The literary endeavours which began in St. Gall continued in operation during years and decades, even into the time of Leo X., and extended over Germany and France as far as Scandinavia. The [435] movement affected the convents of Italy, which were not more respected than foreign ones, and it created a new life at the same time in literature by multiplying and disseminating the old supplies of learning and those newly gained. The book trade, in the proper sense of the word, then first began.

Books were exceedingly rare and proportionately dear till the fifteenth century. Petrarca's and Boccaccio's testimony brings vividly before our eyes the straits in which learned men often found themselves; and even those in high stations copied with their own hand works that they would otherwise have been unable to procure, either on account of the extravagant prices, or in cases where the originals could not be bought on account of a deficiency of copyists and the difficulty of obtaining them. When we regard with a feeling of gratitude the copies of Cicero's 'Meditations' made by Petrarca, and now preserved in the Laurentian library, one of which replaces the original for us, we can estimate, in some degree, the value which these men placed on the discovery—for discovery in a certain sense it was—of those antique models, which became to them examples of life and conduct. This reflection brings us back to the times which we are contemplating, when we find emendations and conjectures of the text written on the margin of the manuscripts in Coluccio Salutati's hand. It but seldom occurred that learned men copied for others, as Poggio Bracciolini, who wrote a beautiful hand, did in his youth, when he had to live on such work. The copying for money had in general become the business of very ignorant persons, of whose negligence Petrarca, who had a skilful assistant in his companion Giovanni da Ravenna, gives us an idea when he asks if Cicero, Livy, and Pliny, would recognise their own works in this shape, or would not rather consider them productions of the barbarians. Coluccio Salutati wrote a special treatise on the unfortunate condition of books, and the means of preventing harm [436] arising to literature. Not only works of antiquity were considered here, but modern authors also. 'I cannot express,' says the Florentine chancellor once,[332] 'how repulsive the universal corruption which has crept into books is to me. We scarcely find one manuscript of Petrarca's and Boccaccio's works which does not deviate from the original. They are not texts, but coarse caricatures of texts (*similitudines*), while the real texts are in a measure seals (*sigilla*) of the original documents. What we have deviates more from the originals than statues from the men whose counterfeit they are. They have a mouth, but they say nothing; or worse, they

frequently say what is false. In Dante's book this calamity is the greatest, as the uninitiated are often unable to follow those who are at all acquainted with the poet.'

Nevertheless a certain kind of book trade was an old-established calling;[333] not to speak of single sales, as for example the sale, at the little town of Poggibonzi, of a perfect copy of the 'Corpus Juris,' as well as the decrees of Gratian, of which we possess a notary's deed of transfer bearing the date 1215. The *stationarii* at the universities, an expression preserved in the English word stationer, were persons who kept a supply of text-books used in the lectures, for the purpose of copying, in which learned and unlearned, and even women, were employed. The thronging of the ignorant to this business, which seems to have been lucrative, necessitated superintendence, which was exercised by Peciarii, selected among the students, and all of the clerical order. We can easily understand that, except at the universities, in which Bologna and Padua took the lead, such superintendence (for which, and for the trade in manuscripts generally, special directions were issued in the fourteenth century) could not be organised, so that much always [437] depended on the pleasure and ignorance of dealers and copyists.

Copying and painting were certainly favourite employments in the monasteries; but either the requirements of the special community were principally kept in view, or it was chiefly a question of ecclesiastical and devotional books. As towards the end of the Gothic period, Cassiodorus, one of the last who witnessed antique culture still alive, recommended copying to the monks of Squillace, so did Fra Giovanni Dominici in the beginning of the fifteenth century, when he remarked that such employments raised monks and nuns to pure and holy thoughts, words which plainly show what kind of books were meant. Even in the cloister the want of books, and those the most necessary, was at times felt. Most of the convent libraries were poor in ancient manuscripts. It was worse in the more recently founded ones and in nunneries. The sainted Chiara Gambacorta,[334] daughter of a ruler of Pisa, towards the end of the fourteenth and at the beginning of the following century, repeatedly complains of the destitution prevailing in her convent of Dominican nuns, and rejoiced when any book was promised as a legacy. Once she begs for information where a Book of Lessons or a Bible may be found. 'We are very poor in books, and need them for Divine service. Copying is too expensive for us to be able to think of it. If we should find any ready made, however, I hope to God that I shall be able, by the assistance of good people, to pay for them.' Three and a half to four gold florins were paid at this time for a devotional book, the offices of the Virgin, not only by noblemen but by wealthy citizens. Rinaldo degli Albizzi considers it worth noticing in his memoirs,[335] that in the summer of 1406 he paid eleven gold florins for a Bible at Arezzo. Even in a city like Florence it was not easy to procure books of devotion, because of the small number of good copyists. An [438] Augustinian brother of Sto. Spirito, a skilful writer, was engaged in 1395 by the Cardinal Piero Corsini for full two years.[336] The materials were also costly. The parchment for a book of Epistles cost ten silver florins. The expense of illustrating manuscripts with miniatures and ornaments was very considerable. The convents would not have been able to obtain so many manuscripts of this kind had not the industry of their inhabitants been specially directed to the art of illumination.

The rapid diffusion of learning and the equally swift increase of literary material created the book trade properly so-called, which till then had been pursued occasionally by persons of every calling, among others by tavern-keepers. One of the centres of this trade was Venice, which was materially assisted in her dealings by her extensive commercial connections. When the study of Greek began to revive, numerous codices were imported from Candia, among other places, where copying had become a fruitful source of gain, and were eagerly bought up by native and foreign collectors.[337] Of course this trade presupposed the formation of a special class of copyists, who were under the direction of such persons as specially devoted themselves to this branch of business, undertook large and small orders, and had them executed by hundreds of workmen. A certain degree of literary cultivation was requisite in those whose duty it was to control the workers. The great mass of manuscripts of classical works belongs to the fifteenth century. In some cases they represent for us the originals, which have disappeared since,

especially after the invention of printing by types, for as we know from Aldo Manuzio's complaint, the parchment of manuscripts which had been printed from was often used for binding purposes. In other cases they are to be counted of especial value, because the originals were then already in a very injured condition, like the [439] manuscripts of Quintilian and the 'Sylvae' of Statius, which Poggio found in St. Gall and in France, as was the case also with the manuscripts of Constantinople. A numerous progeny of errors may be derived from such copies, of which the earliest, even when made by learned men, were not always perfectly exact, not those of Petrarca nor Poggio, who were occasionally forced to work in a hurry (*velociter*). The costly parchment was by no means employed for all new manuscripts. The paper manufacture, which, if not revived in the fourteenth century, was at least developed then in a greater degree, wherein the first place seems to belong to the town of Fabriano, which still furnishes the best paper in Italy. This manufacture was begun as early as 1379 at Colle, in the Elsa valley, [338] and was of essential service to the book trade. Of this most brilliant but brief period of the preparation of manuscripts, and the trade in them, an epoch which immediately preceded that of the invention of printing, and the memorials of which are to be found in all the libraries of Italy and elsewhere, we shall speak again later.

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CHAPTER II.

LEONARDO BRUNI ARETINO AND THE FLORENTINE HUMANISTS. FRANCESCO FILELFO. COSIMO DE' MEDICI.

Next to Poggio Bracciolini, Leonardo Bruni and Ambrogio Traversari were those who did most effective service to the knowledge of classic antiquity. Leonardo Bruni[339] was descended from a burgher family in Arezzo, whence he derived the name of Aretino, which, after having been held in honour, was dragged through the mud a century later by one of his own countrymen. Although eleven years older than Poggio, and instructed in Greek by Chrysoloras at Florence, he did not appear till much later in the Papal exchequer, owing, it seems, to his being disgusted with events passing at Constance. He remained at home when Pope Martin V. returned, and the office of chancellor was there bestowed on him in 1427, a post he filled with dignity till his death on March 8, 1444, at the age of seventy-five. Like Coluccio, Poggio, Gregorio Correr, the highly educated kinsman of Pope Gregory XII., and others, he laid the foundation of a criticism which kept his fame alive for centuries in the emendation of manuscripts; while by the translation of Greek [441] authors into the Latin language, he made them accessible to a larger circle of readers, among whom a knowledge of Greek had not found its way. Everyone who had any pretensions to cultivation understood Latin more or less. All speeches on festive occasions, and even some private conversations, were in Latin. Official documents were drawn up in the same language, and most business transactions were conducted in it. Pope Martin V. spoke Latin with his Tuscan secretaries, even when angry at the rudeness of the Florentine street boys. But Greek remained a subject of study which never, even in the happiest times, extended beyond a circle privileged by exceptional knowledge and position. Though Leonardo Aretino wrote a small treatise in Greek[340] on the Florentine constitution, he composed his principal works in Latin. His history of Florence, extending from the origin of the city to the strife with Gian Galeazzo Visconti, was, so to say, completed by Poggio's last work, which concludes with the year 1455. Men of the fifteenth century, who longed to see the classical form of historiography employed on events at home, attributed an imaginary value to this work, and believed that Florence could rival Athens, and her two historians, statesmen as well as scholars, might compete with Thucydides and Xenophon. Whoever wishes to study Florentine history will not turn to the Latin historians of the humanistic epoch, whose style, however, exercised a decided influence not merely on contemporary works in the vulgar tongue, but on much later writings. The importance attributed to these works is shown by the excellent Donato Acciaiuoli having been publicly commissioned to translate into Italian the history of his master Leonardo, which had been bought by the State, while Poggio's son Jacopo did the same with that of his father. The veneration in which Leonardo Aretino was held was expressed by a grant of the rights of citizenship to him in 1416, by the immunity from taxation decreed in his favour [442] twenty-three years later, by the purchase of his principal work,[341] and by the laurel wreath at his funeral, a distinction granted to many deserving men. On March 9, Alamanno Rinuccini wrote to Giovanni de' Medici, Cosimo's son, then residing at the baths of Petriolo:[342] 'I do not doubt that letters and messengers will have outstripped this letter in speed, but for the sake of our mutual friendship I will speak of him who quitted this life but yesterday. How could I be otherwise than deeply moved when so many undying virtues are suddenly removed from our sight, virtues which were not only an adornment to him in whom they shone, but sufficed as an ornament and benefit to the whole town? Who felt and exercised such beneficence towards all, friends and strangers? who assisted friends with advice like him? who distinguished himself by excellent qualities and knowledge to such a degree? It is amongst ancient Romans we must search to find men who resemble him.'

Ambrogio Traversari,[343] born in 1386, the son of poor peasants at Portico, a little village of Tuscan Romagna, was younger than Leonardo by seventeen years, than Poggio by six. If he were one of

Chrysoloras' scholars,[344] it must have been at a very youthful age. At all events, he attained an unusual knowledge of Greek, while he was considered the best Latinist in Florence equal to Leonardo; joint praise which the latter, who laid claims to the first undivided place, took so amiss that he quarrelled with his rival and friends about it. As a boy, Ambrogio entered the order of the Camaldolese monks, in which he attained to the highest honours. When a man, the fame of his virtues and knowledge attracted all who were interested in learned studies in Florence to the convent of the Angeli in Via degli Alfani. This church, which has been lately restored, is at present disused for Divine worship, and empty. Like the great mother-house in the Casentino, the city convents have [443] been taken from the Camaldulese, who seemed to have grown with Tuscan history, and yet fell a sacrifice to a revolution of which there is yet no history. But whoever enters the pillared court is reminded by the marble bust of Ambrogio Traversari of the time when this spot was a centre of brilliant intellectual light illuminating the houses of Florentine patricians, and through them the whole world. The most illustrious and talented men flocked to Fra Ambrogio (as formerly to Marsigli), who not only gave lectures for the clergy and laity on Greek and Latin language and literature, but discussed philosophical and theological questions in public conferences. In addition to the various works of his regular calling he was employed in the translation of Greek writings, especially the Fathers of the Church. Cosimo de' Medici testified to his skill therein when he related how Fra Ambrogio dictated the Latin translation of St. Chrysostom's 'Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul' to Niccolò Niccoli, who wrote a ready hand, so quickly that the latter was hardly able to follow him, Cosimo, who, with his brother Lorenzo, was one of the most frequent visitors to the convent of the Angeli, assisted Fra Ambrogio, who was not rich, with money as well as books. The latter translated for Cosimo. Diogenes Laertius' 'Lives of Philosophers,' a work which he, having devoted himself entirely to theological studies, undertook unwillingly, but yet could not refuse to his generous friend. The men whom the two Medici met most frequently at Traversari's were Niccolò Niccoli, Carlo Marsuppini, and Gianozzo Manetti. Such a lover of books as Niccoli had never been seen in Florence. The son of an affluent merchant, he devoted himself when independent zealously to literature; while he displayed scarcely less sympathy for art, with the most famous disciples of which he stood in intimate relations. Like Fra Ambrogio's cloister, his house was a centre for literary effort and learned conversation. At the commencement of the dialogue 'De Infelicitate Principum,' Poggio describes his meeting Cosimo de' Medici and Marsuppini at [444] the time when he was at Florence in the suite of Pope Eugenius IV. A conversation on the instability of human things afforded the opportunity for holding the dialogue mentioned. Poggio observed then, among other things, that during his thirty-four years' service at the Papal court he never remained more than two years in one and the same place. Thoroughly versed in the Latin language, and instructed in philosophy and theology under the guidance of Marsigli, Niccoli was one of those who caused Chrysoloras to be summoned to Florence, and was one of his most earnest scholars. His knowledge was extensive also in other branches; no one was more at home in geography. His love for books became a passion. He had agents everywhere, and manuscripts came to him from all sides. If he could not obtain possession of the originals, he borrowed and copied them himself. His copy of Lucretius, kept in the Laurentian library, after another manuscript of Poggio had been lost, became the original of all which were written in the fifteenth century. He employed all his fortune on his library—no mere ornament to his house, nor was it dead capital. Liberal and sympathetic, he placed his treasures at the disposal of all. Many owed their progress in studies to him. Where his own means did not suffice, he persuaded friends to purchase, especially Cosimo de' Medici, who cherished a great affection for him, and in 1420, when he quitted Florence on account of the pestilence, took him and Marsuppini to Verona. Neither Cosimo nor his brother could refuse him anything. When he had expended so much that his income no longer sufficed to support the modest household which he maintained with a single aged servant (he had not wished to marry, in order not to be interrupted in his studies), the two Medici commissioned their banking agents to pay him as much as he might demand, and to put it to their account. Niccoli repaid the friendship

they always showed to him. In 1433 he expressed himself so unguardedly against Cosimo's enemies, that he would have shared their fate had not the change come soon. He was the most open-hearted man in the world—cheerful, conversational, eloquent, accessible to all, and obliging. By sincere sympathy he richly compensated for the irritability of his temper, which more than once led him into mistakes and often exposed him to literary attacks. His exterior was dignified, his dress careful. Beside books, his house was full of objects of art of various kinds; and if his food was of the simplest, he loved to decorate his table with delicate porcelain, crystal, and fine table-linen. He was the first to conceive the idea of a public library, and caused the manuscripts which Boccaccio had bequeathed to the convent of Sto. Spirito, and which were treasured up in coffers, to be laid open for common use by having book-shelves and reading-desks made at his own expense. We shall speak later on of the way in which his own library was disposed of. [445]

Through Niccoli, Carlo Marsuppini[345] was brought into contact with the Medici, which proved the turning-point of his whole life. His intimate relation with them is shown by the fact that at Cosimo's wish he made the funeral oration on the death of his mother Piccarda. Born at Arezzo of affluent parents, at the end of the fourteenth century (his grandfather was secretary to King Charles VI. of France, and governor of Genoa conjointly with the Marshal of Boucicault), he came in early youth to Florence, where he attained considerable knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages and literature, made himself a famous name, as a public teacher, by his eloquence and excellent memory, and subsequently became chancellor. The numerous official duties he undertook in later years hindered him from cultivating literature as much as he desired. Thus he laid aside the metrical translation of the Iliad, which aroused in Pope Nicholas V. the wish to have the author near him, that he might devote himself undisturbed to Homer. After some time it was taken up by a greater poet and Latinist, who, however, also left his task unfinished. [446]

How honourable was the position held by both Leonardo Bruni and Carlo Marsuppini is shown by the beautiful monuments erected to them, as well as the laurel bestowed on them after death. Giannozzi Manetti had greater literary and political importance than the latter.[346] He was descended from an illustrious family, and was born in 1396. While he devoted himself to science with as much zeal as if he considered study the main duty of his life, he developed an activity in public affairs which extended his connections beyond the narrow limits of his country throughout all Italy. He learnt Greek with Traversari; Latin he spoke and wrote with equal elegance, so that he made impromptu speeches at festivals, as at the Emperor Frederick III.'s entry into Florence, when he answered Eneas Silvio Piccolomini's address extempore. To aid his theological studies he learned Hebrew, then a rarity, and disputed with Jewish scholars over the words and meaning of the Holy Scriptures. With three books he was so familiar that he might almost be said to know them by heart. They were the Epistles of St. Paul, Augustine's 'City of God,' and Aristotle's 'Ethics.' He translated the New Testament, and wrote a treatise on the Psalter. He devoted himself likewise to contemporary history, in which his extensive circle of personal friends was of great assistance to him. Continually employed in embassies, in which he did his native city essential service, he investigated with unusual acuteness the nature of sovereigns and governments. He has delineated Pope Nicholas V. and King Alfonso, while he attempted biographies of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, and celebrated the merits of distinguished contemporaries like Leonardo Bruni and Giannozzo Pandolfini in memorial speeches. More perhaps than others of the time was he subject to that literary pedantry (a strange feature in a statesman) which appeared so strongly in the eulogy of Bruni, for example, that Poggio Bracciolini felt himself obliged to treat the same subjects in a freer and more independent manner. Manetti's many services to the State in peace and war were ill requited. When in Cosimo de' Medici's later years the party came to the helm who suffered no independent position outside their own circle, Giannozzo Manetti, who could not be injured otherwise, was ruined by taxes, and ended his days in a foreign country. [447]

The men we have mentioned, whose activity extends beyond the limits of the fifteenth century, were the most illustrious of those on whom Manuel Chrysoloras exercised direct or indirect influence. If

we return to their training-time, we find the university so flourishing at the beginning of the century that undisturbed continuance of its prosperity might have been prophesied. In 1401, especially famous among its teachers of jurisprudence was Paolo di Castro, whose name was considered to rank only second to that of Bartolo di Sassoferrato. He was variously employed by the Government, and took a prominent share in reforming the Florentine statute law; a reform at which several clever lawyers, like Bartolommeo da Soncino and others, worked for years. This revised code, concluded and accepted in 1415, remained in force till the abolition of all the numerous civil corporate and individual rights in the time of the Grand Duke Leopold I.[347] Citizens of the most illustrious families gave instruction then, as later. Not only youths but men of mature age filled the lecture-rooms, for literary and scientific knowledge was considered necessary in the higher ranks, where wealth excluded the necessity of gaining bread by scholarship. It was a noble emulation; and many, amid the sudden changes which brought rich families to beggary, did find means of subsistence in what they had once only regarded as an ornament of life. How many found the studies which delighted their youth the comfort of age in desolation and exile! The favourable prospects of the university did not last, however. Soon after 1404 the school seems to have been closed for eight years, in consequence of the disturbance and expense caused by the Pisan war and the oppression of King Ladislaus. After its being re-opened, Guarino of Verona was for a short time professor of Greek, a knowledge of which he had gained from Giovanni of Ravenna, and then perfected in Constantinople. In the spring of 1414 we meet with Palla Strozzi as one of the reformers, an office which he again undertook in the year 1428. On both occasions he rendered great services to the state, as it was he who obtained from Pope Martin V. the taxation of the clergy for purposes of public instruction.

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We have made the acquaintance of Palla Strozzi in our description of political life in his native city. His family was noble, and he ennobled it still more by the high character and position he attained. He had learned the Latin language thoroughly in his youth, and his longing for a knowledge of Greek had essentially contributed to the appointment of Chrysoloras. He entered the Greek's circle of scholars, and took care to procure books and means of assistance from Constantinople and the Levant. His house was prudently kept, his sons most carefully instructed. Giovanni of Imola was their first tutor, and then Tommaso of Sarzana, who was destined for high honours. The perplexities in which this excellent man was involved in the disturbances of 1433-34 have been already related. The heads of the opposite party could hardly have considered him dangerous, but he was inconvenient to them. They said they wished for no court of appeal in Florence,[348] and Cosimo de' Medici who yet had had more opportunities than others of knowing Palla's great qualities and honest intentions, was not magnanimous enough to lay aside hatred and envy and restore him to his home. In his influential days the guidance of the State was placed in the hands of men who were interested in intellectual as well as political matters. Rinaldo degli Albizzi was occupied all his life with public affairs, perhaps more than any other citizen. If we consider that for more than fifteen years he was the real and, so to say, hereditary head of the aristocratic party, we scarcely understand how he could possibly undertake one embassy after another, commission after commission. The astonishment increases when we review the numberless reports and memoranda composed during his missions, which lasted to the beginning of 1433. They are some of the oldest of the large collection of documents the Republic can boast of. They are memorials drawn from the cultivated mind of an acute observer and practised business man, who treats the smallest things with the same conscientious care as the greatest; a virtue which was peculiar to this time and people, and the brilliant results of which are displayed in various fields. The vulgar tongue, in general still excluded from the treatment of scientific questions, or even political affairs, as far as it was a question of real representation (even in the discussions of the guilds it was first employed in 1414), appears here with a precision and skill which forms a prelude to the political writings of Lorenzo de' Medici and Machiavelli. That Rinaldo selected Tommaso of Sarzana as well as Palla Strozzi to be the tutor of his sons shows what value he placed on good training, such as he had enjoyed himself. A physician who

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united medical science with philosophical studies, Giovanni Baldi de' Tambini of Faenza, teacher at the Florentine university, and burgher of the city, in intimate connection with Rinaldo and Cosimo de' Medici in their youth, has noted a disputation which he held with the latter on the question as to whether science was opposed to the [450]
Christian faith. The illustrious youth replied in the affirmative, like Pietro Pomponazzo a century after him, and supported his opinion by expressions of Aristotle.[349] His eloquence was praised by several of his contemporaries; Giovanni Cavalcanti says expressly that he maintained the honour of eloquence in Florence. It is more than probable that he wrote political poems.[350] Leonardo Aretino addressed a treatise on war to him. Among those who were active at the university we do not find his name; but we find among its promoters Niccoli, as well as Niccolò da Uzzano, the latter of whom evinced the interest he took in science by a munificent bequest for the foundation of a college for fifty scholars, a gift unfortunately employed for other purposes.

Although the clouds which gathered more and more at the close of the third decade of the century threatened disturbances and war, a busy scientific life flourished at Florence. In April 1429, Francesco Filelfo of Tolentino, persuaded by Palla Strozzi, was appointed teacher of Greek literature.[351] He had studied for years at Constantinople, and latterly taught at Bologna. Never, perhaps, had a philologist such influence on the public, or was able to assemble such a brilliant circle of listeners, not even Pomponio Seto. However much allowance we may make for the boasting of a man vain beyond belief, who ranked himself in serious earnest above Virgil and Cicero because he found in himself the poet and orator combined, and because Greek and Latin were alike familiar to him, he yet possessed extraordinary talents. His versatility was as great as his industry, supported by the most powerful constitution, which enabled him to continue the usual fatiguing life of the humanists [451]
unharmed to a great age. After having explained Homer and Thucydides, Cicero and Livy, he gave lectures in Sta. Maria del Fiore on the Divine Comedy. In the spring of 1431 the rights of citizenship were awarded to him. But his sharp tongue and his vanity, which led him to interfere in the civil factions, made him numerous enemies. A decree of banishment[352] promulgated against him in April, 1432, on account of an insult to the Republic of Venice, was not executed, but he was unable to save himself in the confusion which led to the fall of the Albizzi. With a degree of self-assertion which his position outside the political circle did not justify, he placed himself on the side of the now defeated optimates, with whom he remained in close connection even in their misfortunes. In his confident expectation of success he put no limits to his expression of hatred of the Medici, whom he accused of personal malice and disloyalty. When Cosimo was imprisoned, Filelfo went so far as to call upon his enemies in hexameters to prevent future quarrels and bloodshed by the death of that one man.[353] This would have been sufficient, even if he had not indulged in bitterness against the friends of the Medici—Niccoli, Marsuppini, Poggio, the latter of whom was not far behind his opponent in virulence. When Cosimo returned, Filelfo fled to Siena, and for years the most undignified strife went on, not only in books and letters, but even with sharper weapons and criminal investigations; the effusions of the celebrated scholar himself gave the saddest proof of his unbridled temper.

Cosimo de' Medici was inferior to many of his illustrious fellow-citizens in classical knowledge, but to few in scholarly interest and vivid appreciation of those tendencies the pursuit of which imparted to his epoch such great splendour.[354] Trained, even in his youth, by a skilful father to the business of a great mercantile house, gifted [452]
with rare insight into financial and mercantile affairs, he and his brother Lorenzo received a thorough education. Lorenzo rivalled him in respect to scientific interests. Antonio of Todi, a pupil of Filelfo's, extols Lorenzo by saying that, though not eloquent, he always displayed correct understanding and ripe knowledge, which, besides the example afforded him by excellent parents, he had obtained through good teachers, by attending to his studies from his youth, and collecting a number of valuable books in addition to the other treasures of his house. Poggio, in his memorial addressed to Marsuppini on Lorenzo's death a quarter of a century before that of his brother, specially dwells on his correct and refined taste, his

good sense and his urbanity of manner, and says that he has lost in him father, brother, and friend, one who had always assisted him when he required it, and abundantly supported him.[355] Thus we can understand how the two brothers lived in perfect harmony together, and supported one another in their patriotic labours.

It was Roberto de' Rossi who instructed the two young Medici and several of their contemporaries of the families Albizzi (Rinaldo's brother Luca for example), the Alessandri, Buoninsegni, Tebaldi, &c., in the Latin language and literature. When this man, of ripe age and quite alone in life, walked out, the young men who were distinguished in study and general conduct, and who sometimes shared his meals, were seen following him. From his youth upwards, Cosimo always had a great predilection for Latin literature and scientific labours generally. Preferring grave conversation he soon turned his back on pleasures which he took up for the moment, and habitually spent his leisure hours in talk with the learned. A love of books was developed in him in the course of time by his endeavours to place what he collected at the disposal, first of friends and then of the city in general. This predilection, united to a love for antiquities, [453] was doubtless fostered by Poggio, with whom he formed an intimate acquaintance at Florence at the time when the latter came thither with Pope John XXIII., and later in Constance. Poggio seldom writes a letter to a Florentine friend without sending messages to Cosimo and Lorenzo. He took an interest in all that concerned them. On February 28, 1429, he wrote from Rome to Niccoli: 'I have heard of the death of the excellent Giovanni de' Medici, who has so well served his country. My sorrow is great, as well because the land is poorer by the loss of such a citizen as because his sons have lost such a father and we such a serviceable friend and patron. I can imagine how grieved Cosimo and Lorenzo are. It cannot be otherwise, with their excellent qualities and the merits of their sainted father.'[356] In political affairs Poggio stood on the Medicean side; and in his letters to Niccoli about the war against Lucca, and its cause, he expresses himself often with great asperity, and anticipates nothing but mischief to those engaged in it.[357]

The friendship between Cosimo and Poggio seems to have been unsullied. The ever-ready Papal secretary always praised his patron, both before and after the time when the latter placed the conduct of affairs in his hands. This was in 1430, when Cosimo was residing at Rome for a time, on business which after his father's death had devolved upon him and his brother, who had been there in April 1429. Cosimo always managed to unite business with his various studies and favourite pursuits. In a letter to Niccoli, Poggio informs him of a visit made with his countryman to the site of Ostia, where the ruins of a mediæval castle were raised on those of the Roman town. 'When Cosimo and I visited the harbour, we found no inscriptions. The temple, which has been ruined by the people for use in lime-burning, presents none. The epigram from a monument [454] consisting of a single block of marble with fasces sculptured on it, found on the banks of the river on the Via d'Ostia, I have already sent to you.' When Cosimo went into exile, Poggio addressed a long consolatory letter to him. He showed him what he had lost, and what remained to him; how rich the compensation, and what a comfort it was he had nothing to reproach himself with, and that the consciousness of the services he had rendered his native country was his. The letter does not speak of a prospect of a speedy return home.[358] Poggio, who came to Florence during the exile of his patron, did not, perhaps, believe in it. When it occurred, however, he compared it to the return of Cicero, as Paolo Giovio did long afterwards.

After the year 1434, Cosimo was very seldom absent from home, but antiquities and objects of art came to him from all quarters. He even seems to have become Poggio's rival, for Greek sculptures originally destined for the latter came into his possession. Everywhere manuscripts, intaglios, inscriptions, and coins were offered to him, even long before he began to make the large collections for his own and others' use, as will soon be mentioned. The most travelled and skilful collector of antiquities of this time, the father of the race of wandering antiquaries, a scholar and trader too, though not always trustworthy as either, Ciriaco Pizzicolli of Ancona, has given eloquent expression to the gratitude he owed to Cosimo. This man travelled through Italy and the Levant at a time when the rule of the Venetians in a part of Greece, in the Ionic and

Ægean Sea, and the residence of Italian families on the Greek islands, the Lusignans in Cyprus, and the order of St. John in the island of Rhodes, afforded facilities for travelling. He visited Roumania and Anatolia, which were for the most part under Turkish rule, and went into Egypt which already maintained many connections with the West. His eyes were directed towards the far [455]
East, when death surprised him soon after the middle of the century. It was Ciriaco who served as cicerone in 1433 to the Emperor Sigismund, whom he had accompanied from Siena to Rome, the inhabitants of which were severely and not unjustly condemned for their Vandalism by the orderly Florentines, accustomed to a city that was growing daily richer in ornament. The Romans made lime from the marble of their monuments, but furnished no native antiquary to guide across their wide fields of ruins the ruler of the empire named after Rome.[359] Ciriaco stood in connection with the whole learned world of Florence, and many may have availed themselves of his services, but not all spoke well of him, for Poggio complains repeatedly of his boastfulness, a fault which was shared by his successors.[360]

In the Medicean household renowned scholars were employed as instructors of the two sons, of whom Pietro, the elder, was eighteen years old when his father returned from exile. We find Antonio Pacini of Todi and Alberto Enoch of Ascoli often named both in the literary history and letters of the time. Enoch of Ascoli taught the Medici and Bardi in Florence, gave public lectures in Perugia, and was variously employed by Pope Nicholas V. in the formation of the Vatican library, and in Germany. In the year 1451 the Pope sent him as far as to the Grand Master of the Teutonic order in Prussia to make researches in monastic and other libraries.[361] 'Our Enoch,' writes Traversari (1436) to Cosimo[362]—'you know whom I mean, since he was your sons' tutor—begs pressingly to be commended to you. What the question is he will tell you. According to my opinion, [456]
he deserves your support both for his unusual learning and his modesty, and the confidence he places in you and your goodness. I do all for him on my part that I can, but your authority will do more for him than another's.' Antonio of Todi[363] came from Filelfo's school. He was very intimate in the Medicean house, and seems especially to have attached himself to the younger sons. 'I have received a letter from you,' he writes once to Giovanni de' Medici, 'as welcome as it is pleasing, for I see in it how much you aspire after virtue and good report, by accepting the admonitions that are intended for your good. This lies at my heart as much as at yours, on account of our mutual affection as of my love to Cosimo, whom nothing in the world can render more happy than to see that his son is sensible and fears God.' Antonio of Todi's merits of style cannot have been great, if Cardinal Ammanati, a reasonable judge, calls unreadable his translations of Plutarch's Biographies, of which he speaks in the letters to the youthful Medici.

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CHAPTER III.

THE COUNCIL OF UNION AND PLATONISM. COSIMO DE' MEDICI'S LATER YEARS.

LEARNED studies were at their height in Florence when Pope Eugenius IV. arrived on June 23, 1434, and soon afterwards saw his court assembled around him. It was, as we have said, the time when Rinaldo degli Albizzi felt the ground unsafe beneath his feet, when he hoped to secure power to himself by proceeding against Cosimo de' Medici, and had been urged to the violent attempt which ended in his own ruin. Except in the removal of Francesco Filelfo, the peaceful but decisive revolution seems to have exercised no influence on literary affairs. The presence of the Papal court was of service to studies of science and those who fostered them: their long residence in the city, which was then the centre of all scientific and literary effort, had, too, a powerful and decided influence on the course pursued by that court under Eugenius' successor. This successor, Tommaso of Sarzana, was the former tutor of the sons of Rinaldo degli Albizzi and Palla Strozzi and, as secretary to Cardinal Niccolò Albergati, the excellent bishop of Bologna, revisited the city in which he had once resided in comparative poverty. The two men who had been most intimate with him were forced into an exile which only terminated in death. Tommaso, however, who showed himself grateful to their descendants in the days of his greatness, found friendly reception and patronage from Cosimo de' Medici; and till the death of Nicholas V. this friendship continued to be a great [458]
assistance to them and to science generally. Vespasiano da Bisticci, who has left us an attractive picture of the good and learned Pope, describes how Tommaso, after he had accompanied his cardinal to the palace, met in the corner of the square the men who represented learning in Florence at that time, namely, Leonardo, and Carlo of Arezzo, Gianozzo Manetti, Giovanni Aurispa, Gasparo of Bologna, and Poggio Bracciolini. The latter, after much danger from Piccinino's mercenaries, into whose hands he fell in his flight to Rome, had been liberated for a heavy ransom and had followed Pope Eugenius.[364] Here they conversed on learned subjects morning and evening in the open air, with the simplicity which characterised the manners of the time. Carlo Marsuppini, freed from a troublesome rival by Filelfo's removal, was the most celebrated teacher. Cardinals and prelates might be seen among his listeners.

We now approach an occurrence, the result of which was rather a great stir than any practical effect in the history of the Church. The Council of Florence exercised great influence on the progress of learning at a time when the impetus had been already given in a certain direction. But a small number of the Greek fathers who came to Italy were able to participate in scientific research, and the majority of them were surpassed by the Florentines; yet the presence of so many Greeks did exercise a decided influence on the connection between Eastern and Western Europe, especially as the final destruction of the eastern empire happened scarcely more than a decade later. Many Greeks who sought a new home after the conquest of Constantinople had the way shown to them by the council, although the Rome of Nicholas V. had already begun to rival Florence. Among the Greek fathers, Cardinal Bessarion, who promoted the interests of learning to the end of his life, was perhaps the only man of scientific importance for the West. Among the assistants and interpreters, many may be named who made [459]
themselves famous in the history of the revival of classical literature in Italy. In the foremost of these rank Georgios Gemistos, surnamed Plethon, Nicolas Secundinus of Eubœa, and Theodore Gaza of Thessalonica.

Georgios Gemistos,[365] a native of the Morea, had been tutor to Chrysoloras, whom he survived many years, attaining to a great age. He had also instructed Bessarion. Plato's writings and doctrines formed his chief study. His zealous research into and dissemination of them, and his labours for the construction of a new philosophical system with their aid, was so great that he gave lectures everywhere on his favourite author. He did so in Florence, where Cosimo de' Medici mingled among his hearers, and soon gained an

interest in doctrines the intellectual meaning of which made a deep impression on one who, like him, inclined to peaceful meditation, seems to have found as little to satisfy him in the lectures of the theologians of the time as in the disputations of the philosophers, which commonly degenerated into dialectic subtleties. As Cosimo did not understand Greek, Gemistos must have employed the Latin language. It was his lectures which awoke in Cosimo the idea of reviving the study of Platonic philosophy in his native country. This is shown by the words of the man whom he chose to carry his intention into execution. 'The great Cosimo,' says Marsilio Ficino, in the translation of the works of Plotinus, dedicated to the grandson of his first patron not long before his death, 'at the time when the council of Greeks and Latins summoned by Pope Eugenius IV. was sitting at Florence, frequently heard the lectures of the Greek philosopher called Plethon, who disputed on Platonic mysteries like another Plato. The lively style of this man inspired him with such enthusiasm, that there arose immediately in his lofty mind the thought of forming an academy as soon as a favourable moment should be found.' The history of the origin of the Platonic Academy presents two peculiar phenomena: first, that a man who had already passed middle life should be so strongly attracted by an author whose acquaintance he had made through the medium of a foreign language; secondly, that he selected as his chief companion and special instrument in carrying out his intentions a boy who, at the time when the project was thought of, scarcely numbered seven years.

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Marsilio Ficino[366] was born in October, 1433, the turning-point in the fortunes of the Medici, at Figline, a not insignificant place in the upper valley of the Arno. His father was a skilful surgeon, who removed to Florence, where the Medici among others employed him. The son, educated at the university, seems to have entered the Medicean house at the age of eighteen or nineteen years. He says himself that he had two fathers, Ficino and Cosimo de' Medici. He owed his birth to the one, and his second birth to the other; the first had dedicated him to Galen, the second to the divine Plato. Both were physicians, one for the body and the other for the soul. The youth did not deceive Cosimo's expectations. Of a delicate constitution, he united a keen feeling for poetry and music with a profound and delicate faculty for investigating natural phenomena and the doctrines of ancient wisdom. He began the study of Platonic doctrines before he understood Greek, but even without the counsel of Cosimo and his friend Landino, his senior by nine years, he would hardly have satisfied himself with knowledge derived from later Roman authors, as not only the prevalent tendency of the time, but his own intellectual bent must have urged him to seek the fountain head. When Marsilio began his Greek studies, namely in 1456, John Argyropulos, who about the middle of the century did as much for a knowledge of language and literature as Chrysoloras at the beginning, must have already begun his lectures at the university, and these were probably of assistance to Marsilio. During his exile at Padua, Palla Strozzi had attracted him, and Cosimo de' Medici afterwards gained him for Florence, where for fifteen years he taught, besides Greek literature, Aristotelian philosophy, and in 1464 was presented with the rights of citizenship. The favour shown by Cosimo to the Peripatetic Argyropulos was continued to his sons and grandsons, and we shall find this useful man busy in later years, while at the time now under consideration many who made themselves an honourable name were among his disciples; as, for instance, Donato Acciaiuoli, Pandolfo Pandolfini, and finally Poliziano, and Lorenzo de' Medici.

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Marsilio was thirty years old when, at Cosimo's wish, he undertook the translation of the Hermetic writings, and Plato's works. That the former, a production of scientific mysticism and sentimentality of the new Platonic school at Alexandria, excited so strongly the interest of a new school, which aimed at and laid claim to the revival of Platonic tradition, shows clearly what danger this school was in of amalgamating true Platonism with its Alexandrian outgrowths, and of falling, like the new Platonists, into the fundamental error of confounding true doctrine with arbitrary forms. But the circumstance that Argyropulos translated writings of Aristotle for Cosimo at the same time indicates, in a manner most honourable to the latter, how anxious he was to form an independent opinion for himself by comparison of the doctrines of the two great philosophers in whose systems all ancient and even

the germs of modern thought were preserved for later times. This was an aspiration which certainly deserves recognition, however imperfect the results may have been compared with the means employed. Cosimo's kindness towards Marsilio Ficino remained unchanged to the end. He presented him with a house in the neighbourhood of Sta. Maria Nuova, and a country residence at Careggi, where the little farm of Montevecchio still reminds us of the friendly and pious man. When in the summer of 1464 Cosimo retired seriously ill to Careggi, he invited Marsilio thither.[367] It was in listening to the books on the One Origin of Things and the Highest Good that the last days of the sick man were spent. The epoch of the perfect development and most important labours of Marsilio Ficino belongs, however, to the times of Cosimo's grandson. [462]

The most fruitful labours of a man no less intimately connected with the Medicean house belong to the same time. In the village of Borgo alla Collina, right in the heart of the Casentino, not far from Poppi, on the right bank of the Arno, are still to be seen the mortal remains, dried to a mummy, of Cristoforo Landino,[368] who, descended from a family of the neighbouring Pratovecchio, was born at Florence in 1424.[369] A papal secretary, Angelo of Todi, facilitated by a legacy the youth's studies, first in Volterra and then in Florence, where he was soon recommended to Cosimo. He has gratefully acknowledged what he owed to his patron in verse and prose,[370] and, as with others, the affection of the head of the house was transmitted to sons and grandsons. Among learned men Carlo Marsuppini seems to have exercised especial influence on him; Landino himself assisted in determining the bent of Marsilio Ficino's studies. He soon formed friendships with all who devoted themselves to science—with the excellent Jacopo Ammannato, who rose from poverty and distress to the ecclesiastical purple, and, as an affluent man, preserved an affectionate feeling for the city in which he had gained a scanty living as teacher. Cristoforo also became acquainted with literary men, and such as associated themselves with them, as Antonio and Bernardo Canigiani, Giovanni Cavalcanti, Roberto Salviati, &c. In 1457, the three-and-thirtieth year of his life, the chair of rhetoric and poetry at the university was confided to him, and a career began for him in which we shall meet him again an aged man. If he had had no other pupils than Lorenzo de' Medici and Angelo Poliziano, they would have sufficed to prove the superiority of his teaching. [463]

While the Council of Union contributed directly to promote Greek studies and the adoption of Greek philosophy, it had no influence in the province of native theological literature. He who made himself the greatest name as a theological writer, and took an active part in the ecclesiastical councils, was entirely outside the literary circle. The character of Antonio Pierozzi, who is venerated by the Florentines of the present day as Saint Antoninus, and was the model of a pious and active pastor, shone alike in his writings and his life—godfearing, zealous, learned, untiring, simple and modest withal, and void of all pomp and studied form. Born in 1389, he entered priestly orders when about sixteen years old, and the cell in St. Mark's convent which he inhabited, and which preserves many memorials of him, is still shown. His youth coincided with the first active movements of the learned class styled humanists, but it did not concern him. His studies were strictly theological; but as he never withdrew from public life when the commissions given him did not clash with his pastoral duties, so he included in his labours the field of history, which often afforded him guidance in the science of his calling. His 'Summa Theologiæ,' first printed entire eighteen years after his death, and republished in the last century, is considered in his native country as the first text-book of moral theology. His letters, chiefly addressed to a pious lady of high rank, Madonna Diodata degli Adimari, are moral and theological treatises, full of apostolic zeal and love, with correct and clear judgment, that knew how to combine active and contemplative life; and though he advises his reader to occupy herself rather with edifying literature than with the heroic deeds of the Paladins, he by no means neglects the affairs of this world.[371] His chronicle, reaching down to the year of his death, 1459, makes no pretensions to artistic form, and the humanistic historiographers would have certainly looked with some scorn on the work, which appeared in 1474, if they had noticed it at all. Entire portions of this work are taken from others, a [464]

proceeding which we meet with in the nineteenth century, and which was less scrupled at in the times of the pious archbishop than later, as such works were often only intended for the most intimate circle of friends, or for a single convent. Nevertheless, the chronicle had a value of its own for the fifteenth century, so that the number of editions which it passed through is explained. His biography relates how Saint Antoninus himself practised in his life what he taught and advised in his writings, how he influenced the moral and religious conduct of the Florentines, and put down disorders, which had become prevalent under prelates like Vitelleschi, Scarampi, and Zabarella, archbishops only in name or for a short time. His example had an encouraging and elevating effect on Orlando Bonarli, his immediate successor. 'As much as lay in him,' says Vespasiano,[372] 'he attempted to emulate the pattern afforded him by his predecessor. Although some in the city endured him against their will, for every one tries to escape as much as he can from the effects of the laws, he never allowed himself to falter in the fulfilment of his [465] duty, and knew no respect of persons where it was a question of reason and justice. He thus left his diocese in a praiseworthy state. Would to God that this had lasted so!'

Cosimo de' Medici's position, his warm sympathy for intellectual effort, his liberality towards men of letters, explain the number of addresses and petitions that reached him from all sides at a time when patronage was at its height. No treatise or dialogue could be written, no ode or elegy composed, no book translated from a classical author without a dedication to him—a practice connected with the epistolography of the fourteenth century, which arose less from the requirements of personal intercourse than from its adaptation to learned purposes, besides being an imitation of classical models which scholars thought to excel by remodelling letters into treatises. Letters always remained in fashion from the days of Petrarch; and though a good portion of the literary and even political history of the time is found in printed collections of letters, which might be indefinitely increased, in most of these epistolaries there is much mere wordiness. In the matter of dedications even men of high standing were not unfrequently influenced by pecuniary considerations. Many made an actual business of it. Of course this circumstance did not exclude friendly relations. When Poggio on his marriage in 1435, at the age of fifty-five, with Vaggia Buondelmonti, then only eighteen years old, dedicated to Cosimo the dialogue 'Shall an old man marry?' ('An seni uxor sit ducenda'), in which Niccoli and Marsuppini appear as interlocutors, it was only an expression of old friendship. The Medicean manuscripts are full of dedications. The most striking, however, is that of a book which has left a mournful name in the literature of the Renaissance, and which only in later years, and in other lands, was allowed to appear in print—the century accustomed to grossness even to satiety having lacked the courage to print it. This was the Hermaphroditus, the [466] licentious production of an otherwise learned and elegant author, Antonio Beccadelli, usually named, after his birthplace, Panormita. When King Alfonso of Naples, the enthusiastic admirer of antiquity, patronised and rewarded the poet, and the Emperor Sigismund bestowed on him the laurel which had once adorned Petrarca's chaste and noble muse, we should scarcely be surprised that Cosimo de' Medici accepted the dedication, if it were not that the work, which revelled in indecent allusions to modern circumstances and persons, was so little in conformity with his whole character. Beccadelli's connections with Cosimo originated in the year 1432, when the former taught ecclesiastical law so successfully in Florence, that they could not part with him when Padua and Bologna attempted to gain him for themselves.[373] Strange contrasts! on the one side, the council and the pious archbishop; on the other, productions of the worst paganism. The popular orators of the time, Bernardino of Siena and Roberto of Lecce, burned the book of Panormita at Milan and Bologna in the public square (that it was done at Ferrara in the presence of Pope Eugenius is not proved). Poggio, Filelfo, and Valla appeared in arms against it. Would that they had observed morality and decency better in their own writings instead of drawing down upon the entire literature of humanism the deserved reproach of cynical immorality and indecency on the one hand, and servility and unbounded vanity on the other!

It is an honour to the learned Florentine world, in the epoch here to be considered, to have remained freer from these sins and

offences than was the case in most other places. If we except the undignified disputes which were principally caused by a foreigner, Filelfo, and ascribe Poggio's reported dishonourable quarrel with Valla to Roman tradition, Cosimo's time offers hardly anything of this sad kind. The circumstance that so many disciples of learning in the higher orders did not consider it as a means of gain,nor belong [467] to that class of literati who consider themselves bound by no personal considerations, certainly contributed to this pleasing state of things. How beneficially the share in literature eagerly taken by those highly placed affected the attitude and position of literature in general life, we see from many accounts. They afford an insight into the circumstances of the time when patriarchal manners still went hand in hand with the requirements of freedom of thought and more general culture in the city as well as in the country-houses. Pastime alternated with serious conversation in which such as filled the first offices of State and went repeatedly as ambassadors to Popes and princes associated themselves with the literary men whom they often fully equalled in scientific cultivation. The meetings at Careggi were not the only ones. Agnolo Pandolfini did even more than the Medici, in his beautiful villa at Signa, where the Arno, on leaving the Pistojan plain, flows to the mountain pass of the Golfolina—a villa which received Pope Eugenius and René of Anjou, Francesco Sforza and Niccolò of Este.[374] This distinguished and wealthy man, who filled the highest offices with honour, and had gained a large experience which doubly disgusted him with the factions that had got the upper hand in the latter times of the Albizzi, had exercised a pacifying influence on the conflict of 1433. All the more deeply was he pained by the inconsiderate use of that victory, and by the circumstance that Cosimo should allow free course to the hatred and covetousness of his partisans. He resided, therefore, much at his villa in order to avoid city matters, and exercised the noblest hospitality in a circle of the most important men, scholars and others. Domestic politics were not allowed to be discussed. The much-read book on the government of families was once ascribed to this country life, and stands in high repute as a mirror of the times [468] and the expression of the feelings and views of a benevolent, sensible, and experienced man: a book of which we shall speak more further on (p. 483). We obtain a view of the country life of a learned and respected citizen in the characteristic sketch of Franco Sacchetti, a grandson of the well-known novelist.[375] He was not rich, but lived very respectably. He had no lack of honours and experience, as he had been ambassador to Pope Pius II. and King Alfonso, and had attained the highest honours. On friendly terms with the Medici, he remained aloof from party-spirit. His knowledge of Greek and Latin literature was extensive. He was intimately connected with John Argyropulos and supported him whenever he could. When he resided at his villa, situated in the neighbourhood of the city, the learned Greek frequently visited him accompanied by his pupils, and the time passed in erudite conversation. Twice in the year he arranged great banquets where only respected and cultivated men were invited.

Even under the more modest circumstances that generally prevail among literary men properly so called, villas and meetings there were not uncommon. When Poggio Bracciolini, to whom the Florentine citizenship had been granted in 1415,[376] was still in the service of the Pope, fifteen years and more before he entered the Florentine exchequer, he purchased an estate near his birthplace, Terranova.[377] 'I will,' thus he wrote to Niccoli, 'adorn with the collected remains of antiquity, my Valdarnesian academy, where I hope to rest when rest be granted me from the stormy sea of life.' Sculptures, Greek and Roman, gems, coins, and inscriptions embellished not only the library but the house and garden. He has expressed his admiration for antique art in a letter to the dealer in antiquities, Francesco of Pistoja.[378] 'When I see nature so admirably imitated in marble, an awe of artistic genius inspires me. Every one has his weakness; mine is to admire the works of [469] distinguished sculptors with a perhaps too lively enthusiasm. But how should I not wonder when I see the expression given to lifeless material by art?' Learned friends, among them Lorenzo, Cosimo's brother, and Niccoli, came to visit him and inspect his collection. Of these visits and conversations traces remain to us in the literary history of the time and the traditions still preserved in the Valdarnese Academy, a learned society which, combining the names

of two sons of the Arno valley, Petrarca and Poggio, has its seat in Montevarchi opposite Terranova, which lies on the right bank of the stream surrounded by green hills. When, in later years, Poggio bought another villa in the Piano di Ripoli, only four miles to the south-east of Florence, it may be easily understood that there was no lack of visitors from the adjacent city.

The brilliancy of the learned society and intellectual life in Florence extended into foreign countries. The connections with England were various. Poggio was disappointed in his expectations of Cardinal Beaufort, an acquaintance from the Council of Constance; and even Duke Humphrey of Gloucester did not answer to those of Leonardo Bruni. But William Gray, afterwards Bishop of Ely, who, after he had pursued his studies at Cologne, continued them at Padua and Ferrara, and represented his native country, England, at Rome in Pope Nicolas V.'s time, had influential connections with the learned world in Italy, particularly with Niccolò Perotto of Sassoferrato. The latter was intimate with the Florentine circle and became subsequently Archbishop of Manfredonia, owing his advance to Gray. Many literary treasures bought by Gray at Florence and elsewhere went to England. So did those which were afterwards collected by John, Earl of Worcester, who, at the expulsion of King Edward IV. in 1470, fell a victim to the hatred excited by the cruelty with which he had exercised his office of Constable. He purchased manuscripts everywhere when on his return from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land he stayed for a time in [470]
Italy. 'On his residence for several days in Florence,' relates Vespasiano, 'he wished to inspect the whole city, and wandered about without any servant except a guide at his left hand. As the name of John Argyropulos was well known to him, he wished to hear his lectures, repaired one morning to the university incognito, and was much pleased.'[379] Even at the time when Pope Eugenius IV. still resided at Florence, the English representative at the Papal court, whom Vespasiano[380] calls Andrea Ols (Holles?), maintained friendly intercourse with Marsuppini, Manetti, Palmieri, &c., and had collected such a number of manuscripts, old and new, that he was obliged to engage a vessel to transport them to his native country. Eneas Silvio Piccolomini had more influence than the Florentine circle on the connections with Germany. We shall speak later of those with Hungary.[381]

Cosimo de' Medici lived long enough to see the entire generation of the first Florentine humanists descend into the grave. Leonardo Bruni, Carlo Marsuppini and Poggio Bracciolini died as chancellors of the Republic; Ambrogio Traversari as general of the Camaldulese, a dignity to which Pope Eugenius IV. had elevated him, a promotion by which he was removed from his true field of action, that of science and literature, into an overwhelming current of petty affairs; Roberto de' Rossi and Niccolò Niccoli had died in their native land years before; Giannozzo Manetti in voluntary exile at Naples; Palla Strozzi, at the age of ninety, in the spring of 1462, at Padua, after eight-and-twenty years of exile borne with noble resignation. Cosimo lived to see the man whom he had known as a humble teacher and whom he afterwards supported as Pope Nicolas V., emulate him in the most earnest and discriminating fostering of science, during the few years of his papacy. For but a few weeks did [471]
Æneas Sylvius the successor of Nicolas survive him. In Sylvius humanism ascended the Papal throne, for Pope Pius II. had the most elegant and in many respects the most comprehensive intellect of the time. A new world arose round the man who nearly all his life had guided the fortunes of his native land. Much which he had planted flourished luxuriantly; much also assumed a new shape. Classical literature had become the principal object in his time. The most illustrious humanists wrote only in Latin. The unassuming sister of this classical literature, who spoke the popular language, studded as it was in the preceding century with the most brilliant flowers, but not yet considered equal in birth, lived unhonoured by a glance from the learned men who, uninstructed by the fate of Petrarca's 'Africa,' continued to sing the deeds of Alfonso of Aragon and Francesco Sforza in Latin, and were guilty of a far greater error than that of Petrarca. Yet the time was not far distant when this despised language of the people should once more spread its wings in freedom and soar aloft.

CHAPTER IV.

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LIBRARIES AND THE BOOK TRADE. VESPASIANO DA BISTICCI.

While such a busy life was developed under the influence and continual encouragement of Cosimo de' Medici, the two great collections had originated through him which at that time supplied a centre for literary work, and now have combined their most important contents in the same locality and form the most considerable part of the celebrated library to which (as to a sanctuary of the literature of antiquity and the Renaissance) learned men of all countries continually direct their steps. In the days of his exile, Cosimo, in conjunction with his brother, by the erection of the library-hall of San Giorgio Maggiore at Venice,[382] had bequeathed to a foreign city where he found eager fellow-labourers—especially one, Francesco Barbaro—a monument of his gratitude and munificence. Should he not do the same, and even more, for his native city? In San Marco he would not only found a monument of his piety but of his love of knowledge. In the third dormitory of the [473] convent we see two cells which, according to tradition, Cosimo retained for his own use when he resided here in pious intercourse with St. Antoninus and his holy companions, and where, as the inscription says, Pope Eugenius IV. spent the night after having been present at the consecration of the church on the day of Epiphany, 1442. Fra Angelico painted the Epiphany here, and later the cell was adorned with an excellent portrait of Cosimo by the hand of Jacopo da Pontormo. The library-hall makes the greatest impression. It is more than fifty yards long by ten yards broad, and has along its whole length a double row of eleven slender columns supporting the roof, and at the end a square space shut off by transverse walls, from the large windows of which the inmates formerly looked over broad quiet gardens, now turned into streets.[383] On the narrow outer side of this hall we see the Medicean arms with the balls as they were before the alterations made by King Louis XI. On the book-shelves, now set up along the rows of columns, lie more than eighty choir-books—partly belonging to the convent of San Marco, partly to other convents and churches—with miniatures from the hands of celebrated artists of the fifteenth century.

While the building was in progress Niccolò Niccoli died in 1437. The wish he had always cherished of seeing his valuable collection of books useful to the community, as he had always placed them at the disposal of his friends, was fulfilled. In his will he directed that a commission of sixteen members should dispose of his literary property so that it might best serve the community. Ambrogio Traversari, Leonardo Bruni, Poggio Bracciolini, Carlo Marsuppini, Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici, Giannozzo Manetti, and Francesco Sacchetti, were among these sixteen.[384] As Cosimo de' Medici, who had long supported Niccoli, undertook to satisfy his creditors, the disposal of the property was referred to him. The entire value of [474] the manuscripts, about 800 in number, was estimated at 6,000 gold florins, a considerable sum which yet hardly corresponded with their real value at that time. When in 1441 the hall was finished, 400 manuscripts were laid out on sixty-four long reading-desks such as we still see in the Laurentian library, all inscribed with Niccoli's name.[385] At Cosimo's request Tommaso of Sarzana made regulations for the arrangement of the books,—rules which then served for the Fiesolan library, for that at Urbino, and that of the Sforzas of Pesaro.[386] 'Whoever has to arrange a library,' remarks Vespasiano in Pope Nicolas V.'s life, 'cannot dispense with that inventory written by Tommaso's own hand.'

Of the remains of Niccoli's manuscripts Cosimo retained a part to increase the literary treasures of his house, which, enlarged by his sons and grandsons, formed the nucleus of the subsequent Medicean-Laurentian library. He divided others among his friends. But he continually thought of filling up the vacancies in the collection of San Marco, for which he made purchases and copies. A part of Coluccio Salutati's books had gone thither with Niccoli's library; Cosimo bought and presented it with another part,[387] as

well as manuscripts of Filippo di Ser Ugolini, one of the cleverest and best-informed men in the public service of the State.[388] Vespasiano and the Dominican Fra Giuliano Lapaccini were especially occupied in Lucca and Siena with purchasing and copying. Cosimo, so variously occupied, had ordered that one of the monks of San Marco should send in the receipt to his bank in order [475] to receive the necessary sums. Death alone prevented him from making this library complete according to the requirements of the times; Biondio Flavio, the Roman annalist and antiquary, declared that, as it was, it was the finest of the age. In 1453 the hall and a part of the books were seriously damaged by an earthquake, but were restored by Cosimo and his son Piero.

This one collection, however, was not sufficient for the active and liberal man. When he rebuilt the abbey of Fiesole, he determined to furnish this also with literary treasures. Vespasiano, whom he employed in this, describes how it was done.[389] 'When I was in his chamber one morning, he asked what means I could suggest for forming this library? I answered that it was impossible to procure it by purchase, as the requisite books could not be collected. He answered, And how are they otherwise to be obtained? On my answering that new copies must be made, he asked further if I would undertake such copies? I declared myself ready to do so. Thereupon he empowered me to begin the work, the execution of which he left to me. The payments would be made by his bank on presentation of the receipts by the prior of the abbey. So I went to work; and as he wished it to be done as speedily as possible, and there was no want of money, I engaged in a short time 45 copyists, and furnished 200 volumes in 22 months. The arrangement was the excellent one suggested by Pope Nicolas, which was used in his own library. As all the works were not to be found at Florence, we sent to Milan, Bologna, and other places. Thus Cosimo saw this collection and an inventory of it finished, and had great pleasure in it, while he rejoiced at the speed with which it had been completed.' The present Medicean-Laurentian library preserves, beside the literary treasures of the Medici house, the principal part of the collections made by Cosimo. In 1783 the manuscripts from the dissolved abbey [476] of Fiesole, 223 in number, were added to the Laurentiana, and in 1808 those of San Marco. The latter, at the time of the abolition of clerical orders by the Napoleonic government, amounted to about a thousand, many of which have, however, been lost, and others returned to their former place at the restoration of 1814.[390] As with the collection of the Dominican convent, Cosimo and his sons and grandsons continued to increase that of Fiesole by new acquisitions and presents. The magniloquence of the inscriptions of many of the volumes, in which the regular clergy of the abbey praise the liberality of their patrons, may be carried too far. Nevertheless it is pleasing to meet with these proofs of the affectionate interest taken by the men in whose hands the guidance of the State lay in the institutions connected with ecclesiastical foundations, and through them profitable to the whole community. They are proofs, too, of an intimate intercourse between the clergy and laity which was advantageous to both.[391]

When Federigo of Montefeltro founded the celebrated library of [477] Urbino, for which from thirty to forty copyists were fully employed in different towns, so that the copies alone are said to have cost nearly thirty thousand gold florins; a library, the beautiful hall of which, in the noble ducal palace, is described to us by Bernardo Baldi[392] and its wealth by Vespasiano[393]—the library of San Marco was of great use to him. 'Illustrious lord and brother,' he wrote on January 23, 1473, to Cosimo's grandson,[394] 'I have already requested your Magnificence to charge the brethren of San Marco to deliver to Vespasiano any of their books which he may require for the use of the copyists employed for me in your city. I now repeat the request that it may please you to give these orders, that for my sake they may be obliging to Vespasiano, whereby your Magnificence would do me a great favour.' From this letter, and that addressed to Lorenzo by the brethren of the convent, in which they sign themselves as 'Custos librorum bibliothecæ vestræ in Sto. Marco,'[395] we see that the family reserved a certain right of possession for themselves.

Vespasiano da Bisticci, to whom we owe so many valuable data for the history of his times, is the worthiest representative of the book trade, as it was developed about the middle of the fifteenth

century in consequence of the great discoveries then made and increased literary activity. His intimate intercourse with popes, princes, prelates, and great lords, and the numerous and important commissions entrusted to him, prove his excellence and the high respect he enjoyed. The contents and tone of his biographies and character sketches, exceeding a hundred in number, are most valuable for a knowledge of the literary as well as the moral and [478] general culture of the times. He displays a warm heart and excellent feeling, nor is his correct judgment weakened by his benevolence. People of high position were in intimate correspondence with him; Giannozzo Manetti, Donato Acciaiuoli, Niccolò Perotti, &c., for whom he purchased books, while, beside the Medici and the Duke of Urbino, Pope Nicolas V. employed him in the foundation of the Vatican. 'I accept,' thus Manetti[396] writes to him on one occasion, 'your offer respecting the books you heard of—the Bible, and "Lives of the Fathers." Send them me, I beg, and it will give me much pleasure. But that you do not mention the "Avicenna" seems a bad sign for medicine. Try to procure it for me, for I need it. In case you succeed in finding a "Paulus Orosius," and Euclid's Geometry, do the same.' He did not pursue his business mechanically. When employed in arranging the Urbino library he used, for comparison, beside the inventories of the Vaticana and San Marco, those of Pavia and Oxford.[397] In the number of new manuscripts which he caused to be prepared, there was unavoidably a great deal of carelessness. Angelo Poliziano complains once in the dictata composed in 1481 for Piero de' Medici, Lorenzo's son, of the incorrectness of the Urbino manuscripts;[398] a complaint which Bottari made, in the last century, in reference to the codex of Virgil belonging to the time of Vespasiano. But it would be unjust to lay the blame of this on him. Down to his latest years he was continually employed by Cosimo's son and grandson, and seems to have been considered the first literary connoisseur in Florence. When an old man, in 1487 and 1490, he presented several books to the library of San Marco, of which he had himself witnessed the origin.[399]

This man, to whom we are indebted in a variety of ways, [479] belonged to a burgher family of mediocre means, residing at the little village of Sta. Lucia, near Bisticci in the upper valley of the Arno, and was born in Florence in 1421.[400] He had evidently attained by business practice a certain literary cultivation (which is shown in his writings, and, with the hearty interest of the author in person and things, makes us easily forget his deficiencies of style), and he witnessed the most brilliant epoch of the Italian book trade, in which one library arose after another and the treasures of antiquity were speedily multiplied; an epoch in which numerous practised copyists worked in Florence for natives and strangers. Here, as elsewhere, many foreigners pursued the same calling; French, German, and Dutch, ecclesiastics and laymen, associated themselves with the Italians, and sometimes settled entirely in Italy. The beauty and regularity of the writing, the richness of the miniatures, the fineness and smoothness of the parchments, the value of the niellos adorning the bindings, explain why, long after the discovery of the art of printing by types, manuscripts such as these retained the favour of those who did not fear expense. The codex of the Divine Comedy which Cristofo degli Amerighi of Pesaro, Podestà of Florence in 1457, caused to be executed here for his wife in that year, and which is now in the National library, is a splendid specimen of the luxury in books at that time.[401] The regularity of the writing on the finest parchment is such that at first we are rather reminded of mechanical reproduction than of penmanship. That those who belonged neither to the learned class nor to the special trade of copyists were occasionally employed in it, is shown by the manuscript found in the Laurentian library of the [480] Divine Comedy, which an Umbrian soldier, Gasparo di Tommaso of Montone, wrote in 'semi-Gothic characters' in 1456 at Ferrara, where he was in the service of the Podestà.[402]

The prices of books still remained very high, which was unavoidable considering it was a question of new copies, and the price depended on the rate of pay of the copyists. In older books their rarity, state of preservation, &c., had of course to be considered. About 1430 Traversari informs Leonardo Giustiniani that he has found a skilful man to copy Livy, &c., for thirty gold florins yearly salary and comfortable board and lodging.[403] About 1442 Poggio sold two volumes of the letters of St. Jerome to Lionello

of Este for a hundred gold florins. The marquis, a generous and munificent master, found the price extravagant, and regarded the surplus pay as a present to Poggio, who considered, however, that the present was too small for a prince, and that he should receive it as a pledge of future liberality.[404] Even persons like Poggio paid a good deal; twenty-five golden florins for a copy of the Bible that was not even complete, ten for a Lactantius, and seven for some tragedies. Piero de' Medici obtained a Cornelius Celsus for twenty gold florins; the price was pretty high, Giannozzo Manetti thought, but it was a fine and beautiful manuscript.[405] In the years 1470-72 Vespasiano furnished Cardinal Bessarion with a copy of the works of St. Augustine for the price of 500 gold florins.[406] The constant commissions from abroad, especially from King Matthias Corvinus, [481]
Alessandro Sforza, the Earl of Worcester, &c.,[407] necessarily had an influence on the prices, and it may be easily understood how the whole business was restricted to a few persons by the extravagant cost of the books. Just when manuscript copies were at their dearest, printing by types began. Vespasiano da Bisticci died fully twenty-six years after the first book had been printed at the Florentine press;[408] but in his writings, which certainly extended to the year 1482, we only find one mention of the new discovery, which so quickly produced the greatest revolution in the field where he had worked so honourably. This mention is characteristic enough. 'In this library,' we read in the description of the treasures collected by the Duke of Urbino,[409] 'all the volumes are of the most faultless beauty, written by hand, with elegant miniatures, and all on parchment. There are no printed books among them; the duke would have been ashamed to have them.'

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CHAPTER V.

LITERATURE OF THE VULGAR TONGUE. POPULAR AND SACRED POETRY.

The period succeeding Petrarca and Boccaccio gave indications that the spirit of poetry was extinguished for some time to come. After Boccaccio's death, his would-be rival, Franco Sacchetti, a man not only skilled in grave and gay compositions, but able to unite literary work with political office at home and abroad, a man capable of thoroughly appreciating the varied circumstances of life, merrily sang:

> The spring of poetry is now grown dry,
> No living form dwells on the Muses' mount;
> Nor can we think that Dante could return,
> Since none will slake their thirst at his pure fount.
> Where'er we listen we but hear the tone
> Of horns, that blow the signal to refrain:
> Where'er we look we see but dead leaves strewn,
> And time must pass ere verdure clothes the plain.

Nor were indications deceptive. For many centuries elapsed ere a poet of real significance arose. Here and there a hand touched the lyre of Petrarca, as, for instance, the Roman Giusto de' Conti, the best among the imitators of Madonna Laura's poet. We can hardly call poetry the greater works of the Florentine Antonio Pucci, in which he recounts the chronicle of Villani in *terzine* and the Pisan war in *ottava rima*, the eight-lined stanza. He was a popular poet, who was not wanting in either feeling or talent, as many of his sonnets testify. Whatever might be attempted in various quarters [483] passed without leaving a trace amid the efforts of the humanists, who despised the language of the people, and thought of nothing but perpetuating ancient culture, compared to which, according to the prevailing opinion, this language took the position of an inferior in birth. All its native power, and the cheerful, calm energy of the Tuscan people, were necessary to prevent its perishing in the midst of a twofold danger. Contempt might have excluded the language from any application to nobler ends, and so caused it to deteriorate. The attempts of the philologists to elevate the vulgar tongue after their fashion might have robbed it of naturalness, independence, character, and originality, and made it a clumsy compromise between old and new, without life or root in the people. The Tuscan language, which became the written speech of Italy, was in the fifteenth century threatened with both these dangers from a want of appreciation of its true spirit and life.

At the commencement of this century we meet with a work which, like its author, still represents the thirteenth, but which casts some rays of light over the following period. It is the tract, 'Del governo di cura familiare,' by the Dominican monk Giovanni Dominici, who has been already mentioned (p. 426). The book originated at the suggestion of a noble lady, Bartolommea degli Obizzi, who, with her husband Antonio degli Alberti and four children, were involved in the fearful persecution which the family had to endure in consequence of the implication of one of the Alberti in the events of 1378. The sensible, God-fearing woman, suddenly overwhelmed with all the cares of the household and the education of her children under the most distressing circumstances, had turned to a pious preaching friar whose counsel stood in high repute in and beyond his native town. He answered with this book, which was preceded by others of the same kind. It is an introduction to Christian life, and to the duties of a Christian education, containing many small details inseparable from the opinions and manners of [484] the time. It is full of a manly spirit, with a clear recognition of the position and duties of parents and heads of families in the midst of changes which arose everywhere in consequence of the newly discovered antique world having already begun to penetrate, as it were, into a society hitherto hedged about by the narrow limits of mediæval culture and customs. From a special reference to the duties of a mother left in some sense in the position of a widow, the book passes to general remarks and considerations suggested by the state of a commonwealth torn by sectarian hatred.[410] The domestic ordinances for a Christian education in reference to respect for parents and authorities are followed by those which are

dictated by active patriotism, zeal for the common good, and the preservation of unity. Parts of this book afford us a complete picture of the domestic condition of the time. The language is still that of the thirteenth century, but the structure of the sentences has no longer the graceful simplicity and transparent clearness which characterise more than one of the author's brethren in orders.

More than a generation after Fra Giovanni Dominici, a man standing in the midst of the new classical school took up the same subject from a wider point of view. He belonged to the family for whose use the book of his predecessor had been destined. We meet with Leon Batista Alberti in almost every field—in science, literature, and art—and only his unexampled versatility hindered him from ascending to the height which he often approached. In his dialogue, consisting of several books, 'La Cura della Famiglia,'[411]
Alberti, to whom in a certain sense all the knowledge of the times [485]
lay open, displays, in his moral and philosophical view of life, the greatest harmony with the monk who hardly crossed the threshold of his age, and expresses himself on education and the true relation of the authors of antiquity to Christian morality in the same sense, and sometimes in the same words, as Giovanni. Dante and Petrarca had completed and purified by Christian wisdom the old philosophy as it had appeared to them; Alberti, a disciple of Greek learning, maintained the doctrine that, without Christianity, the world would remain in a valley of error, and wisdom would be impossible or vain. There was no lack of similar tendencies; out of the theological circle no book has spoken so decidedly.

If we regard the style of this work, which purported to be popular, we feel the difference between it and that of the book which gave the author the impulse to its composition. Here is a learned man who endeavours to make use of a language despised by the learned, if not for strictly scientific purposes, yet for the discussion of questions which include a philosophy of life. He will, so he declares, write in a simple, naked style, though he has always Xenophon in his mind. More than the lost sovereignty of the world, he laments the loss of the rich and harmonious language of the world; but he does not understand why the Tuscan language of his day should excite so much aversion that even excellent things composed in it should displease. It was only a question of being easily understood, and knowing how to handle the language. It would be foolish to despise what was in daily use or to praise what no one understood. The ancient language had attained such authority because numerous learned men had written in it. It would be the same with that of the present day if learned men would expend real industry and pains to purify and cultivate it. Thus wrote
Leon Batista Alberti about the middle of the century. His words [486]
indicate the direction of the effort then made to impart to the popular language dignity and euphony, not merely by an imitation of Latin phrases like Boccaccio's, but even by a Latin formation of words. The error was not entirely avoided by this gifted man, who in the book under discussion, though striving after simplicity and comprehensiveness did not overcome the pedantry which sought safety in foreign elements only. When the accomplished scholar, Cristoforo Landino, at the commencement of his explanation of Petrarch's poetry, before the 'Padri Conscripti,'[412] expressed his opinion of the feasability of cultivating the Tuscan language which, like the Latin, ought to be subjected to grammar, he propounded the aphorism 'He who would be a good Tuscan must be a Latinist.' He then praised Leon Batista as the foremost master of the prose of later times, Leonardo Bruni as the reviver of antique poetry, and the hendecasyllabics as Sapphic and heroic verses. Knowing all this we cannot see from whence the fresh spirit was to come that could alone breathe life into the forms of language.

How far they went in this direction, when dead if learned imitation triumphed over nature, genius, and the laws of a living language, which, as a modern writer expresses it, produced a greater reverence for the dead than for the living, is shown best by the Academy of Languages held in 1441, principally at the instigation of Alberti, under the patronage of Piero de' Medici, in Sta. Maria del Fiore, to celebrate the presence of Pope Eugenius IV. The rectors of the university proclaimed a poetical competition, the theme of which was to be a eulogy on friendship. A silver laurel-wreath was appointed the prize; from this is derived the name of 'Academia coronaria;' the papal secretaries were the umpires. Before the Signoria, the archbishop, the Venetian ambassadors,

prelates, nobles, and people, eight poets read their verses, most of [487]
them in triplets or *terza rima*, and one in stanzas or *ottava rima*, on Sunday, October 22. The worst poets certainly would not have presented themselves; but we search in vain for poetry in these dry and bombastic productions. The amusing yet pathetic character of this competition was most manifested in the dialogues recited by a celebrated man, Leonardo Dati, the first and second part of which were in hexameters, the third in Sapphic metre, and the fourth ended in a sonnet, composed, as it was said, after antique rules. The metres corresponding with the language, neither Italian nor Latin, were modelled after Latin words and syntax; an incomprehensible and most indigestible mixture of new and old.[413] The judges awarded the prize to none of the competitors, but gave it to the Church, which, in respect to poetry, was accustomed to something different when the 'Divine Comedy' was expounded in her lofty halls. He who gave the impulse to the competition seems, however, not to have found this degradation of poetry so dreadful, for he arranged a second tournament on Envy, which, however, happily did not take place. This corrupted taste found sufficient defenders in the following century, and even men of genius retained the morbid taste for mingling languages and exaggerated artificial forms of words, which these times made a fashion, and which bore the same relation to the true language as periwigs to natural hair. Happily a counterpoise to such a caricature was not wanting—a counterpoise that weighed all the heavier because connected with the inward nature and life of the people, with their faith and feeling, their religious requirements and traditions, which, if much degenerated into superficiality and mere observance, not only opposed the progress of worldliness, but won before the end of the century a victory, the echoes of which were long heard. Not to speak of the low comic branch of popular poetry, the people's language was preserved living and fresh in letters, both those relating to business [488]
and those of a religious character, in smaller writings intended for the people, and in sacred poetry.

Thus in the second half of the fourteenth century, when the schism in the Church oppressed the minds of men, when that which had been held to be unchangeable began to totter, as well as in the first half of the following, when humanism began to develop its necessary but undermining effects, there still existed a fervent and living religious sense, which held together many things that threatened to fall asunder, and explains much that would otherwise be a riddle. Caterina of Siena is the greatest and most brilliant figure in the first epoch; all the more significant because in her the purest piety is united to penetration, blended with mysticism. Her insight into the secrets of the soul and the nature of doctrine, and her clear perception of the requirements of the age, were combined with unwearied activity and frank courage. The respect due and willingly shown by her to popes and princes, detracts in nothing from the decided character and expressive language of her discourses. But St. Caterina, unequalled before or since, does not stand alone. In writings which contain the natural unadorned expression of feeling and opinion, and in letters which, unlike those of learned men, were not intended for the public and for national collections, we find the explanation of many phenomena that contrast with the facts of public life noted by history. These phenomena must surprise him who does not regard the domestic life of the people in all ranks, or who has not sounded the inner working of a religious feeling, the manifestation of which in architectural monuments in an age full of violence and predominating worldly activity, attracts our principal attention, and scarcely seems in accord with the time. Besides several ecclesiastical representatives of this school, like Giovanni Dominici and Giovanni delle Celle, who was also canonised, Chiara Gambacorti—the foundress of the Pisan convent of Dominican nuns of the Strict Observance, who died in [489]
1420—may be mentioned. We find others certainly not less important in that class of laymen, who were as numerous as they were influential in the towns of Tuscany in the two centuries we have spoken of—men who divided their activity between public offices and private business, and who with time and power, had an open eye, and a warm heart for whatever concerned intellectual interests, especially religious tendencies and ecclesiastical matters. These fervent natures, whose numbers increased as worldliness became more threatening, finally gathered round Fra Girolamo Savonarola as round a fixed centre in their protest against the

pagan tendencies which constantly gained ground, in spite of many contradictory phenomena, in the second half of the fifteenth century. And the same natures, thirty years later, at the last flash of this mystic piety and ascetic reformatory movement in the decisive battle for life or death of the commonwealth, lent their best powers to the champions of freedom, who were overthrown for a second and last time.[414]

With this intellectual tendency a style of poetry was connected to which the philologists of the Renaissance period would have disdained to award a place in literature, even if they would have noticed it at all, had not their attention been in a certain measure forced to it by persons of high standing who guided the general taste in their circles. Popular sacred poetry was as old as the language of Dante's time, and Fra Jacopone of Todi, to whom some pathetic if not grand Latin hymns of the later Middle Ages are ascribed, touched the keynote in his Canticles, which was echoed for three centuries in the lauds or hymns of praise. But Fra Jacopone himself only transmitted the tradition, which had [490] remained alive since Francis of Assisi. The great number of fraternities, who assembled after the day's work in churches and chapels and at the corners of streets and sang hymns; the numerous processions and pilgrimages, even if we except those which, like the processions of the White Penitents, set whole villages and towns in commotion; the frequent evening devotions, which were shared in by others than members of the confraternities; the expressions of pious feeling and religious aspiration, after the labour and toil of the day—all this contributed to the growth of a species of popular poetry which bore rich fruit, especially in the fifteenth century. The continuance of Christian feeling and the desire to manifest it among the people at a time when paganism had revived in the learned world is remarkable, and to judge of the general opinions and tendencies merely by the literary monuments of the age would lead to wrong conclusions.

If, as we have said, the full development of this kind of poetry belongs to the fifteenth century, the preceding age, when trials of every kind—sanguinary civil wars, devastating marches of mercenary and robber bands, pestilence and Church schism—called men to serious reflection, presents hardly less activity in this direction. The crowds of Florentine burghers who, during the strife with Pope Gregory XI. on his return from Avignon, sought compensation for the discontinuance of Divine worship in the city while under the interdict by devotions in the open air, by prayer and psalmody before the tabernacles in the streets, were a remarkable and, in their way, elevating sight. The oldest company, or *schola*, of the psalm-singers, or *laudesi*, which originated in a chapel near the cathedral church where the bell-tower now stands, and was named after the Holy Virgin or St. Zanobi, was instituted before the end of the twelfth century. From it proceeded the pious men who founded the order of Servi di Maria (Servites), who had their residence in Florence, near the church of the Annunziata, on the wooded heights [491] of the Apennines, in the far-seen cloisters of Monte Senario, and who are often mentioned in connection with the history of the Florentine patriciate.[415] Other societies followed: the companies of Or San Michele, Sta. Maria Novella, Sta. Croce, Sto. Spirito, of the Carmine and Ognissanti. In short from all the large churches were formed brotherhoods which, in conjunction with similar ones for benevolent purposes, included a considerable part of the higher class of citizens, and several of which still exist. The style of poetry fostered in and by these fraternities had a long life, and sent forth aftershoots centuries later, when Vincenzo da Filicaia composed hymns for the society of St. Benedict, which, in the Jubilee year 1700, undertook a pilgrimage to Rome at the same time as the last but one of the Medicean rulers.

Nor do we meet with these phenomena in Florence alone, but in the neighbouring towns of Tuscany also. In Siena—where, as in adjacent Umbria, in the midst of all civil disturbances, not seldom accompanied with bloodshed, a peculiar spiritual life penetrated with mysticism had been developed and long upheld—arose the society of Jesuates about the middle of the fourteenth century, originally a congregation of laymen which formed themselves into an order and, like the Humiliates before them, combined monastic life with the practice of arts and industry. When in 1367 Pope Urban V., for whom all the serious and believing inhabitants of Rome [492] longed, arrived at Corneto on his return from Avignon to Rome,

Giovanni Colombini, the founder of this congregation, marched with his followers singing lauds through Viterbo to the sea-shore. With olive branches in their hands they accompanied with hymns the procession of the Holy Father, who granted the white robe to them in Toscanella. From its origin this popular order had sacred poets, [416] by whom the tradition of Fra Jacopone was kept alive, himself a member of one of the most popular orders. When the Venetian Antonio Bembo, who belonged to the Jesuates, lay on his death-bed in Pistoja, the two brethren who tended him began at his wish to sing the hymn of the saint of Todi, 'Thou love of God hast wounded me.' Towards the end of the century we find the fraternity of the Bianchi in Siena singing lauds like the Florentine brotherhoods. In Lorenzo de' Medici's days these consisted principally of artisans who assembled on Saturdays, after nine, in a church and sang lauds in four voices before a picture of the Madonna, changing about among themselves with every hymn. It was partly a kind of *canto fermo*, and partly sung after popular melodies. If we consider that till the reform of church music, undertaken at the wish of the Council of Trent by Giovanni Pierluigi of Palestrina, Divine worship had been accompanied by vaudeville melodies, we cannot be surprised if the same tunes to which carnival songs were sung—Italian, French, and Flemish—were occasionally used with the lauds without anyone taking offence at it. Thus we find them founded on melodies as those of the 'Leggiadra damigella,' or 'Una donna d'amor fino,' 'O Rosa mia gentile,' 'O crudel donna ch'hai lassato me,' 'Vicin, vicin, vicin, chi mol' spazar camin,' 'Plus que je vis le [493] regar gracieuse,' and similar ones. Occasionally it is remarked that the melody is the same as that of dances or *strambotti*, as the popular songs were called, which might be referred to King Manfred's days and make the nearest approach to our street-tunes.

This sacred poetry is very prolific, and though the frequent recurrence of the same motive is wearying, we are astonished at the endless wealth of the variations and the delicate expression of effect, elegant in its simplicity. The form and metre of the hymns, some of which are quite short and others extending to several verses, are very different. Fra Jacopone was succeeded by the Minorite, Fra Ugo Panziera of Prato; the Dominican, Fra Domenico Cavalco of Vico Pisano, who, as an ascetic writer, has proved himself a master of prose; Bianco dall'Anciolina, one of the companions of Giovanni Colombini; and, about the beginning of the fifteenth century, by the learned Venetian Leonardo Giustiniani, brother of the patriarch Lorenzo who was venerated as a saint; contemporaneous with him were Fra Giovanni Dominici, Francesco d'Albizzo, and many others. The succeeding epoch witnessed the appearance of the two men who have given this popular poetry its greatest brilliancy and importance: they were Feo Belcari and Girolamo Benivieni.[417]

[494] The birth of Feo Belcari[418] occurred at a time when the sad divided condition of the Church—which the Pisan Council did not help by the choice of a third Pope—had excited in Florence a movement which was only terminated by the restoration of unity. He was born on February 4, 1410, and belonged to a respectable family extinct before the sixteenth century. He filled many public offices, sat in the magistracy of the priors in the summer of 1454, was secretary in the office of the Public Debt, and died on August 16, 1484. He is the best representative of the tendency, intellect, and feeling which we are now considering. Feo Belcari was no dreamer, but a man of active life, a sharer in the cheerful society, principally composed of artists, which was a characteristic element of the social condition of the time. All that we possess of him belongs to devotional literature. His book on the founders of the Jesuates, dedicated to Giovanni de' Medici, describes times and circumstances which he knew from oral tradition, being in the most intimate connection with the orders that had acquired importance in Florence. His letters—one of which on humility, addressed to his daughter Orsola, gives a clear view of his opinions—are moral philosophical treatises, in which the familiarity with the Fathers of the Church and Christian authors of the Middle Ages would make us take them for the work of a theologian, had not the knowledge of this literature been so widely disseminated among a portion of the laity. His dramatic works are among the most important of the kind which introduced Sacred History into the circle of festivals, half ecclesiastical half secular, and claimed the equal attention of high and low. In 1449 his mystery of the 'Sacrifice of Abraham' was acted

in the church of Cestello. But more than all, his *laudi* have made him a name. The number of them is very great, for many are only variations of the same theme—that of Divine love and the powerlessness of human nature without grace. But the different [495] turns and shades of meaning are remarkable, and the ease with which the metre harmonises with the hymn is astonishing, whilst there is no want of reality. In 1455, when the author was at the height of his powers and activity, a collection of this poetry had been arranged for the Compagnia de' Battuti di San Zanobi, and the plays were kept in use till far into the following century. The style is mostly simple, as befits popular productions, but it is not entirely free from Latinisms and affectation in his prose writings.

The death of Feo Belcari, the 'Christian Poet,' was sung by Girolamo Benivieni[419] in *terza rima*, where we read among other things:

The darkened world has now long missed the star
Which, while the shade still hung before my eyes,
Shone like a guide unto my steps afar.

Ne'er will the sweet and heavenly tones resound,
Silent the harmonies of that sweet lyre,
Now only in the angels' bright world found.

Girolamo Benivieni, as his own words suggest, was in a measure the successor of Belcari. But while the latter wrote entirely under the influence of strictly orthodox Christianity, Benivieni sought to impart to his work the spirit of Greek philosophy which ruled the age in which he had grown up. While Belcari, again, united public activity with the contemplative life in which he loved to indulge, we are not informed that Benivieni, however deeply the events in his native country might move him, had any share in them beyond that of an author and a friend of many of the actors. Born in 1453, he survived friends and foes and the Republic itself. Intellectually active up to his last years, he kept true to the recollections of his most active years, and to the convictions he had then formed. Feo Belcari had been his leader in youth; Fra Girolamo Savonarola was the guiding star of his ripe manhood. Between the two, the [496] representative of the contemplative man and the strenuous ascetic, stands a grave, beautiful figure, Pico of Mirandola, who had no less influence on Benivieni than the others. Only from its intimate connection with these three has Benivieni's life—of which nothing else is known—a significance and importance, that cannot otherwise be explained. As he sang Belcari's death, and defended the truth of Savonarola's doctrines and predictions—more than thirty years after his death—before Pope Clement VII.,[420] so did he choose his last resting-place beside Pico,[421] whose death preceded his own by half a century. Benivieni illustrated his friend's canzonets on Divine Love with a detailed commentary which proved how their minds accorded with one another.

Benivieni attempted the most various kinds of poetry—eclogues, canticles, canzonets, sonnets—which give him a place beside the two men whom we shall soon see taking the first places in poetry, Poliziano and Lorenzo de' Medici; while in popular songs, the *Frottole*, he retained the tradition which, whatever the learned might say, still represented the popular element in literature. He translated the Psalms and the 'Dies Iræ' into the *terza rima*, remodelled a novel of Boccaccio's into stanzas, and made poetic translations from the Greek and Latin. His poems on religious philosophical subjects show him to have been in form and meaning one of those who aspired to mediate between Christianity and Platonism, a tendency also evinced by the commentary accompanying the poems we have mentioned, and addressed to [497] Pico's nephew, Giovan Francesco. Benivieni's principal historical importance, so to say, consists in the sympathy he showed for the movement commenced by Savonarola, which found its especial poetical expression through him. His lauds, which, in their mysticism tinged with sensuousness, remind us at times of Fra Jacopone's sentimentality, were sung by the people in the streets of the city, by high and low members of the Dominican order, in places where shortly before Medicean carnival-songs had resounded, and where piles of worldly vanity were heaped up to be followed soon by other forms of terrible ruin.

In the style which gives importance to Belcari's and Benivieni's poetry when the former still lived and the latter was in youthful

manhood, a woman appeared who claims peculiar attention, because she exercised a decided influence on the personage who has given to this epoch the special stamp of his individuality. Lucrezia Tornabuoni de' Medici was eminently gifted; we have seen her in several positions in life which display her clear understanding, caution, affection for her family, and care for their welfare, without arrogance or forgetfulness of her station. Her productions as a poet belong to the intellectual class. The six lauds[422] which remain of her poetry have this peculiarity, that they include the ecclesiastical year; and if their poetical value does not exceed others of the kind, they produce a favourable impression by avoiding the endless repetitions of similar poems. The Birth of Christ, the Adoration of the Shepherds, the Passion, the Resurrection, the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the Life of Christ on earth, these are the themes of her hymns, some of which were sung [498] to sacred, and some to profane airs. Beside these processional songs, Lucrezia wrote various Biblical histories in *terza rima* or in eight-lined stanzas: *e.g.*, the 'Lives of the Virgin and John the Baptist,' the 'History of Esther, Judith, and Tobias.' Angelo Poliziano revised her poems, and her grandsons learned them by heart. Another poetess of the time, whose family was intimately acquainted with Lucrezia's, Antonia Giannotti Pulci, attempted sacred dramas, in which her husband Bernardo made himself a name.

Besides poetry another branch of literature deserves attention, although the humanistic school diminished its powers, and restricted its influence without entirely depriving it of importance. It will be easily understood that, in the native country of Dino Compagni and the Villani, there could be no lack of such as continued to note down what they felt and heard, and what they had themselves a personal share in. Nowhere, perhaps, were such notices, either in the form of annals or chronicles, or as narratives of personal experience with a predominance of character drawing, so frequent and so valuable as here. In the last decades of the fourteenth century several writers had followed in the steps of the Villani with far more talent than they had. Donato Velluti, Marchionne Stefani, Gino Capponi wrote a description of the popular insurrections of 1378, in the course of which the reader is in danger of losing the thread if he does not keep the separate elements apart. The following century was active in this department, but however important in many cases the material may have been, the form and language betray the lowly position to which the humanistic literature had condemned this despised sister. Buonaccorso Pitti, Jacopo Salviati, and Neri Capponi wrote histories and commentaries which are partly personal memoirs, and all the more instructive because the epoch was one which claimed so fully the active participation of capable citizens at home and abroad. We may, perhaps, blame the weakness of the last-mentioned writer for [499] placing his own deeds and those of his father, relations, and friends, in the foremost rank in commentaries, which extend nearly to his death in 1456; but where men like Gino and Neri Capponi have laboured in such a conspicuous manner, the circumstantial style is willingly accepted, as the inner life of a people can only be recognised and understood by a closer view of important persons. Other chroniclers, like Domenico Buoninsegni and Goro Dati, from whom less is to be gained for political history, are the more readily pardoned for their gossiping patriotism because the subject of their preference is a deserving one, and they furnish us with a quantity of information that is important for the history of civilisation.

A special place belongs to Giovanni Cavalcanti, the principal authority for the time from 1420 to 1440. The humanistic school had exercised more influence on him than on any of the historians of his day who wrote in the vulgar tongue, but in a manner which imprints the strangest character on his history. For we find here, grafted on the passionate description of a partisan who had fallen out with his own faction in the course of his work, a rhetorical wordiness and elegant would-be eloquence which clothes the strife of faction, with its loves and hatreds, in antiquated speeches and moralising sentences. The personality of the author in and for itself, as it meets us in his writings (we know nothing else of him), is characteristic; a nobleman of one of the oldest families, poor, oppressed, without any share in the administration, and with a full consciousness of the old conservative claims of the patricians, with a fierce contemptuous hatred of the lower classes, and a bitter grudge against the heads of the State, which leads him to charge Cosimo de' Medici whom he so

often praises with a diabolical design to destroy freedom. To all these annalists and historians we may add others, whose works are mostly printed, and include the times of Lorenzo or later, namely, Benedetto Dei, Bartolommeo Cerretani, Pietro Parenti, Giovanni Cambi. Similar to this branch of history, biography placed her [500] achievements in the vulgar tongue beside those of the humanists, who, rivalling the Greeks and Romans, created much that was important and permanently valuable in a higher sense than their great historical works. Most unassuming, and, in spite of all solecisms and defects of form, most pleasing is the popular form of biography, in the hundred characteristic portraits by Vespasiano da Bisticci, to whom we owe innumerable deep views into the inner life for which we vainly seek among the learned historians.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Vasari, in Michelozzo's Life (*Vite*, Lemonnier's edition, Flor. 1846, ff., iii. p. 271); and in Brunelleschi's Life, a. a. O., p. 228. Michelozzo was born about the year 1391. It is generally understood that the building of the Palace took place before Cosimo's exile, and they quote from Migliore (*Firenze Illustrata*, Flor. 1684, p. 198 ff.), which specifies 'circa all'Anno 1430.' There is no foundation for this statement. Moreover, Michelozzo was not in Florence in the year supposed (Fantozzi, *Guida di Firenze*, Flor. 1842, p. 457).

[2] Vasari in the Life of Lorenzo di Bicci, a. a. O., ii. p. 225. The house came afterwards to the Ughi family. At present it is all built round, even the adjoining Lorenzi Palace, which up to our day preserved its ancient, solemn aspect.

[3] *Ordinamenta justitiæ communis et populi Florentiæ anni* 1293, a Francisco Bonainio edita, in Archivio Storico Italiano, serie ii. i. p. 1-93 [1855]. C. Hegel, *Die Ordnungen der Gerechtigkeit in der Florentinischen Republik*, Erlangen 1867. Compare P. Capei, Arch. Stor. Ital. ser. iii. vii. p. 132.

[4] Fr. Bonaini, *Della Parte Guelfa in Firenze*, in Giornale Storico degli Archivi Toscani (Flor. 1857), ii. p. 171, 257; iii. p. 77, 167; iv. p. 3. Unfortunately this laborious work remains incomplete. The oldest constitution of the Capitani and the Guelf party was in 1335, and is printed in Bonaini, i. p. 1-41. The office was in existence up to the year 1769.

[5] Gio. Villani, xi. chap. 92, 93.

[6] G. Canestrini, *La Scienza e l'Arte di Stato desunta dagli Atti Officiali della Repubblica Florentina e dei Medici*. Parte 1, L'imposta sulla ricchezza mobile e immobile. Florenz. 1862. No more has appeared of this work, which was to be the economical and administrative history of the Republic and of the first Medici period. The first part treats of the *Estimo*, of the *Cadastre*, and of the *Decima* of 1494. Cf. L. Banchi in the Archivio Stor. Ital., serie iii. i. p. 90 (G. F. Pagnini). *Della Decima e delle altre gravezze imposte dal Commune di Firenze* (Lucca, 1763) has in its first volume, p. 10, a short account of Florentine taxation, up to the introduction of the *decima* (p. 214-231.—Provision of May 22, 1427, for the formation of the *cadastre*).

[7] The Peruzzi in 1325 were an instance of this. *Storia del Commercio e dei Banchieri di Firenze.* Flor. 1868, p. 197.

[8] Varchi, *Storia Fiorentina*, at the end of book xiii. (Edit. Arbib. Flor. 1844, iii. p. 36.)

[9] 'Ipse quidem nescit si fructus sequetur, vel non; sed, auditis aliis civibus, idem secutus est.' 'Consulta' of May 12, 1427, by P. Berti, Nuovi documenti intorno al Catasto florentino, in the *Giorn. Stor. degli archivi Toscani*, iv. 32. Giovanni Cavalcanti (*Storia Fiorentina*, Flor. 1838, i. 196.)—a contemporary, who has left us the most lifelike description of that period, but who must be used with great caution on account of his decided and enthusiastic party views—has been followed by all later writers in his opinion of the Medici. At the head of these is Machiavelli, who took him as the principal source of information for those times.

[10] Gio. Cavalcanti, l. c. p. 262.

[11] Domenico Moreni, *Continuazione delle Memorie della Basilica di S. Lorenzo*. Flor. 1816, i. p. 27.

[12] *Monuments Sépulcraux de Toscane*, Flor. 1821. Table xiii. The inscription is as follows:

'Cosmus et Laurentius de Medicis v. d. Joanni Averardi f. et Picardæ Adovardi f. carissimis parentibus hoc Sepulchrū faciendum curarunt. Obiit autem Johannes x. Kl. Martias MCCCCXXVIII. Picarda vero xiii. Kl. Maias quinquennio post e vita migravit.

Si merita in patriam, si gloria, sanguis et omni
Larga manus nigra libera morte forent,
Viveret heu patriæ casta cum coniuge felix
Auxilium miseris portus et aura suis;
Omnia sed quando superantur morte, Johannes,

Hoc mausoleo tuque Picarda iaces,
Ergo senex mœret, invenis, puer, omnis et ætas,
Orba parente suo patria mœsta gemit.

[13] G. Cavalcanti, l. c. p. 269.

[14] The xv. and xvi. cantos of *Il Paradiso* contain eloquent descriptions of historical importance, to the explanation of which the translation of Philalethes has contributed valuable materials.

[15] G. F. Berti, *Cenni storico-artistici di S. Miniato al Monte*, Flor. 1850. The MSS. of Bishop Hildebrand of the year 1013 show that the reconstruction of the church had already begun at that time.

[16] V. Marchese, *Memorie dei più insigni pittori, scultori, e architetti Domenicani*. Flor. 1845. I. p. 44 ff. F. Moisè, *Santa Croce di Firenze*, Flor. 1845. I. p. 42 *et seq.*

[17] L. Passerini, *La Loggia di Or San Michele*, l. c. p. 113 ff.

[18] *Regesta florentina internam Reipublicæ historiam spectantia ab a.* MCCXXV, *ad a.* MD., by Gaye, Carteggio inedito d'Artisti, i. 413 *et seq.*

[19] M. Rastrelli, *Illustrazione istorica del Palazzo della Signoria*. Flor. 1792. F. Moisè, *Illustrazione storico-artistica del Palazzo de' Priori*. Flor. 1843.

[20] Fr. Becchi, *Sulle Stinche di Firenze, in Illustratore fiorentino*. Flor. 1840.

[21] Inferno xix. 17 ('in my beautiful San Giovanni'). Purgatory xii. 100. Even with the present transformation of the hillside a great flight of steps is to be seen hard by.

[22] Concerning the various kinds of the *macigni* (Dante uses the expression, *Inferno* xv. 63, speaking of the obdurate nature of the Florentines of his time), the *pietra forte*, *pietra fina*, *serena*, *bigia*, see Targioni, *Viaggi per la Toscana*, i. p. 18 *et seq.*

[23] The opinion expressed in the book of the Carmelite, P. Fr. M. Soldini—*Delle eccellenze e grandezze della nazione fiorentina* (Flor. 1780),—respecting the palace Tosinghi on the old market-place, destroyed, according to Gio. Villani, in the party wars of the middle of the 13th century, is, no doubt, a modern conjecture.

[24] Gaye, l. c. p. 498 (Anno 1344).

[25] Baldinucci, Professori del disegno (D. M. Manni's Ausg.), vol. i. p. 24, Gaye l. c. p. 483.

[26] G. Masselli and G. P. Lasinio, *Il Tabernacolo della Madonna d'Orsanmichele*: Flor. 1851.

[27] L. Passerini, *La Loggetta del Bigallo*, l. c. p. 89 *et seq.*

[28] Benedetto Dei, in Varchi, *Storia Fiorentina*, book ix. (ii. p. 116), names twenty-one loggias on private houses in the latter half of the 15th century. Lastro, *Osservatore Fiorentino* (published Flor. 1821), iii. p. 203 *et seq.*

[29] *Cronaca di Matteo Villani*, book vii. chap. 41.

[30] L. Passerini, *La Loggia della Signoria* l. c. p. 99. Gaye l. c. p. 527.

[31] Passerini l. c.; after him Il. Semper in A. v. Zahn's *Fine Arts Annals*, iii. p. 35-37. The tradition respecting Orcagna is in Lemonnier's *Vasari*, ii. p. 130.

[32] G. Aiazzi 'Illustrazione della Capella gentilizia della *Famiglia Rinuccini*,' in the *Ricordi di Filippo Rinuccini*: Flor. 1840, p. 304-327.

[33] Gaye l. c. p. 536.

[34] C. Guasti, *La Cupola di Sta. Maria del Fiore*: Flor. 1857, p. 9, 37, 89.

[35] Plan and sketch in the *Osservatore Fiorentino*, ii. p. 167.

[36] *Book of Statutes*, part vii. book 4.

[37] Inscription on the back: 'Clarissimi viri Cosmas et Laurentius fratres neglectas diu Sanctorum reliquias martyrum religioso studio ac fidelissima pietate suis sumptibus æneis loculis condendas colendasque curarunt.' Figured in the *Monuments Sépulcraux*, Table xx. In the time of the French invasion broken up and destined to be melted down, but rescued and restored, and now in the National Museum in the Palace of the Podestà.

[38] Pagnini, *Della decima*, etc., ii. p. 80. S. L. Peruzzi, p. 61. *Osservatore fiorentino*, iii. p. 185, vi. p. 157.

[39] Gio. Villani, xi. chap. 93.

[40] P. Berti, *Documenti riguardanti il commercio dei Fiorentini in Francia nei secoli xiii. e xiv.* in the *Giornale storico degli Arch. Tosc.* i. pp. 163, 217. The most abundant material is contained in Francesco Balducci Pegolotti's *Pratica della Mercatura*, 14th century, and Pagnini, iii.

[41] *Osservatore fiorentino*, iv. p. 124. F. Fantozzi, *Notizie biografiche di Bernardo Cennini*, Flor. 1839, p. 33. Fantozzi regards the Calimaruzza as the former Via Francesca, where the magazines of foreign cloth were, and the Calimala as the place for the sale of the native fabrics.

[42] G. Gargioli, *L'Arte della Seta in Firenze trattato del secolo* xv., Flor. 1868. The lists from 1225 to 1337 are printed p. 282-290. L. Venturi, *Filippo Matteoni* (the biography of one of the most intelligent silk-weavers of our time), in verse and prose, Flor. 1871, p. 321. S. Bongi, *Della Mercatura dei Lucchesi nei sec.* xiii. e xiv. *Osservatore fior.* iv. p. 103; vi. p. 36. Peruzzi, p. 36, where there are also the portraits of a crimson-dyer and a silk-spinner, after a MS. in the Laurentiana.

[43] *L'Inferno*, xvii. 43. Compare E. Morpurgo, *I prestatori di denaro al tempo di Dante*, in *Dante e Padua, Studj storico-critici*, Padua, 1865, p. 193.

[44] *Divine Comedy*, 'Paradise,' xix. 119.

[45] Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Les Argentiers Florentins*, in the *Bulletins de l'Académie r. de Belgique*, 1861, pp. 295-312. Compare also his treatise, *Recherches sur la part que l'ordre de Citeaux et le Comte de Flandre prirent à la lutte de Boniface VIII. et de Philippe le Bel*, in the *Mémoires* of the same Academy, xxviii. On the Franzesi family see Repetti, *Dizionario della Toscana*, article 'Figline, Staggia.'

[46] Vol. x. chap. 88.

[47] Fr. Balducci Pegolotti, in Pagnini, p. 198.

[48] Bartolommeo Cerretani, in Fabroni *M. Cosmi Med. Vita*, ii. 63. Concerning this still unprinted chronicler, see Moreni, *Bibliografia della Toscana*, i. 249.

[49] Del Migliore, p. 6. See Gaye, p. 424.

[50] Extracts in Gaye, in the registers.

[51] *Paradiso* xv. 97. *Purgat.* xvi. 117.

[52] L. Mehus: *Ambrosii Traversarii Epistolæ et Orationes*. Flor. 1759, ccclxxiv.

[53] On the Bardi see Ademollo, *Marietta de Ricci*, 2nd edit. by L. Passerini, Flor, 1815, iii. 1135.

[54] 'Io confesso—che il concilio non è per me. Ma che debbo fare, se haggio uno fato che mi ci tira?'—Luca della Robbia, *Vita di Bartolommeo Valori*, in the *Arch. Stor. Ital.* iv. part i. 262.

[55] *Documenti relativi alla liberazione dalla prigionia di Giovanni XXIII.*, in the *Arch. Stor. Ital.* 429. Writings of Averardo di Medici to Michele Cossa, Flor. Dec. 31, 1419. Fabroni as above, ii. 11.

[56] Ciacconio: *Historia Pontificum*, etc., Rome, 1677, ii. 795, and the *Monuments sépulcraux*, plate xi., give an illustration. From Michelozzo's Survey-Declaration in Gaye, as above, 117, we see that the monument was still unfinished in 1427, and the price agreed upon had been 800 florins.

[57] L. Passerini: *Gli Alberti di Firenze*, Flor. 1870, i. 118; ii. 227.

[58] *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi per il comune di Firenze dal 1399 al 1433*. Edited by Cesare Guasti. 3 vols. Flor. 1867-

73.

[59] *Gio. Cavalcanti*, 319: *Albizzi Family*. See Ademollo, as above, ii. 695. *Genealogij*, by Gius. Ajazzi, MS. in possession of the author.

[60] Niccolò's conversation with Niccolò Barbadoro, in Cavalcanti as above, p. 380 (copied, with alterations, by Machiavelli in the 4th book of the *Florentine Hist.*), gives the best insight into the feelings of the party.

[61] Vasari: *Life of Lorenzo di Bicci*, ii. p. 229. The building of the Sapienza already begun, served later as a cage for lions, and is now employed as an educational institution.

[62] Vasari: Life of Masaccio, vol. iii. p. 160.

[63] *Vitæ CIII. Virorum Illustrium qui sæculo xv. extiterunt*, auctore coævo Vespasiano Florentino. (In the *Spicilegium Romanum*, edited by Cardinal Angelo Mai.) Rome, 1839, reprint. *Vite di nomini illustri del secolo xv.* scritte da Vespasiano da Bisticci, stampate nuovamente da Adolfo Bartoli. Flor. 1859. *Palla di Noferi Strozzi*, p. 271. Messer Leonardo is Leonardo Bruni.

[64] Vespasiano da Bisticci as above, 278.

[65] *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, iii. 507.

[66] Gio. Cavalcanti as above, 320-327.

[67] Fabroni as above, i. 27; ii. 31, 58.

[68] L. Passerini: *Genealogia e storia della famiglia Guadagni*, Flor. 1874, p. 52.

[69] Cosimo's own memoranda, Fabroni as above, ii. 96, which give no information as to the grounds and form of the action, must be compared with Cavalcanti's relation, 507, which supplied Machiavelli with his materials. The protocols of the Signory give no information as to these proceedings.

[70] Gio. Cavalcanti as above, 558, 610.

[71] *Storia Fiorentina dai tempi di Cosimo de' Medici a quelli del gonfaloniere Soderini.* Flor. 1859. Vol. i. of the *Opere inedite di Fr. Guicciardini, illustrate da G. Canestrini*, p. 4.

[72] 'Fermare lo Stato'—to give a settled form to a Government, introduced by the sovereign or a political party. 'Stato' means in this case the rule with which they exercise it.

[73] *I Capitoli del Comune di Firenze Inventario e Regesto*, i. Flor. 1866.

[74] Published by D. M. Manni, Flor. 1720. Constantine Höfler has in his history of King Rupert (Freiburg, 1861) placed the activity of Buonaccorso Pitti in its right light.

[75] Printed by D. M. Manni Cronachette Antiche, Florence, 1733. The history of the conquest of Pisa, printed there likewise, is probably by his son Neri.

[76] *Storia Fiorentina*, chap. i.

[77] P. Litta: *Genealogy of the Acciaiuoli*. L. Taufani: *Nicola Acciaiuoli*, Florence, 1863. Gaye has published in the *Carteggio inedita d'Artisti*, i. 57-69, the remarkable letters of the seneschal for the years 1355-56, on the building of the Certosa. Vespasiano da Bisticci as above, 351 (on Agnolo Acciaiuoli).

[78] Vespasiano da Bisticci as above, 332. Angiolo Segni: *Vita di Donato Acciaiuoli*, edited by Tommaso Tonelli, Florence, 1841.

[79] Franc. Guicciardini: *Recordi di Famiglia*, in his *Opere inedite*, x.

[80] Description and narrative which Vespasiano da Bisticci, 525, gives of Alessandra de Bardi Strozzi and her sad fate, give a deep insight into the miseries of this time.

[81] *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, iii. 651, 669.

[82] *Commissioni*, iii. 672, 677.

[83] *Idem*, 680.

[84] Vespasiano de Bisticci as above, 417.

[85] L. Basserini: *Baldaccio da Anghiari*, in the *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, 3, iii. 131, 166. The author is of the opinion that the connections of Baldaccio to the Pope Gregory IV., still residing in Florence, were the cause of the Medicean party wishing to get rid of him.

[86] Gio. Cavalcanti, I. c. ii. 195.

[87] Register of 1458, Canestrini, as above, 168. Progressive scale, *id.* 213.

[88] Gio. Cavalcanti as above, ii. 210.

[89] Etiam nobis esset reputatio et utilitas si Papa hic veniret. Rinaldo degli Albizzi, *Commissioni*, iii. 589.

[90] C. Milanesi, 'Osservazioni intorno agli esemplari del decreto d'unione della chiesa Greca con la Latina che si conservano nella biblioteca Mediceo-Laurenziana o nell'Archivio di Stato,' with Greek and Latin text of the decree of union, in the *Giorn. stor. degli Arch. tosc.* i. 196-225. This is not the place to refer to the newest historico-critical literature on this subject.

[91] Fabroni as above, ii. 163.

[92] *Life of Eugenius IV.* as above, 16.

[93] *Life of Agnolo Acciaiuoli* as above, p. 357.

[94] Giannone, *Storia civile del Regno di Napoli*, book xxvi. chap. 2.

[95] *Ricordi storici di Filippo di Cino Rinuccini dal 1282 al 1460, colla continuazione di Alamanno e Neri suoi figli fino al 1506 per cura di G. Aiazzi*, Flor. 1840, lxxxix.

[96] Letter of Pius II., and his answer, in Fabroni, ii. 254.

[97] Document of the purchase of the 'sclava,' twenty-two years old, for the price of 60 ducats, Fabroni, ii. 214.

[98] Fabroni as above, ii. 251.

[99] *Idem*, 253.

[100] The list of the masses ordered by Piero de' Medici after his father's death, and the grants for mourning habits to the members and servants of his family, among them five chamber-women and four maids (*schiave*), are given by Fabroni, ii. 254.

[101] M. Ficino, *Epistol.* i. 85.

[102] Fabroni, ii. 257.

[103] Litta, 'Family Tornabuoni,' in the *Famiglie celebri Ital.*, Ademollo as above, iv. 1200. The Tornabuoni became extinct in 1635, and the name and inheritance of the Tornaquinci, extinct in 1790, passed to the branch of the Medici which is still flourishing in Florence.

[104] January 1, 1448, after Florentine style (annus ab incarnatione, *i.e.* from March 25), is the same day 1449.

[105] *Laurentii Medicis Vita*, per Nicolaum Valorium edita ad Leonem X.P.M. First printed by L. Mehus after a Laurentian MS., Flor. 1749; more recently in Philippi Villani *Liber de civitatis Florentiæ famosis civibus et de Florentinorum litteratura principes fere synchroni scriptores*. Ed. G. C. Galletti. Flor. 1847, p. 161. An Italian translation had already appeared, Flor. 1568. Niccolò Valori was a pupil of Marsilio Ficino, and a member of the Platonic Academy.

[106] On Gentile of Urbino, as he was commonly called, see A. M. Bandini, *Specimen literaturæ Florentinæ*, sæc. xv., Flor. 1752, i. 182; ii. 111. Desjardins-Canestrini, *Négotiations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, Paris 1859, i. 317. *Embassy of Becchi and Piero Soderini to King Charles VIII.*, 1493, *idem*, 321-365. *Address to Pope Innocent VIII. on occasion of the Neapolitan war of the Barons*, 1485, p. 205-214. Gentile, bishop of Arezzo 1473, died April 19, 1497.

[107] Fabroni, *Laur. Med. Magnif. Vita*, Pisa, 1784, ii. 9.

[108] N. Valori as above, 166.

[109] Politian, *Conjuratio Pactiana*, at the end.

[110] Litta, *Family Pazzi*, Ademollo, as above, iv. 1228.

[111] As above, 372.

[112] For documents referring to the embassy, see Desjardins, as above, 109, 135.

[113] Vespasiano, as above, 375.

[114] L. Passerini, *Genealogia e storia della famiglia Rucellai*, Flor. 1861.

[115] L. Passerini, *Genealogy of the Soderini*, continuation of Litta's *Famiglie celebri*.

[116] Vasari, *Life of Donatello*, iii. 250. For illustration see Litta.

[117] *Cronica di Napoli di Notar Giacomo*, pubbl. da P. Garzilli, Naples, 1845, p. 100. Giovan. Pietro Cagnola, *Storia di Milano* ('Cronache Milanesi,' in the *Arch. stor. ital.* iii. Flor. 1842), informs us (p. 170) of Don Federigo's arrival and the causes of the delay of the wedding, which was connected with Jacopo Piccinino's affairs (see below, p. 219). Ippolita arrived on September 14 at Naples, after having waited two months in Siena, till her father permitted her to proceed. (*Cronica di Notar Giacomo*, 112; Cagnola, 171.)

[118] Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, xcv.

[119] Luigi Pulci's letter, see Roscoe, App. ix., but more correct in the *Lettere di Luigi Pulci a Lorenzo il Magnifico e ad altri* (edited by Salvatore Bongi), Lucca, 1868, p. 1. There are various notices of the writer here, but unfortunately no notes to the letters, which are often unintelligible, and will probably remain so, in spite of all notes, with regard to various persons mentioned.

[120] Fabroni, l. e., ii. 51 *seq.*

[121] Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, xcvi.

[122] Fabroni as above, ii. 47; letter of March 22, *idem*, 49.

[123] Desjardins as above, 136-141.

[124] Guicciardini, in whom the traditions of grandfather and granduncle are united in cap. ii. of the *Storia fiorentina*, p. 18; Machiavelli, who, in consequence of the death of Girolamo, his ancestor in Cosimo's time, could not be very favourable to Luca Pitti and his adherents, in book vii. of his history. G. M. Bruto, *Florentinæ historiæ*, book ii.

[125] On this affair, which has never been fully cleared up, see Ricotti, *Storia delle Compagnie di Ventura*, iii. 191, where the judgment of contemporaries is referred to; and Canestrini, *Documenti per servire alla storia della Milizia italiana*, Flor. 1851 (*Arch. stor. ital.* xv.), series lxxviii. 179-184, where the letters of Francesco Sforza and the King are to be found.

[126] Vespasiano da Bisticci as above, p. 360.

[127] Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, xcix.

[128] *Lettera di Jacopo Acciaiuoli ad Agnolo*, Naples, September 6, 1466. See Fabroni as above, ii. 28. The time of Lorenzo's journey cannot be precisely fixed, but it must have taken place before or towards the middle of August, for the later events leave no time. Jacopo writes: 'Lorenzo di Piero fu quà. Il S. Rè li fece carezze assai.'

[129] *Paradiso*, xv. 109.

[130] Francis Joseph Sloane, who died in 1871. The villa passed by inheritance to the Russian family Boutourlin.

[131] The name Camaldoli, which is borne in Florence by two districts of the city inhabited by the poorer classes—that of San Frediano and that behind San Lorenzo—is derived from the Camaldulensian church of San Salvatore, pulled down in 1529, which stood near the city walls on the left bank of the Arno. To the district of San Lorenzo the name was transferred from the other behind Sta. Croce, and at Porta San Niccolò there are other districts so named.

[132] The prevailing opinion among the opponents of the Medici of the events of 1466 is expressed decidedly in the notices of Alamanno Rinuccini, who continued those of his father Filippo from the year 1460, as above, coll. xcix.

[133] *Cronachetta Volterrana di autore anomino del 1362 al 1478*, given by M. Tabarrini in the *Arch. Stor. Ital.* App. iii. 317.

[134] The history of the conspiracy, in Machiavelli, b. vii., entirely reverses the chronology of the occurrences, excepting the speeches and letters, which correspond but little to the reality. Jacopo Pitti *Istoria fiorentina*, p. 19, *seq.*, gives a clear narrative of the proceedings. G. M. Banto, in his third book, is diffuse and tedious with his imaginary speeches. The version of Cardinal Ammanati in the *Rerum suo tempore gestarum Commentarii*, Milan, 1506, is to be consulted. Scipione Ammirato gives in his twenty-third book, as usual, a useful but very dry relation. The remarkable letters and other writings of the Acciaiuoli and Neroni, as well as the letters of King Ferrante's private secretary, Antonello Petrucci, to Lorenzo, November 10, 1466 (see Fabroni as above, ii. 28-38), reveal the persons and circumstances better than the declamations of antiquated historians. The conspiracy in itself would scarcely justify a detailed account if it did not afford so clear a view of the manœuvres of the political parties in Florence at that time.

[135] Fabroni as above, ii. 38.

[136] Both letters, see Desjardins as above, p. 141 *seq.*

[137] Fabroni as above.

[138] Letter of January 10, 1467, to the ambassadors Antonio Ridolfi and Giovanni Canigiani; see Desjardins, as above, p. 144.

[139] Instruction for Fr. Nori, do. p. 147.

[140] Diotisalvi to Pigello, Malpaga, October 8, 1466; see Fabroni as above, ii. 38.

[141] *Inferno*, xxvii. 37. The translation of Philalethe gives in the historical sketch appended to this canto a careful view of the confused condition of the Romagna in Dante's days. We have in the continuation of Litta's work by L. Passerini the genealogies of most of the great families of Romagna, the Malatesta, Ordelaffi, Manfredi, and Da Polenta.

[142] Instead of the exceedingly numerous works on the history of Ferrara, only Litta's *Genealogy* will be quoted here.

[143] R. Reposati *Della Zecca di Gubbio*, Bologna, 1772. James Dennistoun, *Memoirs of the Dukes of Urbino*, London, 1851. F. Ugolino *Storia dei Conti e Duchi d'Urbino*, Flor. 1859.

[144] N. Ratti *Della Famiglia Sforza*, i. 144 *seq.*; Litta, *Sforza Family*.

[145] Fabroni, *Cosm. Med. Vita*, ii. 169.

[146] Giovanni Gozzadini, *Memorie per la Vita di Giovanni II. Bentivoglio*, Bologna, 1839.

[147] The most abundant material for the history of the war and peace of 1467-68 is afforded by Fr. Trinchera, *Codice Aragonese*, i. (Naples 1866), which contains King Ferrante's correspondence. S. Romanin, *Storia di Venezia*, b. xi. (vol. iv.) gives the account, having used D. Malipiero's *Annali, Veneti* i.

[148] Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, s. cv.

[149] Malipiero as above, p. 215.

[150] Compiègne, September 18, 1468; see Desjardins as above, p. 151.

[151] Guichenon in his *Histoire de la maison de Savoye* rather doubts the strange fact, contrary to Corio. See Muratori, *Annali*, 1468.

[152] Vespasiano da Bisticci as above, p. 228.

[153] The inscription reads:

> 'Detisalvio . Neronis . f . equiti. floren. viro.
> integerr. qui. domi. forisq. multa. pro.
> rep. optime. gessit. patriae. libertatem.
> vehementer. amavit. demum. inter. fortunæ.
> procellas. summa. cum. laude. vixit.
> ann. LXXXI. mens. VI. dies XII. filii.
> unanimes. patri. pient se. et. b. m.
> pos. obiit. anno Christi MCCCCLXXXIIIIII. kl. Aug.'

In an elegy to Lorenzo de' Medici, probably written after the end of the Colleonic war, Angelo Poliziano (*Prose volgari*

inedite, &c., p. 219) refers to this man's fate:

> 'Diotisalvi left in hasty flight his home;
> Pining in exile now, he mourns the slow-footed time.'

[154] Cronachetta Volterrana as above, p. 326. Pecori, *Storia di San Gemignano*, Flor. 1853, p. 242.

[155] Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, s. cviii.

[156] L. Pulci, *Lettere*, p. 31.

[157] See A. Cappelli, *Lettere di Lorenzo de' Medici conservate nell'Archivio palatino di Modena in Atti e Memorie delle R. R. Deputationi di storia pratria per le provincie Modenesi Parmensi*, i. 249.

[158] Purgatorio xxv. 13. Par. iii. 46.

[159] *Ricordi d'una giostra fatta a Firenze a dì 7 Febbraio* 1481 (1469), after a Magliabechi MS. printed by P. Fanfani in *Il Borghini*, vol. ii. (Flor. 1864) pp. 473-483, 533-542. Tournaments were also publicly proclaimed, as at the carnival, 1467, at Perugia. See *Giornale d'erudizione artistica*, ii. 208.

[160] In the elegy to Lorenzo mentioned above (p. 260), Politian alludes to the tournament, which is also sung by Ugolino Vieri (Verino).

[161] See Litta, *Fam. Orsini*, table ix. xxiii. In San Salvator in lauro at Rome, where Latino Orsini lies buried (his monument belongs to the seventeenth century) the beautiful monument of Clarice's mother is to be seen, with a statue of her reposing in death, and beneath, Magdalena Ursina pudicitiæ exemplum; in the niches, statuettes of the Madonna, St. Benedict (missing), and St. Scholastica; above, the Orsini arms, with the inscription:

> Ranaldus. Vrsin. archiepus. florent. parenti. b. m.
> pientiss. p.

For illustration see Litta.

[162] *Tre lettere di Lucrezia Tornabuoni a Piero de' Medici ed altre lettere di vari concernenti al matrimonio di Lorenzo il Magnifico con Clarice Orsini.* (After the MSS. of the Flor. Archives edited by Cesare Gnasti), Florence, 1859.

[163] The persons named in the letter are: Giovanni Tornabuoni; Cardinal Latino Orsini, also called Monsignore, the title (Illustrissimo e Reverendissimo Monsignore) which the cardinals bore to the times of Urban VIII.; Clarice's two brothers—Orso (called Organtino, who married a Savelli), and Rinaldo (afterwards Archbishop of Florence); Clarice's uncle Lorenzo, lord of Monterotondo; her uncles Latino, Giovanni, Archbishop of Irani and Abbot of Farsa, Napoleon, lord of Bracciano, and Roberto, mentioned above. Of the three young girls mentioned, Maria can only be Piero's natural daughter, the wife of Leonetto de Rossi and mother of Luigi de Rossi, created a cardinal by Leo X.; Bianca is the wife of Guglielmo de' Pazzi. Who Lucrezia is, is obscure. Guasti (as above, p. 10) is mistaken in thinking all three to be daughters of Piero and Lucrezia. In the *Ricordo* quoted by him (Fabroni, *Laur. Med. Vita*, ii. 9), Lorenzo only mentions Bianca and Nannina Rucellai.

[164] Guasti, as above, 12.

[165] Guasti, as above, p. 12.

[166] Fabroni, as above, ii. 39.

[167] The different letters, see Guasti, as above, pp. 14-16.

[168] The description of the marriage in *Delle Nozze di Lorenzo de' Medici con Clarice Orsini nel* 1469 *informazione di Piero Parenti Fiorentino*, Flor. 1870. The writer says at the beginning that he has the details from Cosimo Bartoli, one of the speakers at the festivities. The Magliabechi MS., from which the writing is taken (Strozzi MSS. xxv. cod. 574), mentions no author; the list of the MSS., however, gives Piero, the son of Marco Parenti, the author of a chronicle which has remained in MS., which will again be mentioned. A similarity between the writings of the latter and this 'Information' would be hard to discover, however. The opinion of the unmentioned editor, that the report was addressed to Filippo Strozzi the elder then in

Naples, has slight foundation.

[169] This valuable little book is enumerated as No. 27 in the inventory of valuables found in Lorenzo's house after his death.

[170] A letter written from Careggi on July 13 by Piero to his wife, who was in town, and which is difficult to understand on account of allusions to unknown circumstances, arouses the suspicion that Piero was not quite pleased with this embassy. 'Tu sai che mal volentieri decti licentia a Lorenzo per molti rispecti et maxime per non fare dimostratione di questa mandata. Di a Lorenzo che non esca dello ordine in cosa alcuna e non faccia tante melarancie non essendo imbasciadore ch'io non determino che paperi menino a bere l'oche' (*Med. Arch.*).

[171] Fabroni, as above, ii. 53.

[172] As above, p. 56.

[173] Vasari in Verrocchio's *Life*, as above, v. 142. *Monuments sépulcraux*, Plate XIV.

[174] Fabroni, as above, ii. 42.

[175] *Storia Fiorentina*, chap. ii.

[176] 'Discorso di Alessandro de' Pazzi al cardinale Giulio de' Medici' (Pope Clement VII.) anno 1522 in the supplement to Jacopo Pitti's *Istoria Fiorentina* (*Arch. stor. Ital.* i. Flor. 1842), p. 420 *seq.*, and Introduction to the same by Gino Capponi, 413 *seq.*

[177] Del Reggimento di Firenze, libri ii. In the *Opere inedite*, ii. Flor. 1858, 1-234.

[178] Beside Machiavelli, Gio. Mich. Bruto has this story in his book, and according to custom made Piero deliver a speech to his partisans, filling many pages ('Ita ad illos loquutus fertur,' i. 380 *seq.*). But this author cannot be considered as an authority. A better one is Vespasiano da Bisticci, who, however, limits the project of recall to Agnolo Acciaiuoli. The Neapolitan ambassador, Marino Tomacelli, is said to have been present at Piero's interview with the heads of the party.

[179] Despatch of King Ferrante to Antonio Cicinello and Marino Tomacelli, February 26, 1467; see Trinchera (as above), 65.

[180] Despatch of August 14: Trinchera, 209.

[181] Del Reggimento di Firenze, as above, 34, 64, 97.

[182] Niccolo Roberti to Duke Borso, Florence, December 4, 1469; see Cappelli, as above, i. 250. 'I quali due ultime (i.e. Pitti and Martelli) soggiunsero che si aveva a riconoscere uno signore e superiore che avesse unanime a trattare tutte le cose occorrenti concernenti lo Stato di questa eccelsa Signoria.'

[183] Guicciardini, *Storia Fiorentina*, chap. ii. Machiavelli has embellished the story in his fashion, and spoken of Lorenzo and Giuliano as being present at the consultation, which is very unlikely. Roscoe, chap, iii., has been led by this incongruous statement and Lorenzo's notices to believe the whole affair to be fictitious. On the day after the consultation they went to the Medici.

[184] Rinuccini, *Ricordi,* s. cxiii. cxiv. cxviii.; Guicciardini, *Storia Fiorentina*, chap. iii.

[185] Fabroni, as above, ii. 47.

[186] *The Medicean Archives* (divisione avanti il principato), contain an endless series of letters from princes and great men, which afford a proof of the widely-spread and intimate connections of Lorenzo and his family.

[187] Luigi Pulci, *Lettere*, p. 38, and later.

[188] Bern, *Corio*, b. vi. chap. ii. Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, s. cxv. cxvi. L. Pulci, *Lettere*, p. 51 (Letter from Naples, March 19). G. Tommasi, *Sommario della Storia di Lucca*, Flor. 1847 (vol. x. of the *Arch. Stor. Ital.*) 336.

[189] Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, s. cxxii. The king is called 'Re di Dacia o signore di Norvecia.' Beneath the arch of the Porta San Gallo, we read on a marble tablet a remembrance of a successor of Christiern, King Frederick IV., who visited Venice and Florence in 1708, and had great pleasure in contemplating the treasures of art. The Medici, whom his predecessors had seen rise so

brilliantly, were then almost extinct.

[190] L. Pulci, *Lettere*, p. 96 (Letter of June 16, 1475).

[191] Fabroni, as above, ii. 66 *seq.* Desjardins, 161 *seq.* The Dauphin, afterwards King Charles VIII. was born in 1470, Beatrice of Aragon in 1457. In 1476 she married Mathias Corvinus, King of Hungary.

[192] L. Pulci, as above, p. 63 (Fuligno, May 20, 1472).

[193] *Med. Arch. Filza*, 34.

[194] Cosimo Rucellai, Bernardo's son and Lucrezia's grandson; born 1468, died 1495. The marriage with Madonna Argentina, daughter of Gabriel Malaspina, Marchesa of Fosdinovo, took place only in 1492. (The widow married Piero Soderini, later Gonfaloniere for life.) The expression 'nuova di zecca,' or 'zecca al gitto' for unexpected news, is still used in Tuscany at the present day.

[195] L. Pulci, as above, p. 83.

[196] When Muratori, in vol. xxiii. of the *Scriptores rer. Ital.*, printed the Commentariolus de bello Volaterrano, a. 1472, by Antonio Ivano (Hyvaniss) of Sarzana, then Chancellor of Volterra, he remarks with his usual insight how cautiously one must proceed in employing this apologetic official account, evidently ordered in Florence, of a man not well spoken of. (Ivano came to Florence in March, 1473, as ambassador from Sarzana; see Gaye, *Carteggio inedito*, vol. i. p. 251. There is a description by him of the ruins of Luni.) The anonymous 'Cronachetta Volterrana' already quoted, which M. Tabarrini gives in the *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, App. vol. iii., is also favourable to the Florentines. Machiavelli and G. M. Bruto, who copied from him, have an account not only insufficient but incorrect, in respect to the causes which led to the quarrel; Alamanno Rinuccini, as above, s. cxx., has only short notices of the war; Scipione Ammirato has no desire of agreeing with Machiavelli. How Raffael Maffei (Volterranus) regarded the matter is shown by his 'Comment. Urb.' and the whole of his proceedings towards the Medici. Stan. Gatteschi has in his translation of Bruto (vol. ii. p. 90, *seq.*) investigated the origin of the whole conflict with the help of documents. The name of Lorenzo de' Medici is not to be found in the contract which mentions the members of the trading company, but in the contemporary 'Ricordi' of Zaccharia Zucchi (see Fabroni, as above, vol. ii. p. 62). Francesco Guicciardini (*Stor. Fior.* chap, iii.), who had the traditions of his own house at his disposal, although he remarks that the fact was unknown to him, also speaks of Lorenzo's selfish intentions in the affair, and how he oppressed the Volterrans, because he feared a diminution of their general respect if he did not succeed in his purpose. Louis XI.'s letter to the Florentines of June 3O, wherein he complains of the silence of the Republic about the Volterran affairs, is in Desjardins, as above, p. 157; the letter from the Signori of July 1, p. 58; and the answer to the first of July 30, p. 160.

[197] Fabroni, as above, vol ii. p. 63.

[198] Lorenzo to Sixtus IV., November 21, 1472. See Fabroni, vol. ii. p. 61 (Quello che essa ha a me tanto liberalmente in questa causa promessa). The letters of Cardinal Ammanati from 1473, idem. pp. 58-61.

[199] Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, s. cxxi., cxxii.; *Cronaca di Notar. Giacomo*, p. 126. Angelo Politiano refers to the presence of Eleonore in his beautiful elegy on the death of Albiera degli Albizzi—*Prose volgari inedite*, &c., p. 140. ('Cum celebres linquens Sirenum nomine muros—Herculeumque petens regia nata torum,' &c.)

[200] *Med. Arch.*

[201] See Cappelli, as above, p. 251.

[202] L. Passerini, *Manfredi Family*. Ratti, *Della Famiglia Sforza*, vol. ii. p. 35, *seq.*

[203] Litta, *Vitelli Family*. A. Fabretti, *Capitani venturieri dell'Umbria*, vol. iii. p. 37, *seq.* Roberto Orsi, *De obsidione Tifernatum Città di Castello*, 1538, reprinted by D. M. Manni in vol. ii. of J. M. Tartini's Supplements to the Muratori Collection.

[204] June 28, 1474: Fabroni, as above, vol. ii. p. 105.

[205] Florence, December 25, 1475. See D. Moreni, *Lettere di Lorenzo il Magnifico al S. P. Innocenzo VIII.* Flor., 1830, p. 1, *seq.* The letter addressed to Sixtus IV. is here incomprehensibly referred to his successor.

[206] *Ricordi*, s. cxxiii. cxxiv.

[207] *Chronicle of Piero di Marco Parenti*, MS. of the Magliabechiana; *Letter of Angelo Poliziano to Madonna Lucrezia de' Medici* of May 31, 1477, in Poliziano's *Prose Volgari Inedite*, &c. p. 49.

[208] *Cronaca di Notar Giacomo*, pp. 134-137.

[209] The date results from Morelli's *Chronicle*. See T. Dellungo in G. Carducci's edition of Poliziano's *Italian Poems*, Flor. 1863, p. xxvii. Piero de' Medici mentions the desire of his younger son in a letter to Lorenzo, then at Milan, Fabroni, *l.c.* vol. ii. p. 52.

[210] Vasari, vol. x. p. 293. C. Quarti, *Le Ville Bandinelli a Pizzidimonte, in Belle Arti Opuscoli descritivi e biografici*, Florence 1874, p. 345, &c.

[211] *Ricordi*, s. cxxv.

[212] L. Pulci, l. c. p. 99.

[213] Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, s. cxxvi.

[214] Rome, Oct. 15, 1474, *Med. Arch.*

[215] 'Ad Franciscum Salviatum,' 1473, in the *Prose Volgari*, &c. p. 113. He calls him 'dulcis Salviate,' and says 'Parva peto, dare magna soles; da parva petenti.'

[216] Niccolò Bendedei to Ercole d'Este. See A. Cappelli. l. c. p. 252.

[217] *Chronicles* of Giovanni di Juzzo, in the *Cronache e Statuti della Città di Viterbo*, ed. Ignazio Ciampi, Flor. 1872, p. 414. Fabretti, *Capitani dell'Umbria*, vol. ii. p. 307.

[218] Sixtus IV. to Federigo di Montefeltro, Rome, June 9, 1477. (*Arch. of Urbino*, in the Tuscan Central Arch., Cl. I. Div. G., Filza, 104.)

[219] Malavolti, *Historia di Siena*, part iii. book 4, p. 71.

[220] *Med. Arch.*, Filza 34.

[221] Fabroni, 1. c. vol. ii. p. 106.

[222] A 1. c. p. 160.

[223] Guicciardini, *Storia Fior.*, p. 34, and *Ricordi di Famiglia*. Jacopo de' Pazzi's letters to Lorenzo, Fabroni, 1. cit. vol. ii. p. 104.

[224] Fabroni, 1. c. vol. ii. p. 105.

[225] The confession of Giovan Batista da Montesecco, in the *Excusatio Florentinorum*, drawn up by the Chancellor Bartolommeo Scala in Fabroni, vol. ii. p. 167, gives the clearest insight into the course of the conspiracy, and the measure of Pope Sixtus IV's. share in it. We have not the least ground to doubt the truth of the statements contained in this document. The best-known contemporary account of the occurrences is Angelo Poliziano's *De Coniuratione Pactiana Commentarius*, printed in the year of the conspiracy, and extremely rare, reprinted in the edition of Poliziano's works which appeared at Bâle, 1553, and then carefully re-edited, with many valuable additions by Giovanni Adimari. A translation made, as it seems, after the middle of the sixteenth century, was printed in the *Prose Volgari inedite*, &c., di Angelo Poliziano, Flor. 1867, pp. 87-105. There was no lack of later translation. The relation of the facts is undoubtedly correct; the opinions regarding the acting persons are those of a partizan. The later ones follow that of Poliziano in all essentials, whom, however, G. M. Bruto rightly accuses of partizanship. The best and most reliable representation, according to the documents, is that in Scipione Ammirato, in the twenty-fourth book of his Florentine History, printed separately with remarks, Flor. 1826. Fabroni, as usual, has selected the most important from the documentary materials, as far as they were at his disposal in Florence.

[226] *Med. Archiv.*

[227] Rome, January 15, 1478. (The delivery of the letter followed on the 22nd, according to Lorenzo.) *Med. Arch.*

[228] *Med. Archiv.*

[229] List of Filippo Strozzi after a Riccardi MS. in *Vita di Filippo Strozzi il vecchio, scritta da Lorenzo suo figlio, per cura di Giuseppe Bini e Pietro Bigazzi*. Flor. 1851, p. 55, *seq.*

[230] Piero di Marco Parenti, *Flor. Hist.* MS. of the Magliabechiana. See above, p. 277.

[231] Filippo Strozzi relates that Nori was slain by the side of Giuliano.

[232] Concerning the different sentences pronounced on command of the Magnifici Octoviri from April 28 to May 18 and August 3rd, 1478, see *Sententiæ Dni. Matthæi de Toscanis de Mediolano Potestatis*, Florentiæ, 1477-1478, from the Strozzi MSS. G. Adimari, l. c. pp. 136-155. A less correct list of those executed and killed after a Magliabechian MS. in the Appendix to the separate imprint of Scip. Ammirato's Report, pp. 86-88. On June 9, 1478, Sforza degli Oddi wrote to Lorenzo to recommend to him Madonna Andrea, widow of Messer Gentile de Graziani, a Peruginese emigrant, who had perished in the tumult (*Med. Arch.*, Filza 36, see *Cronache di Perugia*, vol. ii. p. 589).

[233] Letter of May 22, 1478, *Med. Arch.*

[234] Fabroni, p. 111. (Ex cod. 170, *Provision. Reip. Flor.*).

[235] See book v. The palace in the Borgo degli Albizzi, belonging to a branch of the family in the present day, with the large garden, whose portal in the Via dell'Orinolo was ascribed to Donatello, has lately disappeared in building the National Bank.

[236] Vasari's assertion that these libellous pictures are by the hand of Andrea del Castagno arises from an anachronism.

[237] Vasari, in the *Life of Verrocchio*, vol. v. p. 152. According to this description, one might suppose that the figures were still existing at Vasari's time. Other Medicean portraits (Voti), in the Annunziata were destroyed after the revolution of 1527.

[238] Letter to Gio. Lanfredini of August 18, 1487, *Med. Archiv.* The priorate of Capua came later to Leone Strozzi, the son of Filippo and Clarice de' Medici, Lorenzo's granddaughter.

[239] Vespasiano da Bisticci, l. c. p.

[240] Fabroni, l. c., ii. 116.

[241] Romanin, iv. 389.

[242] In the document, *Synodus florentina*, cap. ix.

[243] Allegretto Allegretti, *Diarj Senesi*; Muratori, *R. It. Scr.*, xxiii. col. 784.

[244] Bull, see Rainaldi, *Annales Eccl.*, x. 582 *et seq.*, and Fabroni, l. c. ii. 121 *et seq.*

[245] Rome, June 1478, *Med. Arch.*

[246] *Instructio pro. R. Card. Mantuano*, &c. Copy without date. MSS. Capponi, cod. xxii. cat. no. 1230.

[247] Letter of the Doge Andrea Vendramin. Capponi MSS. cod. cccxiii.

[248] Romanin, l. c., iv. 390.

[249] *Cronaca di Notar Giacomo*, pp. 128-132. The statement of Barante (*Histoire des ducs de Bourgogne*, 'Charles the Bold,' b. iv.), that Campobasso came to France with the Anjou prince, is erroneous according to this. The condottiere belonged to the Aragonese party. In Naples the defeat at Nancy was ascribed to his treason, *Cronaca*, 1. c. p. 133.

[250] *Idem*, p. 129.

[251] See first, Fabroni, p. 119; also Desjardins, p. 171; French, in Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Lettres et Négociations de Philippe de Commines*, i. 173.

[252] The documents relative to Commines' mission. See Kervyn de Lettenhove, i. 173-182.

[253] Florence, June 19, 1478. See Fabroni, p. 132.

[254] Kervyn de Lettenhove, iii. 11.

[255] *Mémoires*, vi. chap. v.

[256] *Archives of Urbino (Tuscan. Central Arch.)*, class i. div. iv. 104.

[257] Brief of Sixtus IV. to the parish of Perugia, Rome, June 10, 1478, in the *Cronache e Storie di Perugia*, ii. 580.

[258] *Divine Comedy*, Purg. xiv. 48.

[259] *Divine Comedy, Inferno*, xxix. 46.

[260] The best details of the campaign of 1478-9 are given in Allegretti's *Diarj Senesi Sanesi*, 1. c., 784-797.

[261] Rainaldi, *Ann. Eccl.*, 1. c., p. 585.

[262] Roscoe, *Illustrations*, Doc. v., Heidelberg edit., iv. 199.

[263] Fabroni, ii. 136-166. See above, p. 387.

[264] Letter of July 25, 1478, in Fabroni, ii. 130.

[265] G. M. Canale, *Nuova Istoria della Republica di Genova*, iv. 212.

[266] Rosmini, *Istoria di Gian Jacopo Trivulzio*, Mil. 1815, i. 31 *seq.*; ii. 31 *seq.*

[267] Rainaldi, *Ann. Eccl.*, 1. c., p. 591; Kervyn de Lettenhove, 1. c., iii. 12.

[268] Kervyn de Lettenhove, l. c., i. 185.

[269] *Mémoires*, 1, vi. chap. 5.

[270] Warrant of Louis XI. for Lorenzo de' Medici and Commines, July 13, 1478. Warrant for Commines to grant the investiture of the same date, in Kervyn de Lettenhove, i. 185-188. Despatches of the Milanese ambassadors at Florence, &c., ib. iii. 13-29.

[271] Ib., 1. c., pp. 190, 191.

[272] Letter of the Signoria, August 23, 1478; Desjardins, 1. c., p. 172; Kervyn de Lettenhove (French), i. 190; Letter of Lorenzo in Kervyn, p. 191. When Commines says in his memoirs, 'Je demourai au dit lieu de Florence un an, ou dans leurs territoires,' this is incorrect. He did not arrive at Turin much before the middle of June; went from thence to Milan, Florence, and Rome; and at the beginning of October was again in Lyons.

[273] Letter of Louis XI. to Lorenzo de' Medici, November 1, 1478, and instructions for the ambassadors, from the Medici Archives, Desjardins, 1. c., vol. i. pp. 174-184.

[274] Rainaldi, *Ann. Eccl.*, l. c., pp. 588-590.

[275] Malipiero, *Annali Veniti*, i. 247; Romanin, l. c., iv. 391

[276] The demand that the caricature of the Archbishop of Pisa should be erased is dated February 9, 1479. Gaye, 1. c., p. 574.

[277] Romanin, 1. c., iv. 382.

[278] Notices of the treaties in Rome from the documents of the Medicean Archives, Desjardins, 1. c., i. 184-186; Scip. Ammirato, 1. c., pp. 131-136; Rainaldi, *Ann. Eccl.* x. 587 *seq.*

[279] *Cronache Ec.* di Viterbo, p. 420 *seq.*

[280] Scipione Ammirato, book xxiv. Pezzana, *Storia di Parma*, iv. 86-128.

[281] Vincenzo Acciaiuoli, *Vita di Piero Capponi*, in the *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, iv. pt. 2, p. 17. Tommasi, *Storia di Lucca*, p. 338.

[282] Rosmini, *Storia di Milano*, iii. 82. Pezzana, 1. c. p. 144 *seq.*

[283] Despatches of December 30, 1478, January 13, and July 18, 1479, in *Kervyn de Lettenhore*, l. c. i. 232, 239, 271.

[284] Despatches of Visconti and Cagnola, Orleans, September 1, 1479, l. c. p. 283 *seq.*

[285] Letter of Antonio Pucci to Lorenzo de' Medici, Flor. June 18, 1479; see Fabroni, l. c. p. 199.

[286] *Med. Arch.*

[287] D. Malipiero, l. c. i. 482.

[288] *Mémoires*, l. vii. c. 2.

[289] *Cronache Milanesi*, pp. 186, 187.

[290] Molini (G. Capponi), *Documenti di Storia Italiana*, Flor. 1836, i. 297.

[291] *Instructio D. Nicolai Martelli ituri ad Laur. Medicem*, see Fabroni, l. c. ii. 189 seq. 'Inter os et offam multa accidere possent.' 'Jactet aleam.'

[292] Pier Filippo Pandolfini to the Magistracy of Ten, Milan, November 22, 1479. Fabroni, pp. 196-199.

[293] See above, Bk. 3, ch. i. Filippo says: 'Che totalmentegli si rimetteva nelle braccia e che in quello modo Sua Maestà lo volessi o grande o basso dentro o fuori, era contento, di modo che S. M. rendesse pacie alla città e le terre tolte.'—*Idem.* l. c. p. 58.

[294] Guicciardini, *Storia Fiorentina*, cap. vi.

[295] The danger which Lorenzo de' Medici exposed himself to has been made much greater in later times than it really was. Jacopo Pitti (l. c. p. 25) says clearly that safety had been promised him both by the king and the pope (?); but it was believed that he gave himself into Ferrante's power unconditionally (liberamente), in order to increase the fame of the latter and the splendour of his own patriotism. The danger lay less in what might happen at Naples than what might occur at Florence from a longer absence. Guicciardini hints at this (p. 59). Confidence shown in a man like the king was never without danger however.

[296] *Lettere de' Principi* (Venet. edit. 1581), i. 3. Translated by Roscoe, i. 221.

[297] *Lettere di Lorenzo de' Medici* from the Modena Archives, edited by A. Cappelli. *Atti e Memorie della R. Diputazione di Storia patria per le prov. Modenesi e Parmensi*, i. 230.

[298] Malavotti, *Historia di Sienna*, part iii. p. 176.

[299] B. Scala's Letter (see Fabroni, p. 205) has the date of December 5, which must be a mistake, as the Signoria was first informed on the 7th.

[300] Lorenzo de' Medici to the Ferrarese ambassador Antonio Montecatino, Pisa, December 10; see Cappelli, l. c. p. 240.

[301] *Cronaca di Notar Giacomo*, p. 145.

[302] Fabroni, i. 103 *seq.*, has an address to the king spoken by Lorenzo, evidently a later oratorical production.

[303] Guicciardini, l. c. chap. vi. p. 58.

[304] Fabroni, l. c. ii. 201, 202. Agnolo della Stufa to Lorenzo de' Medici, January 4, 1480; *Idem.* pp. 207-210.

[305] Carlo Visconti to the regency at Milan, Tours, January 30, 1480; see Kervyn de Lettenhove, i. 318.

[306] Guicciardini, l. c.

[307] Bart. Scala to Lorenzo de' Medici, January 12, 1480; see Fabroni, l. c. ii. 202-204.

[308] Lorenzo de' Medici to the Ten, Naples, January 3, 1480; Fabroni, l. c. ii. 206.

[309] Capponi MSS. xxii. p. 68 *seq.* (*Catalogo*, No. 1212). The date is wanting in the copy; but the instruction must be of 1459, as this year is spoken of as the present one.

[310] Fabroni, l. c. ii. 207-210.

[311] Letter of Ippolita Maria, Castel Capuano, July 3, 1480; Fabroni, l. c. ii. 223.

[312] (Ratti) *Della Famiglia Sforza*, ii. 11. See above, p. x. Lascaris'

Greek grammar, dedicated to Ippolita, appeared at Milan 1476.

[313] Diarium Parmense, see Muratori, *R. It. Scr.* vol. xxiii. col. 335.

[314] Alamanno Rinuccini, l. c. s. cxxxi.

[315] Agnolo della Stufa, l. c.

[316] Ercole d'Este to Ant. Montecatini, March 19, 1480; see Cappelli, l. c. p. 253.

[317] Jacobi Volaterrani, *Diarium Rom.*, ad. a. 1479 (1480); see Muratori, *R. It. Scr.* vol. xxiii. col. 100.

[318] Ferrante to Lorenzo, Castelnuovo, March 1, 1480; Fabroni, ii. 213-216.

[319] Jacobi Volat. *Diar.*, 1. c.

[320] Ercole d'Este to Ant. Montecatini, April 20, 1480; Cappelli, 1. c. p. 253.

[321] *Cronaca di Notar. Giacomo*, p. 146.

[322] Angelo di Costanzo mentions the suspicion in his History of Naples; but an author of the second half of the sixteenth century is no authority. That Lorenzo, in a letter to Albino, the Duke of Calabria's secretary, who entertained the same suspicion (see Fabroni, l. c. ii. 216), rejoices over Alfonso's success and speaks of *cani Turchi*, proves as little on the other side.

[323] See Fabroni, l. c. ii. 217.

[324] Jac. Volaterr, l. c. pp. 113, 118.

[325] *Regola del Governo di Cura Familiare del B. Giovanni Dominici*, pubbl. da Donato Salvi, Flor., 1860.

[326] L. Mehus, *Epistola di M. Lapo da Castiglionchio*, Bologna, 1653. Fr. Bocchi, *Elogia*, in G. E. Galletti's edit. of Philippi Villani, *Liber de civitatis Florentiæ famosis civibus, et de Florentinorum Litteratura principes fere synchroni Scriptores*, Flor. 1847, pp. 9, 12.

[327] In the decree of August 27 (Gaye, l. c. i. 573) we read: 'Cogitantes magnifici viri priores artium et vexillifer virtutem supremam, vitam sinceram, mores honestos et in omnibus exemplares, religionis integritatem, doctrinam sanctam utilem et decoram, ac vere sancte et summæ eloquentiæ vas habundans venerabilis et omni tempore cum laude memorandi magistri Loysii de Marsiliis de Florentiæ', &c.

[328] The students were then placed on an equal footing with the burghers by law, 'tractentur ut cives populares.' See Gaye, l. c. i. 461; Prezziner, *Storia del Pubblico Studio di Firenze*, Flor. 1810, i. 3; Fabroni, *Historia Academiæ Pisanæ*, i. 46.

[329] Extract of the decree of August 7, 1348, *apud* Gaye, 1.c. p. 499.

[330] L. Mehus, *Ambrosii Traversarii*, &c.; *Latinæ Epistolæ accedit eiusdem Ambrosii vita*, &c., Flor. 1759, i. 356.

[331] G. Shepherd, *Vita di Poggio Bracciolini, trad. da T. Tonelli*, Flor. 1825. The numerous corrections and additions made by the translator of the English work which appeared in 1802 are based on careful investigation. Tonelli arranged later a complete edition of Poggio's letters, the first volume of which appeared at Florence in 1831 (*Poggii Epistolæ ed. a Th. Tonellio*), the second long after the editor's death, while the third is still wanting.

[332] Mehus, *Ambr. Travers. Epist.* i. 178.

[333] Savigny, *History of Roman Law*, &c., iii. 583 and elsewhere. A. Kirchhoff, the manuscript collector of the Middle Ages, in Naumann's *Serapeum*, 1852, p. 17 *seq.* Fr. Bonaini, *I libri, gli Stazionari, i Peciari, i Copisti*, &c., in the *Giornale Stor. degli Archiv. Tosc.* iv. 97 *seq.* The price of the *Corpus Juris*, from the legacy *quondam Cristofani judicis*, amounted to 112 Sienese liri.

[334] *Lettere della B. Chiara Gambacorta Pisana* (edited by Cesare Guasti), Pisa, 1871.

[335] *Commissioni*, i. 86.

[336] *Lettere della B. Chiara Gambacorta*, p. 59.

[337] Marco Foscarini, *Dei Veneziani raccoglitori di Codici*, in the Appendix to his *Storia Arcana*, Flor. 1843, vol. v. of the *Archiv. Storico Italiano*.

[338] Gayo, l. c. i. 533.

[339] Information respecting Leonardo Bruni has been collected by C. Monzani: *Leonardo Bruni Aretino*, in the *Archivio Stor. Ital.*, series ii. vol. v. (reprinted in *Istoria Fiorentina di Leon. Aretino, tradotta in volgare da Donato Acciaiuoli*, Flor. 1861). L. Mehus' edition of the letters appeared at Flor. 1741. The literary Academy of Arezzo planned (Flor. 1856) a reprint of the Florentine history which had first appeared in 1610, with Acciaiuoli's version opposite, which, completed in 1473, had been published at Venice three years later, while the original remained so long inedited.

[340] With a Latin translation by B. Moneta, Flor. 1755; German by C. F. Neumann, Frankfort, 1822; and new revision of the text by L. W. Hasper, Leipsig, 1841.

[341] Gaye, 1. c. i. 545, 554, 560.

[342] Fabroni, *Magni Cosmi Med. Vita*, ii. 217.

[343] L. Mehus, *Ambrosii Traversarii*, &c.; *Latinæ Epistolæ*, &c.

[344] Vespasiano da Bisticci, l. c. p. 240.

[345] Vespasiano da Bisticci, 1. c. p. 439. Letters of Nicholas V. to Marsuppini and the Signoria, October 24, 1452, p. 441.

[346] Detailed Latin biography by Naldo Naldi, Muratori, *Scr. r. Ital.* vol. xx.; Vespasiano da Bisticci, 1. c. p. 444 *seq.* For the introduction to the latter by Bernardo del Nero, with a short outline and list of Manetti's writings, as well as an Italian extract from Naldi by one of the Ricci family, see Galletti, 1. c. p. 129 *seq.* Compare *Apostolo Zeno Dissertaz.*, Voss, i. 170 *seq.*

[347] The original of the *Statuta Populi et Communis Florentiæ* is to be found, with the MSS. of numerous other statutes, in the Florentine archives; printed in three volumes, said to be at Freiburg, 1778-83. See Lami, *Antichità Toscane*, i. 522, and N. Salvetti, *Antiquitates Florentinæ jurisprudentiam Etruriæ illustrantes*, Flor. 1777.

[348] Vespasiano da Bisticci, l. c. p. 283.

[349] *Tractatus quo concluditur: Nullam Gentilium scientiam chatolicæ fidei christianæ esse contrariam*, addressed to Malatesta de' Malatesti by Pesaro as umpire, Rinaldo is termed therein, 'Nobilis florentinus juvenis Rainaldus domini Masii de Albicis de Florentia.' There is a tract by the same author, *De electione medici ad nobilem florentinum juvenem Cosmum Johannis Bitii de Medicis*; see *Commissioni di R. d. A.* iii. 601 *seq.*; Mehus, 1. c. p. 394.

[350] On the sonnet generally ascribed to Burchiello, 'O umil popol mio, tu non ti avvedi,' see *Commissioni*, iii. 647.

[351] Rosmini, *Vita di Francesco Filelfo da Tolentino*, Milan, 1808, i. 35.

[352] Fabroni, l. c. ii. 69.

[353] Phil. *Sat.* ii. 3; iv. 1; Shepherd, l. c. i. 238. Rosmini, p. 75, has no desire to dwell on revolting subjects.

[354] Vespasiano da Bisticci, l. c. p. 246.

[355] L. Mehus, l. c. p. 18; Poggio, *Opera*, p. 278.

[356] *Epist. I.* iii. 29 (in Tonelli's edit. i. 269).

[357] *Idem.*, iv. 16, 17 (i. 333, 339).

[358] Shepherd, l. c. i. 155, 222.

[359] Tiraboschi, *Stor.* lett. vi. 1 (vol. vii.), p. 263. A. Peruzzi, in Hercolani's *Biografie d'illustri Piceni*, i. 27, very superficial. L. Mehus' edition of *Kyriaci Anconitani Itinerarium*, Flor. 1742, is insufficient; information about him has been carefully collected in the preface and in Traversari's life. For the opinion of Alberto degli Alberti respecting the state of Rome in Pope Eugenius IV.'s time in a letter to Giovanni de' Medici, Cosimo's

son, see Fabroni, 1. c. ii. 165.

[360] Vespasiano da Bisticci, 1. c. p. 511; G. Cantalamessa, Hercolani, i. 117 *seq.*

[361] G. Voigt, *Die Wiederbelebung des classischen Alterthums*, p. 361.

[362] Mehus, 1. c. ii. 335.

[363] Apostolo Zeno, 1. c. i. 318; Fabroni, 1. c. i. 136, ii. 223.

[364] *Histor. de var. Fort.* p.92; Traversari, *Epist.* v. 10 (ii. 245).

[365] Fr. Schulze, *Geschichte der Philosophie der Renaissance*, i. Jena, 1874.

[366] Gio. Corsi, *Marsilii Ficini Vita*, with introduction and notes by A. M. Bandini, Pisa, 1771; reprinted by Galletti Philippi Villani, *Liber*, &c., pp. 183-214. L. Galeotti, *Saggio intorno alla vita e agli scritti di M. F.* in the *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, series ii., ix. 2, 25 *seq.* (A careful collection of Ficino's opinions, especially on religion and particularly from his letters.) Edit. of the Works, Basle, 1576, with twelve books of letters in vol. i. There is an Italian translation of the letters, *Lettere di M. F., tradotte per M. Felice, Figliucci Senese*, Venice, 1556. Ficino composed his commentary to Plato's Banquet and his book on the Christian religion in Italian also. Edit. of the first, Flor. 1544; the second, Flor. 1568 (Gamba, *Testi di Lingua*, 1097, 1098).

[367] M. Ficino, *Epistolæ*, book i.; see vol. i. p. 192; vol. ii. p. 29 *seq.*

[368] In Lord Vernon's illustrated edition of the *Inferno* there is a representation of Landino's grave and the body.

[369] A. M. Bandini, *Specimen literaturæ Florentinæ sæculi XV.* Flor. 1748 (*History and Monuments of the Florentine Literature of the second half of the Fifteenth Century*, in the form of a biography of Landino); see vol. ii. p. 40 *seq.*

[370] *Ad Jacobum Salvettum de laudibus M. Cosmi*, Bandini, i. 102.

[371] *Lettere di Sant'Antonino*, Flor. 1859, pp. 126, 193. On the embassies to Rome entrusted to the Archbishop in the years 1455 and 1458: *Due Legazioni al Sommo Pontefice per il Comune di Firenze, presedute da Sant'Antonino arcivescovo* (edited by Cesare Guasti), Flor. 1857. Of the works of the Saint, for which see Brunet's *Manuel bibliographique*, i. 330, we need only mention here, *Opera a ben vivere di S. A., messa a luce con altri suoi ammaestramenti e una giunta di antiche orazioni Toscane, da Fr. Palermo*, Flor. 1858.

[372] L. c. p. 193.

[373] Fabroni, l. c.

[374] Vespasiano da Bisticci, l. c. p. 291.

[375] Vespasiano da Bisticci, l. c. p. 482.

[376] Gaye, l. c. i. 545; see above, p. 528.

[377] Shepherd, l. c. i. 255.

[378] *Idem.* p. 261.

[379] Vespasiano da Bisticci, pp. 210, 213, 402.

[380] 'Protonotaio apostolico inghilese,' 'Messer Andrea Ols,' l. c. p. 238.

[381] See vol. ii. pp. 141, 142.

[382] Inscription:

SOCIETATI MEDICEÆ
APUD DEUM
FRATRES ET STUDIOSI OMNES
LINGUIS ANIMISQUE
FAVERE TENEMUR
QUOD SUA IMPENSA
LOCUM BIBLIOTHECÆ
OMNI CULTU ET ORNATU
JOANNE LANFREDINO SOCIO
FACIUNDUM CURAVIT.

The bitter words in the sonnet mentioned on page 451, after the recall of the decree of 1434, 'del tuo gran tesoro—ti vota sempre, e empie a Marco il seno,' refer to Cosimo's munificence at Venice.

[383] Plan of San Marco in (Aurelio Gotti's) *le Gallerie de Firenze*.

[384] Mehus, *Ambr. Trav. Epist.* i. 63.

[385] 'Ex hereditate doctissimi viri Nicolai de Nicolis de Florentia.' These and similar words we read in the MSS. also.

[386] 'Inventarium Nicolai p. v. quod ipso composuit ad instantiam Cosmæ de Medicis ut ab ipso Cosma audivi die xii Nov. 1463. Ego frater Leonardus Ser. Uberti de Florentia ord. præd.' &c. MSS. of the same library. See Mehus, *Traversari*, i. 65, where are a number of details respecting the history of the Collection partly from Fra Roberto Ubaldini's *Annales Marciani*.

[387] 'Liber Colucii Pierii de Salutatis cancellarii florentini Liber Cosmæ Johannis de Medicis de Florentia.' Such is the inscription on such Codices.

[388] Vespasiano da Bisticci, l. c. p. 382.

[389] Vespasiano da Bisticci, l. c. p. 252.

[390] (N. Anziani) *Della Biblioteca Mediceo-Laurenziana in Firenze*, Flor. 1872, pp. 4, 6, 22, 24.

[391] In a MS. of the Epistles of St. Paul (Codd. Fiesolani Laur. cod. v.) we read the following inscription: Magnifici viri Cosmae de Medicis ingens liberalitas, eximia virtus et charitas prope singularis ex omni parte sese ostendit. Sacras has ædificavit ædes, his religiosis viris canonicis regularibus quæ ad usum vitæ necessaria erant paravit, postremo illis has epistolas Pauli dono dedit ut nihil relinqueretur quod esset ab illis ulterius expetendum. Adsit igitur clementissimus Deus et benedicat ei omnibus diebus vitæ suæ. Ex hereditate Joannis filii sui.'

In a MS. of the works of the Fathers of the Church (cod. lv.) we find: 'Has Sanctorum Patrum Collationes quas Joannes Cassianus luculentissime edidit Magnificus Cosmus Medices viginti aureis emit et huic Divi Bartholomæi fesulano monasterio quod a fundamentis erexit sua pietate dedit anno MCCCCLXII. Inter orandum eius animæ memores estote. Timotheus Veronensis.' In the Cod. lxxii.: 'In hoc volumine quisquis legendo profecerit Petro Mediceo Cosmi filio acceptum referri debebit qui eximiam patris pietatem atque religionem prosequutus hoc ipso multisque aliis præclarissimis libris bibliothecam istam ornavit, cui æternum munus cumulatamque mercedem reddat Deus opt. max.' In the cod. clvii.: 'Laurentius Medices Petri filius eiusque virtutis et gloriæ æmulator felicissimus codicem hunc illustri suo nomine ab auctore dicatum huic preciosæ librorum supellectili avita paternaque magnificentia ac liberalitate institutæ addendum merito duxit ut et eam hoc munere locupletiorem ornatioremque redderet et opus eius scriptorisque nomine insigne ipsa quoque sede illustrius fieret ac multorum ingeniis deserviret. Orato itaque lector ut gloria et divitiæ sint in domo eius justitia eius et maneat in sæculum sæculi.'

[392] *Descrizione del palazzo d'Urbino in versi e prose di Bernardino Baldi*, Flor. 1859.

[393] Vespasiano da Bisticci in the *Life of Federigo*, l. c. 94 *seq.* The inventory of the library of Urbino by Federigo Veterano in the *Giornale stor. degli Arch. tosc.* vi. and vii.

[394] *Giorn. stor. degli Arch. tosc.* ii. 240.

[395] *Med. Arch. passim*.

[396] *Vite di illustri Italiani* (*Arch. stor. Ital.* iv.) i. 305. Many portions of Vespasiano's Correspondence are found in the Laurentian library.

[397] Vespasiano da Bisticci, l.c. p. 99.

[398] Poliziano, *Prose volgari inedite*, &c. p. 83. 'Recentes enim mendosique sunt libri.'

[399] Mehus, *Traversari*, p. 67.

[400] See A. Bartoli in his preface to the Florentine edition of the *Biographies*, where an extract is given from the registers of the heirs of Filippo di Leonardo da Bisticci (Vespasiano's father) of

the year 1430, which answers Mehus' and Cardinal Mai's doubts regarding the name.

[401] Colomb de Batines, *Bibliografia Dantesca*, ii. 62; (L. Passerini) *Cenni storico-bibliografici della R. Biblioteca nazionale di Firenze*, Flor. 1872, p. 23.

[402] Batines, l. c. ii. 41, 42; Mehus, *Traversari*, p. 180.

[403] Mehus, l. c. p. 320.

[404] Shepherd, l. c. ii. 45.

[405] *Vite di illustri Italiani*, i. 306.

[406] The Medicean Archives, filza xlvi., contains the following letter of Bessarion (B. episcopus Sabin. card. patr. Constant. Nicænus sedis apost. legatus) to Lorenzo de' Medici: 'Illustrious and noble lord, dear friend,—The bookseller, Vespasiano di Filippo, whom we mentioned shortly before at the close of a letter addressed to you, has now sent us information about the works of Augustine that he had written for us, with an estimate of the expense with which we are entirely satisfied. He writes us he has divided the work in question into nine volumes, with miniatures, bindings, and all that belongs to it. One volume is wanting to complete the collection, respecting which he writes that he will hasten to finish it, which we also desire. For payment he has still to receive eighty-seven ducats, besides the four hundred which your bank has accredited to him in our name. We request you to pay him this remainder and to place it to our account. Take the books to yourself and keep them in a suitable place till we write to you about them. May it be well with your Magnificence! Frascati, May 23, 1472.' The learned ecclesiastic perhaps never saw the books, for he died on November 19 of the same year. The copy is in the Marciana, where, however, only seven volumes are found. It is decorated with Bessarion's arms, and in the fourth volume we find the name of the copyist, Francesco degli Ugolini, Fiorentino, 1471. G. Valentinelli speaks of this manuscript in his catalogue of the MSS. of the Marciana, ii. 30.

[407] Vespasiano da Bisticci, l. c. pp. 113, 217, 403. See above, p. 469, ii. Bk. iv. pt. 3. c. 6.

[408] 'Vespasiano cartolare' was buried in Sta. Croce on July 27, 1498. *Giornale Sior. degli Arch. Tosc.* ii. 241. On the first Florentine printers see ii. 133 *seq*.

[409] Vespasiano da Bisticci, l. c. p. 99.

[410] L. Passerini, *Gli Alberti di Firenze*, i. 87 *seq.* Madonna Bartolommea, the daughter of Tommaso degli Obizzi, of a distinguished family of Northern Italy, a general of Pope Urban V. and the King of Italy, and first Italian knight of the Garter, married Antonio degli Alberti in 1390, and died about 1426.

[411] *Opere volgari di Leon Bat. Alberti, pubbl. da Anicio Bonucci*, vol. ii. Flor. 1844. A portion of this work has been repeatedly printed under the title *Trattato del Governo della Famiglia*, as a work of Agnolo Pandolfini, of which we have spoken above (p. 467; see Gamba's *Testi di Lingua,* 700, 701) a question of authorship, the discussion of which can have no place here, and which was lately revived in the introduction to *Il Padre di Famiglia, dialogo di L. B. Alberti rimesso in luce sopra un nuovo codice palatino da Fr. Palermo*, Florence 1871.

[412] *Orazione facta per Cristoforo Landino da Pratovecchio, ec.*; see Fr. Corrazzini, *Miscellanea di cose inedite o rare*. Flor. 1853, p. 125 *seq.*

[413] L. B. Alberti, *Opere volgari*, i. pp. xvii.-xix., clvii.-ccxxxiv., where these sorry productions are given.

[414] A. M. Biscioni has collected a considerable number of these writings in the *Lettere di Santi e Beati Fiorentini*, Flor. 1736. C. Guasti's edition of the *Lettere della B. Chiara Gambacorti* has been mentioned above. He also printed in his *Miscellanea Pratese*, No. 5, the touching letter of Sister Costanza Ciaparelli on the death of Feo Belcari's daughter (Prato, 1861). For more on Feo. Belcari's letters, see back. The letters of the two St. Caterinas of Siena and de' Ricci lie beyond the scope of the present work.

[415] D. M. Manni, *Sigilli antichi*, xix. 127; xx. 39. Poccianti: *Chronicon rerum s. ord. Servorum B. M. Virginis*, Flor. 1569, p.

3. In Florence there are still a few memorials of the Laudesi. On the Cathedral (formerly Sta. Reparata) is an inscription on the side turned towards the Campanile: 'S. Societatis Laudensium B. M. Virginis qui congregantur in ecclesia Ste. Reparate, anno Dom. MCCCX. de mense Novemb.' (see *Firenze, antica e moderna illustrata*, ii. 112). In Via dello Pappe, now Via Folco Portinari: 'Questa casa è de la compagnia de Laudesi di Sancta Maria che si raguna in Sancta Liperata.' The chapel of the Laudesi of Sta. Croce was where the splendid Niccolini chapel began to be built in 1585 (F. Moisè, *Santa Croce di Firenze* p. 198). In the *Decameron* (Giorn. vii. Nov. 1) the Laudesi of Sta. Maria Novella and their good-natured superintendent, Gianni Lottaringhi, is mentioned (D. M. Manni, *Istoria del Decamerone*, p. 460; Fr. Sansovino, in his edition of the *Decameron*, Ven. 1549); see Fr. Cionacci, *Rime sacre di Lorenzo de' Medici*, 2nd edit. Bergamo, 1760, p. xxi.

[416] *Laudi spirituali del Bianco da Siena povero Gesuato del sec. XIV.* (edited by Telesforo Bini), Lucca, 1851. Feo Belcari's *Vita del B. Giovanni Columbini et di alcuni Jesuati*, composed in 1448, but first printed towards 1480 (Gamba, *Testi di lingua*, 100 *seq.*). On the Jesuates, G. B. Uccelli, *I Convento di S. Giusto alla mura e i Gesuati*, Flor. 1865; see ii. 163. The order was dissolved in 1668 by Pope Clement IX.

[417] The most perfect collection of Lauds, especially of the fourteenth century, including Belcari, Lorenzo de' Medici and his mother, &c., is called *Laude spirituali di Feo Belcari, di Lorenzo de' Medici, di Francesco d'Albizzo, di Castellano Castellani, e di altri, comprese nelle quattro più antiche raccolte, con alcune inedite e con nuove illustrazioni* (by G. C. Galletti), Florence 1863, with woodcuts. On the older editions, see Gamba, *Testi di Lingua*, 105 *seq.*, 576 *seq.* The hymns of Ugo Panziera were printed by P. Fanfani in the translation of Ozanam's *Poëtes Franciscains*, Prato, 1854, and C. Guasti, *I Cantici spirituali del B. Ugo Panziera da Prato de' Frati Minori*, Prato 1861 (*Miscellanea Pratese*, No. iii.). Another collection of hymns to the Virgin and the Saints, edited by Eug. Cecconi: *Laudi di una Compagnia fiorentina del secolo XIV*, Florence 1870.

[418] D. Moreni, *Lettere di Feo Belcari*, Flor. 1825. The most complete account of the mysteries, in the literature of which Feo Belcari takes an important place, is given by Colombs de Batines, *Bibliografia delle antiche rappresentazioni italiane sacre e profane stampate nei secoli XV e XIV* in P. Fanfani's *Etruria*, ii. (Flor. 1852), 193. A copious collection of these mysteries was published by Alessandro d'Ancona: *Sacre Rappresentazioni dei secoli XIV, XV, XVI*, Flor. 1872, three vols.; see J. L. Klein, *Geschichte der Drama*, iv. Leipsig, 1866.

[419] See Mazzuchelli, *Scrittori d'Italia*, vol. ii. div. ii. p. 860 *seq.* for list of his writings.

[420] Florence, November 1, 1530, in G. Milanesi's edition of the *Varchi*.

[421] In *San Marco*. Inscription of the two graves:—

JOANNES IACET HIC MIRANDULA CETERA NORUNT
ET TAGUS ET GANGES FORSAN ET ANTIPODES.
OBITT AN. SAL. MCCCCLXXXXIV. VIXIT AN. XXXIII.
HIERONYMUS BENIVENIUS NE DISIUNCTUS
POST MORTEM LOCUS OSSA TENERET QUORUM IN
VITA ANIMOS CONJUNXIT AMOR HAC
HUMO SUPPOSITA PONENDUM CUR. OBIIT AN.
MDILII. VIXIT AN. LXXXIX.

[422] See the oldest edition of the *Laudi di Feo Belcari*, Florence 1485, printed three years after Lucrezia's death, and Fr. Cionacci's *Rime sacre di Lorenzo de' Medici unitamente a quelle di Madonna Lucrezia sua madre*, Flor. 1680 and Bergamo 1760, as well as the Galletti collection before mentioned. Crescimbeni (*Della volgar poesia*, ii. 277) is inclined to place Lucrezia above most, if not all, poets of her time; but Crescimbeni is a weak critic. The *Lauds* begin: (I.) 'Ecco 'l Messia' (resembling the 'Venite adoremus' of the Church); (II.) 'Venite pastori'; (III.) 'Contempla le mie pene o peccatore;' (IV.) 'Ecco il Re forte;' (V.) 'Vien il messagio;' (VI.) 'Ben venga Osanna.'

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