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LORENZO DE' MEDICI



THE MAGNIFICENT

R. WHITEHEAD, K.G.
8, GROVE END ROAD, W.



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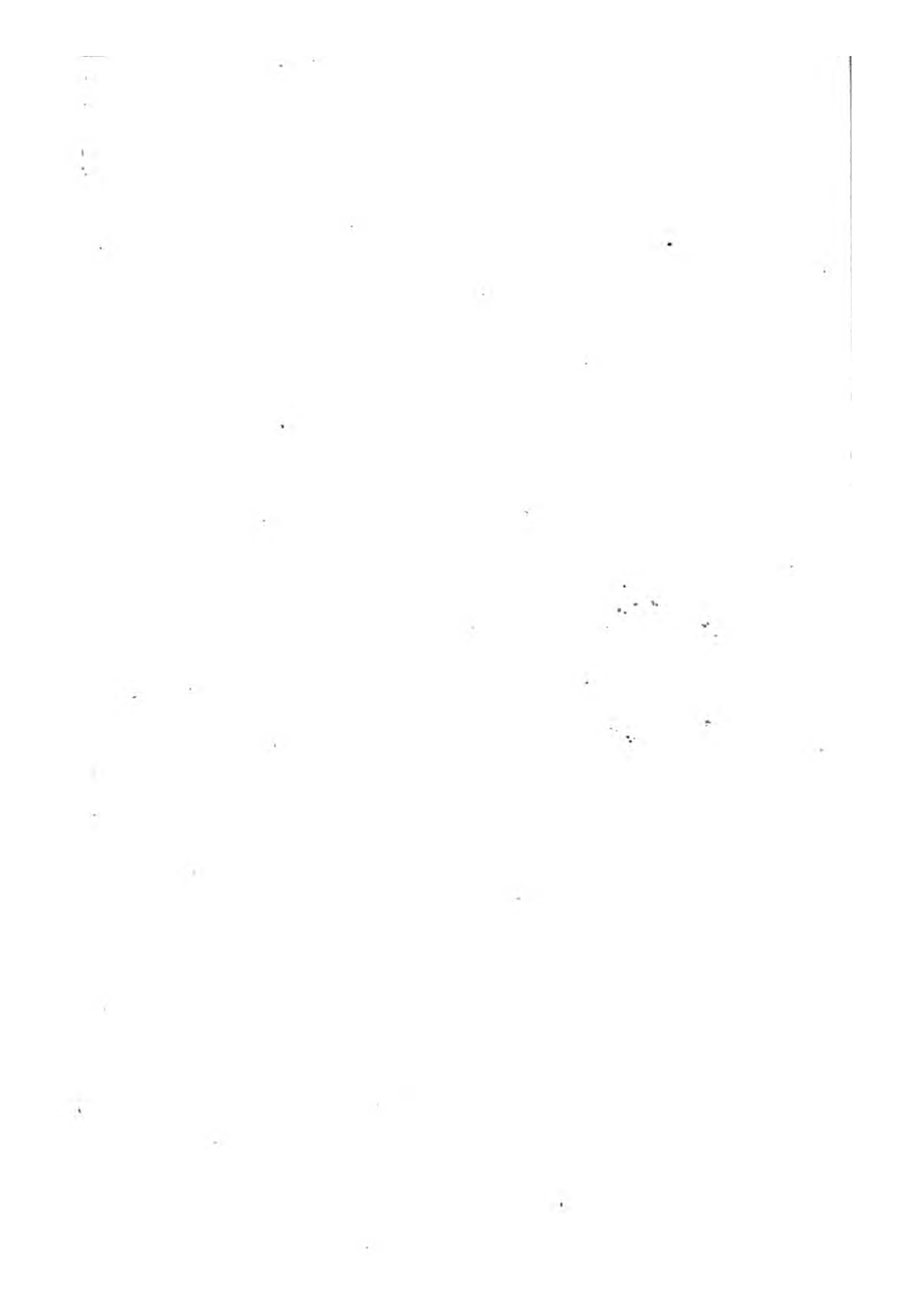
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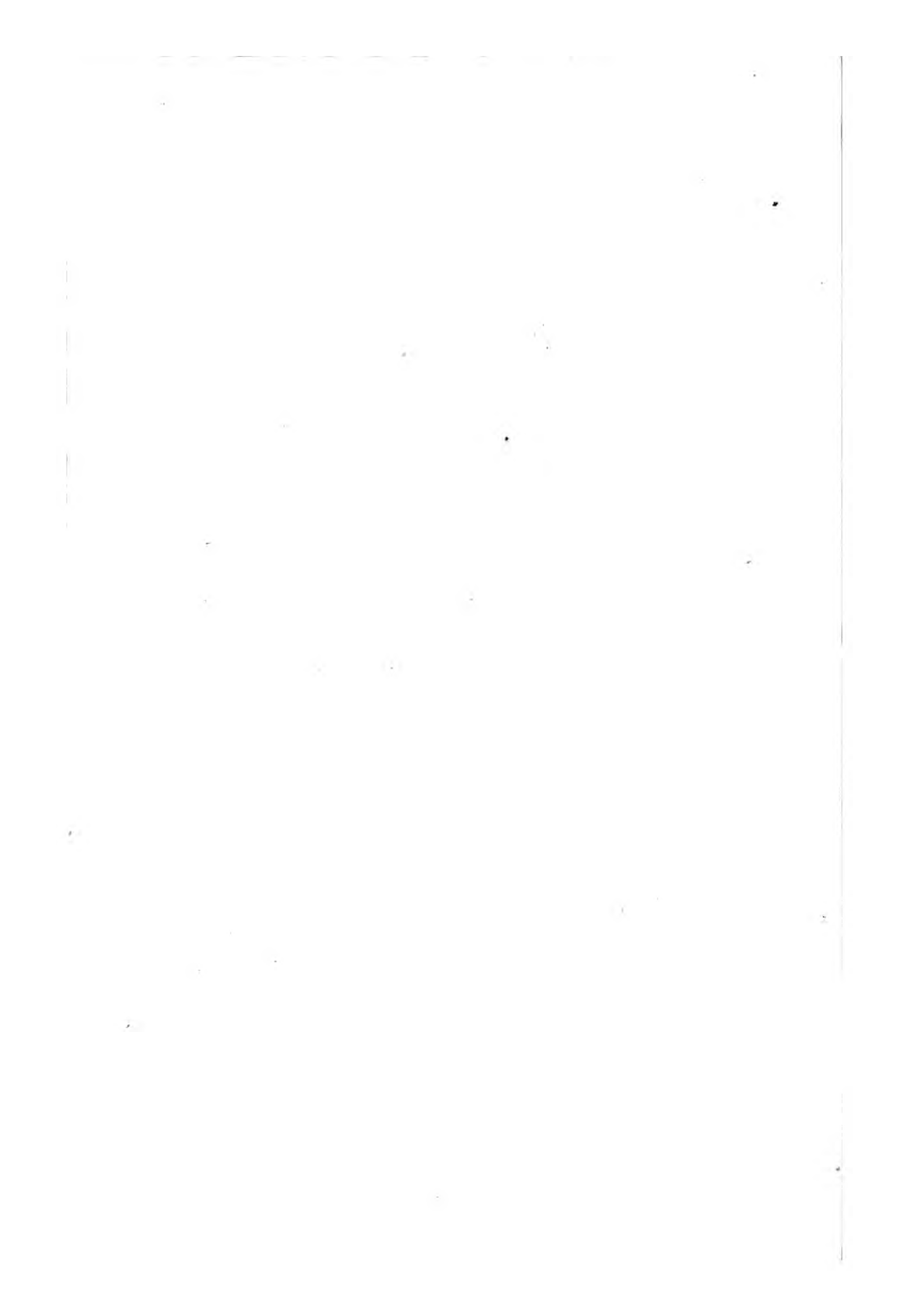
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LORENZO DE' MEDICI

VOL. II.



LORENZO DE' MEDICI

THE MAGNIFICENT

BY

ALFRED VON REUMONT

TRANSLATED from THE GERMAN by ROBERT HARRISON

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

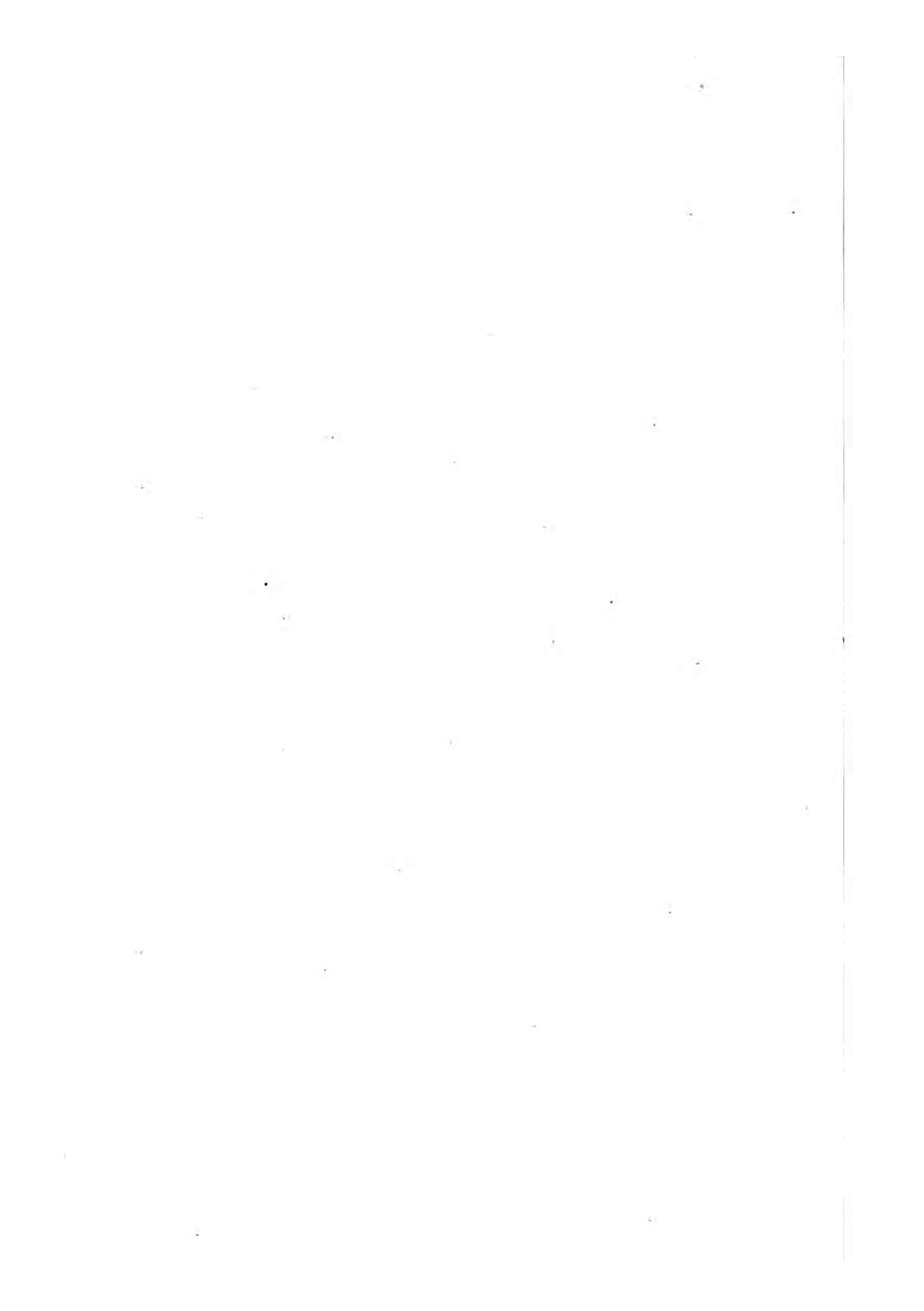


LONDON

SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE

1876

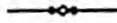
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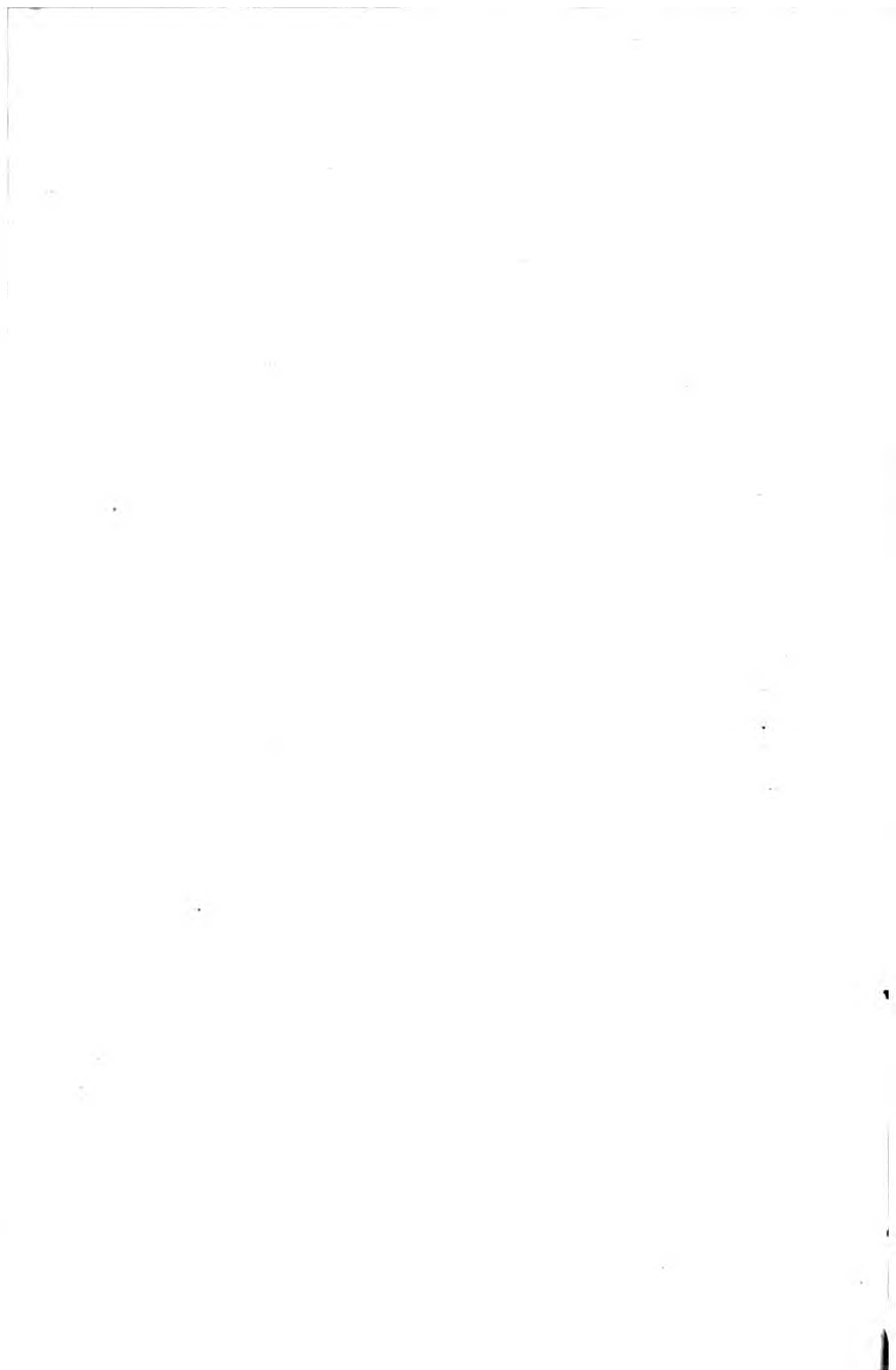
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FOURTH BOOK—*continued*



SECOND PART

TIME OF LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT.

CHAPTER VI.

LORENZO AS A POET.

IN April 1465, as already stated, Federigo of Aragon, Prince of Naples, and Lorenzo de' Medici, then seventeen years old, met at Pisa. A letter addressed by the young Florentine to his royal friend, probably in the following year, begins thus: ¹ 'When thou, illustrious Federigo, didst visit the

¹ The collection of Italian poetry made by Lorenzo de' Medici for Don Federigo is to be found—not, indeed, in the original, which was lost probably during the French invasion of Naples in 1495—but in a copy made either at the end of the fifteenth or in the sixteenth century, and now in the Florentine National Library (Magliabecchi), to which it passed with the Palatine MSS. (Fr. Palermo, *I manoscritti Palatini di Firenze*, Flor. 1853 seq.; i. 353 seq.). This MS. belonged to Marco Foscarini, with whose library it went in 1800 to Vienna, and later to the Archduke, afterwards Grand Duke, Leopold, when he collected and published the poems of Lorenzo (*Opere di Lorenzo de' Medici*, Florence, 1825, 4 vols. i. p. xxvi., where occur also Apostolo Zeno's remarks on the MS. in question). On the MSS. and printed copies of Lorenzo's poems, compare the same edition, i. p. xiii.-xlv., and Gamba, *Testi di Lingua*, pp. 648-660. For a complete critically revised text much is still wanting, even after the splendid edition of 1825, which came out under the auspices of the della Crusca Academy. A large and well-arranged selection, *Poesie di Lorenzo de' Medici*, Flor. 1859, has an introduction by Giosuè Carducci, which has been a guide to much of what is said here of Lorenzo as a poet.

The letter of Lorenzo to Don Federigo, from which extracts are given above, is among the Riccardi MSS., No. 2723, under the name of Poliziano, and was published under that name in the edition of the *Rime* by V. Manucci and L. Ciampolini, Flor. 1814. The mistake is palpable; Poliziano's age and the agreement with Lorenzo's views in the commentary on his poems, show it as clearly as do the historical allusions.

most ancient city of Pisa, thou didst turn our conversation to the subject of those who have written poetry in the Tuscan language, and didst manifest a laudable desire to see all their works collected by my care. Endeavouring to fulfil thy wishes, I had a diligent search made for all the old manuscripts, and chose from them the least imperfect, which I now present to your Highness, arranged in order in a book which I earnestly desire thee approvingly to accept, as a token of especial goodwill. Let no one despise this Tuscan tongue as poor and rude, for he who can rightly estimate its value will find it rich and well cultivated. There is, indeed, nothing vigorous or graceful, impressive or ingenious, witty, harmonious, or majestic, of which examples may not be found in our two greatest poets, Dante and Petrarca; and after them, by those whom thou, Prince, hast recalled to life.

‘Petrarca shows in one of his letters that the ancient Romans were acquainted with rhyme which, after a long interval, revived in Sicily, spread through France, and was restored to Italy, its original home. The first who gave our modern poetry its peculiar form of verse were Guittone of Arezzo and his Bolognese contemporary Guido Guinicello. They were both well versed in philosophy, and wrote profoundly; but the first is somewhat harsh and rude, deficient in ornament and eloquence. The latter, who is far more clear and elegant, was called by Dante “his father,” and the father of all who write sweet and graceful love songs. He was unquestionably the first to impress on our beautiful language that attractive colouring which the bard of Arezzo had but faintly indicated. After these shone Guido Cavalcanti, one of the keenest dialecticians and most admirable philosophers of his time. He was handsome in person, and his writings are to me in the highest degree attractive; his imagination is rich and wonderfully grand; his reasoning is weighty; his tone extremely dignified. These qualities are heightened by the rich charm of a style that sets them off

like a resplendent robe. He needed but a wider field to have attained the highest honours.

‘Bonagiunta of Lucca and the notary of Lentino must not be overlooked; but though earnest and weighty writers, they were so destitute of refined taste, that they must be content to find a place in this collection of honoured names. Another contemporary of Guittone was Pier delle Vigne, of whom Dante said that “he had both the keys of Frederick’s heart.” Only a few short pieces by him remain, and they are not wanting in depth or earnestness.

‘And now come the two glorious suns that have illuminated our language—Dante, and he who stands hardly below him, Francesco Petrarca. In praise of them, silence, to use the words of Sallust concerning Carthage, is better than halting speech. Greatly in need of their polish stood Onesto, and the Sicilians who in order of time preceded them, and who were not without spirit or purpose. Cino of Pistoja, tender and full of feeling, deserves his reputation. He was the first, in my opinion, who thoroughly surmounted the antique roughness which Dante, so admirable in other respects, could not entirely avoid. A host of writers follow, ranking far below those I have named. All these of the past, and some of our own time, owe lasting thanks to thee, O Prince, who hast bestowed on them life, and light, and fame, acquiring for thyself a claim to greater renown than that of the Athenian Peisistratos, who rescued from oblivion the lays of Homer. He restored life to one; thou hast revived a whole host. At the end of the book, as it seemed not displeasing to thee, I have added some sonnets and canzoni of my own, that when thou readest them, my goodwill and affection may be vividly recalled to thy mind. Though in themselves unworthy of a place beside the admirable works of the past, it may be useful to set them side by side for a comparison which can but enhance the perfections of the latter. Pray take then, O Prince, not only into thine house, but into thy heart and mind, both

them and me, even as thou abidest a welcome guest in my heart and soul.'

Thus wrote Lorenzo de' Medici apparently in 1466. On a subsequent occasion, in a gloss on his own poems such as it was the custom then for an author himself or some of his friends to write, he gave his opinion on the much-disputed question of the value of the vulgar tongue as the language of poetry. 'If we want,' he wrote, 'to prove the worth of our language, we need only apply this test: does it express with ease all our thoughts and all our feelings? Nothing can be more satisfactory than the answer given us by experience. Our countrymen Dante, Petrarca, and Boccaccio, have in their verses and discourses, whether grave or gay, proved clearly that every thought and feeling finds easy and natural expression in this tongue of ours. Whoever reads the "Commedia" sees various questions of theology and nature discussed with as much skill as success. He finds there the three degrees of style specified by orators—the simple, the florid, and the sublime, nay, more—Dante in himself presents a union of all the qualities which Greek and Latin writers display separately. Who again can deny the warmth, tenderness, and gaiety of Boccaccio? In his love poems he shows a mingled grace and fervour that neither Ovid, Tibullus, Propertius nor Catullus have equalled. Dante's pithy sonnets and canzoni are scarcely surpassed by anything in prose or verse, and the readers of Boccaccio, whose learning was as great as the polish of his style, must admit that in him the faculty of invention contends with the variety and eloquence of his language. Any one who examines his "Decameron" with its endless diversity of subject, its descriptions of every conceivable situation produced by love and hate, hope or fear; its exhibition of countless intrigues and artifices; its characteristic representation of diverse natures, and its expression of every passion, will be convinced that for all this no language can be better adapted than our own. It is not the language that has been unfavourable to writers, but

there has been a dearth of authors who could use it. To any one with a little practice, it is full of power, harmony, and grace. It appears to me richly endowed with all that constitutes the excellence of a language, and I am persuaded that a knowledge of what has been written in it is not only useful but necessary—more especially the works of Dante, which are both solid and profound. The commentaries of learned men on the “Commedia” bear witness to this no less than the allusions made to the work from the pulpit. We may look forward to the appearance of other excellent works in this language, which still preserves its freshness and is growing in elegance and copiousness. A prospect of still greater perfection is before it, should the dominion of Florence be extended, a thing not merely to be hoped but to be striven for by our gallant citizens with all their energies of body and mind. Though such a consummation cannot positively be predicted, since it depends on fate and the will of God, yet it is within the limits of possibility. For the present the following conclusion is enough. Our native speech has all the excellencies of a language in abundance, and we ought not to be dissatisfied with it, nor ought any one to blame me for writing in a tongue to which I was born and in which I was educated. Hebrew and Latin originally were no more than vulgar tongues, yet those who hold an honoured place in literature cultivated them to a degree of perfection that was never attained by the mass of the people.’

These remarks, which are followed by others on the sonnet and on Tuscan rhythm and metre, show that from his youth up Lorenzo de’ Medici thought much of the nature and history of the language of his country. His poems opened out no new path, but served with those of many among his contemporaries to give more freedom and grace of movement to the language, more facility for applying it to manifold aims and objects, and a richer variety of idiomatic forms. His masterly handling of the language was equalled by his command of versification. Harshness he has, and

that force which will not avoid a difficulty. Nor is he wanting in archaic forms and illegitimate turns of expression, while he has echoes of the artificial manner which in the poet's youth was regarded as modern classicism. We do not always meet with the refinement of ear, accuracy of taste, and fulness of harmony, which give such importance to his contemporary Poliziano, and mark him as the true leader of the great literary movement of the fifteenth century, a movement which, in its last decade, put an end to a state of things in which it is hard to say whether stagnation or perverted energy was the worst feature. Nevertheless, Lorenzo de' Medici takes a conspicuous and peculiar place in this movement. Had he been only a literary man, he would have shone as such. As in his whole character, so also as a poet, is he the true representative of his time, a time that strove with pious care to restore the old, while it joyfully if doubtfully anticipated the opening of new vistas and formed the threshold between two great epochs, the blending of the sunset and the dawn. Lorenzo de' Medici, while rightly estimating the character of the literature of Dante's age, and perceiving that it and not the pedantry of the humanistic poets contained life and hope for the future, was, nevertheless, still influenced by the great fact of the first half of his century, the revival of classical culture. Even when he most nearly approaches the lyric poets who preceded him, it is not in imitation, like Bembo's imitation of Petrarca. Even when Dante or Guido Cavalcanti, with their subtle dissection of feelings, partaking somewhat of the character of scholasticism, and their habit of treating even earthly things with a certain unearthly solemnity of tone, have been most evidently his guiding lights—still, through all, there pierces a spirit which could only have been aroused by the contact of modes of thought derived from the antique with modern life and experience, and by a direct knowledge of the creations of Hellenic genius, which

to the fathers of Italian poetry were sealed books, whose very titles were unknown to most of them.

Lorenzo de' Medici is no imitator of Petrarca, although echoes of Petrarca and even, through the latter, of the poetry of the Troubadours occur frequently in his compositions. But, apart from other details, he has one conspicuous trait in common with Petrarca—a quick sense of the beauties of nature. The hermit of Vaucluse and Arquà is, of all modern poets, the first to whom nature seems to have been especially revealed in her inner life and in the impression which she makes on the feelings; for in Dante it is rather the historical character of the landscape and the plasticity of sharply defined individual phenomena which come out most strongly. Like Petrarca, he who dwelt in the Tuscan villas and among the wooded Apennines found in nature an inexhaustible fountain whence flowed forth an ever-fresh stream of forms and images clothed in the most varied and brilliant colours. The richness and freshness of his treatment proves how quick were his eyes to receive and his mind to realise such impressions. He delighted to consecrate to the mental and moral refreshment of a residence in the country the hours and days which he could steal from his varied and often vexatious cares and occupations. If his poetic descriptions did not sufficiently declare it, his whole life would furnish a proof that there was in him not merely an active fancy, but an actual need, as well as a true and quick apprehension of nature. He has shown in the 'Selve d'amore,' and in the idyl of 'Ambra,' what were his powers of describing nature, not merely in the illustration of thoughts and feelings, but as an independent picture complete in itself.

The greater part of his sonnets and canzoni consists, as may be imagined, of love poems. But the individualising characteristics of his poetry save them from the monotony usually inseparable from this style; for where there is no variety of tone, there is a variety of situation and colouring. The lover and poet is with Lorenzo always a disciple of phi-

losophy, and the subject of his poems, decked in all the brilliant colours of fancy, retreats into the background infinitely more than with the great poets of the Trecento. In reading Lorenzo's poems, one gives little more than a passing thought to Lucrezia Donati, whose name even is revealed to us only by the poet's friends. Beatrice and Madonna Laura have been the objects of careful historical research—scarcely any one has troubled himself about the fair Florentine, sprung from a race whose name filled the history of the city when that of Medici was still unknown. The reason is not merely that Lucrezia's bard was no Dante or Petrarca, and that his poetry, however fresh and genuine, and however important as completing a character unique in its way, yet held but a secondary place in the mind and life of Lorenzo de' Medici; but the ideal creation threatens to swallow up the personality. The story connected with the beautiful girl lying on the bier, in which the poet sets forth how he sought and found a worthy object for his affection, sufficiently indicates that he rather transferred to this object what had already assumed a living shape in his own mind than received his impulse from it. To the greatest of Italy's poets the angel-bride of his early youth became the ideal in which all his thoughts and feelings were wrapt up; the ideal stood before the eyes of Lorenzo de' Medici before he knew her whose form he clothed in the magic of spiritualised desire.

The disciple of the Platonic philosophy, giving a description of his beloved one in the commentary on his sonnets,¹ thus declares himself in his definition of the nature of love. 'Whoever seeks the true definition of love, will find that it consists in the desire for beauty. This being so, whatever is ugly repels him who truly and worthily loves. The beauty of the countenance and soul of our beloved one impels us to seek beauty in other things; to rise to that virtue which is

¹ Cf. Carducci's edition of the *Poesie di Lor. de' Med.*, p. 54 seq., and Fabroni, *supra*, p. 10.

beauty on earth as in heaven, and to reach at length the highest beauty—the Divinity, our final goal and resting-place. The necessary conditions of a true, worthy, and elevated love, appear to me to be two: first, that the object shall be one, then that the love shall be constant. It is not given to all to fulfil these conditions, seeing that but few women possess the lofty power of attaching men so entirely to themselves that they shall never offend against the two conditions without which there is no true love.' But his philosophical view of life and human happiness is contained in a longer poem in terza rima, ('L'Altercazione'), in which Marsilio Ficino is personally introduced as teacher, and decides between the poet and his interlocutor. The former has left the tumult of the city, the confusion of party politics, the throng of the market, to bring his soul to a haven of rest, a life free and secure from anxiety, in the solitude of the country. He describes what he seeks and hopes to find in this retreat to the shepherd whom he meets; the latter points out to him the toils and troubles of his humble lot, and how he drags on day after day beneath ever-renewing cares. Then Marsilio comes to place in their true light the worth and the worthlessness of sublunary things; to show how happiness depends neither on the high position of the one nor the lowly station of the other, but is to be found in the knowledge and love of the Author of all things. As may be seen from this sketch of its contents, the poem contains nothing original, but it is pleasing from its life-like description of contrasts, and interesting as a token of the earnest self-introspection of a richly and variously endowed mind.¹

The three idyls which we possess of Lorenzo de' Medici are so many witnesses to the many-sidedness of his genius. The first, 'Corinto' (the name of the shepherd who sings his love), resembles the eclogues of the ancients, which were

¹ Herr von Reumont here gives two or three specimens of Lorenzo's sonnets translated into German verse. It is not attempted to retranslate these, but the English reader in search of examples of the poet's style is referred to Roscoe's *Lorenzo de' Medici*, ii., iii., v.—*Note by Translator.*

soon to become the models of so many writers, and especially of Sannazaro. Following the precedent of Boccaccio, it is in terza rima, a metre better suited to a series of narratives and descriptions than to a subject in which the lyrical element preponderates. 'Nencia da Barberino' is pure nature—in some parts severe nature, with a rich vein of quaint humour and a charming local colour. It is an idyl in eight-lined stanzas, redolent of Tuscan soil, describing the Tuscan people, their manners and modes of speech, with a succession of apostrophes, eulogies, and comparisons, including some that are strange enough. Such are the so-called *rispetti*,—those songs of the people, especially country people, which sometimes in their fantastic flights soar up to the sun and stars, and sometimes borrow their similes from the humblest things. Lorenzo has, in fact, here put together a whole poem of *rispetti*, in which the serious and the comic alternate, and through the mouth of a lover has applied to one rustic beauty what would have sufficed for a whole bevy of maidens. These *rispetti* are evidently learned from the people, who to this day produce thousands of these half-lyric, half-epigrammatic songs, particularly in the hill-country of Pistoja, for, as an old proverb says, 'the mountaineers have thick shoes and fine brains.'¹ They are to be heard also in other parts of the Florentine and Sienese dominions, as far as the Maremma, from whence they extend into the Roman Campagna. Some of the rustic verses are peculiar to the poet, who exercises himself freely in a style that permits great variety, and who rivals the people among whom he mingles in fantastic flights and quaint similes, producing a somewhat motley but richly coloured and life-like picture. Luigi Pulci has furnished a companion piece to 'Nencia.' Poliziano, without confining himself to a special subject, has

¹ 'Il montanino ha scarpe grosse e cervello fino.' The fullest collection of *rispetti* and other Tuscan popular songs is that of G. Tigri, *Canti popolari Toscani*, first published at Florence in 1856, and reprinted several times since. The reproach against the 'Wunderhorn' has been repeated in this case, and indeed not without reason.

also tried his hand at these little songs, which seem to flow spontaneously from Tuscan pens, and form a branch of literature highly important in its relation to the character of the people.

While in 'Nencia' the popular and burlesque element prevails, the third of these idyls, 'Ambra,' belongs to the province of mythology. Its importance lies far less in the story itself—one of the oft-told tales after the Ovidian pattern—than in the grand descriptions of nature to which the fable gives rise. The scene is the villa of Poggio a Cajano, on the decoration of which the princely owner bestowed so much trouble and expense, the results of his work being repeatedly destroyed by the overflow of the Ombrone in its descent from the Pistojan mountains to the level ground around the low hill on which Cajano stood. A small islet in the river bore the name of Ambra, which was transferred to the villa itself. The dykes raised for its defence did not fulfil Poliziano's hope that the stream would spare the flower-garden. In the poem, Ambra is the nymph beloved by the shepherd Lauro. Her charms, seen when bathing, attract the river god, and she only escapes from his wild pursuit by the help of Diana, who, at her entreaty, changes her into a rock, on which the villa is then built. As in 'Nencia' the ottava rima adapts itself to a burlesque and popular subject, so here it develops a surprising power in descriptions of the natural occurrences that caused the destruction of the pleasant rustic dwelling, and of the events which are made to precede them.

As 'Ambra' inclines to the descriptive, so does another little poem in eight-line stanzas called 'The Hawking Party' ('La Caccia con Falcone'), a lively picture of a universally favourite pastime to which our poet was almost passionately addicted. The fresh morning on which the party sets out, the adventures and intermezzos on the way, the rivalry and excitement of the huntsmen, the manœuvres of the chase, with the birds and dogs, carefully trained, yet not always to

be relied on, the return in midday heat, and the cheerful meal, which reconciles the tired disputants and brings the day to a close,—all this is described with the most vivid reality, and with an amount of detail that could only come from an initiated sportsman. We are in the midst of the cheerful company that crowded around the gay and stately young man. For the poem dates some time before the year 1478, as is proved by the circumstance that Lorenzo's brother-in-law, Guglielmo de' Pazzi, is one of the chief persons present, together with Luigi Pulci, Foglia Amieri, Dionigi Pucci, and several others less easy to distinguish by name. A whole stanza is taken up with the names of the falcons, the number of which shows that this was indeed a princely hunt, such as often took place at Pisa or Poggio a Cajano.

The poem in terza rima which bears the name of 'I Beoni' ('The Drinkers'), or 'Simposio,' resembles the 'Nencia' and the 'Hawking Party' in so far as it describes Florentine and Tuscan manners. In rhythm, tone, and manner, it is very different from the others; for although in 'Nencia' peasant life sometimes receives a burlesque covering, the poem never becomes satire, nor sinks to that degree of low comedy which degenerates into vulgarity. This, however, is the case in the 'Beoni,' a series of chapters in which the poet describes the manners and adventures of a company of jolly fellows, whom he meets near Porta Faenza as he is returning from Careggi, at the moment when they are setting out for Ponte a Rifredi, a little place about a mile away from the town, and which takes its name from a bridge over the little stream Terzolle. The business of the company is to taste a cask of wine which they have heard highly praised. The poem is not wanting in humour, and offers a lively picture of convivial rather than social manners, such as long existed in Tuscany, and of which we possess many literary monuments. Although unfinished, it is long, and monotonous in spite of the variety of its situations; its dry comedy often degenerates

into downright coarseness, such as might lead to very unfavourable conclusions with regard to the morals even of the higher classes and the clergy, who in part are represented here. 'I Beoni' makes an unpleasant impression from another point of view. Not only is the metre that of the most sublime poems in the Italian language; the outward arrangement of the poem, as well as a number of particular turns, are burlesque imitations of the great poets. This is a proof of keen observation, of wonderful and many-sided power; but it has a darker side. If we are to recognise in this production the beginning of Italian satire, we can all the more justly measure the distance between these 'chapters' and those brilliant mirrors of the time which immediately followed that of Lorenzo de' Medici—the satires of Lodovico Ariosto.

Like the 'Beoni,' the dance-songs ('Canzoni a ballo') and the songs of the carnival ('Canti carnascialeschi'), especially the latter, often pass the limits which separate social gaiety from burlesque and satire. Yet the nature and object of these songs demand the predominance of the lyrical element. The dance songs are explained by the old traditional customs of the Tuscan people, and Lorenzo did but follow examples furnished by the age of Dante; examples differing in character of all degrees, from the grave and sententious to the popular and comic. The musical accompaniment, in which popular old tunes alternate with later compositions, naturally influences the form of these songs; but the poet handles the form with the greatest ease, and knows how to give to metre and rhyme a variety that corresponds with the changes of mood, and prevents the monotony which the matter and subject might produce. For the subject is love and its enjoyments, in which the sensual and humorous preponderate. Here prevails the sway of that epicureanism which sees in the material satisfaction of our desire for enjoyment the solution of the problem of life, which regards as lost the time spent on all else, snaps its fingers at a

severe moral judgment, and ends in outspoken nihilism, mocking even at love and happiness. The sum of worldly wisdom here taught is—enjoy yourself as much as you can, and lose no time about it; it is not the action that matters, but only that it should not reach the ears of those who would be sure to give it a bad name; ill-will and the conflict of interests bring blame, not things in themselves. Even more clearly than in the dance-songs is this cynicism seen in the ‘Lays of the Carnival,’ which, like the former, are intended for choruses, mostly with alternate parts.

The following pages, which treat of the manners of the time, will describe the bacchanals, which were not new in Florence, but which Lorenzo de’ Medici increased, and not merely for the humour of the thing, to a degree that has cast on his memory a reflection which an exact comparison of the poet’s circumstances with the past would hardly justify. The abundant imagination and many-sided wit of these gay compositions may be admired, but, even were the licence less, it would be impossible to take real pleasure in them when once the purpose underlying them is perceived. Such songs were traditional in Florence and other places, as were also the people’s carnival societies, of which Lorenzo made use for his popular festivals, and for which he wrote even in the days of his highest authority—perhaps even more especially then. To these songs the accomplished choir-master of San Giovanni, the German Heinrich Isaak, commonly called Arrigo Tedesco, composed melodies for three voices. Even before the event which exercised so great and injurious an influence on life and morals—the plague of 1348—songs were openly sung, the levity and revolting coarseness of which contrasted strangely with the pious canticles which resounded in the evening before the image of the Madonna and other shrines. The ‘Decameron’ refers to them, and the Chronicles of Modena give us the beginning of a drinking-song which bears witness to the confusion of tongues that had arisen, probably

among the mercenary bands: 'Trinche gote Malvasie—mi non biver oter vin.' The poems destined for singing increase in number from the fourteenth century onwards.¹ Lorenzo only perfected in form, rendered more significant, and finally turned to account for other purposes, what he found ready in the life of the people. A greater contrast to these frivolous productions than even his wanderings on the heights of speculation, his effusions of philosophic poetry and tender aspiring sentiment, is offered by the poems on religious subjects, of which Lorenzo found examples in his own family. The mystery-play, 'Rappresentazione dei SS. Giovanni e Paolo,' composed, according to the prologue spoken by the angel of the Annunciation, for the brotherhood of San Giovanni, is said to have been acted at the festivities which celebrated the marriage of Maddalena de' Medici. It is certain that Lorenzo's son, Giuliano, then just ten, and perhaps also Piero, took part with other youths and boys of noble houses in the representation held by the said company in 1489. The legend of Constantia, daughter of Constantine the Great, who was said to have been cured of leprosy at the tomb of St. Agnes on the Nomentan Way, and that of the martyrs John and Paul, who suffered death in Rome on the Cœlian, are here blended with the story of the division of the empire among Constantine's sons, of the reign of Julian the Apostate, and his death in the Parthian war, and formed into a whole in which strange confusion and leaps from one subject to another do not prevent much poetical beauty and moral and political teaching. Like other earlier and contemporary pieces of this kind, it is more lyric than dramatic; in particular it has no dramatic unity. But if the dramatic element is weak, the historical character of one of the two chief persons, the Emperor Julian, shows an accuracy of conception which, with regard to this prince,

¹ Tommaso Lancillotto's *Chronicle* in the *Cronache inedite Modenesi*, pp. 8, 9. *Poesie musicali dei secoli XIV, XV, XVI, tratte da vari codici per cura di Ant. Cappelli*, Bologna 1869. Cf. the last story of the fifth day of the *Decameron*.

must have been rare at that period. In this respect Lorenzo's drama commands an interest far superior to that which we take in most productions of this class. Since the statue of Victory was taken away from the Curia—so speaks the Emperor—success no longer crowns the Roman arms, which once subdued the world. Only by returning to our old gods can we recall victory to our standards. But the object is not to be attained by this alone, or by taking from the Christians wealth and goods which should be forbidden them by the teachings of their own faith. The head of the empire must again command the old reverence, and this cannot be if the ruler hands over the cares of government to others, while he heaps up treasure and thinks only of amusement. If he is rich, his riches are but lent him to share with his people, and relieve necessity wherever he finds it. Power and property belong not to him, but to the community; he is the steward who has the satisfaction and the glory of distributing to others what fate has placed in his hands.

Julian is a man of energy, conscious of the extent and difficulty of his task; Constantine in his old age is the representative of the melancholy which overcomes him, who feels that the burden of government has become too heavy for his shoulders. Who knows whether the poet is not drawing from the experience of his own heart when he puts into the mouth of his hero the description of the labours and dangers of sovereignty, which wear out body and soul, while others see in it the height of happiness, never reflecting that *they* can sleep while one is watching who holds the scales in his hand, to whom all eyes are turned, who lives not for himself, but for others, who must be the servant of servants:

How often does the man that envies me
Not know that happier far than I is he.

Strange contrasts of height and depth there were in this man—contradictions in his life as well as in his poetry. Like his mother, he tried his hand on spiritual songs, and his

hymns of praise display an individuality and fulness of conception wanting to other compositions of this kind which perhaps surpass his in freshness and simplicity. Besides songs in which the teachings of Platonism give a peculiar colouring to the faith of the Church, we find others in which the tone of the older hymns to Mary has been successfully adopted. If these lauds have not the same ardently soaring strain as those of Benivieni ; still we can well imagine that they were sung alternately with the latter when the opposition to the worldly spirit encouraged by their author had gained the victory. This, too, is one of the contrasts which abound in the history of Lorenzo de' Medici. The lauds give us a deep insight into his mind. They are, in some degree, the agonised cry of a soul which, instead of finding satisfaction in the glory and splendour, the wealth and enjoyments of the world, is repelled by its emptiness, and feels driven further and further away from the highest good, of which the love once kindled within it had grown cold amid the cares and pleasures of this life :

Thou seekest life where nought hath living breath ;
Thou seekest joy where nought avails save death.

CHAPTER II.

MARSILIO FICINO AND CRISTOFORO LANDINO.

IN order to gain a complete view both of Lorenzo de' Medici's own life and of his influence on the scientific progress of his time, it is necessary to contemplate the circle in which he was placed in his youth, and which, though greatly modified in the course of years, preserved the same character in essentials to the end. The persons of whom it was composed carry us back to the time of Cosimo. The first we meet are Marsilio Ficino and Cristoforo Landino. Both owed their rise to the house of Medici; both contributed to its glory.

The last twenty-five years at least of Ficino's life were occupied with the endeavour to reconcile Platonism and Christianity, to make the one expand within the other. At the end of 1473, when forty years old, he entered holy orders, after seriously weighing the duties and obligations of that sacred office, and after coming to the conclusion that there is nothing on earth nobler than a good priest, nothing more vile than an unworthy one. At the same time he held counsel with his own mind as to the direction of his philosophical studies. The example of St. Augustine, who, after he became a Christian, inclined to the Platonics of the Christian era, decided him the more easily, because it confirmed the direction of his whole previous life. When he became aware how Platonism recognises Christian dogma on account of the analogies which the latter presents to its own doctrines, he thanked God, and felt himself confirmed in his

Christian faith. He did not, however, long remain free from a suspicion of the divergence which Platonism had caused in the mediæval development of Christian teaching from the Aristotelian system, which was the standing-ground of scholasticism, in its efforts to reconcile the faith of the Church with the researches of reason. He had started from the view that religion and philosophy are sisters. As true philosophy, he says, is the loving study of truth and wisdom—as God alone is truth and wisdom—so true philosophy is nothing but genuine religion, and genuine religion nothing but true philosophy. Religion is innate in every man; every religion is good, in so far as it turns to God, but Christianity is the only true one, inspired by the divine power which dwelt in its Founder. For himself, he declares he needs nothing but the teaching of Christ. He would rather believe divine things than know human ones; for divine faith is more secure than human knowledge, and what proceeds from it is confirmed by true science. But there are spirits for whom the authority of the divine law is not enough, and who require the arguments of reason. Divine Providence has ordained that the teachings of Platonism should agree in many things with those of Christianity, in order to bring such spirits to Christ; for, as Augustine said, with the exception of a few things the Platonists were Christians. As Plato always connects religion with philosophy, and does not merely disclose to us the principles and order of natural things, like Aristotle, but teaches us our duty towards Him who orders all things by number, measure, and weight; so he himself has no other object than to make this intimate connection clear, so far as his weak powers permit.

Any one who puts together his numerous remarks on Christianity, dogma, and morality, although he may deem some of his views peculiar, cannot reproach him with constructing a Christianity of his own. Though he found such an agreement between Moses and Plato that he saw in the

latter only a Moses writing in the Attic tongue, and though he compared the life of Socrates with the life of Jesus, yet he acknowledged in the Socratic doctrines only a confirmation of the Christian, and guarded himself against seeing in the Greek philosopher a shadow of the Saviour, and from interpreting the Christian mysteries by Platonic writings. Strange was the position of the thinkers of that time, placed as they were between Christianity and the strongly-reviving influences of heathen antiquity, and we should do them great injustice did we not consider the spirit which governed the whole of that period. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola believed he had found in the Cabala the foundation of the faith and the explanation of the Christian mysteries; both he and Marsilio held confidential evening discussions with learned Jewish doctors on the divine inspiration of the Prophecies, and plunged deep into both ancient and mediæval Hebrew lore. By a gradual enlightenment of his mind, filled with the fantastic images of the later Platonism and the half-rationalistic mysticism founded on it, Pico came back to the pure Christian faith, which finds in Holy Scripture a living heavenly force whose wonderful power raises man to the height of divine love. Marsilio Ficino's mysticism, increased by his strong tendency to astrology, assumed in more than one of his writings a colouring which made his friends uneasy. In 1489 he was even accused of magic before Pope Innocent VIII., but was cleared of the charge partly by his own apology, partly by his friends, Francesco Soderini, Ermolao Barbaro, and the archbishop Rinaldo Orsini, who was then at Rome.

Marsilio Ficino always keeps in view the connection between Christianity and philosophy, both in his speculations and in the practical application of his principles and their corollaries. If we are astonished at the fantastic flights which seem to lead him far away from the course he had traced out for himself, we yet gain a clear and comprehensive development of the aim of his whole teaching, the at-

tainment of the highest happiness by the individual as well as by the community, the end for which God created us. In the harmony between the spirit of government and the divine law, whence the written law is derived, he recognises the essential element of general well-being. As regards forms of government, he decides that many are good, if rightly administered—aristocracy, if its limits are not too narrow; democracy, if it produces respect for law. Mob rule is a polypus, all limbs and no head; tyranny has no legal ground and no legitimate limits. Monarchy would be preferable, if it could be maintained according to Plato's ideal, by power and wisdom united. But the true end of all forms of government and civil constitutions, both in theory and practice, can be reached neither by the few nor by the many, but only by the co-operation of the united forces of the human race, by the maintaining and enforcing of uniform laws by a ruler who is raised above all enmity, ambition, and envy, because he is acknowledged and loved by all. The Christian Platonist, who lived to see the beginning of the new era, the dawn of which had been heralded by the school to which he attached himself, arrived at the summit of his philosophical and political speculations exactly at the same standpoint which the greatest poet of the middle ages had reached more than a century and a half before him, amid the conflict of parties in the State. Wide as was the difference between their positions and experiences of life, and between the civil and political conditions both of their own immediate home and of a large part of Italy, this is a remarkable circumstance, which explains the interest felt by Marsilio Ficino in that book, so diversely judged, in which Dante Alighieri develops his theory of monarchy—a work well-nigh forgotten, despised by the learned on account of its style, and sealed to the generality, till the Platonist of the Medicean times made it accessible to his contemporaries by a translation.

Numerous works were composed by Marsilio Ficino, who

occupied himself not only with philosophy but with theology, medicine, and music, and was wont to say that they belonged to each other like body, soul, and spirit in nature. His book on Christian doctrine, begun after his entrance into the priesthood, seems to have been finished in the beginning of 1475, and appeared in the following year, with a declaration that the author submitted himself in all things to the judgment of the Church. He presented his work to Lorenzo de' Medici. Rather more than two years later he seems to have finished his translation of Plato's works from the manuscripts given him by Cosimo and by Amerigo Benci. These he submitted to the revision of Demetrius Chalcondylas, Antonio Vespucci, and Giovan Battista Buoninsegni, and also sought advice from Angelo Poliziano, Landino and Bartolommeo Scala. Filippo Valori bore the expenses of the printing, which seems to have been completed at the end of 1482—a proof how men of high Florentine families assumed the character of Mæcenas. Meanwhile, the industrious writer had concluded his great work on the Platonic doctrine of immortality (*Theologia Platonica de immortalitate animarum*), which came out at the same time with the translation of the writings on which it was founded. The Laurentian library possesses the parchment manuscript which was given to Lorenzo. It contains ideas new and old blended together, and comprising the philosophic system of its author and the defence of the supernatural against Materialism and Pantheism, which at that time numbered many disciples, in opposition to the Platonic school. The scientific value of this work, in which the doctrines of Plato and the teachings of his most dissimilar scholars in ancient and modern times are not easy to distinguish, must rest on its own merits, as must the validity of Lorenzo's remark that the Materialists, for whom there is no life in the next world, are already dead in this. But we cannot deny the importance of Ficino's great work in the history of civilisation, nor question its beneficial influence on the time.

Then followed a series of smaller writings on separate questions of philosophy, translations connected with them, and a life of Plato. Cosimo de' Medici wished to see the works of Plotinus translated by Ficino, an undertaking to which the latter only devoted himself long after the death of its originator, and to which he was chiefly encouraged by Pico della Mirandola. According to his own words, he recognised in this new task a leading of Providence. As the Latin nations had learned to know Plato, the collector of the traditions of religious philosophy, so they should also learn to know Plotinus, who first drew forth from darkness the theology of the ancients and searched into its mysteries. This work was finished in 1486, and a detailed commentary on it in the summer of 1491. Lorenzo had undertaken to defray the cost of printing, and promised to do the same for a new edition of Plato's works, the former one being inadequate. But the printing was only completed a month after the death of the generous patron—'magnifico sumptu Laurentii patriæ servatoris.' After this came a translation of the mystic theology of the writer calling himself Dionysius the Areopagite. Lorenzo Valla, who surpassed most of his contemporaries in keenness of criticism and knowledge of antiquity, had already raised a doubt as to its genuineness, as had also other writers. But this work, perhaps that of a Platonist of the fifth century, fitted in with Marsilio's system too well not to be accepted by him as valid testimony; another example showing how, like the Alexandrian school, these later disciples wandered from their original models without knowing or intending it; with this difference, that the Neoplatonism of old ran in sharp contradiction to Christianity, while that of more modern times aimed at a union with it.

The philosophic 'Macrobioticon,' an original work, was finished in 1490, and dedicated to Lorenzo de' Medici and King Matthias Corvinus. Far more interest attaches to Marsilio's correspondence, which embraces the twenty years

between 1474 and 1494—the only product of his literary activity that has a real value at the present time. In these letters his opinions and motives are mirrored with life-like originality, and they afford much information as to his life, his occupations, his social relations, and his friends. The twelve books (which he, following the example of many contemporaries, arranged himself, because apocryphal writings were in circulation) are all dedicated to men of high position or friends of the author: Giuliano de' Medici, Federigo of Montefeltro, Matthias Corvinus, Bernardo Bembo, Filippo and Niccolò Valori, and others.

Marsilio's extraordinary literary activity, the more astonishing in a man of delicate health, did not interfere with the performance of his duties as a priest or as a secular teacher. He preached often, not only in his own parish church at Nevoli, but also in Florence, at the church of the Angeli and in the cathedral. His personal relations, to which his correspondence bears witness, were very numerous. Paol' Antonio Soderini, Giovanni Cavalcanti, Carlo Marsuppini the younger, Piero and Giovanni Guicciardini, Bernardo Canigiani, Bernardo Dovizj of Bibiéna, afterwards cardinal; Lorenzo's nephew Cosimo de' Pazzi, Bernardo Rucellai, Pier Filippo Pandolfini, Francesco Sasseti, Ugolini Verini, and many others, were his pupils and remained attached to him; while from Leon Battista Alberti and Cristoforo Landino downwards, all the learned men whom Florence or Italy possessed were in communication with him. At an important moment of his life he called three of these, namely, Piero Soderini (afterwards Gonfaloniere for life), Piero del Nero, and Piero Guicciardini, his three brothers in the search after truth; and on March 6, 1482, he stood sponsor to Guicciardini's son, afterwards the famous statesman and historian. Foreign lands as well as Italy sent their sons to hear his lectures, and more than one of these foreigners remained gratefully attached to him. Among others he became acquainted with several Germans; Johannes Reuchlin and Ludwig Wergen-

hans (Nauclerus), provost of Stuttgart, who with Gabriel Biel, professor of scholastic philosophy at Tübingen, and the learned theologian Peter Jacobi, of Arlon in Luxemburg, accompanied Count Eberhard of Württemberg when in the spring of 1482 he undertook the expedition to Rome, which will be mentioned hereafter. Marsilio maintained the most intimate personal relations with Martin Preninger, chancellor of the bishopric of Constance, and afterwards professor of canon law at Tübingen. This man was twice in Italy in the year 1492 on business of Eberhard's, and his correspondence with Marsilio bears witness to a friendship and agreement of opinions rare to meet with. Marsilio was wont to say that he possessed two friends, one in Germany, the other in Italy, who represented the alliance between philosophy and jurisprudence, namely, Martinus Uranius (Preninger's literary name) and Giovan Vittorio Soderini. He had Greek manuscripts copied for his Swabian friend, and kept him informed of what was going on in the field of science, as well as of what he was doing himself. Another of his German correspondents was Georg Herwart of Augsburg, who made his acquaintance in Florence; Reuchlin's younger brother Dionysius and Johann Strehler of Ulm also received introductions to him, when being sent by the Count of Württemberg to study in Italy they enjoyed the notice of Lorenzo de' Medici and were received into the house of Giorgio Antonio Vespucci. Numerous princes, temporal and spiritual, beginning with Matthias Corvinus, who tried vainly to attract him to Ofen like Argyropulos, were in regular correspondence with him, asked his advice on points of theology and philosophy, and sought his criticism on various works.

Amid all these unsought testimonies of honour and confidence, Marsilio Ficino remained simple, unpretending, easily satisfied. His delicate health compelled him to lead a quiet life, and suffices to explain the melancholy humour that often stole over him when alone. Yet in company which he liked, and which afforded food for his mind in un-

restrained intercourse, he was cheerful and sympathetic. His musical talents, bringing change and refreshment from serious studies, helped to season his conversation. With his plectrum, an instrument which he himself perfected, he resembled the poet-sages of the mythic age. He was seldom absent from Platonic banquets, and had been an habitual guest of Lorenzo's grandfather when the latter invited learned men to his house. He loved a country life above all things, and passed a great part of his time on the little estate of Monteverchio. In later years he often went to see Pico della Mirandola and Poliziano, when they were staying in his neighbourhood—the one at Querceto, the other at Fiesole; and still oftener to Lorenzo, when he was living at Careggi. He was received as a welcome guest at the villas of Valori, Canigiani, Cavalcanti, and others. At Monteverchio he instituted a peculiar yearly festival. On SS. Cosmo and Damian's day he assembled the old tenants ('coloni') of his first and greatest patron and entertained them with music and singing. His independence of mind was in no way diminished by intercourse with those who, through birth or a successful career, held a higher position in life. He once wrote thus to Lorenzo de' Medici, whose fondness for pleasure in his earlier, perhaps also in his later days, appeared to Ficino excessive, and caused him anxiety: 'In the name of the eternal God I intreat thee, my dearest Prince, to economise every moment of this brief life, lest there come over thee vain remorse for dissipation and irreparable harm. The consciousness of lost time drew deep sighs from the great Cosimo in my presence, when he had reached the age of seventy. Trifling occupations and empty pastimes rob thee of thy true self; they make thee a slave, who art born to be a ruler. Free thyself while thou canst from this miserable servitude; only to-day canst thou do so, for only to-day is thine own; to-morrow it will be too late.'

When the young Raffaele Riario was made a cardinal, he addressed to him warnings and counsels similar to those

given in a like case, fourteen years later, by Lorenzo to his son, who was departing for Rome. He reminded him that, since he owed his high rank not to his own merits, he was the more bound to justify by his manner of life the preference bestowed on him. His memorable appeal to Pope Sixtus IV. during the war of 1478¹ shows how he could combine outspokenness with reverence for the head of the Church, which the Bishop of Arezzo, a far higher dignitary than he, and Francesco Filelfo made light of. His was the frankness of a lover of truth whose soul was filled with grief for the evils which had befallen the flock, and no less for the blots which in an unhappily complicated affair had fallen on the reputation of a supreme pastor who ought to be revered for his wisdom and goodness.

Like a true philosopher, Marsilio Ficino never strove after outward splendour. His income was most modest. Besides his little farm, he received from Lorenzo two benefices of which the revenue was small, as he was obliged to entrust them to curates, but which would have sufficed for his modest requirements had he not been besieged in his later years by a swarm of needy relatives. Without the aid of rich friends, the publication of his works would have been impossible. Amid the restlessness and discontent of the learned men of his time, who were rushing breathlessly after wealth and honours; amid the greediness for ecclesiastical benefices, even among those who were not priests like himself, Marsilio Ficino, contented and devoted to science, is a fine example of the realisation of those philosophic doctrines which in the case of so many were only spiritual luxuries or a means of making money. It is this that gives interest to his character and work, though his writings have lost their value except in their connection with the history of learning. Lorenzo's attachment to him remained unchanged till his last hour; it shows itself in his poems as vividly as in his

¹ *Oratio christiani gregis ad pastorem Xistum*, Epist. l. vi. 1. Cf. *supra*, i. 440.

letters. 'Write to me,' he says in a letter addressed to him from Pisa, about 1473,¹ 'whatever occurs to your mind, for nothing ever comes from you that is not good; you never have an unworthy thought, so that you can never write me anything that will not be useful or agreeable. What makes me long for your letters is that in them you combine elegance of expression with solidity of contents, so that in both respects they leave nothing to be desired.' And in the philosophic poem mentioned above, on the independence of happiness from outward position, he thus describes Marsilio's appearance, with a touch of the warm feeling that inspired Dante on meeting his master Brunetto, at the sight of the 'dear, good, fatherly face:'

Marsilio is this, of Montecchio,
Whom heaven has filled with its own special grace,
That to the world its mirror he may be?
This is that faithful follower of the Muses,
In whom are grace and wisdom aye united,
And never separated one from other;
From us and all worthy of highest honour.²

Cristoforo Landino stands far below Marsilio Ficino in scientific importance. But both as a professor and in the learned circle of the Medici he held a peculiar position; and by one of his literary works he opened out a path which hundreds trod after him without taking away the relative value of his labours. His life was not like that of his contemporary and friend, dedicated solely to literature. As Chancellor of the Magistracy of the Guelphic party, and one

¹ *Lettere di Marsilio Ficino*, i. 66 seq.

² Inscription on the monument in Sta. Maria del Fiore:

EN HOSPES HIC EST MARSILIUS SOPHIE PATRIS,
PLATONICUM QUI DOGMA CULPA TEMPORUM
SITU OBRUTUM ILLUSTRANS, ET ATTICUM DECUS
SERVANS, LATIO DEDIT FORES PRIMUS SACRAS,
DIVINO APERIENS MENTIS ACTUS NUMINE.
VIXIT BEATUS ANTI COSMI MUNERE
LAURIQUE MEDICI NUNC REVIXIT PUBLICO.

S. P. Q. F.

ANNO MXDXL.

of the secretaries of the Republic, he was concerned in public affairs till a late period of his life.¹ During the lifetime of Pope Eugene IV. he passed some time in Rome, and studied those antiquities the decay of which made a painful impression on him, as on other Florentines of his time. But when complaining, like others, that the travertine of the amphitheatre is broken up and burnt for chalk, and that the antique sculptures lie about mutilated, he exaggerates strangely when he says:²

Though round the mighty city thy gaze contemplative wanders,
Vainly around does it look for monuments vanished and gone.

In January, 1458, he accepted the professorship of eloquence and poetry at the University, and gathered round him a continually renewed circle of hearers, his influence being equalled by that of no contemporary save Ficino. In 1460 he began to lecture on the Italian poems of Petrarca, being desirous to stem the tide of contempt for the vulgar tongue which still existed in learned circles. Though in this respect he deserves all praise, yet his remarks on contemporaries, on Bruni, Alberti, Palmieri, show how he was himself still prejudiced in his view of the philological treatment of the language. His labours in the field of classical philology have no great weight. He wrote a commentary on Horace and one on Virgil, the former of which he dedicated to Guidobaldo of Montefeltro, and the latter to the young Piero de' Medici. He also translated Pliny's 'Natural History,' and undertook translations of modern Italian works, such as Giovanni Simonetta's Latin 'History of Francesco Sforza,' which was published at Milan in 1490. He composed a letter-writer and a formulary for speeches, which was printed two years later, with a dedication to Duke Ercole d'Este. But the true centre of his activity and its importance lies elsewhere—in his relation to and share in

¹ See a remarkable letter to Lorenzo, dated 1475, in which he speaks of the neglected muses, in Bandini, *Collectio veterum monumentorum*, p. 1.

² In his poem of *Xandra*, book ii. Cf. Bandini, *Specimen litt.*, i. 124.

that intellectual movement amid which the Medici lived, and in his position as a leader of the revival of the study of Dante. In illustration of the first point, his 'Disputationes Camaldulenses,' which belong to the history of Lorenzo's youth, deserve especial consideration.

Amidst the fir and beech woods which still cover the Casentino hills, where they rise towards the Apennines, lies the convent which gave its name to the order of St. Romuald. For nearly a thousand years countless pilgrims and travellers have rested within the hospitable walls of Camaldoli, which now seem threatened with abandonment and desolation. The Medici had long kept up intimate relations with the Order. Cosimo and his brother were frequent visitors to the monastery of the Angeli; and here, in the mother-convent of the Casentino, Madonna Contessina had built a chapel to the Baptist. The connection lasted long. Lorenzo's son Giovanni dedicated some peaceful days in his youth to contemplation and prayer here, as did many before and after him who sat on the chair of St. Peter or were reckoned by the Church among her saints—Gregory IX., Eugene IV., Paul III., Francis of Assisi, and Charles Borromeo. More than four centuries ago, there assembled here a select society composed of elements the most diverse and yet congenial. Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici came to exchange the noise and glare of the city for the delicious freshness and solitude of the woods. Piero and Donato Acciaiuoli, Alamanno Rinuccini, whose youthful studies had been directed by Poggio Bracciolini, and who had been one of the best pupils of Argyropulos, Marco Parenti, and Antonio Canigiani, accompanied the youths. Cristoforo Landino and his brother Piero came up from their home in the valley to the cooler height of the convent, where they also met Leon Battista Alberti and Ficino. Thus many of the most eminent men of the Medicean circle assembled round Lorenzo and Giuliano, who, notwithstanding their youth, were already accustomed to take part in serious discourse.

The abbot, Mariotto Allegri, as host, was the centre of the circle; but it was Alberti who, with his many-sided knowledge and easy command of it, gave the tone to the evening's discourse.

On the following morning, after the whole company had assisted at mass in the church of the convent, they all moved along the pleasant woodland path leading to the summit of the mountain ridge, past the little group of dwellings and gardens, the place where, according to the legend, the saint had a dream which led him to change his black Benedictine robe for the white one which continued to be worn at Camaldoli, as it is represented in Andrea Sacchi's fine picture at the Vatican. We know not whether the travellers reached the neighbouring mountain ridge, the watershed of Italy, whence the eye looks down on Romagna and takes in the wide sweep of the far-off Adriatic. The narrator makes the company halt on the height near a spring, under the shelter of a mighty beech; a tree which, defying the mountain storms, overtops all other trees on the Apennines, whose brow it adorns here in the midst of fine pasture lands. Here Leon Battista, again taking the lead in the conversation, dilated on the good effects of retirement and meditation on the mind of the statesman and the scholar, and showed that only when the mind is set free from contact with the individual does it become capable of embracing the whole. Then turning to the two young men the speaker reminded them that their father's failing health would probably soon call them to the guidance of state affairs, which, he said, were already in some degree entrusted to their care. After a somewhat extravagant eulogium of Lorenzo's qualities, his courage, prudence, and moderation, Alberti continued to set forth how, notwithstanding such qualities and the moderate bearing he had hitherto displayed, quiet meditation or discourse held with a confidential circle on the deepest questions of human nature could not but be beneficial to the community. When the learned man thus adopted

the Platonic principle, according to which complete abstinence from worldly pursuits brings our nature most surely to perfection, it would not have been difficult for Lorenzo, who was already well acquainted with this doctrine, to show that a man who practically applied and followed this principle must necessarily be brought into contradiction with his duties as a citizen; whereas the two phases of our nature—the active and the contemplative life—not divided, but united and balancing each other, lead to the true fulfilment of the purpose of existence.

From the objection put into the mouth of the young man and directed against Landino's own teaching, as well as from the praises bestowed on Lorenzo's conduct, it is clear that the date of the conversation is shortly before the death of Piero de' Medici, when the Pitti transactions had given evidence of the prudence and talents of his son. The visit to Camaldoli may have taken place earlier, but the 'disputations,' which are the actual conversations expanded and embellished, were certainly not composed before 1470. In the discourses of the three following days Alberti again took the lead, and expounded the connection of the 'Æneid' with Platonic philosophy. What is here said of the character of Virgil's poetry, of the ancient wisdom therein, which has become common property, of the poet's knowledge and reverence for antiquity, of the relation between the poetical garniture and the more solid contents of the work, was probably drawn from Landino's own Virgilian studies, for the author of the book speaks through the mouths of those to whom he attributes the conversations held in the woods of Camaldoli. He dedicated his work to Federigo of Montefeltro. If, as it seems, this dedication to the valiant and accomplished prince of Urbino was made in 1472, the book has a certain connection with the sad occurrences at Volterra, in which Lorenzo de' Medici's action belied only too strongly the Platonic theory of wisdom.¹

¹ The copy of *Christophori Landini Florentini ad illustrem Fridericum prin-*

If Cristoforo Landino is ever mentioned nowadays, it is only on account of his studies of Dante, which constitute his only value in the eyes of posterity. The study of the 'Divine Comedy' went through the most varied phases in Florence as elsewhere. On the petition of divers citizens (see above, vol. i. p. 80) in 1373, fifty-two years after Dante's death, the Republic decreed the establishment of public lectures on his great poem.¹ On Sunday, October 3, in the church of Sto. Stefano, Giovanni Boccaccio began the lectures, the interruption of which by his death shortly after was lamented by Francesco Sacchetti. Messer Antonio, priest of Vado, and Filippo Villani succeeded him. A mass of commentaries were composed almost immediately after the poet's own time, partly by his own friends. Numerous copies of the poem were in circulation; that which was formerly in the library of the convent of Sta. Croce, and is now in the Laurentiana, was attributed to Filippo Villani. Most of these copies were faulty. 'I am trying,' wrote Coluccio Salutati to Niccolò of Todi, at the beginning of the fifteenth century,² 'to get a correct copy of the work of our divine Dante. Believe me, we possess nothing more sublime than these three poems, nothing more richly adorned, nothing more carefully worked out, nothing which penetrates further into the depths of knowledge. What only comes to others in part this one man has mastered as a whole. His moral precepts are sublime; he throws light on natural history and theology, and his masterly handling of language and rhetoric

cipem Urbinatem Disputationum Camaldulensium libri IV., now in the Laurentian library, was written by Pietro Cennini, son of Bernardo, the first Florentine printer, finished at the end of spring, and collated with the original. Cf. Bandini, l. c. ii. 188 *seq.* (see also p. 3 *seq.* as to the meeting and the persons present). The first edition is said (*ibid.* p. 192) to have been printed in 1475 (?) and a second at Strasburg in 1508. It was translated into Italian by Antonio Cambini, a literary man much employed by Lorenzo and also in the service of his son the Cardinal. He was also in communication with the Este family, and afterwards attached himself to Savonarola, at whose fall his house was burnt down. (Cf. Cappelli, l. c. p. 309; Villari, *Storia di G. Savonarola*, ii. 388.)

¹ Manni, *Istoria del Decamerone*, pt. i. chap. xxix.

² Mehus, *Traversari*, p. 178.

is such that it would be difficult to find equal beauty of style even in the greatest writers. With him the laws, manners, tongues, the history of all nations, shine like stars in the firmament with such majesty that no one can equal him in this respect, far less surpass him. Wherefore do I say all this? That my eagerness to obtain a correct text may cause thee less astonishment.'

This enthusiasm for Dante—an enthusiasm which one cannot but feel was less for the poet than for the man who had mastered more than any other all the learning of his time—was, however, by no means shared by all the learned men of the fifteenth century, whose threshold Coluccio barely crossed. Niccolò Niccoli, by his attacks on his great countryman, exposed himself to obloquy from which he never recovered; though it must not be forgotten that the words in which Niccoli calls Dante's book reading for cobblers and bakers are only found in a writing of Leonardo Bruni, who was just as excitable as Niccoli himself. Niccoli's rage seems to have been especially excited by the unclassical Latin in Dante's letters; but the reproach which he brings against Dante, that he knew nothing of classical literature, and drew all his information from monkish compendiums—a reproach which, strangely enough, he also applies to Petrarca and Boccaccio¹—resembles other tokens of the pride of the humanistic school too strongly to be seriously examined. The lecture given at the end of 1430 by Francesco Filelfo against the censurers of Dante, and the controversial treatise composed for the same object by Cino Rinuccini, father of Alamanno, are sufficiently clear proofs how false was the judgment of many. Filelfo himself declared, more than forty years later, that he undertook the public exposition of the 'Divine Comedy' of his own accord, and in deference to a general wish.² About the close of the fourteenth century

¹ Mehus, l. c. p. 176.

² 'Che 'l Dante io leggeva per mio piacere e per fare cosa grata alla vostra inclyta città.' Milan, May 29, 1473, in Fabroni, *Laur. Med. Vita*, ii. 76.

Filippo Villani wrote a short life of Dante; a longer biography came out in 1436 written by Leonardo Bruni; twenty years later he was followed by Gianozzo Manetti. Not long after the latter, Gian Maria Filelfo, Francesco's son, who had many opportunities of acquiring information from the poet's descendants living in Verona, wrote a new biography which he dedicated to Pietro Alighieri, and which the latter sent, at the end of 1467, to Piero de' Medici and Tommaso Soderini.¹ The erection in Sta. Maria del Fiore of a monument in the shape of the poet's statue was decreed in 1465. Ten years later, the picture painted by Domenico di Michelino was placed in the north aisle of the church.² In literature the great poet's countrymen had wandered far away from the path which he had pointed out; but they guarded his memory faithfully, and the beautiful manuscripts which appeared about the middle of the fifteenth century, shortly before the introduction of printing, prove how much his work was held in honour.

In 1472 a German named Johann Numeister (Neumeister), and a native of Fuligno, printed the 'Divine Comedy' for the first time in that Umbrian city.³ Other impressions at Mantua, Jesi, and other places were followed in 1477 by the first edition at Venice, with a commentary of the fourteenth century. At last, after Florence had allowed nine editions to take precedence of her, the first Florentine edition appeared in the summer of 1481, with the glosses of Cristoforo Landino. A Silesian named Nicolaus (Niccolò di Lorenzo della Magna) had the honour of presenting to the poet's native city the text of his work, accompanied by the commentary in smaller type, in a form highly creditable to his

¹ On the various editions of the old biographies of Dante, see G. C. Galletti in *Phil. Villani liber, &c.*, where Villani, Leon. Bruni, and Giann. Manetti are printed, the last with Mehus' notes for his edition, Flor. 1747. The MS. of G. M. Filelfo in the Laurentiana was published by D. Morini, Flor. 1826.

² Vide section iii. chap. iii.

³ For the numerous bibliographical works on the history of Dante and his writings, we can only give a general reference to the *Bibliografia Dantesca* of Colomb de Batines and the *Enciclopedia Dantesca* of Ferrazzi.

still youthful art. The Magliabecchian library possesses the copy, printed on parchment, which Landino presented to the Signoria, with a speech which also appeared in print.¹ Rich miniatures at the beginning, arabesque borders, a medallion portrait of Dante, and on the binding, striped with the Florentine colours, red and white, niello-work representing the lion and Hercules, the seal of the commonwealth, with the lily-shield and that of the red cross, show with what pretensions this edition came forth. By a decree of somewhat tardy justice the Republic reinstated the exile of 1301 in his civil rights and honours, and placed his statue, crowned with laurel, in the baptistery of San Giovanni. In a Latin address Ficino set forth the rejoicings of Florence at the restoration of his honour by the hands of one of his fellow-citizens; and Benivieni celebrated in harmonious terza rima the fulfilment of the prophecy in which the exile predicted his future fame, and his ultimate return to his ungrateful city:

With other voice forthwith, with other flecce,
Poet will I return, and at my font
Baptismal will I take the laurel crown.²

The Signoria showed itself grateful to Landino. It gave him a tower on the ramparts of Borgo alla Collina, where he dwelt, and its possession was confirmed to his descendants in 1563 by a sentence of the supreme civil court of Florence, the Rota, when the magistrates of the Parte Guelfa claimed it as public property. His work is not remarkable for critical

¹ According to the colophon, the printing was finished on August 30, 1481. Cf. Bandini, l. c. ii. 131, 140-143; Colomb de Batines, l. c. vol. i. pt. ii. p. 43; Marsilio's Address, Bandini, pp. 132-134; Batines, pp. 43, 44. The Magliabecchian copy has been lately rebound, and not in very good taste.

² *Paradiso*, xxv. 7. Girol. Benivieni, *Cantico in laude di Dante Alighieri*, in *Works*, Venice 1522. Cf. Bandini, ii. 134-136. The latter part of the poem, from the line 'La patria, che a me madre, a Te noverca,' refers to the above-quoted lines of Dante. The restoration of citizen rights to the poet's great-great-grandson, who bore his name, and who was a friend of Poliziano (*Letter to Lorenzo*, Flor. June 5, 1490, in the *Prose volgari*, &c., p. 76), did not take place till 1496, and was paid for! (Gaye, l. c. p. 584.)

thoroughness and correctness, but for the commentary, which had great influence on opinion at the time and long afterwards. Six if not seven reissues in different places before the end of the century show with what approval this edition was received. It encountered formidable rivals, with respect to the text, in 1502, in the first Aldine, and with respect to the commentary in 1544, in Alessandro Vellutello's work, which was soon followed by others; yet it retains some value even now. While Landino was earning well-deserved fame by this fruit of diligent study, the lectures in the cathedral on the 'Divine Comedy' were entrusted, in 1483, to the preaching friar Domenico da Corella, who had taken part in the council, and dedicated his Latin poem on the life of the Virgin Theotokon to Piero de' Medici in 1468. Marsilio Ficino had long previously turned his attention to Dante when he dedicated his translation of the 'De Monarchia' in 1467 to his friends Bernardo del Nero and Antonio Manetti. The latter, who occupied himself much with copying old codices, is remembered among students of Dante by his dialogue (between himself and Benivieni) on the position, form, and extent of hell. Marsilio's dedication states that he had held much discourse with the two men named on the questions raised by this political treatise, and that they were thereby led to discuss the 'Divina Commedia.' As Dante treated in his poem of the kingdom of the blessed, of the regions of the wretched, and of the place where departed souls abide waiting for redemption, so in his book on monarchy he treated of the realms of those who are still waiting and hoping in this world. The perception, imperfect though it be, of the spiritual connection between the great poem and its author's other works, shows a progress in the appreciation of Dante remarkable at the time, and to this Cristoforo Landino had practically contributed.

Lorenzo's great interest in the most sublime poet of the middle ages is shown both by testimonies in his own writings and by a letter written to him, April 13, 1476, by the above-

named Antonio Manetti, then governor of the small town of San Giovanni, in the Val d'Arno. This letter¹ shows that Lorenzo had come to an understanding with the Venetian ambassador, Bernardo Bembo, for the purpose of soliciting from the senate of that Republic the return of Dante's mortal remains from Ravenna to Florence. 'Magnificent Lord,'—thus the letter begins—'I am told that the Venetian ambassador has returned home. Remembering what you once told me, as we returned from visiting him shortly after Matteo Palmieri's funeral, when we were near the house of Antonio Pucci, I wish you would bring that matter to a conclusion. I know not what greater pleasure I could have in my life than to witness the return of those remains which the magnificent ambassador promised to obtain when he went back to his own country; the more so as I am sure that, with your greatness and magnanimity, you will do whatever is in your power to give to the remains of such a man the reception they deserve, as to sepulture and crown. Great acts are for the magnanimous; but what could be greater than this? I commend myself to your Magnificence. May the Lord be with you.'

Twice already, in 1396 and 1426, when the Polenta family, which had offered hospitality to the exiled poet, was still reigning at Ravenna, the Florentines had tried to get back his remains. But both times they failed; and they had no better luck in 1476, nor again under the reign of Leo X., when Michael Angelo offered to raise the monument to his great countryman, whom he resembled in more respects than one. Seven years after the date of Antonio Manetti's letter, Bernardo Bembo, when Podestà at Ravenna, caused Dante's sepulchre to be restored. He had been too rash in the promise given to Lorenzo de' Medici, but he did all that lay in his power to honour the memory of the father of Italian poetry.

¹ Isidoro del Lungo, *Un documento Dantesco*, *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, series iii. vol. xix. p. 4.

CHAPTER VIII.

LUIGI PULCI AND ANGELO POLIZIANO.

AN influence hardly less important than that of the philosophers and grammarians was exercised on Lorenzo and his epoch by the literary innovators who, with some infusion of classic learning, were not so pedantic as the early humanists, while they bore the impress of the teaching of the preceding century. The Medici were to these men of letters, just as much as they were to the philosophers, the centre to which their several rays converged, and Lorenzo's name is inseparable from the names of several among them. One in this brilliant circle holds a different position from the rest. He took as a poet the part which Landino took as a critic in the revival of the study of Dante. Matteo Palmieri holds a place by himself. The first glance into his great poem, the 'City of Life,' ('Città di Vita') shows it to be an imitation of the 'Divine Comedy;' but only in the outward form. It is a philosophical work, the object of which is to describe and correct the problems and abuses of citizen life. It contains no real poetry, but has the merit of popularising the doctrines of moral philosophy in language somewhat lifeless, indeed, yet expressive, comparatively pure, and free from the philological follies of the age. The book became known only within a narrow circle. Theological criticism discovered in it the heretical doctrine of the transmigration of souls, which indeed Alamanno Rinuccini avowed without scruple in his funeral oration on the poet, and the work was suppressed. In later years the author wrote an unfinished his-

tory of the world, and a life of the grand seneschal Nicola Acciaiuolo. He had been a pupil of Traversari and Marsuppini, had held important offices of state, and after fulfilling several embassies with honour, died at a ripe age in 1475.¹

While this faint echo of Dante was addressing itself to the higher classes, and proving how large was the retrogression from the beginning of the fourteenth to the middle of the fifteenth century, the popular poetry, of which the religious side has been already noticed, began to sound a natural strain in a lighter style. Burlesque, which belonged to the character of the people, was allowed considerable play. The sonnets that came forth from the barber's shop of Domenico, called 'Burchiello,' in the very heart of old Florence, the Calimala, and the market, enjoy a reputation that must be taken on trust. They were chiefly experiments in the Florentine vulgar tongue—full of allusions and trivialities; but occasionally they take a flight which may serve to throw light on social and political matters, if all the writings attributed to this man, who died at Rome in 1448, are really by him. Another burlesque poet, Matteo Franco, whom we shall meet again, belonged to Lorenzo de' Medici's household, and used to hold with other poets, particularly with Luigi Pulci, satirical and not always very seemly sham-fights as a social pastime. But far more important for this period was the rise of a new style which was destined to give to the sixteenth century its special poetic character. Of the brothers Pulci, scions of an old family somewhat reduced in circumstances, one, Bernardo, tried his hand both as an original writer and a translator of eclogues; the two others are among the cultivators of the poetry of chivalry, which began its course as a branch of literature under their auspices. Both Luca and Luigi belong to the immediate Medicean circle.

¹ *Vespasiano da Bisticci*, l. c. p. 499 *seq.* Palmieri's Latin biography of the grand seneschal was translated into Italian by a relative of the latter, Donato Acciaiuolo.

Luca Pulci, the eldest brother, born at Florence in 1431, is commonly designated as the author of the poem on Lorenzo de' Medici's tournament, which only retains a place in literature because it records an event in the life of a celebrated man. But the assumption of this authorship is by no means certain, for the first edition bears the name of Luigi Pulci, whose literary fame it would not enhance. That Luca was intimate with the young Medici is shown by the fact that at their desire he began the poem 'Ciriffo Calvaneo,' which two generations later was partially continued by Bernardo Giambullari for another Lorenzo, grandson of the Magnificent. It is a poetical version of a popular romance of chivalry, which in its Italian form bears the title of the 'Povero Arveduto,' and relates the battles and adventures of the time of King Louis d'Outre-mer of France, in 921-954.¹ Luca Pulci, after some unlucky banking affairs at Rome and Florence, died in 1470, in the debtors' prison of the Stinche, and left to his brothers the burden of a large family. He was, as we have said, the eldest of the brothers; but it is probable that his 'Ciriffo' was preceded by Luigi's 'Morgante.' We are led to assume this by the fact that Luigi chose a far better subject.² His poem must have been written in and after 1460, and the cantos must have followed close upon each other. We learn from the author himself that its original conception was due in part to Lorenzo's mother. In a letter addressed by him to Lorenzo from Fuligno, December 4, 1470, he held out prospects of a new heroic poem.³ That

¹ On the *Giostra*, see above, i. 264 *seq.*, and Salvator Bongi's oft-mentioned edition of the *Lettere di Luigi Pulci*. A new edition of *Ciriffo Calvaneo*, with full bibliographical references by S. L. G. Audin, appeared at Florence in 1834.

² L. Ranke's academical treatise, *Zur Geschichte der italienischen Poesie*, Berlin, 1837, contains an excellent account of the elements and the development of the romantic epopee. The last edition of *Morgante*, which was first printed at Venice in 1481 and at Florence in the following year (Gamba, *Testi di Lingua*, p. 241 *seq.*), is that by P. Sermolli, published at Florence a few years ago. The oldest impression of the *Reali di Francia* is that published at Modena in 1491, ten years after Pulci's poem.

³ L. Pulci, *Lettere*, p. 38. Cf. *supra*, i. 313.

a serious and pious woman like Madonna Lucrezia should be patroness of a work more or less offensive in a religious point of view may be matter of surprise. But after making allowance for the tendencies of the time, which saw no harm in a mixture of religion and burlesque, and, amid the strictest devotional practices, treated questions of faith with incredible unceremoniousness, it must be remembered that this lady was wont for the sake of genius to judge leniently many things in literature and in life that were questionable. Thus she remained a supporter of Angelo Poliziano after he had fallen into disgrace with her daughter-in-law, and presented him with her religious poems when the unfavourable rumours as to his faith and morals could be no secret to her. But Luigi Pulci, the free-thinker and loose mocker, who mixed up quotations from St. John's Gospel with open expressions of unbelief, found in her an active and zealous friend till her life's close.

The 'Morgante Maggiore' was the beginning of the romantic epopee, which successfully laid hold of the cycle of Carolingian legends that had been rendered accessible to the Italian nation by the 'Chronicle' of Turpin and the book of the 'Reali di Francia.' This choice of a subject was all the happier because Florence attributed her restoration to Charlemagne, as may be read carved in stone in the church of the Apostles. The style of the work is original. Amid all its prodigies the old knightly romance is serious and full of faith. Christianity is always the foil to the chivalry which sprang from it, and which is animated by its spirit. 'Morgante' (the story takes its name from the giant who accomplishes his strange exploits) is not a satire on chivalry, but it is so saturated with burlesque that it assumes a very peculiar character. Neither is it a denial of Christianity, from which, on the contrary, it derives here and there a deeply religious tone; but it is Christianity struggling with scepticism and denial, so that the faith of the Church and the people is driven into the background. In this respect

'Morgante' is a true mirror of the time. With its perfect command of the subject, bound down to no poetical rules or precedents, it is a mixture of seriousness and irony, Christianity and unbelief, Biblical texts and profane witticisms. It is full of the most glaring contrasts of sound common-sense and folly, of elegance and coarseness, of lofty intellectual flights and mere buffoonery. There is in this poem more richness of imagination and spontaneity than perhaps in any other work before the appearance of the 'Orlando Furioso;' passages occur full of the deepest pathos, and showing a feeling that belongs only to a real poet—passages too often followed by a grotesqueness that tends to destroy their effect. The qualities here united in very unequal degrees were developed and discriminated by later poets. The importance of Luigi Pulci lies less in his poem, which falls short of perfection in every way, than in the fact that his work contains the germs of the romantic epos in all its various branches. In considering that the two parent poems of chivalry in Italian, the 'Morgante' and 'Ciriffo,' originated in the Medicean house, let it be remembered how much this branch of poetry, up to the 'Jerusalem Delivered,' with which it terminates, was connected with that Court life which is so constantly represented in its varied productions. From the household of Cosimo, Piero, and Lorenzo de' Medici, who at the highest pinnacle of their fame did not abandon the simplicity and comfort of free citizen life, to the ceremonious Court of Alfonso of Este, is certainly a very long step. Though the Pulci did not go so far as to weave into their ottava rima a genealogy of their patrons reaching back to demigods, still theirs was a kind of poetry destined to enliven stately banquets.

Luigi Pulci's intimacy with Lorenzo is shown by his oft-quoted letters, which throw some side-lights on the various relations between patron and client, and on the commissions, rather political than literary, entrusted to the latter. The author of 'Morgante' was sincerely attached to his young

patron. When the latter was going to Southern Italy in 1466, before the Neroni and Pitti conspiracy, Pulci wrote to him from the convent of Alverina: ¹ 'Dost thou really mean to leave me buried in the snow among these woods, lonely and comfortless, while thou goest to Rome? Is it really my fate that, whatever thou mayest think of me, as the climax of my ill-luck, I must never mount a horse by thy side? Am I to come to that only when I am an old man? How often have we talked about Rome, and now shall I not accompany thee?—can it be because I should increase the expenses of the journey? Let not that trouble thee; amid all my troubles I will yet do thee credit. A horse is all I ask of thee; for I shall find so many friends yonder, and will manage so well, that I will not be a burthen to thee, as perhaps thou fearest. Truly thou art wrong to pass me by, not to mention that it would hurt me more than anything in this world. Do not treat me as if I were old iron, for I shall soon be well if thou carest for me.' And Lorenzo really did care for him. Two years later Pulci wrote to him from Pisa: 'If thou dost not wish people to believe or know that I am thy friend, and have some influence with thee, placard it on the walls—at thine own expense, of course; as for some time past having had no money to pay away, I have been paying with thy name instead. Wherever I show myself people whisper, "That is Lorenzo's great friend."'² That Pulci's money matters were not in brilliant order we have already seen. His brother's business misfortunes brought him into great difficulties. 'Never yet have I made a plan,' he wrote to Lorenzo after Luca's failure, 'that Fate did not destroy in an hour what I had taken a year to build up. I must have come into the world like hares and other poor animals, doomed to be the prey of the huntsman. It is my fate to love thee, and to be very little in thy company.' That the Medicean bank helped him out, but that the loans

¹ February 1, 1466. L. Pulci, *Lettere*, p. 8.

were very unimportant and notorious besides, we learn from a petition dated from his estate at Mugello, May 14, 1479, to the effect that Lorenzo would grant him a longer delay for the repayment of a hundred gold florins. He was evidently included in the measures which were rendered necessary by the bad state of the Medicean finances at that time. Pulci, who among others was very intimate with the Sanseverini, seems to have been employed by Lorenzo especially at Naples, Bologna, and Milan, both before and after this period. The last of the poet's letters known to us, written from Verona, August 28, 1484, shows him to us in the suite of Roberto da Sanseverino and his son Fracasso, who were on their way to Venice. He died in Padua shortly after, but nothing is known about his death.¹

Luigi Pulci was about seventeen years older than his princely friend Lorenzo de' Medici, while the man who entered into the closest and most productive intellectual relations with Lorenzo was a few years his junior. In 1464 a boy of ten came to Florence to seek maintenance and instruction in the house of some not very wealthy relatives. He had been rendered fatherless by one of those tragedies which bring to light and stigmatise the wild passions and party hatred that in the Tuscan communes of the fifteenth century mocked at justice, and which, though so fearful in punishment, was so powerless for the protection of the citizens. Benedetto Ambrogini of Montepulciano, a jurist of a not undistinguished family, who had held civil and judicial offices at home and abroad, had in the previous year applied to Piero de' Medici² for protection against the bloodthirsty enmity of fellow-citizens and neighbours, to which he soon after fell a victim, leaving unprovided a widow with five children, of whom the above-named boy was the eldest.³

¹ A petition of his widow, July 14, 1485, states that he had been dead more than eight months. Cf. *Lettere*, pp. 10, 102, 114.

² Fabroni, l. c. ii. 98.

³ Isidoro del Lungo, *La patria e gli antenati d'Angelo Poliziano* in *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, series iii. vol. xi. p. 9 seq. Id. *Uno Scolare dello studio fiorentino nel sec. XV*,

Angelo, who took from his birthplace the name of Poliziano, early became acquainted with the serious side of life; for although as a child he showed brilliant talents and made rapid progress, he was in danger of being compelled to seek a living as assistant in a shop, and of renouncing the studies to which he was ardently devoted. At fifteen he expressed this tormenting dread in a Latin poem addressed to the young but celebrated philologist, Bartolommeo Fonte, who at that time assisted him with guidance and encouragement.¹ In the year 1469-70 he studied at the Florentine university, and at seventeen he wrote Greek epigrams. He had the privilege of listening to the men who kept alive the traditions of the university's best days, Argyropulos and Andronikos Kallistos, Landino and Ficino. That polite literature attracted him more than philosophical lectures he declares himself, saying that he had done with philosophy as dogs with the Nile: one drink, and then away! 'Nature and youth drew me to Homer, and with all the zeal and industry of which I was capable I set myself to translate him into Latin verse.' In one of the earliest, if not the very earliest, of his Latin poems, the distichs addressed to Lorenzo de' Medici in commendation of his master Kallistos, he sets forth how the latter was reading the Trojan war in Argive verse. In this poem he alludes to the time when he hopes to sing the deeds of Lorenzo, then limited to youthful exercises, and his adroit conduct in the matter of the Pitti conspiracy, which Poliziano commemorates in a later elegy.¹

It must have been about 1470 that he began to translate the 'Iliad.' Carlo Marsuppini had translated the first book; Angelo began with the second. It was a great undertaking for a young man. A Latin Homer had been the *in votis* up

in the *Nuova Antologia*, x. 215, seq. Fr. Otto Mencke's *Historia, Vita, etc. Ang. Pol.*, Leipzig, 1736, will always be valuable as a careful collection of literary and critical materials. *Opera Ang. Politiani*, Flor. 1499. *Le Stanze, l'Orfeo e le Rime di Messer Ang. Ambrogini Pol.*, illustrate da Giosuè Carducci, Flor. 1863. *Prose volgari e Poesie latine e greche di A. A. P. raccolte da Isidoro del Lungo*, Flor. 1867.

¹ *Prose volgari*, p. 109.

² *Ibid.* p. 248.

to that time ; and now the work was begun by one who had but just entered the world and was still unknown, but who displayed an ease and grace of diction, melodiousness and richness of versification, that caused general surprise. This work and the admiration it excited opened the Medicean house to the young poet. It was probably Ficino who recommended the 'Homeric youth' to Lorenzo. The young head of the house, who had only become independent the year before, took him up ; and whatever changes outward and inward occurred in Lorenzo's life, the man who owed his brilliant endowments to Heaven, and their early and happy recognition to him kept faithful ; he stood beside his patron's death-bed and ere long followed him to the tomb. The dedication of the second book contains praises of the generous protector—praises lavish according to custom, but not untrue if the custom and the glory with which the young ruler of Florence had surrounded himself be taken into consideration.¹ A troop of panegyrists followed, Marsilio Ficino at their head. There was no lack of exaggeration. The head of the Platonists raised a flattering doubt whether any one could discover if the Greek or the Latin text of this Iliad was the original ; another asked who had the greatest merit, he who had given occasion for the undertaking, or he who had accomplished it. Meanwhile the translator went on with his work ; and when, two years after the completion of the second book, he presented the third to his patron, he expressed a hope that after finishing the whole he might begin an epic poem on a subject taken from Lorenzo's own life, the war of Volterra. The 'Iliad' was never finished, the epic was never written. Lorenzo, who knew the world much better than did Angelo, probably objected to the glorification of an expedition of questionable prowess and of unquestionable barbarity. In like manner, when his son Leo was raised to the cardinalate, he disapproved of the eulogium which Poliziano addressed

¹ See *Prose volgare*, p. 431 : 'O cui tyrrheni florentia signa leonis.'

to the Pope. When Poliziano described the most important and dramatic event of his patron's life, the conspiracy of the Pazzi, it was in prose.

The man who had received the young poet into his house and enabled him to give all his time to study was doubtless also the cause of his sending a specimen of his work to Cardinal Ammanati, who kept up such intimate relations with the Medici. Poliziano's address to this Prince of the Church¹ was modest. He wrote that he was doing like the eagle, which carries its young as soon as they are out of the shell into the light of the rising sun, that their eyes may become accustomed to its splendour. The cardinal, in whom survived the humanistic tradition of the days of Pius II., returns him phrase for phrase without offending against truth. The verses were wonderfully harmonious for so young a writer; the enterprise was useful as an introduction to great things. But if Homer could be asked whether he wished to be turned into Latin, he feared that the old poet, feeling the impossibility of a perfect rendering, would prefer to remain a citizen of Kolophon rather than become a Florentine, and would consider the pallium a more suitable vesture than the toga. In 1473, our poet had addressed some verses full of sonorous but very ordinary flattery to the spendthrift Cardinal of San Sisto, Pietro Riario, on the occasion of his appointment to the archbishopric of Florence. Instead of the expected present, he was put off with fine speeches, and, after the fashion of poor poets, complained bitterly.²

About this time, also, he was rewarded with nothing but words by another cardinal, a very different man from Riario. He must have said to himself that the days of Nicholas V. were over, although Sixtus IV. hardly yielded to him in his zeal for collecting books. He never seems to have become acquainted with the Pope, and the disagreement

¹ *Epistola*, viii. 6, 7.

² See the poems addressed to Cardinal Riario in the *Prose volgare*, pp. 111-114. Cf. *supra*, i. 346.

which gradually arose between the latter and Poliziano's protector deprived him of all opportunity of doing so. Four books of the translation of Homer are in existence;¹ whether the work proceeded further is uncertain. It was twice interrupted, and the second interruption decided its fate. Poliziano may, in the progress of his studies, have come round to the views of the Cardinal of Pavia, and have doubted whether a Latinity which strove after the elegance of the Augustan age was suited to the old Greek epic.

The first short interruption was a journey to Mantua with Cardinal Francesco da Gonzaga, in August 1472. The intimate relations between the Gonzaga and the Medici, which corresponded to those between the Marquis Lodovico and the city of Florence, have been already spoken of. Francesco took the youthful poet with him from the Medici house. Poliziano, then aged eighteen, had already given proof of uncommon talent on the occasion of a visit to his native city, where his arrival was celebrated with brilliant festivities. Here originated the drama of 'Orpheus,' which made an epoch in literature, less by its actual merit than as the first example of a profane drama in the Italian tongue. Mysteries had long been popular; the modern drama, even when treating modern historical subjects, still more when, as in the works of Alberti and Gregorio Correr, it was directly modelled on the antique, had always adhered to the Latin language. In a letter to one of the cardinal's suite, Messer Carlo Canale (who was, it may be mentioned, the second or third husband of the mother of Cesare and Lucrezia Borgia), the author states that 'Orpheus' was composed in two days, amid constant noisy distractions, and that it was written in the vulgar tongue in order to be more intelligible to the hearers—'an

¹ These four books were printed by Cardinal Angelo Mai in the second volume of the *Spicilegium Romanum*, from two MSS. in the Vatican, and thence in the *Prose volgare*, pp. 431-523. The MSS. came to the Vatican from Fulvio Orsini. The one on parchment, with the Medici arms on a red leather binding, is the copy of books ii. and iii., presented by the author to Lorenzo. The other contains books iv. and v., apparently in Poliziano's handwriting and without a dedication.

imperfect work, fitted to bring its father shame rather than honour, and worthy of the fate prepared by the Lacedæmonians for children born weakly or crippled.' This 'favola' is not a drama; it is a succession of lyrical pieces, with an ode inserted in Latin Sapphics, in praise of the cardinal, which Baccio Ugolini, another member of the Medicean circle and of Landino's school, sang to the lyre in the character of 'Orpheus.'¹

The Mantuan journey was a short episode. Some smaller Latin poems, including the beautiful and pathetic elegy on the death of Albiera degli Albizzi, the charming bride of Sigismondo della Stufa, in 1473, kept Poliziano in the same mood, and cannot fairly be considered as interruptions to his Homeric work. A longer interruption was caused by Giuliano de' Medici's tournament, which was a challenge to Angelo to write the fairest flower in his poetic garland.² He himself alludes to this interruption in the seventh stanza of the 'Giostra:'

E se qual fu la fama, il ver rimbomba,
 Che d' Hecuba la figlia, o sacro Achille,
 Poi che' l corpo lasciasti entro la tomba,
 T'accenda ancor d'amorose faville,
 Lascia un poco tacer tua maggior tromba,
 Ch' io fo squillar per l' italice ville.
 E temprà tu la cetra a' nuovi carmi,
 Mentr' io canto l' amor di Giulio e l' armi.

¹ There has been much question as to the relation between the original 'Orfeo,' which the author wanted to destroy, and the later one, which was turned into a tragedy in several acts. The latter was published in 1776 by Ireneo Affò, with a detailed introduction and *excursus*; and in 1812 Vincenzo Ranucci wrote some extensive philological observations upon it which were reprinted in the Carducci edition, pp. 113-188. The question which has lately been raised as to Poliziano's authorship of this second version must be left for decision to the poet's biographers. There is a prospect of a detailed account of his life by I. del Lungo.

² It has been shown in vol. i. p. 299, that Poliziano did not begin this poem so early as has been imagined, from an idea that Giuliano's tournament was held at the same time as that of his brother.' That he was at work upon it in 1476 is proved by the allusion to the death of Simonetta, the young beauty to whom Giuliano's heart was given, an event which Poliziano sang also in Latin, *Prose volgare*, p. 149. [In Simonettam, 'Dum pulchra effertur nigro Simonetta pheretro.']

The subject in itself is poor. The author must have felt this, even had he not been warned by Luca Pulci's verses on the tournament of Lorenzo. The 'Stanzas'—the title by which Poliziano's poem is best known—are counted among the gems of Italian literature. They were the first of the kind expressing real melody without artificiality, being remarkable for their artistic flow and carefulness of composition. But for a few harsh and ignoble expressions, they have never since been surpassed in point of form, though Ariosto may have more variety and freedom of movement, and Tasso more harmony. But how do these beautiful stanzas of ottava rima treat their subject? In the first book it is left altogether out of sight. The tournament gives place to mythology, the Piazza Sta. Croce to the gardens and palace of Venus. All the flowers and trees of the most highly-favoured climates, all animals of the chase and the peaceful park, the whole of Olympus, are introduced; reminiscences of all the classic poets from Lucretius to Claudian, even to the Christian singers, wanderings of an exuberant fancy through the realms of beauty and love,—all these combine and disport themselves in such perfect freedom, that it matters not whether they have anything to do with the subject or not. At the beginning of the second book the poet seems at last to bethink himself that he intended to sing the praises of a Medici. He therefore makes Cupid relate to Venus the glories of the Tuscan race, and begins with the preparations for great deeds which such vast mythological machinery demands. The youth is awakened and armed, but not without assistance from Olympus. The poem breaks off abruptly, and in its closing stanzas there gleams a sad presentiment of the cruel fate which was so soon to put an end to a life apparently destined to glory and happiness, and with it to a work already highly valued as a fragment, and which gave the tone to the poetry of the age just beginning. Who shall say whether it was not well for the poem that it remained a fragment? for the disproportion between the unimportance of the subject and

the pomp of the treatment might have come out too strikingly had it been continued. This poem, intended to celebrate the acts of Giuliano, is addressed to his brother. The dedicatory stanza speaks of Lorenzo without circumlocution as the ruler of Florence :

High-born Lorenzo, laurel¹ in whose shade
Thy Florence rests nor fears the lowering storm,
Nor threatening signs in heaven's high front displayed,
Nor Jove's dread anger in its fiercest form ;
O to the trembling Muse afford thine aid—
The Muse that courts thee timorous and forlorn,
Lives in the shadow of thy prosperous tree,
And bounds her every fond desire to thee.²

Angelo Poliziano continued to write Latin verses. His epigrams, odes, and elegies are valuable both as conveying a knowledge of the persons and tendencies of a memorable period, and as proofs of a versatility and classical spirit to be found in none of his contemporaries and in few subsequent writers. The philologers of the fifteenth century wrote Latin verses with ease; but the only poet among them is Poliziano. His works abound in imitations of all kinds, as do those of the later Roman poets. But Poliziano feels, thinks, and writes like a Roman; if not like a poet of the Augustan age, at least like one of the time of Statius, whom he resembles in more ways than one, having written 'Sylvæ' like him. He is more classical than some of those who are included in the ranks of the poets of antiquity.

A peculiar grace, fulness of thought, and great variety, give to his poems a charm not often found in modern Latin verses, which seldom display a living individuality. To descriptions of modern life and modern localities, whose very names seem unsuitable to a classic sphere, he can give a native classical colouring, without any apparent effort, yet with the most consummate art. Most remarkable among

¹ Laurus, the poetical name by which the poets of the time distinguished Lorenzo.

² Roscoe's translation.

his writings, by its grace and naturalness and an intermingling of joy and sadness, is the elegy on a bunch of violets given him by a beloved hand; a poem which, in the sixteenth century and in our own, has been an object of study to the choice spirits who wish to acquire pure classic inspiration in a modern form.¹ Poliziano here challenges a comparison with Lorenzo de' Medici, who treated the same subject in two of his loveliest sonnets. The 'Sylvæ,' poems of Angelo's later years, from 1482 to 1486, added to his reputation, though in happy turns of thought and warmth of feeling they are inferior to many of his smaller pieces. They are four poems in heroic metre, prologues to his philological lectures at the Florence University, to a chair in which he was appointed on December 23, 1485, the degree of Doctor of Common Law being conferred on him by Archbishop Rinaldo Orsini at his palace, in the presence of Lorenzo's son Piero.² The first of these poems,³ 'Manto' (the name of the Theban prophetess, which was assumed by the Italian city founded by her son), treats of Virgil, his works, his place in literature, his importance for all time.

As the first of the 'Sylvæ' was intended as an introduction to Virgil's 'Bucolics,' so the second, 'Rusticus,' was to serve the same purpose for the 'Georgics,' and for the works and times of Hesiod. The third, 'Ambra,' took its name from the Medicean Poggio a Cajano, but the name has little connection with the poem, which refers to localities only at its close, and is devoted to an analysis of Homeric lays regarded from a pseudo-Herodotean and pseudo-Plutarchian point of view. The last and longest of the 'Sylvæ,' bearing the strange title of 'Nutricia: the Reward of the Nursing-mother,' describes the origin, progress, and influence of the poetry

¹ 'In violas a Venere mea dono acceptas,' in *Prose volgare*, p. 233; Carducci, p. cviii. Agnolo Firenzuola and Giulio Perticari have translated this elegy in very different styles. Cf. *supra*, p. 15.

² The diploma (with a wrong date) was printed from the archiepiscopal archives of Florence in Bandini, l. c. i. 188.

³ *Prose volgare*, pp. 285-427.

and the poetics of classical times, passes on to the author of the 'Divine Comedy,' and ends by singing the praises of Cosimo de' Medici and his successors. The abundance and versatility of Lorenzo's talents were perhaps never more truly and happily expressed than in the closing verses of this poem; and when the praises of living and powerful men appear in such a setting as this, we may accept them without complaining. After describing his labours in the field of sentimental poetry, to which belong the greater part of Lorenzo's earlier poems, his other poetical productions and his whole intellectual character are thus spoken of:—

Non vacat argutosque sales, Satyraque bibaces
 Descriptos memorare senes, non carmina festis
 Excipienda choris, querulasve animantia chordas.
 Idem etiam tacitæ referens pastoria vitæ
 Otia, et urbanos thyrsos extimulante labores,
 Mox fugis in cælum, non seu per lubrica nisus
 Extremamque boni gaudes contingere metam.
 Quodque alii studiumque vocant, durumque laborem,
 Hic tibi ludus erit, fessus civilibus actis,
 Huc is emeritas acuens ad carmina vires.
 Felix ingenio, felix cui pectore tantas
 Instaurare vices, cui fas tam magna capaci
 Alternare animo, et varias ita nectere curas.

Poliziano wrote the 'Nutricia' in October 1486, at the villa of Fiesole. In the following verses he prophesied of the times to come and the future greatness of his pupil, Piero, if the latter, fulfilling the bright promise of his youth, should walk in the footsteps of his father:—

It jam pene prior, sic, ô sic pergat, et ipsum
 Me superet majore gradu, longeque relinquat
 Protinus, et dulci potius plaudatur alumno,
 Bisque mei victor illo celebrentur honores.

A merciful fate spared the poet from witnessing the failure of hopes the fulfilment of which had already become very doubtful when he was prematurely called away. Anyone versed in the history of those days who may now climb

the pleasant heights of Fiesole, which new buildings and roads have altered but not transformed, will think with interest of Angelo's abode here in the country-house of the Medici, which he describes in a letter to Marsilio Ficino. 'If the summer heat oppress thee at Careggi, the cooler air of Fiesole will be pleasant to thee. We have plenty of water between the slopes of the hill, and while gentle winds constantly refresh us, the glare of the sun troubles us little. During the ascent to the villa it appears enclosed in trees, but the spot, when reached, commands an extensive view as far as the town. The neighbourhood is thickly inhabited, yet I find here the quiet which suits me. But I will tempt thee with yet another attraction. Pico sometimes wanders beyond the limits of his own grounds, breaks in unexpectedly upon my solitude, and carries me away from my shady gardens to his evening meal. You know how things are there; no superfluities, but everything as it should be, and with the spice of his conversation. But thou must be my guest; with me thou shalt find as good a table and perhaps better wine, for Pico and I are rivals in respect to wine.'

The 'Sylvæ' are dedicated to three young men belonging to the Medicean circle and one who stood outside it. Lorenzo—the son of Pier Francesco de' Medici, grandson of Cosimo's brother—whose name stands at the beginning of 'Manto,' was at that time on friendly terms with the members of the elder branch of his race. He afterwards became estranged from them; a change the effects of which did not cease when his posterity had entered upon the dominion of Florence, and the last remaining descendant of Cosimo's line sat on the throne of France. Gifted with poetical talents, and no unworthy rival of his more famous relatives, the younger Lorenzo was a friend of Poliziano's, who dedicated to him among other things a description of the *villeggiatura* at Poggio a Cajano. 'Rusticus' was intended for Jacopo Salviati, who, when

¹ *Epist.* l. x. 14.

these verses were written, in 1483, had been designated as Lorenzo's son-in-law; so that Poliziano, who had first sung the praises of the unlucky Archbishop of Pisa and then openly insulted him with extravagant accusations, passed lightly over the troublesome past. 'Ambra' was sent to Lorenzo Tornabuoni, son of Giovanni, and for a time a pupil, together with Piero de' Medici, of our poet, who in one of his letters praised his intellectual gifts and knowledge of classical literature. He was a faithful adherent of his relatives, not only in prosperity but also in adversity, which fell on him even more heavily than on them. In the days of Savonarola he was accused of taking part in a conspiracy in favour of the exiles, and, with Niccolò Ridolfi, the father of Lorenzo's son-in-law, suffered on the scaffold in 1497, at the age of thirty-two, a victim to mob-law. The last of these poems, 'Nutricia,' was dedicated, in 1491, several years after its composition, to the Cardinal of Sant' Anastasia, Antonio Pallavicino Gentile of Genoa, who had great influence in state affairs under Innocent VIII. and Alexander VI., and took much interest in literature and literary men. At the close of the dedication Poliziano gratefully alludes to the cardinal's efforts to further his cause with the Pope.

As we have said, the 'Sylvæ' were prolegomena to lectures on literature. To a cycle of another kind, to lectures given at Florence in 1483 on the Aristotelian philosophy, Poliziano composed a prose introduction, probably the strangest ever heard at any university.¹ The very title—'Lamia' (the Witch)—sounds strange, and we almost

¹ *Prælectio in Priora Aristotelis analytica cui titulus Lamia. La Strega, prelezione alle Priora d'Aristotile nello studio Fiorentino l'anno 1483 per Ang. Ambr. Poliziano volgar. da Isidori del Lungo, Flor. 1864.* The immediate neighbourhood of Fiesole, where Poliziano was so thoroughly at home, still recalls the witch-traditions of the middle ages. The subterranean chambers of the Roman theatre (unhappily in great part destroyed) on the northern slope of the hill are called by the people the Witches' grottos—(Buche delle Fate); they are not far from the stone grotto on the eastern slope, the Fonte Soterra, which is always full of cool water, and the Latomie, which Brunelleschi opened for the purposes of his wonderful buildings (Fr. Inghirami, *Memorie storiche per servire di guida all' Osservatore in Fiesole* (Fiesole 1839), p. 60 seq.

suspect a joke, but find that the author is in earnest. The beginning of this address to his students is highly characteristic. 'Have you ever heard tell of witches? When I was a little boy my grandmother used to tell me about the witches in the neighbouring wood, who eat up naughty children. Fancy what an image of terror a witch was to me in those days! In the neighbourhood of my little villa at Fiesole there is a little brook, hidden by the shadow of the hill-side, and the women of the place who go there to draw water say that it is a place of meeting for the witches. But what is a witch? Plutarch of Chæronea, who was as grave as he was learned, relates that the witches have artificial eyes which they can put in and take out at their pleasure, just as weak-sighted old people do with their spectacles, which they stick on their noses when they want to look carefully at something and then put back into the case; or as others do with their false teeth, which they lay aside with their clothes when they go to bed;—not to mention your helpmeets, ye married men, with their bought braids and curls. If a witch desires to take a walk she puts in her eyes, and wanders through streets and alleys, squares and markets, churches and offices, taverns and baths, looks at everything, thrusts her nose into everything, meddles with everything, let a man do what he may. She has the eyes of an owl and a spy, like the old maid in Plautus. She can find out a grain of sand, and bury herself in the narrowest cranny. When she gets home, as soon as she reaches the threshold, she takes out her eyes and puts them in her pocket. Out of doors she has eyes like a lynx, at home she is blind. You ask what she does then? She sits spinning yarn, and humming a little song from time to time. Have you Florentines never known such witches, who know nothing of their own business, but are always busy about other people's? No? Yet there are many of them in all cities, even here in yours. But they go about in disguise—you take them for men and women, but they are witches. Once it befell that some of them, happening to see me, stood

still, and looked at me curiously, as those desirous to buy are wont to do. They whispered to each other, with uncouth gestures, "That is Poliziano—that is the rhymester who has suddenly dressed himself up as a philosopher," and then they hurried away like wasps robbed of their sting. What they meant by their discourse is not clear to me; whether it displeases them that a man should be a philosopher, which, however, I am not, or that I venture to play the philosopher without having the material to do so. Let us now see what sort of a creature it is that men call a philosopher. You will soon perceive that I do not belong to the species. I say this not because I think that you believe it, but that no one may take it into his head to believe it. Not that I should be ashamed of the name, if it agreed with the facts, but because I prefer to keep free from titles which are not due to me :

Ne si forte suas repetitum venerit olim
Grex avium plumas, moveat cornicula risum.

This therefore is the first point. The second is, whether the condition of a philosopher is bad. When I have proved the contrary I will speak to you briefly of myself and the subject of my lectures.' After this introduction follows a sketch of the course of Grecian philosophy, and an exposition of the work of the later schools of thought.

The man who raised to such a height the poetry of his native tongue, and the idiom from which it sprang, was deeply interested in popular poetry. He went hand in hand with his patron and friend in efforts to bring back language and literature 'from the constraint of false rules to truth and nature.' Both found the popular minstrelsy in the peculiar shape it retains to the present day, and differing completely in tone from the songs of other lands. In the *rispetti* the ottava rima predominates, treated freely as it was in Boccaccio's days for epic poetry. Even the sentimental pieces are epigrammatically pointed, and full of

antitheses, which give an impression of artificiality and imitation of the antique, more especially in southern Tuscany and the Roman district. They are not narratives, nor do they develop a state of mind, but they vividly describe momentary emotion. Without making up a whole history with such little songs, like Pulci and Lorenzo de' Medici, Poliziano composed a series of *rispetti* describing joy and sorrow, accepted and especially despised love. They are partly in dialogue, frequently in a natural easy style, which reminds us of improvisations, more tender in expression, more flexible in diction than the two writers above mentioned, who not unfrequently betray that they are mocking at their own work. Other similar songs, but without internal connection, display a versatility resulting naturally from the way in which they originated. These fugitive poems grew within the Medicean circle, products of social intercourse in the villa and in evening walks in the garden; or, like the dance-songs (*ballate*), of which Poliziano wrote a great number, they were sung with music in the public squares. In short, they belonged to the life of the people who had furnished models for the rhymes composed for them by the poets of quality, with greater refinement, and not always without a secondary object in view.

Poliziano's versatility is wonderfully shown in the labours he undertook in the field of classical philology while thus wandering through the woods of poetry. He was one of the first to establish the true principles of textual criticism; at the request of Innocent VIII. he translated Herodian's Roman history into Latin,¹ and made the writings of Hippocrates and Galen accessible to those of his countrymen who were not acquainted with Greek. On the latter occasion he claimed the assistance of the learned doctor Pietro Leoni, who was then lecturing in Padua, to secure

¹ The translation appeared at Rome in 1493. The dedication to the Pope and his Brief are in book viii. of the *Epistolæ*. The poem 'Herodianus in laudem traductoris sui,' is in *Prose volgare*, etc., p. 264.

the correct rendering of the medical terms.¹ The most talented poet of the fifteenth century was also the philologist who, while equal to others in knowledge of antiquity, represents its spirit with more truth and originality. In trying to rival the classical letter-writers, Poliziano followed a fashion that had influenced statesmen and men of learning from Petrarca downwards. He left a mass of epistolary testimony to the character of his age, the value of which must not be lightly estimated, though it may not always answer the expectations raised by the names. Like Ficino and others, Poliziano had arranged his Latin correspondence for publication, and wrote a dedication to Piero de' Medici, when death cut short his career.² More interesting to us than the generality of these letters, which nevertheless contain valuable matter, are his confidential letters in the vulgar tongue, not meant for publication. Even this highly gifted man was not free from the bad habit of the learned men of the fifteenth century—the intermixture of Latin phrases with Italian when the subject gave no occasion for it.

¹ *Letter to Lorenzo de' Medici*, June 5, 1490, *ibid.* p. 76.

² *Letter to Piero de' Medici*, Florence, May 23, 1494, *ibid.* p. 84.

CHAPTER IX.

POLIZIANO IN THE MEDICEAN HOUSE. SCALA AND RUCELLAI.

FOR many of his contemporaries Lorenzo de' Medici was the frequent subject of verse, especially Latin verse, which the complimentary art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries preferred as the more dignified, even after Italian poetry had secured a position by considerable achievements. Many of these poetical productions have been rescued from oblivion only to sink back again, unless they contribute to the historical knowledge of the period. Their literary worth consists merely in a talent for form which was surpassed by most of the Latinists of the following century. Fortunately the court-poet of the Medici was Poliziano. Many of his epigrams are addressed to Lorenzo, and the elegance of the form as well as the warmth of feeling which breathes through all he wrote about his patron, diminishes that impression of servility which is inseparable from this kind of poetry. Praise of his discretion and foresight, of his words and deeds—wishes that he may attain the age of Nestor, as he already possesses his wisdom—thanks for favour granted, and offers of future service, are the themes of verse, as well as the merits of a swift runner, of a Spanish hound, of a tree before the Medicean house, supposed to be dead, but which had bloomed again, and of the brook of Ambra. During Giuliano's lifetime, the concord between the two brothers was the object of praise; they were called Castor and Pollux, Agamemnon and Menelaus. Angelo wrote an agreeable love-poem of some length on the name of Giuliano. He

thoroughly belonged to the Medicean household. He was still young when Lorenzo entrusted to him the education of his son Piero; but before the latter was eight years old dissensions occurred which caused the poet-pedagogue many an hour of discomfort.

In the summer of 1478, when war and sickness made a residence in Florence undesirable, Lorenzo, as already stated, sent his wife and children to Pistoja, where they were hospitably received in the house of Andrea Panciatichi, the head of an influential family inclined to the Medici. They were accompanied by Angelo Poliziano, other masters, and a doctor. Here Piero, only seven years old, with his great-uncle Giovanni Tornabuoni received Ercole d'Este, who was going to take the command at Florence. In October they exchanged their residence at Pistoja for the villa at Fiesole, where the family circle was increased by the sons of Niccolò Orsini, Count of Pitigliano. And here arose a difference between the mother and the tutor. Clarice was a good and careful mother. Giovanni, who was not yet three, had soon after his birth given occasion for anxiety, and been a great trouble to her and to his grandmother, on account of his delicate health. Concerning Giuliano, then a few months old, whose constitution always remained feeble, she wrote later to her husband: 'I will care for him as a mother should, but I beseech you to take care of yourself for the children's sake and mine.' Poliziano's mode of bringing up did not satisfy her. Not that she began with a prejudice against him; the good terms on which they had once been are proved by the letters which he addressed to her on several occasions when he was absent from Florence with Lorenzo.¹ He bestowed great care on his young pupil, of whose writing and composition he sent specimens to the father. 'I shall not fail,' he wrote to Lorenzo from Pistoja,

¹ Poliziano's *Letters to Madonna Clarice* (cf. vol. ii. book vi. ch. iii.) are in I. del Lungo, *Prose volgare*, p. 45 *seq.*, and also his letters from Pistoja, Caffagiuolo, Careggi, and Fiesole, to Lorenzo and his mother, some of which had already been printed by Fabroni.

September 20, 'in attention and fidelity. I know what I owe to your Magnificence, and I feel for Piero and your other children an affection equal to that of a father. Should anything unpleasant occur, I will endeavour myself to bear it, out of love to you, to whom I owe everything.' These words show that there was already something amiss. Four weeks previously he had written: 'I am busy with Piero, and encourage him to write, and I think in a few days you will receive a letter which will astonish you. We have a master here who teaches writing in a fortnight, so that it seems quite a miracle. The children are particularly happy, and look quite blooming. Piero never leaves my side. I would that I could serve you in greater things; but this is my work, and I fulfil it with joy. But I beg you to ensure, either by letter or by a messenger, that my authority shall not be restricted, so that I may the more easily guide the boy and fulfil my duty. Nevertheless, act therein according to your pleasure. Whatever may happen, I will bear it with equanimity.' And on the same day: 'We get on as well as we can, but I cannot escape a few collisions.' That he was dissatisfied, dull, and longing to be near Lorenzo, is clear from all his letters at this time, both to Madonna Lucrezia and to her son.

To make matters worse, came the *villeggiatura* at Caffaggiuolo, whither Clarice went in November. This was, from position and climate, a melancholy winter residence, where loneliness and bad weather seem to have put the excitable man doubly out of humour, and all the more so because Lorenzo's old tutor, Gentile Becchi, who lived at the country house with the family, grew very unsociable in consequence of the sad circumstances of the time, which weighed heavily on the mind of this vehement accuser of the Pope. Gentile had felt the events of the spring deeply, and had been terribly cast down by the death of Giuliano. Poliziano had tried to cheer him with an ode, which has acquired historical importance from the testimony it bears to the hopes

of foreign aid which were cherished by the adherents of the Medici and many of the Florentine people; hopes which were but very partially fulfilled.¹

AD GENTILEM EPISCOPUM.

GENTILES animi maxima pars mei,
 Communi nimium sorte quid angeris?
 Quid curis animum lugubribus teris,
 Et me discrucias simul?

Passi digna quidem perpetuo sumus
 Luctu, qui mediis (heu miseri) sacris
 Illum, illum juvenem vidimus, O nefas!
 Stratum sacrilega manu!

At sunt attonito quæ dare pectori
 Solamen valeant plurima, nam super
 Est, qui vel gremio creverit in tuo,
 Laurens Etruriæ caput.

Laurens quem patriæ cœlicolum pater
 Tutum terrifica gorgone præstitit;
 Quem Tuscus pariter, quem Venetus Leo
 Servant, et Draco pervigil.

Illi bellipotens excubat Hercules;
 Illi fatiferis militat arcubus;
 Illi mittit equos Francia martios,
 Felix Francia regibus.

Circumstat populus murmure dissono;
 Circumstant juvenem purpurei patres;
 Causa vincimus et robore militum;
 Hac stat Juppiter, hac favet.

Quare, O cum misera quid tibi Nenia,
 Si nil proficimus? quin potius gravis
 Absterisse bono lætitiæ die
 Audes nubila pectoris.

¹ Poliziano afterwards sent the ode also to Lorenzo.

Nam cum jam gelidos umbra reliquerit
 Artus, non dolor hanc perpetuus retro
 Mordacesve trahunt sollicitudines,
 Mentis, curaque pervicax.

Thus rendered by Roscoe :—

O FRIEND, whose woes this bosom shares,
 Why ceaseless mourn our mutual cares?
 Ah! why thy days to grief resign,
 With thy regrets recalling mine?

Eternal o'er the atrocious deed,
 'Tis true our kindred hearts may bleed,
 When he, twin glory of our land,
 Fell by a sacrilegious hand!

But sure, my friend, there yet remains
 Some solace for these piercing pains,
 Whilst he, once nurtured at thy side,
 Lorenzo lives, Etruria's pride.

Lorenzo, o'er whose favoured head
 Jove his terrific gorgon spread;
 Whose steps the lion-pair await,
 Of Florence and Venetia's state.

For him his crest the dragon rears;
 For him the Herculean band appears;
 Her martial succour Gallia brings—
 Gallia, that glories in her kings!

See round the youth the purpled band
 Of venerable fathers stand;
 Exulting crowds around him throng,
 And hail him as he moves along.

Strong in our cause and in our friends,
 Our righteous battle Jove defends;
 Thy useless sorrows then repress,
 Let joy once more dilate thy breast.

To animate the clay-cold frame,
 No sighs shall fan the vital flame;
 Nor all the tears that love can shed
 Recall to life the silent dead.

The poem seems to have had little or no effect, and the poet himself became infected with melancholy. 'The news from this place,' wrote Poliziano to Madonna Lucrezia, on November 18, 'is that it rains violently and incessantly, so that it is impossible to leave the house, and instead of hunting we have taken to playing ball, that the children may have exercise. I sit by the fire in dressing-gown and slippers, and if you saw me you would take me for melancholy incarnate; for that is what I seem to myself. I do, see, hear nothing that cheers me, so deeply have our misfortunes affected me. Sleeping or waking, I have nothing in my head but these fancies. The day before yesterday we were all in joyful excitement, because we heard that the sickness had ceased. Now we are down again, as there is said to be some still going about. In town we have at least some comfort, if it is only that of seeing Lorenzo come home safe and well. Here, everything makes us uneasy, and I assure you I am dying of melancholy, such a burthen is loneliness to me. Monsignore (Becchi) shuts himself up in his own room, with no company but his thoughts; and I find him so cast down and full of care that his society only increases my own sadness. Ser Alberto del Malerba (a priest who was then in the Medicean household) recites the service all day long with the children. When I am tired of studying, my fancy goes off on a chase through pestilence and war—grief for the past, anxiety for the future. I have no one to turn my thoughts to him, and am dying of weariness. And here I have not my Madonna Lucrezia to whom I can vent my feelings.'

At last matters came to an open breach. On May 6, 1479, Poliziano wrote to Lorenzo from Careggi: 'I am here at Careggi, having left Caffaggiuolo by command of Madonna Clarice. The grounds of my departure, I desire, aye I earnestly entreat, to be allowed to explain to you by word of mouth, for it is a prolix affair. I believe that, when you have heard me, you will find that the wrong is not all on my

side. For decency's sake, and in order not to go to Florence without your orders, I came here, and am waiting till your Magnificence informs me what I am to do. For I am yours, though the world itself should turn upside down; and if fortune will not smile upon me in your service, that will not prevent me from always faithfully devoting myself to that service. I commend myself to your Magnificence, and am entirely at your commands.' What had moved Madonna Clarice to this strong measure is clear. She could have nothing to say against the scholar; but the man inspired her with very little confidence, although we cannot think that she was influenced by the evil rumours which were afterwards spread as to Poliziano's moral conduct—rumours characteristic of a time that delighted in the most dishonouring accusations. Men of letters were so full of exaggerated self-importance, and so incapable of controlling their tongues or their pens, that Lorenzo's wife probably had right on her side. She wanted to superintend her children's education; the tutor would not suffer it. 'As for Giovanni,' wrote he to Lorenzo from Caffaggiuolo on April 6, when he enclosed a letter from Piero, 'his mother makes him read in the Psalter, which I cannot at all approve. When she does not interfere with him his progress is surprising, so that he can read without any help.' To give the Psalter to a child of three as a reading-book is certainly a strange proceeding. But if, as we must suppose, it was the translation made for Clarice by Marsilio Ficino, the scholar of the fifteenth century could not make the same objection which was made in the next by another scholar, who received the cardinalate—Pietro Bembo—to the reading of St. Paul's Epistles: that they spoil one's style.

At this time Lorenzo was so much occupied with the crisis in public affairs that strife in his own household must have been doubly troublesome to him. He did not think of restoring to his post the pedagogue who had been turned out of doors. He offered him the villa at Fiesole, where Poliziano

wrote Latin verses in praise of Lorenzo, about the leisure he was himself enjoying, of the pleasant view towards the city of the Muses, and of the winding Arno,¹ but evidently put no bridle on his tongue. 'I should like,' wrote Madonna Clarice to her husband on May 28 from Caffaggiuolo,² after affectionately entreating him to take care of his health during the continued sickness, 'not to be put into a fable like Luigi Pulci in Matteo Franco's verses. I also wish that Messer Angelo shall not be able to boast of remaining in the house in defiance of me, or of your having offered him a home at Fiesole. You know I told you that if it was your will that he should remain here, I would be content, and although I have had to submit to his rudeness, I would bear it patiently if such were your decision, though I cannot believe it possible.' Clarice's remonstrances must have made some impression on Lorenzo. Although Poliziano saw him frequently, he remained excluded from the house. He repeatedly and urgently commended his cause to Madonna Lucrezia, to whom he represented his difficult position, if the hopes set on Piero came to nothing.³ He begged her to try to fathom Lorenzo's intentions concerning him. The tutor of Giovanni Tornabuoni's sons, Martino della Comedia, gave lessons to Piero for a time, as did also Bernardo Michelozzi (son of the architect), who actually educated Giovanni, and was afterwards Bishop of Forli. Poliziano's impatience and vexation are clearly shown. 'I shall be much surprised,' he wrote, 'if they let Piero lose his time, and it really would be a pity. I understand that Messer Bernardo is there, but I cannot quite see how he is to go on with my work, unless he remains permanently. In this case, indeed, it will be

¹ The graceful description of the view of Florence and its neighbourhood from Fiesole ('Talia Fesuleo lentus meditabar in antro-Rure suburbano Medicum) stands at the end of the poem of Rusticus, which bears the date 1483, but its origin is probably connected with the time referred to above.

² Fabroni, l. c. ii. 288.

³ Fiesole, May 21 and July 18, 1479, in *Prose volgari*, pp. 71-74. Several Latin epigrams to Lorenzo (*ibid.* pp. 123, 124) are of this period.

just as well that the shell has burst. But I do not believe it, and therefore I beg you to find out Lorenzo's intentions, that I may judge whether to arm myself for the tourney or the battle. I will always order myself according to Lorenzo's wishes, for I am certain that he sees deeper into things than I, and that he will guard my honour as he always has done, and as my faithful services give me some right to expect.'

When the reconciliation took place cannot be discovered from Poliziano's letters, which are missing for several years at this period. The verses addressed to Lorenzo on his return from Naples, show that at that time Poliziano had not returned to his house.¹ A year after, in 1481, Piero was again entrusted to his guidance; for the Latin dictation for him,² in which the siege of Otranto by the Duke of Calabria is mentioned, is of this year. In these subjects for translation, which sometimes treat of contemporary events, sometimes allude to this or that occurrence of daily life, we vainly seek any really healthy food for a youthful mind. Their want of connectedness and gravity gives no brilliant testimony to the highly gifted man's powers of teaching. But Piero had other teachers besides Poliziano; among them was the theologian Giorgio Cenigno, in whose learning and conduct Lorenzo, who was often present at his lectures, had great confidence, and to whose judgment he afterwards submitted the defence of Pico della Mirandola. This is the same man who many years later took so decided a part with Reuchlin against those who accused him of heresy. Giovanni del Prato, afterwards Bishop of Aquila, and Antonio Barberini, a professor of theology at Florence, were also called in.³ When Piero went to Rome, in 1484 and again in 1488, the first time to welcome Pope Innocent VIII., the second time to be married, Poliziano accompanied him, and he remained until his death a member of the most intimate circle of the family.

¹ *Prose volgari*, p. 127 ('O ego quam cupio reducis contingere dextram').

² *Latini dettati a Piero de' Medici*, 1481, *ibid.* pp. 17-41.

³ *Fabroni*, l. c. ii. 289.

He never was a priest, though he held a couple of ecclesiastical benefices.

We can well understand that the choice of a man of such uncommon intellectual gifts as a tutor, at a time when everything was expected to give way to classical culture, found many eulogists; and the words of Cristoforo Landino in his dedication of Virgil's works to Piero de' Medici do not stand alone. Piero was wanting neither in understanding nor the desire to learn, and the instruction he received was not wasted so far as concerns the elegant culture which was fast superseding the more practical education of older times. But the essential principle of a serious moral view of the world Angelo Poliziano could not give to his pupil, for he had it not himself. The father rejoiced in the progress of the son, promoted as it was by the liberal, scientific, artistic and social movement of which the house of Medici formed the centre. Piero, like his father, entered life early, and was thus prepared for the position he was in some degree destined to inherit. He always showed interest in scientific matters. It was at his desire that his tutor made the collection of letters above mentioned, which, however, were not printed till after Poliziano's death and Piero's banishment; a collection which, like many of the kind, contains much that for the writer's honour had better have remained unprinted. But posterity has not confirmed Poliziano's judgment on his pupil. It was the judgment of a courtier. In Piero, thus he wrote to Pico della Mirandola,¹ there lived again the spirit of his father, the virtue of his grandfather, the humanity of his great-grandfather, the honesty, piety, generosity, and high-mindedness of all his ancestors.

If Lorenzo could not keep the peace in his own house between his wife and a literary friend, still less could he keep it between the latter and another member of his confidential circle. To this belonged, like Poliziano, a man whose

¹ *Epist.* xii. 7.

literary merits contributed nothing to the celebrity of the age, but who attained to a higher and more secure position than most of his compeers because he showed himself a manageable and useful tool. Bartolommeo Scala,¹ born about 1430 at Colle in the valley of the Elsa, has himself described his origin and the commencement of his fortunes in a letter to Poliziano, and he deserves at least some credit for avowing so openly what it is true everybody already knew. 'Deprived of all worldly goods, poor, and born of parents of low degree, I came here, without means, without claims, without protectors, without relations. Cosimo, the father of the country, took me up, and I rose in the service of his family.'² His father was a miller, and the youth's first years in Florence were passed in bitter want, as we know from the letters of Cardinal Ammanati, who was there in not very brilliant circumstances. As in the case of other *protégés*, Cosimo's favour was continued by his heirs. This only will account for the fact that, after the death of Benedetto Accolti, Scala received the office of chancellor.³ Although by no means without cultivation and practice in business, Scala stood far below those who had preceded him with so much distinction in the chancellorship, since the days of Coluccio Salutati to the time of the man whom he replaced. For Benedetto Accolti, who died in the prime of manhood, did honour to the name which his family had already acquired in the field of learning, and united sound knowledge of law with unusual elegance of expression; while

¹ D. M. Manni, *Bartholomei Scalæ Collensis vita*, Flor. 1768. Scala's *Florentine History*, now completely forgotten, appeared at Rome in 1677. The Laurentiana contains a MS. collection of letters, poems, &c., by him, to and on Cosimo the elder, and dedicated to Lorenzo (cf. Moreni, *Bibliographia*, ii. 321).

² Ang. Pol. *Epist.* xii. 17.

³ Accolti (on whom cf. Vespasiano da Bisticci, l. c. p. 442 *seq.*) died in 1466, aged 51; the seals were not delivered to Scala till March 1473, so they must have been put into commission (Manni, l. c. 15). Accolti's dialogue, *De præstantia virorum sui ævi*, which, in spite of the many reservations made by the author from personal motives, will deserve regard as the work of a man in high position, was first printed by Ben. Bacchini, Parma, 1689, and later by Galletti in *Philippi Villani Liber*, p. 97 *seq.*

his eloquence and excellent memory rendered him peculiarly fit for the various solemnities at which addresses and replies had to be made without long preparation. His Latin history of the first Crusade, founded on French materials, and dedicated to Piero de' Medici, is valuable as the source whence Torquato Tasso drew the subject of his 'Gerusalemme.'

Fortune continued to favour Bartolommeo Scala, and even in the great commotion of 1494 he was not overthrown. Posts of honour, embassies, knighthood, riches, fell to his share. He was Lorenzo's confidant, and in constant correspondence with him on civil and political affairs. In the storms of 1478 and the following years he was of no small use to him, and it was chiefly through him that Lorenzo always kept the Signoria well in hand. Scala had a pretty villa—which afterwards passed to the Guadagni¹—on the slope of the hill at Fiesole, and his town house (now belonging, with its beautiful gardens, to the Count della Gherardesca) still bears on its walls the coat of arms which he adopted in allusion to his name. As two of his predecessors had written a history of Florence, he thought it needful to do the same. His work, which comes down to Charles of Anjou, has no intrinsic value; and his other writings are even more utterly forgotten than those of the obscurest among his contemporaries. That he was most anxious to give no ground of displeasure to foreign princes on whose relations to Florence he was obliged to touch in his history is shown by his oft-repeated request to the Ferrarese ambassador for information about the Este family, 'because he wished to write in praise of that illustrious house.'²

Bartolommeo Scala's position made him boastful. His letters to Poliziano are full of the most ridiculous conceit.³ 'Thou wilt hardly venture to compete with my honours.

¹ A. M. Bandini, *Lettere Fiesolane*, Flor. 1776, p. 30.

² A. Guidoni to Duke Ercole II., April 1486, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 281.

³ Ang. Pol. *Epist.* xii. 17-19.

The Florentine people have raised me first to the Priorship, then to the Gonfaloniership, and now to the rank of senator and knight, with such unanimity that many were of opinion there had never been a more popular act; besides which I have the brilliant testimony of Lorenzo de' Medici that distinction was never conferred on one more worthy.' Whereupon Poliziano did not fail to pay him back with an abusive answer. His boast of praise from Cosimo and Lorenzo was a lie; the latter had often said that in advancing him he was influenced by other considerations, not by his own opinion, and had often given Poliziano Scala's official papers to correct, as the latter must have known very well. Lorenzo had prevented the former from destroying the mocking iambs on Scala,¹ saying it was a pity to sacrifice such good verses. Lorenzo de' Medici was dead when the two became involved in that violent strife which gave rise to accusations as passionate, coarse, and spiteful as those flung about by Filelfo, Poggio, and Valla. But in the life-time of Lorenzo a quarrel broke out between the two men, who emulated each other in abasing the moral dignity of scholarship.

There seems to have been another cause of strife besides literary rivalry—Scala's beautiful and accomplished daughter Alessandra. Like many other women of her day, she devoted herself in her youth to the study of Greek, and her teachers were Demetrius Chalcondylas and Johannes Lascaris. That Poliziano was inspired with a violent passion for her is shown by his Greek epigrams.²

Now at last have I found the object I long have been seeking,
Object of loving desire, present in all my dreams.'

But Alessandra, though she exchanged Greek verses with her admirer, and sent him flowers and received small presents, seems to have been very far from returning his affection. She tells him plainly that he has not found what he

¹ 'Ad Bartholomæum Scalam' in the *Prose volgari*, p. 273.

² In the *Epigrammata Græca*. Cf. *Prose volgari*, p. 199 seq.

sought; paying him at the same time compliments on his learning and fame, which do not seem to have consoled him much. When the disdainful beauty gave her hand to Michael Marullus Tarcagnota, a Greek established in Italy early in life, jealousy made Poliziano pour forth a torrent of abuse, which provoked corresponding replies. Time had been when verses addressed by Poliziano to Lorenzo, son of Pier Francesco de' Medici, the patron of Marullus, overflowed with praises of the Greek, who was pronounced superior to Catullus.¹ Now just as immoderate in the opposite sense, Angelo's invectives were most extravagant against the man who had become his happy rival. Under the name of Mabilius, he satirised his person and writings, heaping upon him all the abuse that could be raked out of the poems of antiquity.²

Personalities of every kind, moral and physical, are flung backwards and forwards *usque ad nauseam*. Poliziano's hooked nose and crooked neck, and the supposed infidelity of both combatants are mutually held up to contempt. Well-turned though the epigrams may be, they were better absent from the works of a great poet. Alessandra, the innocent cause of strife, having become a widow, withdrew to the convent of San Pier Maggiore, and died there in 1506.

Among those who rivalled the professed men of learning while taking an active part in public affairs, Alamanno Rinuccini holds a foremost place.³ He was descended from an old noble family, whose castle near San Donato alla Collina, on the road which leads from Florence to Arezzo, along the left bank of the Arno, still keeps much of its mediæval character. Born in 1419, he was a pupil of Poggio and Argyropulos; in his translations from the Greek and

¹ 'Quæris quid mihi de tuo Marullo,' in the *Prose volgari*, p. 124; 'Quod plura Venerem tuus Marullus,' *ibid.* p. 125.

² 'Invectiva in Mabilium,' *ibid.* p. 131 *seq.* The poems of Marullus were printed at Florence in 1497.

³ F. Fossi, *Monumenta ad Alamanni Rinuccini vitam contexendam*, &c., Flor. 1791. G. Aiazzi, in *Ricordi storici di Filippo Rinuccini*, p. 139 *seq.*

his original Latin writings he displayed a perfect command of both tongues, and his house was a place where his friends met for learned discourse. He rose to the highest offices in the city, and fulfilled with equal zeal the chancellorship of the Universities of Florence and Pisa, various diplomatic embassies, and a post in the war department conferred on him in 1495, three years before his death. Like his father Filippo and his brother Neri, he left valuable notes on contemporary events. Although an old partisan of the Medici, he nevertheless, while fully admitting Lorenzo's intellectual gifts, passes on him a severe judgment, showing how the spirit of independence still survived among the aristocracy, and how hard it was for the Medici to secure their support, even by raising them to office. At the same time the virulent attacks on Lorenzo's government throw a strange light on the character of the writer, who never failed to profit by the favours bestowed on him. It was much the same with Bernardo Rucellai, one of the most esteemed members of the Medicean circle. He controlled his ambition during the life of his brother-in-law Lorenzo; but when that firm hand was gone and personal considerations no longer restrained him, he took his own course. He had early distinguished himself in his classical and philosophical studies, and while scarcely more than a youth was a professor at the University of Pisa. Of his Latin historical writings, that on the war of Pisa is founded on the narratives of Gino and Neri Capponi; that on the wars of Charles VIII. of France possesses some intrinsic value as the narrative and judgment of a contemporary whose high position opened to him trustworthy sources of information. Both display his command of style; and his topography of ancient Rome shows how well versed he was in ancient literature.¹ The first principle of this work is

¹ Anton. Francesco Gori has added to a MS. commentary on Rucellai's treatise *De Urbe Roma* (in the Marucelliana at Florence) a life of the author. Cf. L. Passerini, *Genealogia ec. della Famiglia Rucellai*, p. 122 seq. Bernardo was born 1488, died 1514.

a mistake, because it rests on the so-called *regionarii*, that arbitrarily interpolated version of the old topographical texts; but Rucellai surpassed all his predecessors in thoroughness of learning. At Lorenzo's death he entered upon a new phase, not merely in political life. It was he who, after the storms which burst over Florence in 1494, received into his new house, with its large and beautiful gardens in the Via della Scala, the Platonic Academy, then in danger of sharing the ruin of the Medici. In these 'Orti Oricellari' the Academy was kept alive through the brilliant but unquiet times that followed.¹ Here, where Bernardo Rucellai brought together some of the sculptures scattered at the plundering of the Medici palaces, Niccolò Machiavelli read his book on the art of war; here in 1516 Leo X. was present at a representation of the tragedy of 'Rosmonda,' written by Bernardo's son Giovanni; and here in 1522 was laid the plot against Cardinal Giulio de' Medici which put an end to the Academy for ever.

¹ L. Passerini, *Degli Orti Oricellari*, in the *Curiosità*, p. 56 seq. The house, built on the ground bought from Nannina de' Medici in 1482, was begun about the end of the century. It passed, with the beautiful gardens, to Bianca Cappello; it now, after many changes, belongs to a Countess Orloff.

CHAPTER X.

ERMOLAO BARBARO AND PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA.

THE Florentines and other Tuscans gathered together at this period of manifold intellectual activity were joined by men from other parts of Italy, coming as transient visitors or permanent residents. Three of these deserve especial consideration—Bernardo Bembo, Ermolao Barbaro, and Pico della Mirandola. We have already seen Bembo as Venetian ambassador, in the difficult state of affairs which followed on the conspiracy of the Pazzi. He had received this honourable appointment several years before, and held it until peace was restored. The relations between Venice and Florence were not always pleasant and confidential; but the Venetian ambassador knew how to make himself agreeable and to inspire confidence. Poliziano praised his activity and caution in affairs of state, his amiability in personal intercourse, his interest in literature, his union of seriousness and gaiety.¹ Ficino and Landino were on friendly terms with him, as their correspondence and literary communications prove. Bembo was one of the members of the Platonic Academy, and a banquet given to him by his colleagues in 1480 is described by Marsilio in his book on Platonic theology.² He was an ardent lover of books, and wrote a beautiful hand; the octavo form of the Aldine editions, the first variation

¹ 'Bernardo Bembo veneto oratori viro undecumque elegantissimo.' In the *Prose volgari*, p. 251. The copy of Landino's *Xandra*, once sent by him to Bembo, is in the Vatican library. Cf. Bandini, l. c. ii. 164 *seq.*

² *Theolog. Platon.* b. vi. c. 1.

from the old folio or large quarto usual until then, is said to have been an imitation of one of his manuscripts.¹ Bernardo's son was with him during his residence on the banks of the Arno, and the pure dialect to which the boy's ear became accustomed falling on good ground, led to that scientific treatment of the Italian tongue which has given Pietro Bembo a claim to be considered a distinguished master of the language he handled with so much power and facility of expression.

One of those who were in constant literary intercourse with Lorenzo, and assisted him in collecting manuscripts, &c., was Ermolao Barbaro the younger. Literary faculty was the heritage of his family. His grandfather, Francesco Barbaro, held friendly intercourse with the scholars of Rome and Florence and with Cosimo de' Medici. He also made at Venice the largest collection of books of that time, and devoted himself zealously to studying the texts, as is proved by his copy of Homer preserved in the library of St. Mark. Young Ermolao was brought up by the care of a learned uncle of the same name, who was Bishop of Treviso and for many years administered the bishopric of Verona.

Francesco owed some of his accomplishments to Matteo Bosso, whom we shall meet again in the abbey at Fiesole; and at Rome a classical turn had been given to his studies by Pomponio Leto. He was a young man when the Republic, which looked quite as much to the learned accomplishments as to the political capacity and noble birth of her envoys, sent him to the Emperor Frederic, to Lodovico il Moro, and to Innocent VIII. The last embassy was not propitious to him.

When in 1491 he accepted the Patriarchate of Aquileia from the Pope without asking the consent of the Republic, this offence against law and precedent was punished by the senate with deprivation and banishment, and Barbaro died near Rome, of an infectious disease, in the summer of 1493,

¹ Foscarini, l. c. 267.

at the early age of thirty-three.¹ Of his many works, chiefly on Greek writers, none seem now to justify his reputation. His studies on Pliny's 'Natural History' hold an honourable place among the critical investigations begun in his day, and his lively wit shines forth in his letters.

Ermolao came through Florence on his way to Rome in the spring of 1490. As Lorenzo de' Medici was then at the baths of Vignone, his eldest son received the stranger with the honour due to his rank and the friendly relations between the families. Piero's letter to his father has some literary as well as personal interest: ² 'Illustrious father,—By a letter from you which reached Ser Piero yesterday morning I was informed of your desires with respect to Messer Ermolao, who arrived yesterday after dinner. His arrival was, so to say, unexpected, and I only heard of it about an hour before. I went to meet him, as did four or five others, and he had to go first to the hotel, as his quarters were not yet ready, whither he afterwards came on foot. As soon as he had arrived, I went to him, according to your desire, to invite him to us, and to inquire how long he intended to stay. I invited him for to-day, and heard that it was his intention to remain only the one day, as he wants to travel to-morrow as far as Poggibonzi or some other place, so that he may reach Siena before noon on the following day. Whether he means to stay there I do not know. To-day he has been our guest, and I cannot say how much pleasure this has given him. Besides his suite, which consists of his brother (Luigi), a secretary of St. Mark, and a doctor, we invited the persons whom he wished to see; they were the Count della Mirandola, Messer Marsilio, and Messer Agnolo of Montepulciano, to whom, as we wished to have an inhabi-

¹ Inscription on his tomb in Sta. Maria del Popolo:

BARBARIEM HERMOLEOS LATIO QUI DEPULIT OMNEM
BARBARUS HIC SITUS EST UTRAQUE LINGUA GEMIT
URBS VENETUM VITAM MORTEM DEDIT INCLYTA ROMA
NON POTUIT NASCI NOBILIUSQUE MORI.

² Florence, May 10, 1490. Fabroni, l. c. ii. 377.

tant of the city and yet to keep within the circle of intimate friends and scholars, we added Bernardo Rucellai. Whether we did right I know not. After dinner I showed him the house, the coins, vases, sculptured stones—in short everything, including the garden (near San Marco), which he especially liked, though he does not seem to understand much about sculpture. The value and age of the coins interested him greatly; they were all astonished at the quantity of fine things. I cannot tell you much about him, except that he speaks very elegantly, as far as I can judge, and that he likes to show his reading by quoting the ancients, sometimes in Latin. His appearance is on the whole very good; he is temperate in all things, which is probably needful for him, as he seems to have a very delicate constitution. He is said to be an adroit man of business, which I rather doubt, as he seems to me somewhat ceremonious. He could not display greater friendship for you than he does, and I believe he means it. He received all the honour done him with much gratitude, not at all after the Venetian fashion; and indeed nothing but his dress shows him to be a Venetian. According to his own account, he has a great desire to see you, and he says he will willingly go out of his way to meet and salute you; which I think it my duty to mention, in case it should meet your views. He also says that he is commissioned by his Signoria to salute you. He has been honourably treated by the citizens, and received compensation for having to alight at the hotel. This morning, before he came to dinner, he presented himself to the Signoria, with complimentary greetings.' That the learned Venetian fulfilled his intention of saluting Lorenzo on his way, we learn from Lorenzo himself, who wrote to his agent at Siena on May 15 as follows: 'Ermolao was here early this morning, and continued his journey after staying a while with me.'¹

When Ermolao Barbaro fell into disgrace with his own

government, Lorenzo took his part warmly. Among other things he tried to persuade the Pope to give him the red hat, probably hoping that such a distinction would reconcile the Signoria to him. Ermolao's father gratefully acknowledged his friend's efforts. 'This morning,' wrote Poliziano to Lorenzo from Venice,¹ 'I visited Messer Zaccheria Barbaro, and when I spoke of your favour he answered weeping, and as it seemed with a full heart. The sum of his discourse was this: he has no hope save in you. He made it clear to me that he is aware how much he owes you. Therefore carry out what you have planned, and keep a higher object in view.' Greek clay vases, given to Poliziano for Lorenzo, were to prove the gratitude of the Procurator of St. Mark and the ex-ambassador. But the Signoria evidently did not approve of a stranger intermeddling in the affairs of one of their citizens; for when Luigi Barbaro received from his brother's successor orders to return from Rome, he was told at the same time not to come through Florence.²

All plans and calculations were overthrown the following year by the death of Lorenzo and of the Pope, soon followed by that of Ermolao himself. That the offer of the cardinalate would hardly have altered the views of the senate as to the duty of an ambassador to receive nothing from a foreign sovereign without special permission, is shown by a parallel case which occurred in the next century, that of Marc' Antonio da Mula (Cardinal Amulio).

In the circle of Florentine scholars there was no brighter star than Giovanni Pico della Mirandola; and yet not one of them has left so little to justify the contemporary fame of this 'Phoenix of spirits.' Yet he was something more than a specimen of the sciolism and abstruse pedantry that sought to dazzle contemporaries without leaving anything solid or useful to posterity. Giovanni Pico fought manfully against the errors of his time, and promoted investigations on many

¹ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 284; also in *Prose volgari*, p. 78 seq.

² Piero Alamanni to Lorenzo, Rome, May 14, 1491; in Fabroni, l. c. p. 379.

subjects ; but the results of his labours are not discoverable in the picture of the time as a whole, to which he contributed but a few traits, instead of producing a work of durable value that would have vividly represented the progress of science. Born and brought up in the highest circles of society, it is remarkable that with his quick and passionate temperament he devoted himself to scientific work, ardently and perseveringly, without any external inducement to do so. He comes forth like a meteor, in brilliant but momentary splendour. He was a younger son of Gian Francesco Pico, Lord of Mirandola and Count of Concordia, and Giulia Bojardo, daughter of Feltrino Count of Scandiano, whose grandson Matteo Maria made himself famous as the author of 'Orlando Innamorato.' In his childhood Giovanni showed unusual quickness of perception and desire to learn, which was observed and encouraged by his mother. At fourteen he went to study canon law at the University of Bologna, after which he pursued philosophy and theology, languages and literature, at various universities, and soon displayed a talent for disputation. He was intended for holy orders, and while still almost a boy was seen, like Giovanni de' Medici, in the dress of an Apostolic protonotary. He was not much over twenty when he came to Florence at the beginning of 1484. Recommended by his birth and connections, as well as by Ercole d'Este, whose sister Bianca was his sister-in-law, he became intimate with the Medici, and lived like a great man ; at the same time he pursued his studies diligently, and formed friendships with Ficino, Landino, and Poliziano. The last has described him graphically and with a fair amount of truth. 'Nature,' he says, 'appeared to have showered upon this man, or rather this hero, all gifts of body and mind. He was slender and well made, and something divine seemed to shine in his face. He was acute in perception, gifted with an excellent memory, indefatigable in study, clear and eloquent in expression. One doubted whether he shone most by his talents or his moral qualities.

Versed in every branch of philosophy, favoured by his perfect knowledge of several languages, he showed himself sublime and above all praise.'

What distinguished the young scholar from all the other members of the Florentine circle except Marsilio Ficino—though it did not attract much attention till it brought him into difficulties with Rome—was his study of mediæval Jewish literature, to which he must have found special incitement at Florence.¹ For it was here that he began to study those Jewish mysteries which in Alexandria were first mixed up with the doctrines of the Bible, like Neoplatonism with the wisdom of the Athenians, and were developed under the name of Cabbalah into a lasting tradition of revelation. Following in the steps of Ficino, Giovanni Pico found the teachings of Christianity confirmed by those of Platonism; while the Jewish doctrines furnished him with stronger proofs, for what Ficino did not demonstrate from Platonism, Pico drew from the Jewish mysteries. He was quite right in recognising analogies not to be found in the Greek doctrines; but it is evident that he stood on ground where investigation and the play of fancy might bring him into danger; more especially as he included magic within the circle of his researches. It was nothing more than the natural magic which consists mainly in the contemplation of the powers of the heavenly bodies, but he stated in plain words his opinion that no science could afford us a clearer view of the divinity of Christ than magic and the Cabbalah.

It may easily be conceived what a sensation was made in Florence by a distinguished young man of such appearance, talents, and tendencies. His arrival occurred at a lucky moment. The end of the Ferrara war left a clear field for other than political affairs, and the reputation of Lorenzo de' Medici had just then reached its zenith. The presence of Giovanni Pico gave a new distinction to his whole circle.

¹ L. Geiger, *Johann Reuchlin* (Leipzig, 1871), p. 163 *seq.*

He was one by himself. Ficino and Poliziano had shone by the early maturity of their talents, but to them study was the necessary object of their lives; while this youth of high rank, on whom everything smiled, rivalled them in perseverance and success and surpassed them in universality of knowledge. Soon after his arrival at Florence, in a letter to Lorenzo, he spoke highly of the poems which the latter wrote on Dante and Petrarca; but this does not prove that his judgment was sound, and it may, perhaps, not have greatly impressed Lorenzo himself, though it doubtless did him no harm in the Medicean circle. In 1485 he went to continue his studies at Paris, returning thence at the beginning of the next year. This year he was involved in two troublesome affairs, one of which—though injurious to his reputation—was only of a passing nature, but the other cast a shadow over the whole of his after-life, and put an end to the gaiety of his youth.

The eloquent disciple of the Platonic Academy suddenly found himself involved in a love adventure that was only too real. 'Count Giovanni della Mirandola,' wrote the Ferrarese envoy Aldovrandino Guidoni on May 12, 1486, to Duke Ercole,¹ 'has been living for nearly two years in such splendour and in the enjoyment of such universal esteem as has hardly fallen to the lot of any one before in this city. A few days ago he gave out that he was going to Rome, and sent forward all his luggage. On his arrival at Arezzo, where resided a lady with whom he had a love affair—the beautiful wife of one Giuliano de' Medici, engaged in the administration of taxes there—the said lady, according to previous agreement, left her husband's house. She pretended to be going for a walk, but just outside the town she mounted behind the count. He had about twenty people with him, some on horseback, some on foot, besides two

¹ In A. Cappelli, l. c. p. 282. Domenico Berti, *Cenni e documenti intorno a Giovanni Pico della Mirandola*, in the *Rivista contemporanea*, vol. xvi., Turin, 1859. The reports sent to Lorenzo during his stay at the baths, quoted here from the Medicean archives, agree substantially with the accounts given by Guidoni.

mounted bowmen. When the people saw the lady surrounded by this train there was an uproar. The storm-bell was rung and the count was followed in pursuit, which became so hot that the count was obliged to give up his fugitive. Every one of his suite that could be reached was killed and stripped in the *mêlée*, and many of the citizens also were left dead. Thanks to their good horses, the count and his chancellor got away to Marciano (in the valley of the Chiana), where they were arrested. The Ten, before whom the case was laid, at first gave orders to liberate the count and keep the chancellor, but afterwards they commanded both to be kept under arrest. Probably nothing will be done to him, but the chancellor—on whom the chief blame is laid—may come off badly, the more so as the matter concerns the wife of a Medici, who, though poor, is still one of the family. In truth, the count's mishap is much to be regretted, for he used to be considered a saint as well as a man of learning, and now he has lost greatly in public opinion, though, indeed, love has brought many into like errors.' Duke Ercole's mediation was needless, as Pico was at once set free, and the good easy husband received back into his house the faithless wife, who pleaded forcible abduction. She was a rich young widow of low degree when he married her shortly before. Pico's own remarks on the whole affair display his penitence. 'His sin grieves him,' he said of himself, 'and he does not defend his conduct. He seems to deserve forgiveness just because he attempts no excuse. Nothing is weaker than man, nothing is mightier than love!'

The Roman affair was not so easily disposed of. After the adventure at Arezzo, Pico went to Rome, where, to establish the favourite Florentine thesis of an agreement between Platonism and Christianity, and the assistance to be derived from the former in combating heresy, he announced a public disputation on 900 questions, to which, besides philosophy and theology, law and natural science,

magic and the Cabbalah, Arabia and Chaldæa, had contributed their quota. Thus the most brilliant intellects, sometimes even more than others, pay tribute to pedantry. The fruitful seed that lay buried in these investigations was in a great measure choked up with the dull rubbish from which the age was unable to free itself. Many of the affirmations of the young scholar (which might well seem questionable at that time) were impeached as contrary to the faith, and the disputation was stopped. On August 5, 1486, Innocent VIII. signed a brief against the theses put forth by Giovanni Pico, denouncing their author in no sparing terms. The long interval between the signature and the publication, which did not take place till December 15, instead of helping to smooth the difficulty, only increased it. The author of the controverted propositions—so his opponents maintained—being secretly informed of the papal decision, hastily wrote an apology for them, had it secretly printed in Naples, and pre-dated it, so that he should not appear to be defending assertions already condemned by the highest ecclesiastical authority. The accused denied this, and declared that he had only received the brief on January 6, 1487, on his journey to France. In any case, his written defence furnished his opponents with a pretext by which to set the Pope against him and cause him to receive a citation to Rome. It was even determined to arrest him, as we see from a letter addressed to the Pope from Siena, December 5, by the Bishop of Lucca, excusing the non-fulfilment of the papal orders on account of his absence from his see.¹

The 'Apology,' dated May 31, 1486, is dedicated to Lorenzo de' Medici. 'God is my witness,' says the author in the introduction, 'that I dedicate this writing to thee, O Lorenzo, not as thinking it worthy of such a man, but

¹ In Cappelli, l. c. p. 303. The date of the *Apology* seems to be really wrong. In the register of Lorenzo's correspondence (*Ricordi di lettere scripti per Lor. de' Med.*) in the Florentine archives, we find notice of a letter written as late as February 12, 1488, 'al conte della Mirandola, ringraziandolo dell' Apologia mandate,' letter enclosed to Lorenzo Spinelli, one of the Medicean agents in France.

because I have long known that I owe all I possess to thee. Whatever I am or may become is thine and will remain thine. I say less than I would, and my words are too cold to express the love and reverence which I have long felt and shall continue to feel for thee. To these feelings I am moved by the numerous proofs of favour that have proceeded rather from thy mind towards me than from thy position, and which are as rare as they are characteristic of thee. Receive this apology with kindness; the gift is small, but it is a testimony of my lasting devotion. If thou shouldst turn to it from the important affairs which claim thy attention, remember that it is a sketch rather than a work carefully thought out, a task imposed on me by others rather than chosen by myself, and that I present it to thee, not as a proof of talents and learning to which I am a stranger, but as a token, I repeat, of my entire devotion.'

Lorenzo, Ercole d'Este, and Pico's relatives, took an active interest in his troubles. All through 1487, while the accused was abroad, the affair dragged on without result. The chief hope was in Lorenzo, whose influence with the Pope was known to be great and increasing, and it was not his fault that matters did not get on. He did not wait for the entreaties of Pico's brother Antonio, who came to Florence in February 1488 to beg for his interposition at Rome. He had already, on January 19, written to the ambassador Lanfredini, giving a warning against extreme steps, since excommunication or the like against a man so young and so learned might drive the most moderate beyond all patience. The solution he suggested was that Pico should be allowed to go free to Rome and justify himself to the Pope in person. The envoy did not quite agree with Lorenzo's view, being of opinion that the count would do better to leave theology alone; nevertheless he bestirred himself zealously on his behalf. 'To my great satisfaction and joy,' writes Lorenzo to him on March 22, 1488,¹ 'I have

¹ *Med. Arch.*, Filza 57.

been informed of the agreement made by you with the Holy Father concerning the count. In pursuance of your intimation, I shall invite the count here. I feel assured he will conduct himself so that his Holiness shall be satisfied with him, for which object no efforts shall be wanting on my part.' So Giovanni Pico returned to Florence and Lorenzo continued his intercession. But there were still grave difficulties in the way of an adjustment, and the accused was very shy of appearing at Rome. He lived sometimes in Florence, sometimes at the neighbouring villa of Querceto and the abbey of Fiesole, where he pursued Hebrew and Chaldee studies with great ardour, and worked out a commentary on Genesis. In June 1489, Florence conferred the freedom of the city on her illustrious guest, and gave him the right of acquiring property to the value of 6,000 gold florins. It is evident that Lorenzo was anxious to bind him more and more closely to himself and his home. 'The Count of Mirandola,' he wrote on June 19 to Lanfredini,¹ 'is staying permanently with us, and lives as retired as a monk, continually working at theology, and commenting on the Psalms, &c. He reads the service as is usual for priests, strictly observes the fasts, and has the most simple household that necessity permits. He appears to me a pattern for others. But he desires to be cleared before the Holy Father from the charges brought against him, and to receive a brief by which he shall be readmitted as a true son and a good Christian. I have this much at heart too, for there are few men dearer to me or that I esteem more highly. To my mind he is a true Christian, for he conducts himself so that the whole city would be ready to stand surety for him. Endeavour to obtain this brief in due form, that his conscience may be set at rest. This will stand in the first rank among the many pleasures you have procured me.'

The affair, however, made no progress. The intention

¹ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 291. Some of the following extracts are in the same; some, unpublished, in the *Med. Arch.*

at Rome seemed to be to commission the Bishop of Vaison to receive the explanations of Pico, who declared himself ready to submit simply and entirely to the papal decision. About this time the publication of his commentary on Genesis gave fresh scandal. A feeling hostile to him seemed to be gaining ground. On August 17, Lanfredini wrote that Lorenzo had better advise the count simply to beg for absolution and perform the needful penance. On October 6 he declared that it was only out of consideration for Lorenzo that the Pope was so lenient to the culprit; to satisfy Lorenzo by giving the cardinalate to his son was quite another thing—so his Holiness had said—from lending an ear to his intercessions in a case where the faith was at stake. Finally Lorenzo lost patience when he found that the Pope was in the hands of his friend's opponents. 'I am greatly displeased,' he wrote in October 1489, 'at hearing of the censures on Mirandola's work. If I were not convinced that this persecution arises from envy and malice, I would not speak of it. Various learned and God-fearing theologians here have read the book, and all approve it as excellent and Christian. I myself am not such a bad Christian that I would keep silence and accept the book if I thought otherwise. If he only said the Credo, these malicious spirits would smell heresy in it. If the pressure of business did but permit his Holiness to take personal cognizance of the matter and discover the truth, I am certain the whole thing would fall to pieces and the truth would come to light. But the Pope has to depend on others, and this poor man cannot defend himself. If he gives his reasons, he is said to be speaking against the Holy Father! If he had only to deal with his enemies unprotected by the papal authority he would soon put them to silence. His misfortune is that he has to deal with malicious ignorant foes who shield themselves behind the head of the Church. I have already hinted to you my suspicion that they are trying to drive him to despair, and thereby to some rash step

which might really be directed against his Holiness. For believe me, Giovanni, this man has it in his power to work both good and evil. His life and conduct prove the first; if he is forced to turn another way, I personally shall lose little thereby, for whatever direction he may take, he will be attached to me as I to him. I have never succeeded in quite making you understand this. Without going into particulars now, I will merely observe that an attempt has been made to persuade him into a step which might have given great offence; but I have always prevented it, so that he is come here, where he is leading a virtuous life and is in peace. These devils tempt him with their persecutions, and they are only too readily believed.'

This letter shows how deeply the writer was moved. His earnest remonstrances succeeded at least so far that Pico, who, like Galileo afterwards, had been relegated to a villa in the neighbourhood of Florence, was left unmolested in the city. At this time occurred the visit of Reuchlin, who came to Italy for the second time in 1490 in the suite of a son of Duke Eberhard, and now became personally acquainted with the man who had given the most decisive impulse to his studies, which, like the Italian's, aimed at harmonising the results of Jewish and Greek wisdom with Christian faith and knowledge. These studies entered in Germany upon a new sphere of influence stretching far beyond the scope of Pico, but not more free from danger, and involving the German in conflicts similar to those of the Italian. Pico's Roman troubles were augmented by others. The dispute between his brothers Galeotto and Antonio put him into pecuniary straits, and obliged him to seek the aid of the Duke of Ferrara.¹ Obstructions at Rome were endless. Neither Lorenzo de' Medici nor Innocent VIII. lived to see the conclusion, which was brought about at last by a brief of Alexander VI., June 18, 1493, in which Giovanni Pico

¹ A. Guidoni, *Fler.* September 25, 1488, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 303.

was fully acquitted. The trouble and anxiety caused by this affair made the deepest impression on his mind. His nephew and biographer relates that he heard from his own mouth how great a change it produced in his mind and life.¹ Excepting a visit to Ferrara, where at the duke's desire he was present at a chapter of the Dominican order, he quitted Florence no more. We have seen him in the country, in frequent intercourse with Ficino and Poliziano. He lived entirely for science; and the wealth which enabled him to collect a treasury of books was also freely bestowed on the needy; in these good works he was assisted by his attached friend Benivieni. He burned his Latin poems, which he had collected in five books and given to Poliziano for correction. The latter had altered a few things, as he said, after the example of him who found fault with the sandals of the goddess of beauty because he could find none with herself; and because a few verses seemed to him to be only of the rank of a knight, while the rest were patrician and senatorial. Poliziano lamented his friend's resolve in a letter accompanied by a Greek epigram. He could not remember, he said, ever to have read anything more charming, elegant and polished. 'Ye silly gods of love,' thus ends the epigram, 'why did ye fly to Pico, who is the leader of the Muses?' Poliziano approved of his friend's poetical attempts, and admired his commentary on Benivieni's *canzone* on Platonic love, which the school of Florentine literature reckons among its most important works, more than his deeper studies, when in the rustic solitude of Querceto he wrote an extensive treatise against astrology, destined to form part of a great polemical work on sects hostile to Christianity.² Poliziano thought it was lost time:

'Pico, what hast thou to do with this? Thou'rt wasting thy powers: Truly thy style is too good for this generation of jugglers.'

Savonarola, on the contrary, who was a friend of the author

¹ *Epist.* lib. i. 4. *Epigramm. Græca*, lib. iii. in *Prose volgari*, p. 218.

² *Disputationum de Astrologia*, lib. xii. *Epigramm. Græca*, xlix. l. c. p. 214.

in his later years, and read the unfinished work, expressed mingled pleasure and regret over it; pleasure in the stand made by the work against widespread errors, regret at the premature death of the gifted author. We must not judge Pico della Mirandola by what he has left behind. He paid a heavier tribute to the weaknesses of the time than many others who were not equal to him in intellectual capacity. His whole personality must be considered; it is a typical one. This scion of a princely house, who quitted the world at two-and-thirty, who had measured the heights and depths of the learning of his time, who, with all his abstruse scholarship, preserved a simplicity and amiability of character that drew all hearts to him, is by far the most brilliant figure in that brilliant circle. After four centuries Pico della Mirandola remains the highest representative of early maturity of intellect. But he is something more; in conjunction with the man whose friendship was so warmly expressed, he did more than any other to give a value and importance to a period which, with all its defects, was beneficent and noble.

The sad fate of two other members of the Florentine literary circle who were not Tuscans, as well as the circumstance that both filled public offices in Florence, justifies us in mentioning them together, though several decades separated them. They are Stefano Porcaro and Pandolfo Collenuccio. The former, a Roman knight, was the friend and correspondent of Poggio, Filelfo, Ciriaco, and Traversari, holding a position of influence at home and abroad.¹ He was led into the fatal conspiracy of 1453 against Nicolas V. rather by memories of antiquity and of Cola Rienzi than by his Florentine connections. In the Podestà's palace may be seen, in what was formerly the chapel, a picture of the Madonna painted on the wall, presented, in 1490, by Pandolfo Collenuccio of Pesaro, then judge of the supreme court. Ficino, Pico, Poliziano, admired the intellectual gifts and varied talents of

¹ Speech on accepting the office of Capitano del popolo, from L. B. Alberti's papers, in Bonucci, *Opere di L. B. A.*, vol. i. p. xlii.

this learned man. It was wonderful, wrote the latter, what he was capable of; he managed the affairs of princes with great sagacity, was surpassed by none in the elegance of his prose and verse, and decided intricate suits with a rare knowledge of law. He commanded the most varied knowledge with such mastery that he made further discoveries when others fancied they had found out everything. This sound judge of classical literature was also a student of natural history, and one of the first to apply the science of history to the vulgar tongue. He made use of his connection with Germany, where he had been as envoy from Duke Ercole d'Este to King Maximilian, to make large acquisitions for the Florentine libraries. His execution in 1504, by command of Giovanni Sforza of Pesaro, on pretext of high treason in the Borgia disturbances, was one of those tragedies of which there was never any lack in the petty courts of Italy.¹

¹ G. Perticaro, *Intorno la morte di Pandolfo Colenuccio*, in his *Opere*, Bologna, 1839, ii. 52 *seq.*

CHAPTER XI.

THE UNIVERSITY OF PISA. MANUSCRIPTS AND CRITICISM.
PRINTING. PLATONIC SYMPOSIA.

THE circle of Florentine celebrities which, though its members were continually changing, always retained its peculiar character, included men of smaller importance than many of those already described, but yet worthy of mention. Among these are the philologer-poets who, in endeavouring to follow Poliziano, lost their individuality in imitations of the Roman poets of the Flavian and following periods. Their verses have but an historical and local interest for posterity, and even the sixteenth century, so busy with Latin verse-making, passed judgment upon them very freely.¹ Ugolino Vieri, who Latinised his name into Verino, celebrated his native city and its famous men in three books of a poem, 'De Illustratione urbis Florentiæ,' which spite of a few happy characteristics, is barely more than a dry catalogue. Naldo Naldi has acquired a more lasting reputation by his biographical works than by his numerous verses. People sang each other's praises without end; and such laudations, though endurable from a Poliziano, are tiresome from inferior hands. Alessandro Bracci, one of the secretaries of state; Giovan Battista Cantalicio, afterwards Bishop of Penne and Adria; Tommaso Baldinotti of Pistoja; Alessandro Cortesi, the talented scion of a family of San Gemignano very intimate with the Medici; Piero Riccio, known

¹ Cf. Ben. Varchi's remarks upon Naldi in *Prose volgari inedite*, p. 122.

under the Latinised name of Crinitus, and author of a history of the old Latin poets; these and many other pupils of Ficino, Landino, and Poliziano, belong to the *dii minorum gentium*. Verses by some of them have been printed, while heaps lie in manuscript in the Laurentian library to testify to the intellectual activity of the time.¹ The verses of the Roman Carlo de' Massimi in praise of Pisa University have some interest for the history of literature. Literary productions of every kind were sent to Lorenzo from all quarters; he was the great patron of authors. Much of what he received he sent on to San Marco and to the Abbey of Fiesole, as may be seen by the inscriptions in the volumes.

All these men, small and great, found in Lorenzo their Mæcenas. But he showed very early that he invested the position of patron with more serious importance than his predecessors had done. When scarcely three-and-twenty he brought about the restoration of the University of Pisa, which was not only an act of justice, but, apart from its literary importance, a token of ripe political insight that helped to counterbalance in some degree the miseries inflicted on Volterra in the same year (1472). The university, formed in the fourth decade of the fourteenth century out of the existing public schools, and confirmed in 1343 by Clement VI., fell into decay from political causes later in the century, and finally succumbed to Florentine enmity. The mutual animosity of the two cities is only to be paralleled in the history of antiquity. Twenty-five years after the subjection of Pisa, the Ministry of War at Florence wrote to Averardo de' Medici, their commissioner in the subject town:² 'According to general opinion here, the most effec-

¹ It is not intended in the present work to go into the details of these mostly uninteresting poetical productions. Bandini has noticed many of them in the catalogue of the Laurentiana; Roscoe has filled many pages with quotations and bibliographical notices; to add to them would be easy but useless.

² The *Dieci di Balìa*, Florence, January 14, 1432, in Fabroni, *Cosmi Med. Vita*, ii. 8.

tual means of securing the town is to empty it entirely of Pisan citizens and peasants, concerning which we have written to the Captain of the People till we are tired. He answers that he is hindered by the soldiery and officers. We now command thee to go to him and persuade him to spare no harshness or severity, as we perceive that no other remedy will avail. We have confidence in thee that thou wilt at once set everything to work, for thou couldst do nothing more pleasing to this whole people.' The efficacious result was that the city was ruined, the marshy neighbourhood left fallow to become the home of fever, and the fleet vanished. So rooted was this hatred that when Pisa had freed herself amid the confusion which followed on Lorenzo's death, Bernardo del Nero—a usually moderate man of the Medicean party—declared that against the Pisans nothing availed save force; all prisoners of war must be slain after the example of the Genoese, who let the Pisan captives taken at Meloria languish to death in prison.¹

Lorenzo early perceived that the blind enmity which ruined Pisa was overshooting the mark. As his family held considerable property in the district he frequently had occasion to visit the city, whose position made it a halting-place for many travellers between northern and southern Italy. Pisa must not be allowed to give the Florentines any more trouble, but neither should it be allowed to perish. Two considerations in particular seem to have prompted the re-establishment of the old university. The first was the quiet, which was more favourable to study than the busy life of Florence; the second was the number and cheapness of dwellings, which were in increasing danger of falling to ruin since trade had departed from its old abodes, and the inhabitants were nearly all poor people. Yet Lorenzo needed great power and moral courage to set himself against rooted hatred and stubborn prejudices. On December 19, 1472,

¹ Guicciardini, *Del reggimento di Firenze*, p. 209.

was issued the decree by which the university was restored to life.¹ A board of management was appointed—the *Officiales studii*—consisting of five Florentine citizens: Tommaso Ridolfi, Donato Acciaiuolo, Andrea Puccini, Alamanno Rinuccini, and Lorenzo de' Medici. The yearly endowment was to consist of 6,000 gold florins, and the statutes of the University of Florence were to be in force at that of Pisa. Members of the state were to be entitled to academical honours and the authority to practise in Pisa alone. To raise the salaries of the professors, Pope Sixtus IV. consented to a tax on the clergy to the amount of 5,000 florins in five years, a tax which was renewed by his successor in 1497 for another five years, and drew complaints from Ficino, Poliziano, and others. Only the philosophical and literary branches of study were to continue at Florence.

The credit of all this was justly given to Lorenzo. 'I heard a few days ago,' wrote Antonio de' Pazzi to him from Padua, January 29, 1473,¹ 'that by your direction a new university is to be founded at Pisa; at which not only we Florentine students, but foreign ones too, are greatly delighted, seeing that Pisa is a city eminently suited for it, and because the scheme proceeds from a man who will strive to acquire honour by this as by all else that he undertakes.' Scholars came flocking from all parts, and first among them Francesco Filelfo. He had found an asylum with the Sforza at Milan; but, dissatisfied and restless, extravagant and in debt, he tried to change his position. During the pontificate of Pius II. he made several attempts to this end, but, failing in his hopes, he attacked the pontiff before and after death with his usual invectives, and in consequence was imprisoned for a time. In April 1473 he applied to Lorenzo. Some

¹ Fabroni, *Historia Academicæ Pisanae*, i. 109 *seq.*; *Laur. Med. Vita*, i. 49. Many other references to the University, *ibid.* ii. 74 *seq.* Carlo de' Massimi, *Carmen heroicum ad Laurentium Medicem de studio per eumden Pisis innovato*, from a Laurentian MS., in Bandini, *Laur. Cat.*, vol. iii., and Roscoe, iii. 237 *seq.* (No. lviii.)

² Fabroni, *Laur. Med. Vita*, ii. 77.

time before he had managed to flatter Lorenzo's father into forgetting his offences against Cosimo so far as to hold one of his sons over the font; and when in Florence in the autumn of 1469, shortly before Piero's death, he obtained a loan from Lorenzo.¹ The letter which he now addressed to the latter² is curiously characteristic of the man. He attacks those who had long been in their graves—Marsupini, Poggio, and their 'synagogue.' He begins by declaring that the Milanese chancellor, Cecco Simonetta, had advised him to prefer Pisa to Rome, where he was much wanted; and he ends with the artless assurance that Lorenzo must know well he cannot find in all the world a second Filelfo nor one more devoted to him. In another letter he remarks in the same style: 'You are aware that at the present time no one can stand a comparison with me in my own branch.' Simonetta, from Pavia, seconded the appeal, and sang the vain man's praises. Lorenzo answered by asking what salary would be required, but the negotiation fell through, which Medici probably did not much regret, as he must have felt some hesitation in attaching the quarrelsome old man to his young establishment. Besides, the sentence of banishment once passed on Filelfo was still in force, and his services in the way of literary invective after the conspiracy of the Pazzi had not yet smoothed the way to his return. When he was at last summoned to Florence as professor of eloquence and moral philosophy, he had scarcely time to greet the city he had left for nearly half a century before he died, a few days after his arrival, in the summer of 1481, in his eighty-third year.

The new-born university, which was opened in November 1473, soon took its share in the working of many active forces in diverse directions. In its very earliest years it would have risen to the highly flourishing condition it afterwards attained had not various unfavourable circumstances

¹ Rosmini, *Vita di Fr. Filelfo*, ii. 191.

² Fabroni. l. c. ii. 75. 76.

come in the way. The unhealthy air of the city and neighbourhood had not been sufficiently taken into consideration. War, desolation, poverty, made matters worse, just at the time when Florence was also a prey to disease. For six years the establishment kept moving from place to place. Professors and students wandered away to Pistoja and Prato, and sometimes to Florence—even Empoli and San Miniato were thought of—till the state of affairs was improved, and the hitherto scattered lecturers were brought together in a university building erected by the care of Lorenzo. There was no lack of difficulties with the professors; the Sienese Bartolommeo Sozzini and the Milanese brothers Decio, all professors of law, gave Lorenzo a great deal of trouble by their unruly conduct. Among the best professors at the outset were the jurists Baldo Bartolini of Perugia and Francesco Accolti of Arezzo, brother of the Florentine chancellor, and a pupil of Filelfo; Piero Leoni of Spoleto, already mentioned, who afterwards, to his misfortune, became Lorenzo's family doctor; the humanists Lorenzo Lippi of Colle and Bartolommeo of Pratovecchio. Special honours fell to the share of the Roman Francesco de' Massimi, who came to the university at its opening as professor of law, was made Principal the next year, and gained such esteem both by his lectures and by his endeavours to establish and maintain a better understanding between the two hostile cities, that the rights of citizenship were conferred on him and his descendants, and he was permitted to add the arms of Pisa to his own.¹ The salaries of the professors were

¹ Camillo Massimo, *Sopra una inedita medaglia di Francesco Massimo dottore in legge e cavaliere*, Rome 1860. Francesco Massimo was elected Podestà of Siena in 1477, but could not assume the office owing to the death of his father. That he was in Florence in 1488-89, engaged in affairs of state, is shown by the following letter from Lorenzo to Giovanni Lanfredini at Rome: 'Messer Francesco Massimi is going back, having gained the approval of the whole city as well as my own. He has in truth conducted himself so well that I have thought good to recommend him to his Holiness and to the Cardinal Giovanni Colonna. I do the same to you, and beg you to bear witness that his conduct could not have been more praiseworthy. In consideration of his good offices I shall be glad if you will introduce

mostly considerable, and Lorenzo repeatedly contributed to them out of his own funds. The archbishop, Filippo de' Medici, supported him in his efforts to benefit the institution, which was conducive both to the honour and advantage of the see. That pecuniary difficulties could not be escaped, however, is clear from the fact that in 1485, in consequence of the non-payment of the papal allowance, a retrenchment of 2,000 florins was deemed needful.

The philosophical and philological lectures continued, as has been said, at Florence, and scholarly activity there seemed in nowise diminished by the re-animation of the sister city. Among the native professors, Bartolommeo della Fonte (Fontius) made a name equally distinguished in Latin and Greek literature, and left Latin memoirs on contemporary events from 1448 to 1493, the value of which is not to be measured by their brevity.¹ His friendship with Poliziano became clouded when he obtained the chair of eloquence vacant by Filelfo's death. He does not seem to have held it long, as he undertook the superintendence of Matthias Corvinus' library at Ofen. The study of Greek flourished. The chair once occupied by Argyropulos and Theodoros was filled by the Athenian Demetrios Chalcondylas, who kept it longer than anyone else, and left a better reputation, both for learning and morality, than many Greek grammarians. Poliziano, who is supposed to have perfected his knowledge of the Hellenic tongue under him, addressed him in several Greek epigrams, which give no hint of the rivalry afterwards said to exist between them. A fine testimony to his Homeric studies is the edition of the 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey' which came out in 1488. Three years before,

him wherever it may be agreeable to him.' Florence, March 13, 1489 (*Med. Arch. Filza 59*).

¹ The *Annales suorum temporum* were printed by Gio. Lami in the *Catalogus codd. MSS. bibl. Riccard.*, Livorno, 1756; and again by Galletti, in *Phil. Villani liber, &c.*, p. 151 *seq.* According to a letter of Fonti to Lorenzo, he once intended writing a history of the Medici. He praised the chief scholars of his time in a pretty epigram, *ibid.* p. 153.

at the age of nearly seventy, he left Florence for Milan, where he long continued to teach, having been gladly welcomed by Lodovico Sforza, who rivalled the Medici in his patronage of science and art. Chalcondylas' place at Florence was taken by Johannes Lascaris, who formed many fruitful connections with Milan, France, and Rome, in the days of Lorenzo's son. The knowledge of Greek was, perhaps, never so widespread among high-born youths anywhere as in those days in the Tuscan city to which, Poliziano said, Athens with its native soil and all its possessions had transferred itself. In truth, strangers eager to learn came from all quarters—England, Germany, Portugal—just as of old everybody went to Athens. Here Alessandro Farnese acquired that knowledge of the language and literature of Greece which the greyhaired Pope Paul III. had not yet lost. Poliziano thus addressed the hearers of Chalcondylas :

Seek the Pierides not in their ancient home, O ye poets :
 For in this city of ours dwells now the heavenly choir.
 Where, do ye ask, have they chosen among us a place to abide in ?
 All the nine ye will find safe in Chalcondylas' breast.

Textual criticism was a work taken up less by foreigners than by Italians : in Rome, especially by Lorenzo Valla and Pomponio Leto ; in Florence, by Landino, Poliziano, and Pico. Lorenzo not only encouraged those personally intimate with him to this work, but urged others to it, particularly the members of the Academy, which, having weathered the storms of Paul II.'s reign, flourished with renewed vigour under Sixtus IV., a Pope who felt no fear of the baptized heathens. Bartolommeo Platina, writing to Lorenzo¹ to recommend the Milanese sculptor Andrea Fusina, adds that the man felt assured of obtaining his desire if he, Platina, interceded for him. ' Farewell, and believe me, thou hast few who love and honour thee like

¹ Gaye, l. c. i. 273.

Platina.' On March 30, 1488, Lorenzo wrote to Lanfredini on behalf of a friend of Pomponio Leto: ¹ 'Doubtless you know, at least by name, Pomponio, one of the most famous scholars in Rome, if not the very first, and a man much attached to me and our whole house, so that I am greatly desirous of doing him a favour.'

The art of studying manuscripts had first to be put on a sound basis. The rich harvest of discoveries was now almost at an end, a few objects of interest turning up only occasionally. Collectors had naturally enough given themselves up to delight in the prizes thus gained, without troubling themselves much about criticism. The necessity of criticism became more strongly felt and exercised as continued study of the old authors involved a stricter examination of the correctness of the manuscripts. At first people had been too much inclined to believe generally in their great age, and had been misled in individual cases by the chronological notes at the end of the codices. Often, as in the Medicean codex of the later books of the Annals of Tacitus, the date was fixed in the fourth Christian century, when in reality the parchments were written on by a later copyist. The corrupt state of the manuscripts called for correction, but the correction was mostly arbitrary. Coluccio Salutati, Leonardo Bruni, Francesco Barbaro, and others, sought to supply what was needed, but of rules they knew nothing. In this, above all, shines the transcendent merit of Poliziano; though even he indulged largely in conjecture, when in his youth he self-complacently fancied that his work on Catullus surpassed everything of the kind. Nor did he stand alone in this respect. Ermolao Barbaro in his edition of Pliny in 1492, Marullus in his critical works on Lucretius, confess how often they had had recourse to emendations of their own devising. But Poliziano thoroughly perceived that a secure basis was only to be obtained by a comparison of

¹ *Med. Arch.*, Filza 59.

MSS. where more than one existed. When this was not the case he tried to get a foundation for his conjectures from notes and parallel passages. Many printed books from his library bear on their margins traces of this comparison of MSS., to which he alludes in one of his letters to Lorenzo.¹ The collection of critical studies which he published in 1489 under the title of 'Miscellanea,' at Lorenzo's desire and with a dedication to him, is a lasting memorial of his learning and acumen. A painful impression is made by his dispute with Filelfo's pupil Giorgio Merula,² the editor of 'Plautus.' This man had been invited to Milan by Ludovico il Moro, gave philosophical lectures there, and though previously an admirer of Poliziano, now professed to find errors and plagiarisms in his works. Sforza showed his good sense by trying to calm the irritation of the Florentine when appealed to by him.

Poliziano's critical work on the correction of the text of Justinian's 'Corpus Juris' holds an honourable place in the history of this subject. This famous copy of the Pandects was avowedly acquired by Pisa at the conquest of Amalfi, whither it had doubtless come as a gift from some Greek emperor, and on the overthrow of Pisa it was transferred to Florence. Poliziano's views of its age and authorship may have been exploded by later criticism, but for the foundations of a better text than that of the later MSS., and the two editions printed from them, we still owe him thanks.³

While the Latin works of the humanists were being done into the vulgar tongue, the practice of translating Greek works into Latin was continued. Alamanno Rinuccini translated Plutarch's 'Lives' and moral writings, as well as Philostratos'

¹ Venice, June 20. 1491, in *Prose volgari*, p. 78.

² The letters are in Poliziano's *Epistolæ*, book xi.

³ A. M. Bandini, *Ragionamento istorico sulle collazione delle Pandette, ec.*, Livorno 1762. The copy of the Pandects marked with Poliziano's collations is preserved in the Laurentianæ. Bandini also speaks of it in the fourth volume of the *Catalogue of Latin MSS.* See Th. Mommsen's introduction to his critical edition of the *Digestum*.

'Life of Apollonios of Tyana,' which excited special interest in an age much busied with the theologising philosophy of the later Greeks. Alessandro Bracci did the same for the histories of Appian, and Poliziano, as has been mentioned, translated those of Herodian for Innocent VIII. The movement, begun in Florence and Venice, had spread all over Italy. In the most palmy days of these studies the invention of printing produced in the whole world of letters a change, the possible extent of which was at once felt, though it could not yet be measured. Books had hitherto been things for the great and opulent, and not seldom were to be obtained only by personal labour. There were difficulties even in the highest circles. The spread of the new art produced not only a material increase of literary productions, but led naturally to an immense increase of criticism. In earlier times bitter complaints had been heard of the corruption of the texts. The few attempts that had been made to attain greater correctness now became a recognised branch of study. Every corrector was not indeed a Poliziano, a Barbaro, or a Merula. The last complains, in his edition of 'Plautus' of 1472, that learned and unlearned alike busied themselves with correcting books; a circumstance which limits the value of more than one *editio princeps* to its mere rarity, and explains the fact that many of the correctors of that time rivalled their predecessors the copyists in the arbitrariness of their proceedings. But even in the case of the learned the canons of criticism were by no means fixed.

It is remarkable that Florence, which, when printing was introduced into Italy, stood at the head of all literary movement, is by no means the first city that appears in the annals of typography. In 1465, three years after the capture of Mainz by Adolf of Nassau had scattered to the four winds the printers established there, two Germans set up the first printing-press in the Benedictine monastery at Subiaco, whence ere long it was removed to the house of the Massimi at Rome. Four years later Venice followed, then the

Umbrian and other cities. In November, 1471, appeared the first book printed in Florence, the commentary of Servius on Virgil's 'Bucolics,' which was followed in the following January by the 'Georgics,' and in October, 1472, by the 'Æneid.' But if the city fell behind many others in point of priority, this honour is due to her, that one of her sons cut and founded his own types, without needing the services of a foreigner. The goldsmith Bernardo Cennini was the first Italian who set himself up as an independent artist in this line.¹ Born in Florence, January, 1415, he was first a silk-weaver and then a goldsmith, and was concerned in the bronze doors of the Baptistery, and other great works. His art led him to manufacture types for printing. The inscription in the book printed by him, with the help of his sons Domenico and Pietro, the first as compositor, the second as corrector of the press,² shows that he was proud of the achievement: 'To Florentine minds nought is arduous.' The book shows an artistic mind in its form and typographical arrangement, but the round type is lacking in sharpness and evenness. The pecuniary result can scarcely have been worth the trouble and outlay. When we find that Cennini, after spending sixteen months on the production of the folio volume, pledged his house for a loan of 120 florins, we can understand why he returned to his old occupation, and why no other book printed by him is forthcoming. In course of time Bernardo Cennini, whose sight had suffered greatly, became consul of his guild, and died in 1483, twelve years

¹ F. Fantozzi, *Notizie biografiche di Bernardo Cennini*, Florence, 1839. G. Ottino, *Di Bernardo Cennini e dell' arte della stampa in Firenze*, Florence, 1871. When the first Florentine printer had been almost forgotten for 400 years, the present generation, on occasion of the fourth centenary of his work, has raised a monument to him in San Lorenzo—where he lies buried—placed a memorial tablet on the site of his workshop, and given his name to a street.

² 'Ad lectorem. Florentiæ, vii. Idus Novembres, MCCCCLXXI. Bernardus Cenninus (*sic*) aurifer omnium iudicio præstantissimus: et Dominicus eius F. egregiæ indolis adolescens: expressis ante calibe characteribus et deinde fuis literis volumen hoc primum impresserunt. Petrus Cenninus Bernardi eiusdem F. quanta potuit cura et diligentiâ emendavit ut cernis. Florentinis ingeniis nil ardui est.'

after the attempt which brought him a name and somewhat tardy honours.

Next a German who had established himself in Florence, Johannes, son of Peter of Mainz, printed Boccaccio's 'Filocolo' in 1472, and afterwards joined the typographical society which took its name from the Dominican nunnery at Ripoli.¹ Its local habitation is still shown in one of the schoolrooms of the educational institute named after the same in the Via della Scala. From this establishment, founded by the spiritual directors of the convent and connected with a type-foundry, issued first, in 1476, some lauds and prayers, then the 'Commentary of Donatus' and the 'Legend of S. Catherine of Siena,' which, both in the common form and in copies with illuminated initials, obtained a great circulation. This printing establishment, in which many both of the clergy and laity had a share, and in which the nuns were employed as compositors, produced a great deal of work during its short existence of eight years. In 1477 printing was begun by Nicolaus of Breslau, already mentioned; in 1478 he brought out the 'editio princeps' of Celsus, and three years later Landino's 'Dante.' In 1481, Antonio Miscomini printed Savonarola's 'Triumphus Crucis,' a proof of the increasing notice attracted by the eloquent and learned Dominican. Next came Ficino's 'Platonic Theology,' and translation of 'Plotinus.' In 1488 the series of Greek books issued in Florence opened brilliantly with the 'Homer,' dedicated to Lorenzo's eldest son. Chalcondylas undertook the correction, the difficulty of which called forth his remark, in the preface, that the text had been so corrupted by the carelessness of copyists that it was, so to say, impossible to find it entire in any codex, however old. The expenses were borne by Bernardo and

¹ P. Vinc. Fineschi, *Notizie istoriche sopra la stamperia di [S. Jacopo di] Ripoli*, Flor. 1761. D. Moreni in the *Novelle letterarie Fiorentine* of 1791, and F. Fossi in the *Catalogo delle antiche edizioni della B. Magliabechiana*, vol. iii., have collected other information concerning the works of this printing establishment amounting to eighty-six in number, among which, curiously enough, a *Decameron* is included.

Neri, sons of Tanai de' Nerli, a noble citizen. Lorenzo Alopa of Venice is said to have printed the beautiful volume, which was soon followed by numerous others. The most celebrated Florentine family of typographers, that of the Giunta, did not begin their labours till Lorenzo de' Medici had long been in his grave.

The extended use of typography had, however, as yet by no means diminished the value of manuscripts or put an end to the work of the copyists, while the need and difficulty of unearthing literary treasures was as great as ever. The explanation of this is to be found in the material perfection to which the art of the copyists had been brought, a perfection of which the proud consciousness was expressed in Vespasiano's disdainful remark on printing. This branch of industry went on flourishing for many years, to disappear at last and leave scarcely a trace behind. One of the most brilliant, though not the most important, of the treasures of the Laurentiana, the works of St. Augustine in sixteen folio volumes full of miniatures and ornaments, was begun in the time of Piero de' Medici and finished shortly before the death of Lorenzo (two of the volumes are dated 1491). It may not have been completed till the time of his second son, unless the escutcheon with the balls and the *Triregnum* points to Leo X. only as the possessor of the work and not as concerned in its execution.

In the diffusion of literary treasures, both of classical and modern works, and in the relations of the latter to the general public, who now for the first time became really acquainted with them, was brought about that great change which gives to this period double importance in the history of intellectual development. At Lorenzo's death this revolution had hardly reached its first stage; but his keen vision perceived its growing importance when he observed that in the course of twenty-eight years Italy had come to take a more prominent share than other lands in the activity of the press. This showed, quite as much as the previous rapid

development of Greek literature, that the country was ready to make an independent and profitable use of the gifts of foreign countries. The invention of printing and the discovery of America were in some degree the two great landmarks of Lorenzo's life. The first created actual publicity, the second opened a new horizon to the world.

Never were manuscripts more eagerly collected and copied than in those days. The sum of the collections was not so great as in the days of Poggio and Leonardo Bruni; still the libraries were increasing everywhere. Greece, which had contributed so largely to enrich the West in the first half of the century, and after the fall of the Eastern empire, was still the principal mine. Witness the two journeys of Johannes Lascaris, the second of which, like that of Bernardo Michelozzi, was entirely devoted to searching the monastery of Mount Athos. Its results, as already stated, reached Florence after Lorenzo's death. As early as 1472 Lorenzo had projected a building, probably near the palace in the Via Larga, destined to contain the great number of manuscripts collected by his grandfather, his father, and himself. This appears from a letter addressed to him by Vespasiano da Bisticci, in which the latter recalls their frequent conversations on the subject, and adds that such an undertaking would do great honour to Lorenzo as well as to the town; and that he had written about it to the Duke of Calabria, the Count of Urbino, and Alessandro Sforza, Lord of Pesaro, knowing how much pleasure it would give them. Doubtless the manifold cares and disturbances which prevented Lorenzo from imitating his grandfather in the number and splendour of his buildings hindered him from executing this plan in good time. Consequently at his premature death the library was but half finished. It is now impossible to make out even the site of the building, since it is uncertain whether it was the same chosen many years afterwards by his nephew Pope Clement VII. for the existing Mediceo-Laurentian library. We still possess the inventory of the

private library of the Medici, drawn up in 1495, when the books were made over to the convent of San Marco. There they remained, through many vicissitudes, till 1508, when Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici bought them and transferred them to Rome; after his death they returned to Florence, to form the chief part of the San Lorenzo collection.¹

It may be imagined that many of Lorenzo's fellow-citizens were his rivals in book-collecting. A fine library had once been formed by Piero de' Pazzi, son of Andrea. Francesco and Angelo Gaddi followed his example, and the great public library of their native city contains many books once in their possession. Poliziano's friend, the accomplished merchant Filippo Sassetti the elder, also made a large collection. The good custom of making special bequests to secure these literary treasures from dispersion was kept up. Boccaccio had done this, and Riccoli, Traversari, Cardinal Piero Corsini and others; and in like manner Ugolini Guigni, Bishop of Volterra, left his books to the Benedictine abbey at Florence.² In 1477, Jacopo Salvini, Bishop of Cortona, bequeathed his collection to Lorenzo de' Medici.³ The latter had literary correspondents everywhere. In 1476 we find him corresponding with the Milanese Gio. Francesco della Torre, who, with Maestro Bonaccorso of Pisa, had purchased the books of Andronikos Kallistos, when the latter purposed returning from Lombardy to his own home.⁴ Giovanni Rossi of Candia, who had been employed by Cardinal Besarion, was also made use of by Lorenzo, apparently to look after copies of manuscripts.⁵ Among those more closely connected with him in later years, Poliziano, Pico, and

¹ Enea Piccolomini, *Delle condizioni e delle vicende della libreria Medicea privata*, in the *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, series iii. vols. xix. and xx. N. Anziani, *Della Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana*, Flor. 1872.

² Targioni-Tozzetti, *Notizie sulla storia delle scienze fisiche in Toscana* (ed. by Fr. Palermo), Flor. 1853, pp. 60, 61.

³ *Med. Arch.*

⁴ Fabroni, l. c. i. 153; ii. 286.

⁵ *Ibid.* i. 153.

Ermolao Barbaro took charge of the enrichment of his collection and that of the convent libraries of San Marco, Fiesole, and San Gallo. He said once to Poliziano, he wished that he and Pico could procure him so many books that his income would not suffice to buy them, and he should be obliged to pawn his household goods. He kept copyists in many places, especially at Padua, which, as the residence of so many great scholars and from its connection with the Levant through Venice, was a spot favourable to book collectors.

The difficulty and expense of obtaining manuscripts in earlier times has been already noticed. Even in Lorenzo's latter years it was by no means easy, and his correspondence shows that once, in the very height of his glory, he had to apply in his own handwriting to a prince who was probably under obligation to him, in order to obtain the loan of Dion Cassius. 'There is in your Excellency's library,' he wrote on February 5, 1486, to Duke Ercole d'Este, 'a historian, by name Dio, *de Romanis historiis*, that I earnestly desire to see, both on account of the enjoyment and consolation which history affords me, and because my son Piero, who has some knowledge of Greek literature, has begged me to help him to become acquainted with this author, who, I understand, is very rare in Italy. Your Excellency can understand how highly I shall prize the favour, if you will lend me the book for a few days.' Notwithstanding their intimacy, the Duke did not send the original, but allowed a copy to be made by a copyist sent to Ferrara for the purpose. Two years later he had Niccolò Leonicensi's translation copied for Lorenzo, on condition that it was neither to be printed nor allowed to go any further.¹ In the spring of 1491 Poliziano was, as we have seen, in Venice, where he bought for his patron a quantity of manuscripts now in the Laurentiana. He was refused permission to see Cardinal Bessarion's collection of

¹ Cappelli, l. c. The MS. was by Battista Guarino. The translation was first printed at Venice in 1532, the original at Paris in 1548.

books, although the Ferrarese ambassador used his influence with the Doge Agostino Barbarigo—a strange token of petty mistrust.¹ ‘Your diligence in having Greek works copied, and the favour you show to scholars,’ wrote Poliziano to Lorenzo about this time, ‘procures for you such honour and attachment as no one has enjoyed for many years past.’ He mentioned at the same time the admiration for Lorenzo expressed by a Venetian poetess honoured by all scholars and literary men, as well as by popes and kings. ‘Last evening I visited Cassandra Fedele,² to whom I presented your salutations, Lorenzo; she is really admirable, both in Latin and in the vulgar tongue, withal very modest, and, in my opinion, also beautiful. I left her astonished. She is devoted to you, and speaks of you as if she knew all about you. Some day she will certainly come to Florence to visit you, so prepare to do her honour.’

Lorenzo’s example did not fail to bring forth fruit in his own house. Leo X. laboured all his life to follow it, with a zeal in collecting which showed that his father’s spirit survived in him. Piero, with his tutor Poliziano, superintended the arrangement and enrichment of the library, sending reports about it to his father, when the latter was ill at the baths. We learn from one of his letters³ that the Medici, in the interests of their library, took advantage of the death of King Matthias Corvinus (April 4, 1490) to secure a number of his copyists and agents who were then thrown out of employment. That monarch vied with the book collectors of his time, and spent more than 30,000 gold florins yearly on the increase of his library at Ofen. In 1488 he sent an agent to Florence with full power to make purchases and superintend the taking of copies. The efforts made by this active and high-minded ruler of a people still half barbarous, however capable of de-

¹ *Prose volgari*, p. 78.

² This poetess, of a Milanese family, was born at Venice about 1465, and is supposed to have died in 1558. Politian (*Epist.* l. iii. 17) addresses her: ‘O decus Italiae virgo.’

³ Florence, May 8, 1490, in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 287.

velopment, were always assisted by Lorenzo, as became his friendly relations with Matthias. Long before the days of Matthias Corvinus there had been a literary and artistic connection between Florence and Hungary through Filippo Scolari, commonly called Pippo Spano by his countrymen, from his title of Count Palatine (*Obergespann*) of Temesvar; he held an influential position under Sigismund of Luxemburg. The connection with the Italian literary world had been actively kept up by the powerful Archbishop of Gran, Johann Vitez, who founded a high school at Ofen; still more by his nephew, Janus Pannonius, Bishop of Fünfkirchen, who studied at Padua under Guarino, and visited Cosimo de' Medici at Careggi.

From his youth Lorenzo had extended his attention beyond what are called literary treasures in the narrower sense. In another field, bordering at once on the study of antiquity and on that of history, his name must also be mentioned with distinction. The range of classical studies was extended to ancient monuments. Rome, for centuries active only in destruction, began to be ashamed of the bad name which such barbarism had brought upon her. The time of Sixtus IV., with all its sins, was the turning-point. Like his successor and namesake, Sixtus V., the Pope did not entirely refrain from demolishing ancient monuments; but works of art and inscriptions were safe. The Roman Academy strove to wipe out the blot pointed at in an epigram by Pius II.

The great increase in the collection of old inscriptions drew attention to those valuable witnesses of old times. At the same time the disappearance of these memorials through decay and careless removal gave warning that their contents must be secured by copying. What had been once undertaken by Nicola Signorini, Giovanni Dondi, Poggio, Ciriaco, perhaps even before them by Cola di Rienzi, was now continued under the guidance of Pomponio Leto and his friends, with the sympathy of all Italy. Inscribed stones were diligently collected in Rome, Naples, and northern Italy. Ber-

nardo Rucellai copied a number of epigraphs from the originals in Rome. One of the most valuable of these collections of transcriptions was dedicated to Lorenzo de' Medici by its author, the Dominican Fra Giocondo of Verona. He was one of those many-sided geniuses frequent at the time; versed in classical literature and in knowledge of antiquity. His pupil, Julius Cæsar Scaliger, called him a living library of ancient and modern learning. He was an engineer and architect, active in many ways at Rome, at Venice, and in France, and at an advanced age master-builder of the Vatican Basilica, under Leo X. The copy of the collection of inscriptions presented by Fra Giocondo to Lorenzo de' Medici, who came in contact with him through Alessandro Cortesi, has disappeared, but other copies remain. The dedication of the work is an eloquent lamentation over the state of ancient Rome, and over the dispersion or destruction of stone and bronze tablets. It offers a warm tribute to their value, and an acknowledgment of Lorenzo's interest in these studies. Poliziano and other friends made use of the careful work of the energetic Veronese, who was in communication both with the future Pope and his brother Giuliano, to whom he dedicated his commentary on Cæsar's 'Gallic War,' and the later edition of 'Vitruvius.'¹

Such were the literary tendencies which, notwithstanding the rivalry of other cities, had their chief centre and focus at Florence; such was the circle of men which had gathered together in this city. Vacant places were soon

¹ Vasari's *Life of Fra Giocondo* (ix. 155 seq.) is very imperfect and leaves room for further study. On Giocondo's works in his own city see G. Orti Manara, *Dei lavori architettonici di Fra Giocondo in Verona*, Ver., 1853. On his collection of inscriptions see G. B. de Rossi, *I Fasti municipali di Venosa restituite alla sincera lezione*, Rome 1853. (From vol. cxxxiii. of the *Giornale Arcadico*.) According to the *Novelle letterarie di Firenze* for the year 1771, p. 725, the Medicean copy was sent to Pope Clement XIV., but has never been seen either in the Vatican archives or the library. On the other copies, and the second collection, differing from the first in some respects, less numerous, and dedicated to Ludovico de Agnellis, Archbishop of Cosenza, cf. De Rossi, p. 7 seq. The dedication—'Laurentio Medici Fr. Io. Jucundus S. P. D.'—is in Fabroni, ii. 279 seq. It ends: 'Vale feliciter humani generis amor et deliciae.'

filled up again. Like Lorenzo himself, several of the most prominent were in the prime of life, and younger men began to make good their claims. Such were Marcello Virgilio Adriani, who, after Scala's death, restored the chancellorship to its pristine glory, and Bernardo Dovizj, who grew up in the house of the Medici, and afterwards gained a world-wide reputation as Cardinal of Bibiena. Whatever personal divergences there might be in the group, Lorenzo held them all together: all did homage to him, all acknowledged him as their leader. It was no cringing homage to a mighty lord; many of those who stood nearest to him gained little in worldly goods by their position, and others were too high and independent to need his help. It was the homage due to a richly endowed mind with noble aims and endeavours. Regardless of all inequalities of rank and position, freedom and ease reigned in this circle. When the meetings were academical, they were free from the formality which afterwards crept into academical life. Lorenzo de' Medici, cheerful and sociable, maintained unconstrained intercourse with his literary friends. He received them everywhere: in the house in Via Larga, in the garden of San Marco, in the villas at Careggi and Poggio a Cajano. The more intimate of them accompanied him also when he went to the baths or to Pisa, or when he paced the convent cloisters in serious discourse with the clergy. The Platonic Academy, an inheritance from his grandfather, was only one manifestation of this multiform social life. It was so strangely composed that it is not surprising the Platonists sometimes fell into very un-Platonic ways. There is something half comic about a letter of Landino's dated 1464, the year Cosimo died;¹ it is a petition on behalf of the herald of the Priory Palace, who had been dismissed from his post for keeping a girl hidden two days in his room. He solicits pardon upon the following pleas: his wife was expecting her confinement,

¹ *Med. Arch.*

he had two little daughters and an aged mother, and was a member of the Platonic Academy.

Lorenzo sometimes took part in the meetings of the learned society, which he was fond of summoning to Careggi, being less disturbed there than in the city. In both places the Symposia were renewed which, according to Alexandrian tradition, were to celebrate the day of Plato's birth and death (November 7). Marsilio Ficino has described one of these banquets which took place under the presidency either of Lorenzo or Francesco Bandini.¹ Among the guests were Marsilio and his father, Landino, Antonio degli Agli Bishop of Fiesole, Carlo and Cristoforo Marsuppini, Giovanni Cavalcanti, Bernardo Nuzzi, and Tommaso Benci. The academical celebration or exercise succeeded the repast. Plato's 'Symposion'—the book which treats of the tokens of love at similar happy meetings, and a commentary on which Marsilio furnished in his treatise on love—was used as a starting-point for free disputation, the parts being divided among the persons present. Giovanni Cavalcanti developed the 'Phædro,' and showed how the birth of Eros from the conjunction of the earth with chaos, amid the throes of creation and the struggle for light, signified the original motive force of all that is good, noble, and beautiful in mankind. With this discourse was connected the exposition, also allotted to Cavalcanti, of the speech of Pausanias on the double Aphrodite, and Urania; on the distinction and confusion between moral and physical affections, their emanation, extension, stages of purification, and participation in the manifold forces of nature. Landino undertook to explain the speech of Aristophanes. According to this, love is the never-sleeping longing of man for a return to his former state of oneness with the Divine, from which Zeus, in wrath, had divided him by means of his earthly form and by sin. To Carlo Marsuppini fell the discourse of Agathon, which glorifies the qualities of the god who is at once so

¹ Epist. ad J. Bracciolini, l. i. Prolegom. ad Platonis convivium.

various and yet blends all variety into unity. Tommaso Benci devoted himself to pointing out the connection between the Christian view and the supposed inspired words of the priestess Diotima, who disclosed to Socrates the nature of a love that raises man to the highest good or sinks him to the lowest depths of evil. Cristoforo Marsuppini undertook to bring into harmony with the Socratic doctrine of Love the poems of Guido Cavalcanti, to which, as an emanation of Greek philosophy in the arena of the new-born Italian literature, great importance was attached by contemporaries, especially by Lorenzo de' Medici. Such were the occupations of these famous assemblies. Their positive scientific results were not great, yet they afford a brilliant testimony to the cultivation which enabled the upper classes in Florence to take part in the noblest intellectual efforts.

While poetry and philosophy were thus flourishing, the exact sciences were making considerable progress. It is doubtful whether Fra Luca Paciolo, of Borgo San Sepolcro—who first recalled true geometry to life by his exposition of Euclid, and who exercised so much influence on Leonardo da Vinci—began his labours during the lifetime of Lorenzo. But Paolo del Pozzo Toscanelli, the physician, philosopher, naturalist, and mathematician, commenced his studies as early as the days of Cosimo the Elder. In 1468 he laid down the famous meridian in Sta. Maria del Fiore, primarily for the purpose of ascertaining exactly the solstices in order to fix the festivals of the Church. The importance of the work was appreciated by later generations, and the task was performed more perfectly 300 years afterwards, at the suggestion of La Condamine.¹ It is well known that Toscanelli, who died in 1482, aged seventy-five, exerted great influence on the mind of Christopher Columbus by his calculations of the longitudinal extent of Eastern Asia, which, however,

¹ The work of the Sicilian Jesuit, P. Leonardo Ximenes, *Del vecchio e nuovo Gnomone fiorentino*, Flor. 1757, contains the history and explanation of the scientific value of the famous meridian, and of the more ancient mathematical and astronomical works in Tuscany.

rested chiefly on Marco Polo's mistaken hypotheses. Long after Toscanelli's death, Columbus—when upon his first voyage—made use of the map, marked with the latitudes and longitudes, which the former had once sent to Lisbon. It was in the last years of Lorenzo's life that a man whose name is more famous than his deeds, and who has been the subject of renewed controversy in our own times, left his home to seek a new one in Southern Spain.¹ The family of Amerigo Vespucci, which reckoned among the navigator's near relatives men of both scientific and political importance, was sometimes on friendly, sometimes on hostile terms with the Medici; but we hear nothing of any personal relation between him and Lorenzo. About the age of forty, Amerigo settled in Seville, where he joined the banking and commercial house of his fellow-countryman Giovanni Berardi. Well furnished with knowledge, to which his learned uncle Giorgio Antonio had contributed not a little, he began a course of practical preparations for the undertaking which led him to the Far West. Not with the Florentines, but with a schoolman of Lorraine, originated the name of the new continent which, as long as the world stands, will recall Amerigo Vespucci. Still the Florentines rightly rejoiced in the fame of their countryman. A later generation has seen the house of his forefathers turned into a hospital, and has inscribed on it in homage to his memory: 'Ob repertam Americam sui et patriæ nominis illustratori amplificatori orbis terrarum.' When the news of his discoveries made in the voyage of 1497 reached Florence, the Signoria had the above-named house illuminated for three nights, a distinction they were wont to bestow only on the most conspicuous merit.

¹ This controversy has never rested from the time of Angelo Maria Bandini, who published in 1755 the *Vita e Lettere di Amerigo Vespucci gentiluomo fiorentino*, down to our own days, which have witnessed a new defence of the Florentine's claims by the Brazilian, F. A. de Varnhagen. It will be sufficient here to refer the reader to the facts published by Oscar Peschel in the *Zeitalter der Entdeckungen*, p. 305 *seq.*, and in an essay on Amerigo in the periodical *Das Ausland* (No. 32, 1858). Vespucci's well-known work on his second journey (Bandini, p. 64) is addressed to Lorenzo de' Medici, the son of Pier Francesco.

THIRD PART.

THE FINE ARTS.

CHAPTER XII.

COSIMO AND PIERO DE' MEDICI IN THEIR RELATION TO ART.

THE early years of Cosimo de' Medici were passed during the great revolution in art by which realism, united with reminiscences of the antique, enforced its claims, and, superseding the Gothic and Pisan styles in architecture and sculpture, restricted that of Giotto, in painting, to a narrow circle of recognised types. Art had struck out for itself these new paths before Cosimo became ruler of the whole state; but he influenced its rapid development by his active sympathy and by a liberality rarely equalled by private individuals or even by princes. Independently of the encouragement he afforded to talent in his princely capacity, he gave honourable commissions to artists from his own resources. In personal intercourse with them he united a thorough knowledge of art with a sympathetic affability which did equal honour to them and to himself. His two favourite architects, Brunelleschi and Michelozzo, have been already mentioned. The former died eighteen years before him, the latter survived him about six years. He justly valued their genius, and promoted a friendly understanding between them while employing both on important works. It was

Brunelleschi who continued the building of the church of San Lorenzo and the abbey of Fiesole.

After the days of Giovanni di Bicci both branches of the Medici seem to have been reunited. The church of San Lorenzo was the parish church of Cosimo's branch, and the burial-place of both. As early as 1415 there had been a talk of enlarging this sacred edifice, which dated from the earliest years of Christianity. Three years later a street at the back, the Via de' Preti—a name ill-suited to the occupations of its inhabitants—was assigned to the Chapter for the purpose of enlargement. They began to rebuild the choir in 1419.¹ With other members of wealthy families, Giovanni de' Bicci, having pledged himself to build some chapels, undertook the sacristy, which, for harmony of proportions, both in its cupola and ground-plan, and for the excellence of its decorations, claims the highest admiration. What the father had begun the son continued on a larger scale. On September 23, 1440—while the building of the new church was proceeding under the direction of Brunelleschi, the older one still being in use—Cosimo buried his brother Lorenzo there. Upon this occasion Pope Eugene IV. sent the cardinals and prelates of his court with the banner of the church and his own, and 100 wax candles. Two years later Cosimo proceeded to complete the choir and cupola on condition of gaining the right of patronage for himself and his heirs, in return for which privilege he gave the chapter a state bond for 40,000 florins towards the expenses of the building. On May 15, 1457, the court of the Canonica was begun; it was finished, as well as the high altar and those in the transepts, four years after, and finally the high altar was consecrated by Archbishop Orlando Bonarli on August 9, 1461. Two years before, a college for young clergy had been opened near the church, which retains its chapter to

¹ Cianfogni, *Memorie storiche della basilica di S. Lorenzo* (Flor. 1804), p. 228. On Brunelleschi, cf. i. 71 *seq.*

this day.¹ San Lorenzo is a basilica with columns. It has arches resting on an entablature laid on the capitals, a square end to the choir, a cupola, a flat roof, and chapels of no great depth. A walk through the cloisters of the Canonica recalls times long gone by. Two ranges of arcades enclose the quadrangle and lead to the little dwellings of the canons and to the famous library, which, in its present form, is a work of later days. The mighty dome of the cathedral and the bell-tower of Giotto look down into these cloisters, the stillness of which contrasts with the din of the busy streets around; while its whole appearance reminds the spectator of the homely simplicity, the frugality, and noble generosity which prevailed at the time of its erection.

The work said to have been executed for Cosimo at Fiesole by Brunelleschi was scarcely less important. At the foot of the hill there, in the valley of the Mugnone, lay the old abbey church, believed to be the original cathedral of the Etruscan city. In 1439, by command of Pope Eugene IV., it was handed over by the Benedictines to the regular canons of St. Augustine; and Cosimo de' Medici, who was a friend of the Prior—Don Timoteo of Verona—began the new building. The church still retains the middle compartment of its original façade, belonging to the præ-Gothic period. Containing a nave and chapels of considerable dimensions, the building is simple and artistic. Doubts have been thrown on Vasari's assertion that it is really Brunelleschi's, it being quite unlike his other works.² The building of the convent presented many difficulties on account of the slope of the ground, and was finished by Cosimo's son in 1466. It has

¹ D. Moreni, *Continuazione delle Memorie della basilica di San Lorenzo* (Flor. 1816), i. 6 *seq.*

² The dedication (to Piero de' Medici) of a treatise on Architecture by Antonio Averlino, called Filarete (see below, p. 135), shows that the Church had not been rebuilt in 1460: 'Resta ancora la chiesa a rinovare.' The resemblance of its architecture to that of the chapel of the Madonna de' Voti, afterwards dell' Inconata, in the cathedral of Mantua, always regarded as a work of Leon Bat. Alberti, awakens a suspicion that he may have been concerned in the building at Fiesole. Cf. Gaye, l. c. i. 200 *seq.*; 263. Vasari, *Life of Filarete*, iii. 290.

long been diverted from its original use, but continued to be the domicile of the founder and his family, whose arms were carved upon it, at a later period. Here the Platonic Academy held its meetings, and here a great-grandson of Cosimo donned the purple as cardinal, and another—Giuliano, Duke of Nemours—drew his last breath. In later days the church was enriched with many beautiful works of art; but in vain do we look round the great building, which neither Brunelleschi nor Cosimo lived to see completed, for the learned men and the collection of books that were once in a double sense its best ornaments.¹

Brunelleschi's work in the neighbourhood of the city was surpassed in grandeur by a building of Michelozzo's within the walls. In 1436 the Medici brothers obtained from Pope Eugene IV. the cession of the Silvestrine² convent of San Marco to the Dominicans of Fiesole, who had just settled beside the little church of San Giorgio, on the left bank of the Arno. In the following year the rebuilding of the convent and restoration of the church was begun; not without difficulties on the part of the former owners, who actually entered a protest at the Council of Basle. The cost of reconstruction was borne mainly by the Medici, with some assistance from the community. The church was consecrated on the feast of the Epiphany, 1442, by Cardinal Acciapacci, Archbishop of Capua, in presence of the Pope and his court.³ A considerable portion of the convent was finished in 1443; but the whole was not completed till eight years later. The traces of Michelozzo's hand are no longer to be seen in the church; the choir and apse were rebuilt two hundred years after him.

It is impossible to walk through the great courts, the broad vaulted corridors, the endless rows of cells opening

¹ D. Moreni, *Notizie storiche dei Contorni di Firenze*, iii. 93 seq. Cf. i. 576 seq.

² The Silvestrine was a branch of the Vallombrosan order, named after its founder Silvestro Gozzolini.

³ Cf. i. 574-576.

into the passages, and the noble library, without remembering that this convent was the scene of many famous events in peace and war that influenced the fate of the city, and left their mark in the history not of Italy only, but of the human mind.¹ Cosimo was continually employing Michelozzo, who, besides the family palace, built for him the Noviciate of Sta. Croce and the adjoining chapel; remodelled the villas at Careggi, Cafaggiuolo, and Trebbio, and executed other works, some of them beyond the Tuscan border. Among the latter was the decoration of the palace at Milan, entrusted to him by Francesco Sforza, for which purpose Michelozzo visited that city. Here also he built for Pigello Portinari, director of the Medicean bank, a chapel in Sant' Eustorgio after the model of that of the Pazzi in Sta. Croce. Cosimo's sons employed him likewise. He is commonly believed to have designed for Piero the elegant chapel of the Annunziata, over whose altar hangs the thirteenth century picture of the Annunciation, which gave rise to the building of the church. This building, a quadrangular open chapel, with fluted Corinthian columns of marble supporting a richly decorated entablature, and enclosed by an elegant brass trellis, was executed by Pagno di Lapo Partigiani, a sculptor of Fiesole, and consecrated by Cardinal Guillaume d'Estouteville, Archbishop of Rouen, on Christmas day, 1452.²

¹ Vasari, *Life of Michelozzo*, iii. 277-279. V. Marchese, *Memorie dei Pittori ec. Domenicani*, i. 278 seq. *Id.*, *San Marco convento dei Frati Predicatori* (Flor. 1853) p. 75 seq. The inscription in the church, dated 1442, which speaks of 'magnificis sumptibus v. cl. Cosmi Medicis,' &c., is in Vasari, p. 279.

² A. Zobi, *Memorie storico-artistiche relative alla Cappella della SS. Annunziata* (Flor. 1837), p. 14 seq. Fr. Bocchi, *Della immagine miracolosa della SS. Nunziata* (Flor. 1592, new ed. 1852). Inscription: 'Petrus Med. Cosmi Joann. filius sacellum marmoreum voto suscepto animo libens d. d. Anno 1448. Idib. Martii.' Another inscription on the cornice: 'Piero di Cosimo de Medici fece fare questa hopera et Pagno di Lapo di Fiesole fu el maestro chella fè mcccclii.' From this it certainly looks questionable whether Michelozzo furnished the designs, as Pagno also executed larger works. Inscription relating to the consecration: 'Mariæ glorioss. virg. Guilhelmus Cardinalis Rotomagensis cum superni in terris nuntii munere fungeretur legati ratus officium et innumeris miraculis locique religione motus hanc Annunziatae aram summa cum celebritate ac solenni pompa sacravit mcccclii., viii. Kalen. Januar.'

About the same time, Michelozzo executed for Piero the marble tabernacle destined to contain a figure of Christ in the nave of the basilica of San Miniato. It consists of a canopy supported on composite marble columns and pilasters, the interior richly decorated with rose-coloured ornaments of glazed earth in square panels. On the frieze is the Medicean device, the three feathers with the diamond ring and the motto *Semper*, on the arch the escutcheon of the Calimala guild, in relief. Inside the tabernacle stands the altar with painting and *predella*.¹ For Giovanni, Cosimo's younger son, Michelozzo built on the heights of Fiesole a villa, visible from a great distance, which afterwards passed to the Mozzi family. The architect was also employed by connections of the Medici. For Giovanni Tornabuoni he built the great palace near Sta. Trinità, which still gives its name to the street. To gain more space, it afterwards became necessary to demolish the front part of this palace, which, with its ground floor of rustic-work and its plain arched windows, had a somewhat sombre effect.

While Michelozzo's time was chiefly taken up by the Medici, Brunelleschi was active in other quarters. The progress and final completion of his great work, the dome of the cathedral, has already been mentioned. On August 30, 1436, the roofing-in was celebrated by the pealing of all the bells in the city and the chanting of a *Te Deum*. Eight years later the scaffolding was raised for building the lantern, which was begun in 1446, shortly before the death of the great master, who was succeeded by Michelozzo.² His beautiful arcade at the Foundling Hospital has been men-

¹ Berti, *Cenni storico-artistici di S. Miniato al Monte* (Flor. 1850), p. 54 seq. On June 10, 1448, Piero de' Medici was allowed to place his arms on the tabernacle on condition that those of the Guild should have the highest place.

² C. Guasti, l. c. Doc. 290, p. 201. Brunelleschi was buried in the cathedral. The epitaph is by Carlo Marsuppini: 'D. S. Quantum Philippus architectus arte Dædalea valuerit cum huius celeberrimi templi mira testudo tum plures aliæ divino ingenio ab eo adiuentæ machinæ documento esse possunt quapropter ob eximias sui animi dotes singularesque virtutes xv. Kal. Maias anno MCCCCXLVI. eius b. m. corpus in hac humo supposita grata patria sepeliri iussit.'

tioned. The similar loggia of San Paolo was placed opposite Sta. Maria Novella, at the southern end of the piazza. He built a chapel for the Pazzi family in the front court of the convent of Sta. Croce. Its walls are covered with Corinthian pilasters, high niches, and terra-cotta alto-rilievos; the cupola rests on two side-arches richly panelled and decorated with designs in glazed earth; the pendants being ornamented with terra-cotta rilievos of the Evangelists. Decoration and colour are here kept just within the limits of good taste. Andrea de' Pazzi began the building, which was finished by his son Jacopo, so that Brunelleschi can hardly have lived to see its completion.¹ The official residence of the Capitani di parte Guelfa in the Via delle Terme, rebuilt by Brunelleschi, still exists, though with many alterations. The architect saw only the beginnings of his second greatest work, the palace of Luca Pitti. In Vasari's time, when Eleonora di Toledo, Duchess of Florence, purchased the unfinished building—appropriately called, by an art-writer of those days, *muraglia*—the original plan was no longer to be found. Many alterations were made in succeeding centuries down to the present, when the extensive wings, intended as halls, were built. But the façade has kept its original stamp, and Vasari's words remain true—that Tuscan architecture has produced no richer or grander creation. This grandeur is united with the greatest simplicity; and it is the absence of all ornament upon the three stages of rustic-work, with their gigantic bow-windows, crowned with galleries, which gives the building its peculiar character. The palace is said to have been begun in 1440, long before the time of Luca Pitti's ephemeral greatness.²

¹ Round the altar is the following inscription: 'Ædem hanc sanctissime Andrea tibi Pactii dedicarunt ut eum te immortalis Deus hominum constituerit piscatorem locus sit in quem suos Franciscus ad tua possit retia convocare.' By Franciscus is doubtless meant the saint to whose order the convent belonged, and not, as Richa and Moisé suppose, Francesco de' Pazzi, Andrea's grandson. A letter of indulgence from Card. Pietro Riario, October 8, 1473, speaks of Jacopo de' Pazzi as the founder.

² The history of the building of the Pitti palace has never been thoroughly cleared up.

His villa at Rusciano was begun about the time of Brunelleschi's death, so that the great artist saw little of the execution of his plan, which was carried on by Luca Fancelli. While Brunelleschi here aimed at attaining the whole effect by the majesty and harmony of the proportions, in the palace of Jacopo de' Pazzi he allowed more play to decoration.

It is doubtful whether Cosimo de' Medici employed the most learned artist of the time, Leon Batista Alberti. His chief works in Florence, with one exception, were executed for the Rucellai. Among them may be mentioned the palace, the loggia, the upper part of the façade of Sta. Maria Novella, finished in 1470; and the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre at San Pancrazio, an imitation of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem.¹ The Rucellai palace, in which are retained the bow-windows divided by small columns, points to the days of Bramante. It exhibits a combination of flat decorative pilasters of various orders with smooth rustick-work, antique ornaments on the rectangular doors, and traces of the square form in the bow-windows. Alberti also made designs for another work, which has given occasion to so many objections that its defects have been attributed to alterations by another hand. This is the choir of the Annunziata, commenced in 1451 by Lodovico Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua, who, as victorious commander-in-chief of the Republic, desired to found a memorial at once of his piety and his thankfulness. A quarter of a century elapsed before the building was finished by Luca Fancelli. The exterior is octagonal, the interior round, with several chapels in irregular order, and numerous windows round the base of the large cupola, which is closed, and was ornamented in the seventeenth century with figures in fresco. In our own day re-

¹ Inscription :

JOHANNES RUCELLARIUS PAULI FILIUS INDE
SALUTEM SUAM PRECARETUR UNDE OMNIUM
CUM CHRISTO FACTA EST RESURRECTIO SACELLUM
HOC AD INSTAR HYEROSOLIMITANI SEPULCRI
FACIUNDUM CURAVIT MCCCCLXVII.

decoration has given to the choir as well as the rest of this dazzlingly-gilt church a thoroughly modern appearance.¹

Sculpture, no less than architecture, was in full activity. Here also we find in the foremost rank those artists whom the Medici had attached to themselves; among whom Donatello stood first, while his pupils benefited by the favour shown to him. The Medici mansion was full of Donatello's works. Over the arches in the front court are eight medallions by him, with reliefs in marble; and he restored many of the antique heads over the doors. His other works are all scattered. During Cosimo's exile, the bronze David with his foot on the head of Goliath was taken away and set up in the palace-yard of the Signoria. The owner seems to have been shy of reclaiming it, and finally, in May 1476, his grandsons sold it to the municipality.² During the second exile of the Medici, another work of Donatello's was taken from their house and placed at the great gate of the same palace, with an inscription recalling the events of 1494.³ This is the group of Judith and Holofernes, full of expression, but forced and offending against the rules of plastic composition. A loss to be regretted is that of the bronze bust of Madonna Contessina, which Donatello executed for her husband.

San Lorenzo still contains many of his works, placed there by the indefatigable benefactor of this church. Besides the decorations of the sacristy, &c., there are the reliefs on the pulpits; artistically they are in fault by their superabundance and want of repose, but the fault is one of a

¹ Documents on the building (1471), in Gaye, l. c. p. 225 *seq.* Vasari, iv. 59.

² The price was 150 gold florins; Gaye, l. c. p. 572. The statue was removed when Duke Cosimo erected the fountain adorned with Verrocchio's Boy, and is now in the national museum in the Palace of the Podestà.

³ 'Exemplum sal. pub. cives posuere mccccxcv.' This inscription can have nothing to do with the driving out of the Duke of Athens, as Moisé (*Palazzo de' Priori*, p. 166) imagines. The group occupied the place which was assigned in 1504 to Michel Angelo's 'David,' and has stood since then on the side of the Loggia de' Lanzi towards the Uffizi. Vasari (l. c. p. 251) wrongly thinks it was executed for the Signoria.

man of talent. In point of technical execution, they show a distinct retrogression when compared with contemporary works. It was not only in works of this kind that Donatello displayed an extravagance that belies the sense of beauty. He did so even in the dancing children executed in marble relief for the organ at Sta. Maria del Fiore.

Vespasiano da Bisticci describes Cosimo's attachment to this man. 'He was,' says he,¹ 'a great friend of Donatello and of all painters and sculptors. Finding there was little work for the latter, and not liking Donatello to remain inactive, he entrusted to him the pulpits and the doors of the sacristy at San Lorenzo; giving orders that whatever he needed for his own requirements and those of his four assistants should be paid to him weekly from the Medici bank.' As Donatello did not dress to Cosimo's liking, the latter presented him with a cloak and hood, an upper garment to wear under the cloak, and a whole suit, sending all this to him on the morning of a feast day. Donatello put the new things on a few times only, declining to wear them any longer, lest 'people should think he had grown effeminate.' How thoroughly Donatello was regarded as belonging to the Medici household is shown by the fact that the Marquis Ludovico Gonzaga once asked Cosimo to send the artist to Mantua to execute a shrine modelled in 1450, to be set up during the expected visit of Pope Pius II.² Many other artists were on confidential terms with Cosimo and his family. Michelozzo's two sons belonged almost to the family circle. In the last years of Cosimo, Donatello could no longer work, so his generous patron maintained him, and recommended him to his son Piero. The latter gave him a farm, as he said, 'to provide him with bread and wine.' The artist, however, gave back the gift in legal form, not wishing to embitter his life with household cares; whereupon Piero

¹ L. c. p. 259.

² Mantua, November 7, 1458. Cf. Braghirolli, in the *Giornale di erudizione artistica* (of Perugia), ii. 4 *seq.*

had the value of the produce assigned to him at the bank. In 1462 Piero granted him space for a vault in San Lorenzo, near the sacristy; and here, where so many of his works are to be seen, he was buried in 1468, not far from those who had so valued him during life.¹

After Donatello, most closely connected with the Medici, father and son, were two masters who, while fairly admitting the claims of the realistic principle, carried it out in a different spirit and in more ideal forms. Lorenzo Ghiberti, who finished the second door of the Baptistery in 1452, with the help of his son Vettorino, and in spite of his seventy-two years, undertook the commission for a third. He continued till the later years of Cosimo busily engaged on the rich silver reredos, in which Michelozzo, Verocchio, Bernardo Cennini, Antonio Pollaiuolo, and others, had a share. He also designed the great rose-window of Sta. Maria del Fiore, at which Francesco di Domenico Livi of Gambassi, who learned glass-painting in Germany, was working in 1436, and Bernardo di Francesco in 1443. Glass-painting in the true sense of the word was then just beginning to flourish; until that time coloured windows had been produced by simply putting variously tinted glass together in mosaic patterns. Many trod in the steps of Francesco Livi: notably Ser Guasparre da Volterra, who worked in the cathedral at Siena; while in Florence, Pisa, and Arezzo, the art was practised by the Jesuates of the order of the B. Giovanni Colombini, who were established in Florence in 1436, in the convent of San Giusto before Porta Pinti, and there built the great church which was pulled down in 1529. It was chiefly by them that Sta. Maria del Fiore, Sta. Croce,

¹ Vasari, l. c. pp. 264, 266. Fabroni, l. c. p. 159. According to Vasari, Donatello died on December 13, 1466; according to the contemporary M. Palmieri (*De Temporibus*), in 1468. In the crypt of S. Lorenzo, near the tombs of the Medici, is the following later inscription: 'Donatellus restituta antiqua sculpendi celandiq. arte celeberrimus Mediceis principibus summis bonarum artium patronis apprime carus qui ut vivum suspexere mortuo etiam sepulcrum loco sibi proximiore constituerunt obiit idibus Decembris an. sal. MCCCCLXIV. æt. suæ LXXXIII.'

San Michele, and other buildings, were glazed with coloured windows.¹

In 1440 Ghiberti finished for the cathedral the shrine of St. Zanobi, one of his finest works. To Piero de' Medici he furnished goldsmith's work which brought him great admiration and commissions from Pope Eugene IV. Besides this master, now growing old, the Medici employed a younger one, Luca della Robbia. His style is graceful rather than grand; full of tender and lively expression of feeling, and pleasing execution in drapery and grouping. His works in the cathedral show equal fertility of invention and technical skill. One is the marble relief for the organ gallery, representing a boy and girl playing and dancing, executed in 1438 as a companion-piece to that of Donatello;² and the other, not so good, is the door of the sacristy, finished in 1463, with its bronze reliefs of the Madonna, the Evangelists, and the Fathers of the Church.³ The monument to Benozzo Federighi, Bishop of Fiesole⁴ (who died in 1450), with the figure lying on the bier, displays his capabilities in this direction. But Luca della Robbia is less distinguished by his sculptures in marble and brass than by the reliefs in glazed earth which, called after him, were supplied by his descendants for 100 years. They still abound in Florence and the whole of Tuscany, even to the mountain convents of the Apennines and the modest churches of remote towns, while numbers of them have wandered into foreign lands. Anyone taking a walk in Florence may enjoy these charming creations: lunettes or groups above the doors of churches and houses, medallions of infants on the portico of the

¹ On Francesco Livi, cf. Gaye, l. c. ii. 441 *seq.* On Ser Guasparre, see Rumohr, *Ital. Forschungen*, ii. 377 *seq.*; G. Milanesi, *Documenti dell' arte Sanese*, ii. 194 *seq.* On the Jesuates, cf. i. 596, 597, and L. Fanfani, *Memorie di Sta. Maria del Ponte-nuovo* (Pisa 1871), p. 124 *seq.*

² These basso-relievos, removed from the cathedral when the organs were modernised, are now in the museum of the Palazzo del Podestà.

³ *Metropolitana Fiorentina*, tables xxxiii.-xxxvi.

⁴ Transferred from San Pancrazio to the church of San Francesco di Paola before the Porta Romana; *Monuments sépulcraux*, plate lvii.

Foundling Hospital, heads of saints, tabernacles, heraldic escutcheons, some plain white on a blue ground, some with a judicious mixture of colours and a rich border of entwined leaves and fruit. These works form an almost inexhaustible treasury, with a marked character of graceful earnestness and truth to nature; a help to architecture as long as the decorative element kept its place in the old manner, which in the fourteenth century employed both glass and colour. But they were invaluable for interior decoration, for which Brunelleschi used work in 'Terra della Robbia' in the Pazzi chapel. Luca himself decorated for Cosimo de' Medici a room in his palace and the buildings in Sta. Croce, and for Piero the tabernacle in San Miniato; in the latter church he also assisted in giving to the chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal the charm of harmonious perfection.

In the last years of Cosimo de' Medici grew up a whole generation of younger sculptors. Their most important works are sepulchral monuments, which became richer and grander as time went on. Formerly people had, as a rule, been content with sarcophagi more or less decorated, like that of Noferi, the father of Palla Strozzi, who died in 1418 and is buried in the sacristy of Sta. Trinità, beneath an arch resting on elegant corbels, and on the edges of which are seen pretty genii playing. Twenty or thirty years later these simple monuments were still the most usual, even for men of importance. Neri Capponi lies in the church of the Santo Spirito in a marble coffin bearing on the front his portrait in relief between two genii; Orlando de' Medici rests in that of the SS. Annunziata in a sarcophagus ornamented with his coat of arms, and occupying with rich architectural accessories the whole side of a chapel. These were both works of Simone, whom tradition makes a brother of Donatello.¹ But talented artists soon attempted greater things. Desiderio da Settignano (so called after the plea-

¹ *Monuments sépulcraux*, plates : lvi., xli., xxi.

santly situated little village, two miles east of the city, where Michel Angelo was nursed by a stonemason's wife) was a pupil of Donatello, and thus came into contact with the Medici, who employed him in San Lorenzo. In the Strozzi palace may be seen his fine thoughtful marble bust of Marietta, daughter of Filippo Strozzi the elder and Fiammetta Adimari. His masterpiece is the monument of Carlo Marsuppini in Sta. Croce, a figure of the dead man resting on the sarcophagus in a niche crowned by a lunette, with a Madonna in relief.¹ Notwithstanding some overloading in the accessories, it shows what he might have become had he not died in 1464, at the early age of thirty-six. The sarcophagus, resting on lions' claws and richly adorned with flowers, leaves, and streaming ribands, is one of the most beautiful productions of decorative sculpture. Desiderio had many emulators, to whom we owe some of the finest monuments of this kind. Among them were the brothers Bernardo and Antonio Rossellino. The former, who worked a good deal out of Florence as architect to the Popes, does not seem to have been employed by the Medici. The only thing he is said to have done for them is a marble fountain, decorated with children and dolphins, in one of the courts of their palace; and of its fate nothing is known. But the city contains excellent works by both, exhibiting a similarity to Della Robbia's style. Two of Bernardo's works are the graceful monument to Beata Villana in Sta. Maria Novella, and that of Leonardo Bruni in Sta. Croce.² The conception,

¹ *Monuments sépulcraux*, plate xxxvi. Inscription:

SISTE VIDES MAGNUM QUÆ SERVANT MARMORA VATEM
 INGENIO CUIUS NON SATIS ORBIS ERAT
 QUÆ NATURA POLUS QUÆ MOS FERAT OMNIA NOVIT
 KAROLUS ÆTATIS GLORIA MAGNA SUÆ
 AUSONIÆ ET GRAIÆ CRINES NUNC SOLVITE MUSÆ
 OCCIDIT HEU VESTRI FAMA DECUSQUE CHORI.

² *Monuments sépulcraux*, plates l., xxxi. Inscription:

POSTQUAM LEONARDUS E VITA MIGRAVIT HISTORIA LUGET
 ELOQUENTIA MUTA EST FERTURQUE MUSAS TUM
 GRAIAS TUM LATINAS LACRIMAS TENERE NON POTUISSE.

proportions, and technical finish of these works entitle them to rank among the best productions of a period rich in monuments. The most perfect work of the kind, however, is that by Antonio Rossellino to the Cardinal of Portugal, in San Miniato al Monte. James of Portugal, nephew of King Alfonso V., had come in bad health to Florence, where he died in 1459 aged twenty-six. In the basilica, then belonging to the Olivetans, where he was buried, was built a chapel, unrivalled in symmetry of form and beauty of detail. The roof is set off with reliefs in glazed earth, the walls are inlaid with marble, the altar, the bishop's throne, and the floor of *opus Alexandrinum* are admirable. What was formerly the altar-piece—by Pollaiuolo—is now in the Uffizi. The monument stands in a large niche, with a curtain slightly drawn back. The sarcophagus is an imitation of the coffer afterwards used for the tomb of Pope Clement XII. in the Lateran. The figure of the departed, wearing his mitre, rests on a pall held by two seated boys; an architectural wall-drapery is terminated by a cornice, at each end of which is a kneeling angel bearing a crown and a palm-branch; in the arch above are the Virgin and Child surrounded by a rich garland and upheld by angels in relief. The figure of the cardinal surpasses all else of its kind in grace, dignity, and beauty, while in technical work it is perfection. The head and the folded hands were modelled from nature.¹ A blessed peace seems diffused over the whole figure, which realizes what Vespasiano da Bisticci says of the departed, whom he had known in life: 'He was outwardly handsome, but his soul was more beautiful than his body; and by the holiness of his life and conversation he was fitted to stand beside the saints of old.'²

To these artists must be added Mino da Fiesole, who, though a pupil of Desiderio da Settignano—his senior only

¹ Vespasiano da Bisticci, l. c. p. 157. Vasari mentions the modelling in Verrocchio, v. 152. Brunelleschi's cast is in the building-office of Sta. Maria del Fiore (*Opera del Duomo*).

² *Monuments sépulcraux*, plate lvi. Vasari, vol. iv. p. 218. Berti, p. 70.

by a few years—seemed to have formed himself more on the model of Donatello. His groups of figures in relief, of which the chief are at Rome, are not always happy; his monumental statues, of which the two most remarkable in Florence are of later date, have great dignity and beauty. In his portrait-heads there is a peculiar delicacy and truth, indicating careful study of nature, and of which the bust of Bishop Leonardo Salutati, in the cathedral of Fiesole, is an excellent example.¹ In the Medici house were busts by him of Piero and his wife, the former of which is now in the Uffizi. In ornamentation, particularly in arabesque, Mino is inferior to none; and it is impossible to mistake his influence in this respect at Rome, where, from the time of Nicolas V., the number of monuments rapidly increased. The works of Giuliano da Majano in Florence, where he was occupied in 1463–1465 with inlaid wood-work for San Domenico, near Fiesole, and the sacristy of Sta. Maria del Fiore, are of much less importance. Neither he nor Antonio Filarete, founder of the great door of St. Peter's, are known to have done any work for the Medici. That the latter was one of their *protégés*, however, may be seen not only by the dedication to Piero of his treatise on architecture, but also by a letter addressed by him to Piero from Milan, December 20, 1451, thanking him for a recommendation to Francesco Sforza: 'I am at your service for whatever I can do. Dispose of me as you please. Commend me to his Excellency your father, and your brother Giovanni. With God's help, I hope to do honour here both to myself and you; I say to you, because for your sake and in consequence of your recommendation his Lordship shows me great favour. He thinks of appointing me chief architect to the cathedral, which naturally meets with opposition, I being a stranger; but I hope they will yield to their lord's desire.'²

The goldsmith's art, which in the preceding century had

¹ *Monuments sépulcraux*, plate lv.

² C. Pini, *La Scrittura di artisti Italiani*, cf. *supra*, p. 153.

reached great perfection in Tuscan cities and was closely connected with sculpture, attained through niello-work to engraving on copperplate. The name of Maso Finiguerra, who executed the celebrated pyx for the Baptistery in 1452, is inseparable from the history of the Medicean splendour.

For painting, whether in its general development or its particular productions, the period under consideration is less important than for the sister arts, at least as far as the Medici are concerned. The two greatest masters, in different lines, of the first half of the century, Masaccio and Fra Angelico, continued to adorn Florence with their works. The former, at his death in 1443, left unfinished the Brancacci chapel in San Pietro del Carmine, the high school of all later works of the kind. Unluckily, the fresco has perished in which he represented the consecration of the church in 1422, with a group of remarkable men of the time: Giovanni d'Averardo de' Medici, Niccolò da Uzzano, Baccio Valori, Lorenzo Ridolfi, Brunelleschi, Donatello, Masolino da Panicale, and others. Fra Angelico decorated the chapter-house, corridors, and cells of the convent of San Marco with his wall-pictures, which represent religious art in its loveliest bloom, a free modification of the principles of Giotto's school. He was busy here till Eugene IV. called him to Rome, where he painted the two chapels in the Vatican for this Pope and his successor, Nicolas V. He died in 1455. His greatest pupil, Benozzo Gozzoli, followed his master from Rome to Orvieto, and in 1459 painted the private chapel of the Medici, his most pleasing work. The 'Adoration of the Angels' is here represented amid a rich landscape, with choirs of angels, numerous spectators, and festive scenes, painted with a cheerful colouring that recalls Gentile da Fabriano. Later, when painting in San Gimignano and at Pisa, Gozzoli was still connected with the Medici, and in his first fresco in the Campo Santo, the 'Curse of Ham,' a group in the foreground represents the members of the family as he had known them in earlier years.

The realistic tendency exhibited by Masaccio grew more prominent in Paolo Uccello, who was evidently influenced by sculpture, especially by Donatello. In some of his most important frescoes, those in Sta. Maria Novella, representing the history of the Creation, and the figure of John Hawkwood in Sta. Maria del Fiore,¹ the very colouring, grey upon grey, aims at producing the effect of sculpture. This painter's study of perspective made him exaggerate that branch of his art. The austerity of Andrea dal Castagno's style is not softened by the colouring. The repulsive expression of his group of St. John and St. Francis in Sta. Croce supports the legend of the murder of Domenico Veneziano, which has adhered to Andrea's name till our own day, though he died four years before his supposed victim.² The most important works he has left are the figures of sibyls and of famous men, executed in a hall of the villa formerly belonging to the Pandolfini at Legnaia, but now removed to the National Museum at the Palace of the Podestà. The characteristic figures, among whom are Nicola Acciaiuolo and Pippo Spano, produce a great effect. Neither Andrea nor Uccello seems to have been employed by the Medici, who did, however, engage Domenico Veneziano, Andrea's fellow-worker on the lost frescoes in Sta. Maria Nuova, a painter much influenced by Fra Angelico. The repeated occurrence of the Medici's patron saints, Cosmo and Damian, in pictures of which the origin cannot be clearly traced, points to

¹ Executed in 1436; a pendant to the equestrian figure of Niccolò Maruzzi of Tolentino (d. 1434) by Andrea dal Castagno. The improper introduction of these equestrian figures into churches paved the way for similar monuments in marble, such as may be seen especially in Venice. In the cathedral of Florence was a complete figure of Piero Farnese on a mule, as he rode to a fight with the Pisans in 1363.

² In this place, where we are concerned chiefly with the position of the Medici in connection with the development of art, we cannot refer in detail to the literature, which has been much enriched of late years by Gastano Milanese's researches among the archives, on the Tuscan painters of the early quattrocento (*Giornale storico degli Archivi Toscani*, vols. iv. and vi., and reprinted in *Sulla storia dell'arte Toscana* (Siena 1873), made use of by Crowe and Cavalcaselle in their *History of Painting in Italy*.

the conclusion that they were commissions from the family or their friends. But the painter most highly favoured by Cosimo and his sons was Fra Filippo Lippi, whose manners and conversation were as great a scandal to the Carmelite order as Fra Angelico's whole life was an ornament to that of St. Dominic. Disorderly, loose in morals, always in difficulties and need of money, he yet gained patrons by his undeniable talent, which unites force and animation to Angelico's intensity of feeling. Lippi's grouping and composition is various, free, and rich, showing a realistic study of nature. He worked a great deal for the Medici, who made presents of his pictures to the Pope and King Alfonso, and procured him commissions abroad. His greatest work, the frescoes in the chapel in the choir of the Collegiate Church of Prato, was finished for the Provost Carlo de' Medici, whose likeness may be seen in the representation of the burial of St. Stephen. It was through Cosimo, who had many connections in Umbria, that Fra Filippo went to Spoleto, where he executed in the cathedral the scenes from the history of the Madonna which were finished after his death in 1469 by his assistant Fra Diamante.

Among the painters employed by Cosimo and his sons were the two Peselli, Giuliano d'Arrigo, and his grandson Pesellino; the former followed the artistic tendencies represented by Giotto, the latter was an earnest disciple of the realistic school. Much of the Medici furniture was painted by them, according to a fashion of the time, continued till the middle of the sixteenth century. Presses and coffers (*cassoni*) were ornamented with compositions of small figures, taken from history, sacred or profane, animals, hunting-scenes, &c. In the Florentine collections are many paintings of this kind, even down to Andrea del Sarto and his friends and pupils, the original destination of which is shown by their form. They were not all Florentines who painted for the Medici. A Veronese, Matteo de' Pasti, wrote to Piero in 1441, that he trusted to send him works such as he

had never before seen.¹ He probably alluded to the convex tablets (now in the Uffizi collection) representing scenes from Petrarca's triumphs, which were doubtless intended to decorate a room. The various dealings of the Medici with Flanders, from the time of Cosimo, contributed to draw attention in Florence to the Van Eyck school of painting, which influenced Italian art in the fifteenth century, particularly in point of technicalities. It was through Tommaso Portinari, director of the Medici bank at Bruges, that the church of the hospital of Sta. Maria Nuova—an old foundation of the family—obtained the most important work of the Flemish school to be found in Tuscany. This was the master-piece of Hugo van der Goes, the 'Adoration of the Shepherds,' containing portraits of the members of the donor's family.² The Flemish pictures mentioned by Vasari as being in the possession of the Medici (one of them, a portrait of Tommaso Portinari, is now in the Pitti Palace), prove the interest awakened by these works, great as was their difference in conception from Italian art.

It is easy to imagine that other branches of artistic industry were furthered by this artistically inclined family at a period of such varied activity, and that their house kept constantly filling with treasures of all kinds. For it was the pride of the princes and rich citizens—and even of such as had to deny themselves many of the comforts of life in order to satisfy a noble passion—to surround themselves with ancient and modern works, to decorate halls, staircases, and courts with marbles and other antiquities; to collect old coins and intaglios; to deck their rooms with statues and sculptures by living artists, with handsome furniture, silver plate, rich silken hangings and carpets.

Among the records of the Rinuccini family are notes of the cost of goldsmiths' work furnished by Finiguerra and

¹ C. Pini, *Scrittura di Artisti*.

² This is not the place to refer in detail to the confused notices in the Italian art-historians. Vasari mentions these works, among others, in his Introduction, l. c. i. 63.

Pollaiuolo.¹ Cosimo's love for these things was shared by his brother Lorenzo and both his sons. An inventory of the antique coins, cameos, gems, mosaic tablets, and enamels preserved in the house in the Via Larga, mentions 100 gold and 503 silver coins, a number of intaglios set as seals and rings, Greek and Roman mosaic tablets, valuable vases, precious stones to the value of more than thirty thousand gold florins.² The silver plate here, as well as at the villas, was not reckoned in. Mention has already been made of the travelling antiquaries who carried about with them manuscripts and objects of art, and were at once scholars and colporteurs. But purchases were also made for the Medici abroad. Antiquities came from Rome, Naples, Viterbo, and other places. Donatello was accustomed to restore injured antique marbles, a custom which was later carried to extremes, and led to mischief. Worked carpets (Arazzi) came from Flanders, where Bruges was the chief emporium for works of art, though Antwerp fairs were often visited.³ A letter of Carlo de' Medici to his half-brother Giovanni, written from Rome, apparently in the autumn of 1451,⁴ shows that Cardinal Barbo, afterwards Pope Paul II., was in competition with the Medici, and was not above a little gentle compulsion: 'I bought some time ago about thirty silver medals from an assistant of Pisanello, who is lately dead. I know not how Monsignore di San Marco heard of it, but, meeting me accidentally in the church of the Santi Apostoli, he took me by the hand, and would not let me go till he had got me to his house and taken all I had about me—rings and coins to the value of about twenty florins. There was no getting them back, and in the end I have had to let him keep the things, after a vain appeal to

¹ Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, p. 251.

² Fabroni, l. c. ii. 231. It is doubtful whether the sums given at the end of the inventory are to be added up together, or whether the last represents the sum total.

³ Letter to Giovanni de' Medici, Bruges, June 22, 1488; in Gaye, l. c. p. 158.

⁴ Gaye, l. c. p. 163.

the Pope.' The complaint is repeated in a letter of 1455. As we shall see, however, such losses were more than made up to the Medici at the death of Paul II.

Such were the relations of Cosimo and his sons to art-life in Florence. The great movement had begun before they took the helm of the state; but they exercised great and beneficial influence on its development, and always set a praiseworthy example to their fellow-citizens. In this respect they thoroughly understood their time. The tone and manner of their relations with artists is particularly attractive; it was inspired by true refinement of feeling. Merchant princes as they were, whose help was generally coveted, they kept up a confidential intercourse with men of talent, as among friends and equals. In the requests addressed to them there is no tone of servility; the traditions of free citizenship continued in all social relations. So it was also at a later period, when Cosimo's grandson had attained the position of a ruling prince; Lorenzo's bearing was the same, and contributed not a little to his powerful influence over his fellow-men. In many cases, as with Antonio Squarcialupi, the musician and organ-builder, he merely continued a connection begun by his father, uncle, and grandfather. Antonio, who in his writings adopted the pseudonym *Degli Organi*, belonged to an old family who had once been 'Signori' at Poggibonzi in the Elsa valley, and who on account of their rank were long excluded from office. It was not till 1453 that Antonio became a member of one of the smaller guilds, though before that time he was intimate with the Medici household. After spending some time at Naples with King Alfonso, in 1450, he wrote from Siena on November 26 to Giovanni de' Medici at Volterra, as follows: ¹ 'Dearest gossip, dutiful greeting and salutation! As you doubtless know, it is now about a month since I returned from Naples. Since then it has never ceased raining, or I

¹ Gaye, l. c. p. 160.

should have come to see you. The bad weather has hindered me not only from coming, but also from writing, as I kept waiting for the sky to clear. Now, God be thanked for all things. If I were to tell you about Naples, and the majesty of the king and his court, there would be so much to say that I must needs take all the scribes in Rome into my employ for five days. So for the present I will say nothing about it, and will only tell you that Cardinal Sta. Maria sets great store by his organ; wherein he is quite right, for truly it deserves it. I promise you on your return the satisfaction of hearing one which cannot fail to please you. It is destined for Antonio di Migliorino, who I trust will not object to my letting you see and hear it. Now I will trouble you no further. Commend me above all to Madonna Contessina, Messer Piero, and all the rest.'

In the spring of 1438, Domenico Veneziano wrote from Perugia to Piero as follows: ¹ 'Noble and honoured sir, greeting. I have to inform you that by God's grace I am in good health, and hope to see you well and happy. I have made inquiries after you at various times, and never received any news save through Manno Donati, who told me that you were at Ferrara in very good health, which gave me great pleasure. Had I known your place of abode sooner, I would have written to you, both for my own satisfaction and as it is fitting. My position is in truth far below yours, but my hearty attachment to you and all yours gives me boldness to write to you, to whom I owe so much.' One-and-twenty years later this same Piero, then at Careggi, was thus addressed by Benozzo Gozzoli, who was painting the chapel in the Medici house at Florence: ² 'My dearest friend, I informed your Magnificence in a previous letter that I am in need of forty florins, and begged you to advance them to me; for now is the time to buy corn and many other things that I want, whereby I shall save, and get rid

¹ Gaye, l. c. p. 136.

² *Ibid.* p. 192.

of a heavy load of care. I had resolved to ask nothing of you till you had seen my work, but I now find myself compelled to ask this favour. Therefore, be indulgent; God knows I am endeavouring to please you. I also reminded you to send to Venice for some ultramarine, for in the course of this week one wall will be finished, and for the other I shall need ultramarine. The brocades and other things can then be finished as well as the figures, or even sooner. I am working with all possible diligence. I have nothing more to add save my salutations.'

These confidential relations between the Medici and the artists did not prevent them from carefully settling minor details when giving an order, such as the use of ultramarine and gold, and still smaller matters. Even with regard to the actual composition remarks were not spared, not merely concerning the saints to be placed in the Madonna pictures and other votive tablets, but also as to other figures and accessories. Piero de' Medici was not satisfied with some angels that Benozzo had introduced in the chapel; the painter defended them, but added that he could put a cloud to cover them. Needless to say that all matters of business—prices, instalments of payment and work, &c.—were settled with scrupulous exactness. This belonged to the character of the time, and to the Florentine love of order and mercantile habits; a characteristic which never fails, and remained in the Medici nature even in Cosimo's magnificent grandson. Strict supervision was indeed necessary in the case of these colossal undertakings. It was more especially needful with a disorderly man like Filippo Lippi, who passed his whole life in want of his own making; witness his letters to Piero and Giovanni de' Medici: 'If there is a wretched monk in Florence, it is I!' His protectors pitied him and judged his sins leniently, if we rightly understand the remark in one of Giovanni's letters, to the effect that they had a laugh over Fra Filippo's error. It refers presumably to the well-known story of the elopement of Spinetta Buti from the convent at

Prato, where she was being educated; a story the details of which, as in other instances, are inaccurately given by Vasari.¹ The interest taken by the Medici in this painter descended to Lorenzo. On his return from Rome he wanted to have Fra Filippo's mortal remains brought from Spoleto to Florence, and when this was refused, he assisted Filippo's son in erecting a monument in Spoleto Cathedral.

It was in the time of Cosimo that the written history of art began its first feeble efforts. Its forerunner was Cennino Cennini of Colle in the Elsa valley, a pupil of Angelo Gaddi apparently at Padua, where he was in the service of Francesco da Carrara. Towards the end of the fourteenth century he wrote a book on painting, which is of great value for the study of artistic practice before the victory of oil-painting over tempera, as it is also for the history of modelling, casting, plaster-work, gilding, &c.² This book treats merely of technicalities; but in Lorenzo Ghiberti's commentaries an unfinished treatise on architecture and the proportion of figures is combined with notices of ancient art and also of modern, from its re-awakening in the second half of the thirteenth century down to the writer's own time and works.³ The latter portion is the principal source whence Giorgio Vasari drew his knowledge of past times. Ghiberti's contemporary Filarete has given many notices, valuable for the history of art, referring to Medicean times, in his treatise on architecture, which he dedicated—in styles

¹ Gaye, l. c. pp. 141, 175, 180. Cf. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, iii. 64, 65.

² Complete edition by Gaetano and Carlo Milanese, *Il Libro dell' arte o Trattato della Pittura* (Flor. 1859). There is a German translation, *Das Buch von der Kunst*, &c., by Albert Ilg (Vienna, 1871). The general supposition, from Baldinucci down to Tambroni, the first editor of the treatise (Rome, 1821), viz., that Cennini wrote it in 1437 in the Stinche prison, is derived from a gloss to the Laurentian MS. which proceeds from the copyist instead of referring to the author. The same postil gave rise to the statement that a fresco in Giotto's style, representing the driving out of the Duke of Athens, and brought to light at the demolition of the prison, was painted by Cennini. (Fr. Bacchi, *Illustratore Fiorentino*, pt. v., Flor. 1839).

³ The second commentary, with the notices of modern art, is printed in Cicognara's *Storia della Scultura*, vol. iv., and more readably, together with some extracts from the third, in Lemonnier's edition of *Vasari*, vol. i. pp. v.-xxxv.

differing according to the persons and circumstances, to two patrons, Piero de' Medici and Francesco Sforza, in 1460.¹ These notices, as well as technical remarks, were also made use of by Vasari, whose judgment on Filarete's confused book is just, though rather severely expressed.

¹ On Filarete's treatise and the two dedications, cf. Vasari, iii. 290, 291, and Gaye, i. 200-206, where will be found the dedication to Fr. Sforza. (Cf. *supra*, p. 122.) Filarete gives us a foretaste of the art-phraseology of Federigo Zuccaro. For the rest, he says to Sforza: 'If my book is not elegant, take it as the work, not of an orator nor of a Vitruvius, but of thy master-builder who cast the doors of St. Peter's.'

CHAPTER XIII.

BUILDING IN THE DAYS OF LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

ARCHITECTURE was always a subject of great interest to Lorenzo de' Medici; he possessed an unusual knowledge of the art.¹ It was he who made the plan for the façade of Sta. Maria del Fiore, which was executed in wood by Jacopo Sansovino and painted in chiaroscuro by Andrea del Sarto more than twenty years after the designer's death, when his son, Pope Leo X., made his public entry into Florence.² We shall see what share he took in the project for the completion of this façade. He was intimate with several of the chief architects of the time. A letter, written to him from Rome by Alberti,³ unluckily not on the subject of art but about a proposed exchange of property, shows on what good terms they were: 'I am glad that thou dost address me in confidence worthy of our old friendship; and as I am conscious of my obligations, I am ready to do for thee and at thy desire anything that can be agreeable to one who loves thee. If what thou askest of me were not founded on reason, thou wouldest neither have consented to act as mediator thyself, nor have sought out a third party to do so.' The brothers Da Majano and Sangallo enjoyed his interest and assistance both in and outside of Florence, where a great deal of building was carried on. Yet he built nothing more himself than

¹ N. Valori, l. c. p. 176.

² Vasari, viii. 267. On the design of Andrea, see Waagen, *Kunstwerk und Künstler in England*, i. 244. Cf. *post*, p. 197 *seq.*

³ Pini, *Scrittura d'Artisti*. Cf. A. v. Zahn, *Jahrbücher für Kunstwissenschaft*, iv. 367.

a convent and a villa. Of the convent not a trace is left, and the façades of the cathedral and of the church of the Santo Spirito—in which he was so much interested—still await completion, as does that of San Lorenzo, though Pope Leo X. made preparations for the immediate execution of the works. The finest building of Lorenzo's time in Florence was erected, not for him but for a family which, although connected with his, was destined to maintain a long struggle with it—namely, the Strozzi.

Considering how intimate Lorenzo was with the brothers Da Majano, it seems strange that he employed them so little. There is no authentic record of Giuliano having been employed in Florence except as a worker in wood. He was engaged on the choir-stalls in Sta. Maria del Fiore in 1471 and the following years, and in the audience-chamber of the palace of the Signoria (finished ten years later), where his younger brother Benedetto executed the marble doors, and where he was associated with Francesco di Giovanni, called Francione, master of Baccio Pontelli, who did a great deal of work at Rome and Urbino.¹ Giuliano's works in Rome, where, according to Vasari, he built—under Paul III.—the palace of San Marco and a galleried court, now no longer in existence, are buried in impenetrable obscurity. It is certain that he was there in the time of Sixtus IV., and also that he began the stalls in the choir of Perugia Cathedral, which were finished in 1491 by Domenico del Tasso, one of the Florentine family of wood-workers and architects.² It is needless to repeat how the calling and labours of architect and wood-worker (*magistri lignaminum, legnaiuoli*) merged one into the other, even in the next century, like those of sculptor and goldsmith. In his latter years Giuliano was more abroad than at home. In 1478 he was at Recanati, in the States of the Church, building a palace for Antonio

¹ Vasari, *Life of Giuliano*, iv. 1 *seq.* Gaye, l. c. in annis 1478, 1480, 1481.

² A. Rossi, in the *Giornale di erudiz. artist.*, 1872, p. 97. Inscription: 'Opus Juliani Maiani et Dominici Taxi, Florentini, mccccclxxxxi.'

Giacomo Venier, Cardinal of Cuença, who appealed to Lorenzo that he might urge the dilatory artist to go on with his work: ¹ 'As the said Master Giuliano is a most devoted servant of your Magnificence and eulogist of your excellent qualities, and apparently cannot be moved unless stirred up by you, we beg you to address him on the subject, and to see that he goes to Recanati at the appointed time to finish what he has begun.' In the spring of 1481 Giuliano was passing through Urbino, where the palace of Federigo of Montefeltro made such an impression on him that he induced Lorenzo to ask the duke for a drawing of it. This the duke had executed by Baccio Pontelli, who continued the beautiful work of Luciano Lauranna. 'My lord the duke,' wrote Pontelli to Lorenzo, ² 'answered very graciously that I was to make the drawing, but that he would prefer sending your Magnificence the house itself, that you might rule in it as in your own.' It was doubtless Lorenzo's doing that Giuliano was summoned to Naples. This must, therefore, have happened after the reconciliation in 1480. Notwithstanding the many commissions he received there—for King Ferrante and his eldest son were both much given to building, and after the expulsion of the Turks from Otranto the kingdom enjoyed a few years' peace—there is no need to suppose that he took up his abode there permanently, for artists were generally given to wandering. The famous triumphal arch of King Alfonso in Castelnuovo—not finished till the sixteenth century—is probably in no part his work; but certainly to him may be attributed the Porta Capuana, excellent in point of architecture but disfigured by modern additions. ³ Giuliano died at Naples in the autumn of 1490, and Lorenzo's expressions concerning his loss, in a letter to the Duke of

¹ C. Milanesi, in the *Giorn. stor. degli Arch. Tosc.*, iii. 233, 234. Letters dated Rome, February 1-20, 1478. In consequence of the Cardinal's death in the summer of 1479, the building remained unfinished.

² Urbino, June 18, 1481. Gaye, l. c. p. 274.

³ S. Volpicelli, *Descrizione storica di alcuni principali edifici della città di Napoli* (Naples 1850), p. 1 *seq.*

Calabria,¹ show how highly he esteemed him: 'Your Excellency's letter informs me of the death of Giuliano da Majano, which causes me sincere regret, both on account of our intimacy and because he was engaged in your Excellency's service, and his death will leave many a work unfinished. As you contemplate continuing these, I hear that you want me to procure you another architect, on which subject Paol' Antonio Soderini writes to me in detail. It will give me pleasure if your Excellency will command my services and be satisfied with my arrangements, as was the case with Giuliano; at whose death I have at least the satisfaction that you have been pleased with the work of one who entered your service on my recommendation.'

Giuliano's brother Benedetto, ten years his junior, was not employed as an architect by Lorenzo. His share—as wood-carver—in the works at the palace of the Signoria has been already referred to. But his masterpiece was a work of architecture executed in the last years of Lorenzo's life, and—if we except the Pitti Palace, which stands alone—the most perfect specimen of palatial architecture that Florence has to show. The story of the building begun by Filippo Strozzi the elder in 1489 makes a curious study of manners and an interesting chapter in the history of art. When Cosimo de' Medici contemplated building himself a house, he was afraid of rousing disapproval by too much splendour; more than half a century later another rich citizen felt the same anxiety. He saw the commonwealth and city in altered circumstances, and had before his eyes the warning example of Luca Pitti. Lorenzo Strozzi, who wrote a life of his father, tells of this grand undertaking:² 'When Filippo had made due provision for his descendants—as he thought more of fame than of money, was fond of building, and in-

¹ Gaye, l. c. p. 300 (undated).

² *Vita di Fil. Strozzi il vecchio*, p. 22 seq. (Cf. i. 395.) Cf. also, Gaye, l. c. p. 354 seq., where are also notices by Luca Landucci, an apothecary, on the beginning and progress of the work, and Filippo's will. Vasari treats at length of the palace and of the smith Caparri in his *Life of Cronaca*, viii. 116 seq.

telligent in the art—he decided, as the surest way of handing down his name to posterity, to erect such a building as should make a name for him and his throughout Italy and beyond it. He found, however, one great hindrance in the way. The man who was at the head of the Government might take it into his head that the reputation of another would put his own into the shade, and Filippo was in great dread of exciting envy. So he had it rumoured about the city that his children were so numerous and his house so small that, now they were grown up, he must provide an abode for them, which could be better done in his lifetime than after his death. Then he began, with all sorts of circumlocutions, to talk—first to master-masons and then to architects—on the necessity of building a new house. At times he spoke as though he would begin soon; then made a show of being still undecided and unwilling to spend in a hurry the fruits of many years' labour. Thus artfully did he conceal the object he had in view in order to attain it better. He used to repeat, a comfortable citizen-like house was enough for him, good but not grand. Now the masons and architects, after their kind, kept enlarging upon his plans, which was just what pleased Filippo, though he pretended to the contrary, and declared that they drove him to what he was neither willing nor able to do.

Now it happened that he who then governed the destinies of the city desired to see it embellished in every way; his opinion being that if he was responsible for good and evil, so would beauty or ugliness be laid to his account. Deeming that so large and costly an undertaking would be difficult to estimate and superintend, and might (as often happens with merchants) either destroy the originator's credit or ruin him altogether, he began to meddle in the matter, and asked to see the plans. When he had examined them, he suggested divers embellishments, and advised the use of *opus rusticum*. But the more Filippo was encouraged the more he pretended to draw back. He declared he would

on no account have *opus rusticum*, as it was unsuitable to the condition of a citizen, and would entail heavy expense. He was building, he said, with a view to his own comfort, and not for pomp; and thought of making shops on the ground floor, to produce an income for his sons. To this everybody objected, pointing out how ugly and inconvenient it would be. Still Filippo continued his remonstrances, and said complainingly to his friends that he had begun an undertaking which he only hoped he might bring to a successful end; he wished he had never spoken of it, rather than have got into such a labyrinth. The more he pretended to be afraid of the cost, to conceal the greatness of his intentions and the extent of his wealth, the more he was urged and encouraged to the building. Thus by adroitness and caution, he managed what, had he conducted himself otherwise, would either have been forbidden or have brought him under no little suspicion.

The first thing to be done was to gain space for the *casa grande*. And space was limited. The Strozzi palace lies at the west end of the old town, in a quarter now, perhaps, the liveliest in the city, and doubtless animated even at that time, being close to the old market and to the square named after the church of Sta. Trinità, whence may be seen the bridge of the same name. Several distinguished families dwelt, and some still dwell, in the immediate neighbourhood: the Buondelmonti, Altoviti, Gianfigliuzzi, Bartolini, Alamanni, Viviani, Tornabuoni, Vacchietti, Antinori, and others. According to the original plan, the building was to stand free, with a square and garden on the south, extending as far as the Via Portarossa, where stand the houses of the Davanzati and Torrigiani. But the plan was imperfectly executed. A tolerably large square is on the eastern side, but on the south only a narrow space, now bridged over, divides the palace from neighbouring buildings; on the west the street (Via de' Legnaiuoli) is of moderate width, and on the north it is only since the front of the Tornabuoni house was rebuilt

a few years ago (see p. 125), that sufficient space and light has been gained to get a view of the noble edifice, which on this side was formerly quite hidden.

On August (July ?) 16, 1489, Filippo Strozzi laid his foundation-stone. His memoirs contain a description of the important proceeding, characteristic of the habits of the time. 'At the moment when the sun came up over the mountains, I laid the first stone of the foundations, in the name of God, as a good beginning for myself, my successors, and all who may have a share in the building. I caused a mass of the Holy Ghost to be sung at the same hour by the brethren of San Marco, another by the nuns of Murate, a third in my church, Sta. Maria di Lecceto, and a fourth by the monks there (who are under some obligation to me), with a prayer for a blessed beginning to the work. The time for laying the foundation-stone was fixed by a horoscope by Messer Benedetto Biliotti, Maestro Niccolò, and Messer Antonio Benevieni, doctors; also Bishop Pagagnotti and Messer Marsilio (Ficino), who all confirmed it as lucky. I sent twenty lire to the brethren of San Marco, to be distributed in alms as they thought good, and as many to Murate. I spent ten lire in smaller alms. To Benedetto Biliotti I gave four ells of black damask, costing twenty lire. I had to breakfast Maestro Jacopo the master-mason, Maestro Andrea the founder, Filippo Buondelmonti, Marcuccio Strozzi, Pietro Parenti, Simone Ridolfi, Donato Bonsi, Ser Agnolo, Lorenzo Fiorini, and other of my friends.'

The ground floor was not yet half built when Filippo died, on May 14, 1491. After him, the house was the abode of fortune and greatness; but how many storms burst over it in the days of his youngest son and of his grandchildren!

The Strozzi Palace is a great square building, nearly a hundred feet high, and a hundred and twenty feet wide; it displays rustic work in its greatest perfection, and, notwithstanding the severity and simplicity of its construction, is more attractive than any other building of this style. The

stories, of nearly equal elevation, are divided by strongly defined string-courses, and are composed of great blocks of ashlar (now blackened by nearly four centuries) of unequal length, but in even horizontal lines—*opus rusticum* throughout, but more evenly hewn than in the houses of the Medici and the Pitti, and other buildings. The ground floor has a grand arched doorway on each of the three façades, and small square windows at a considerable height above the stone parapet that runs round the whole. The two upper stories have arched windows divided by small marble columns, with the crescent of the family arms in the panels, and surmounted, like the doors, with upright blocks of ashlar. The handsome but half-finished cornice and the courtyard, both by Simone del Pollaiuolo called Cronaca, and the famous iron lanterns, belong to a period later than that now under consideration. The founder had thought he could complete the building out of his income, without touching his capital; but, owing to untoward circumstances and dissensions among the sons, the work was not brought to its present state of relative completeness till forty-two years after Filippo's death.

In Lorenzo's letter to the Duke of Calabria, after the death of Giuliano da Majano, he states that he was endeavouring to replace the lost one. 'On looking about among the master-builders here, I find no one who, in my opinion, can be compared with Giuliano. I have, therefore, written to Mantua, to a Florentine there, whose capabilities and practice in building ought, I think, to qualify him for the work to be done. If this should come to nothing, and we can make no better choice, we shall be obliged to choose the least bad one possible (*il manco reo che sarà possibile*) in this place.'¹ These words sound strange from Lorenzo, when Benedetto da Majano and Giuliano da Sangallo were both in Florence. The most probable explanation is that present

¹ Gaye, l. c. *ibid.* A letter from Lorenzo, December 16, 1490, to Francesco Gonzaga, in which he asks for leave of absence for Luca Fancelli. Whether the latter went to Naples is uncertain; Francesco di Giorgio was there for some time between February and May 1491.

engagements prevented them from leaving the city, and therefore, Lorenzo's choice fell on Luca Fancelli, who holds a subordinate place in the history of art. Benedetto must have been already known at Naples, and Lorenzo himself had, in 1488, sent to King Ferrante the plan of a palace, by Sangallo,¹ who, in consequence, went to Naples. Giuliano, son of Francesco Giamberti, had been from his childhood known to the Medici family, to whom in Cosimo's and Piero's days his father furnished woodwork. He himself, instructed by his father and Francione, acquired great skill in this art, did some work in Sta. Maria del Fiore, in the palace of the Signoria, and at Pisa, and even in later years continued to style himself *Legnaiuolo*. The Giamberti family must have been intimately connected with the Medici, for after the death of Giuliano de' Medici his little son Giulio was taken care of in their house in Borgo Pinti, where the Panciatichi-Ximenes palace now stands. Giuliano Giamberti afterwards followed two branches of architecture, fortification and palace-building, with great success. In his latter years he was engaged on Sta. Maria del Fiore and St. Peter's at Rome.

In the autumn of 1472, Giuliano, then twenty-nine, was at Rome, working for Sixtus IV.² What he actually did there, where so many Tuscans were employed, is unknown. That he made long and frequent sojourns there is proved by his excellent studies of antique buildings, that have been so useful to later investigators, and by his intimate connection with Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere. The war of 1478 called him home, where he served as an engineer in defending various places. The restoration of peace enabled him to resume his works at Rome; one of which, the castle of Ostia, begun probably for the above-named cardinal, and

¹ Among Sangallo's drawings in the Barberiniana at Rome. Gaye, l. c. p. 301. Vasari, vii. 212, 213.

² A. v. Zahn, *Notizie artistiche tratte dall' Archivio segreto Vaticano*, *Arch. stor. Ital.*, ser. iii. vi. 171.

finished in 1486, marks an important step in military architecture, while its picturesque beauty indicates the eye of a true artist.¹ Long before this castle was finished, Giuliano must have begun at home the building which raised him highest in the esteem of Lorenzo de' Medici—the villa at Poggio a Cajano. Francione and others had submitted plans; Lorenzo chose that of Giuliano. The situation is favourable, on a hill of no great elevation, but with a clear view on three sides. The house is reached by a broad flight of steps, and is of the regular Tuscan type, which continued to later times. The portico before the hall, with its gable decorated with a frieze in Terra della Robbia, displays a tendency to the antique. The great hall has a barrel-vault, the dimensions of which gave rise to a doubt as to the possibility of its execution.

At the time when Giuliano is supposed to have gone to Naples, a great work begun by him in his native city can scarcely have been ready for habitation. This was the convent of the Augustinian Friars in front of the Porta San Gallo, the immediate occasion of which was Lorenzo's liking for the preacher Fra Mariano of Genazzano. The work was important enough to give the artist a new name, under which the whole family became famous. According to Vasari, it was Lorenzo who first used the appellation, and on Giuliano's playful remark that he was taking a backward step in abandoning his old family name, Lorenzo replied that it was better to make a name by one's own merits than to inherit one.² Only a part of the huge building was completed, and this was totally destroyed in 1529. To Lorenzo is attributed the idea of rebuilding the castle on the Poggio

¹ A. Guglielmotti, *Della rocca d'Ostia e delle condizioni dell' architettura militare in Italia prima della calata di Carlo VIII.* (Rome 1862). C. Ravioli, *Notizie sopra i lavori di architettura militare dei nove da Sangallo* (Rome 1863).

² The circumstance that the name Sangallo is to be found as early as 1485 (notes to Vasari, l. c. p. 214) hardly tells against the truth of this story, as the building was probably begun long before. The appearance of the name in the collection of the Barberini drawings, begun in 1465, dates from a later time.

Imperiale near Pozzibonzi, the importance of which had been but too clearly shown in the wars of 1478-79, and he obtained the commission for Giuliano. The work began in 1488, was afterwards directed by Giuliano's younger brother, but finally sank into as complete ruin as the works of Henry of Luxemburg on the same spot. Nothing is known of what Sangallo did in Milan, whither he is believed to have gone on Lorenzo's recommendation, with the plan of a palace, for Lodovico il Moro, and where he met Leonardo da Vinci.

His great patron was no longer living when he began, for Giuliano Gondi, on the Piazza San Firenze, the palace which, though unfinished, still produces a pleasing effect with its fine proportions, its artistic arrangement of rustic work on the first and second stories, and its elegant arcade.¹ The court of the convent of Sta. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi (Cestello), in the Via de' Pinti, is one of Giuliano's earlier works, not wanting in character or grace. Nothing is known of independent works by Antonio, Giuliano's brother and frequent assistant, during Lorenzo's lifetime. His time of activity in Tuscany and Rome, both as a military builder, and as an architect of churches and palaces, began under Alexander VI. and lasted till only a degenerate scion was left of the race of Lorenzo the Magnificent. The Aretine art-historian rightly says that these two brothers left architecture as an inheritance to their family. It was they who mainly contributed to keep up in Tuscany a tradition which was never quite false to the Quattrocento, even when the Renaissance had been overgrown with a certain grotesqueness.

Lorenzo was concerned in two great works, neither of which came to perfection. The building and decoration of the façade of Sta. Maria del Fiore went on till about the middle of the fifteenth century. Donatello and his school contributed to it the marble facings and statues which were

¹ The Gondi Palace was finished in 1874, if not after the original design, at least in the style of the part previously existing.

carried up to the rose-windows over the side doors.¹ The completion of the work was all the more to be desired as the gilt cross had gleamed above the lantern of the dome since May 30, 1472. On February 12, 1490, the following decree was issued by the consuls of the wool-merchants' guild:² 'Forasmuch as of late several of the chief citizens have repeatedly called to mind what a great dishonour it is to this city that the front of the cathedral church should remain in its present condition, to wit, unfinished, and also that the parts already executed in nowise correspond to the rules of architecture, and are bad in many ways, and that it would be highly praiseworthy to come to some conclusion on the matter, the said consuls have resolved and given authority to the present and future master-builders of the church to regulate expenditure and arrange everything that shall seem to them good and profitable for the said purpose now and hereafter.' This decree shows that in the minds of those concerned the fate of the existing portions of the façade was as much decided as ninety-six years later, when they were destroyed after very brief deliberation.

On January 5, 1491, a commission met, under the presidency of the two master-builders Maso degli Albizzi and Tommaso Minerbetti, to pass judgment on the numerous models and designs (*modelli et designi undique habiti et collecti*). Many who were not personally present had sent in plans: Benedetto da Majano, Francesco di Giorgio, Filippo Lippi, Andrea Verrocchio, Antonio Pollaiuolo. There were two designs by Giuliano da Majano, then lately dead. No less than twenty-nine artists had come forward, among whom were Cronaca, Benedetto da Majano, Francione, Lorenzo di Credi, Domenico Ghirlandajo, Pietro Perugino,

¹ From a drawing of Bernardino Poccetti and other documents in the *Metropolitana Fior. Illustr.*, plate xiv.

² In the commentary on Vasari, vii. 243. Francesco Albertini mentions in his *Memoriale* (see Crowe and Cavalcaselle, ii. 436) Lorenzo's intention of finishing the façade ('la quale Lorenzo de' Medici voleva levare e ridurre a a perfectione') and his plan.

Andrea Contucci of Montesansovino, Andrea della Robbia, Sandro Botticelli, Alesso Baldovinetti, and others who, except in this case, are known only as goldsmiths or painters. Lorenzo de' Medici himself had sent in a design. The meeting was held in the portico and the loggia of the office of works (*Opera*), the arches of which—now blocked up and containing a fine marble bust of the first grand duke on the façade—may be seen behind the choir of the cathedral. The models and designs having been examined, were reported on by Tommaso Minerbetti, whereupon Carlo Benci—a canon and one of the competitors—being asked his opinion, rose and said that he held it advisable to take the opinion of Lorenzo de' Medici, a man so versed in architecture that if they followed him they would be the least likely to fall into error. Bartolommeo Scala recommended that a decision should be adjourned to give opportunity for further deliberation. Others took the same view, but thought it better to wait no longer than was absolutely needful. Then Lorenzo de' Medici rose, and said: 'All who had sent in models or designs were deserving of praise; but as the work in question was one of lasting importance, long and grave deliberation was needful; and it was advisable to postpone a decision in order to consider the matter further.' Pietro Machiavelli and Antonio Manetti, architects, supported him, the rest were silent. Sixteen months later he who had started the whole affair lay in his grave. Then came times when Florence had other things to think of than the façade of her cathedral. For the latter, however, it was well that the rebuilding was not begun at that time, for Giuliano da Majano and Giuliano da San Gallo would have been just as incapable of producing work corresponding with the main character of the building, as were Buontalenti or Dosio under the Grand Duke Ferdinand I., or Baccio del Bianco—a decorative painter rather than an architect—of whose façade the foundation-stone was actually laid in 1636. The old unfinished façade might not correspond with the mighty pile

that had developed under the hands of so many architects, but the new one would have disfigured it for ever.¹

The church of the Santo Spirito, too, remained unfinished. Great damage had been done by a fire on March 22, 1471, and three months after contributions were voted out of the taxes for the restoration,² as had been done before. In consideration of this the municipality made it a condition that the escutcheon of the lilies and the cross should be placed beside those of the guilds. There was some difference about the doors, as appears from a decree of the master-builders in 1486, and from a letter of Giuliano da Sangallo to Lorenzo,³ which also shows the want of agreement between the former and Giuliano da Majano. Six architects were to deliberate on the matter, and Majano seems to have carried the day, to the disgust of Sangallo, who expresses a hope that Lorenzo on his return will not allow such a fine building to be spoiled. Further information is wanting. It is to be regretted that the exterior was not finished then, while the traditions of Brunelleschi's time were still in a great measure alive. On the other hand, a great deal was done in the interior of the choir of Sta. Maria del Fiore. In the palace of the Signoria also much work was accomplished in the first and second stories—especially the latter—in the audience chamber, and neighbouring apartments. It cannot be doubted that Lorenzo had a share in all this. The Sala dell' Orologia in the palace took its name from the curious clock made by Lorenzo della Volpaia for the Medici house, and afterwards placed in this hall, whence it has strayed to the Museum of Natural History. It is a handsome piece of work, after the pattern of those made in the fourteenth century by the Paduan Giovanni Dondi (degli Orologi), showing the courses of the planets, the signs of the zodiacal and celestial phenomena, and it brought great fame to its maker, who was

¹ The façade now displays the naked rough brick wall.

² Richa, ix. 11, *et seq.* Gaye, l. c., p. 570. Cf. i. 319.

³ Gaye, l. c. ii. 450. Pini, *Scrittura d'Artisti*.

appointed clockmaker to the city in 1500.¹ Volpaia had a rival in one Dionisio da Viterbo, who, in June, 1477, was recommended by the rich Sienese banker Ambrogio Spannocchi to Lorenzo de' Medici, to whom he wished to show an ornamental clock with numerous figures that moved at the same time.²

The great number of architects in Lorenzo's latter years shows how actively building was carried on. The works executed at that time by Simone del Pollaiuolo Cronaca cannot be chronologically arranged. But when it is considered that at Lorenzo's death this talented man was thirty-five years old, and was soon after fully engaged on public works, it is easy to see that he must long have been in active occupation.³ The Servite convent of the Annunziata, the interior of which was his work, has been entirely altered. On the foremost slope of the hill of San Miniato he built the Franciscan church, for which a rich citizen—Castello Quaratesi—had left to the guild of Calimala a large sum in 1449.⁴ This man had intended to decorate Sta. Croce with a suitable façade, but the scheme came to nothing because he was refused permission to place his coat of arms on the building. The church of San Francesco recalls the abbey of Fiesole. Tradition relates that Michel Angelo admired the simple grace of this church (*La bella villanella*), in whose immediate neighbourhood he spent some time when in difficulties. The sacristy of Sto. Spirito, a very elegant octagon, was not finished till later; Cronaca's cupola fell in when the scaffolding was taken away.⁵ A great deal of building went

¹ Description by Poliziano in a letter to Francesco della Casa, *Epist.* l. iv. ep. 8. D. M. Manni, *De Florentinis inventis* (Ferrara, 1730), c. 29. Cancellieri, *Le nuove Campane di Campidoglio* (Rome, 1806), p. 8. Albertini mentions the clock in the Palace of the Signoria in 1510; it was probably taken there in 1495.

² Gaye, l. c. p. 254.

³ There is great confusion in Vasari, viii. 115, *et seq.* The commentary begins its continuous dates only in 1495, chiefly from Gaye.

⁴ Moreni, *Contorni di Firenze*, v. 6, *et seq.* The chronology here is very confused; it is no better in Moisé's *Sta. Croce*, p. 90. The bells of San Marco were hung in the belfry in 1498.

⁵ Diary of Luca Landini, in Vasari, l. c. p. 121.

on in the immediate neighbourhood of the city. The church of Montoliveto, which, from its cypress-crowned hill on the left bank of the river, overlooks city and country, was finished in 1472. Older conventual buildings were enlarged and churches beautified. This was the case above all with the before-mentioned Dominican nunnery of Annalena in the quarter of Oltrarno, and the monastery of the Jesuates at San Giusto, whose church contained numerous works of art. The building of the façade of Sta. Croce was contemplated in 1476, as is proved by a decree of the municipality, which assigned for the purpose a sum to be collected from backward taxpayers. It was reserved for our own times to witness the execution of the project, after a sketch said to be by Cronaca. The court in front of the Servites' church, and the colonnade on the square in front of the church, opposite the Foundling Hospital and imitating its portico, are both attributed to Antonio da Sangallo, and, if not begun in Lorenzo's lifetime, must at all events have been built soon after his death.

Lorenzo had obtained from Innocent VIII. leave to use the convent gardens—where they were larger than necessary—for the construction of new streets and squares, and the widening of old ones. Space there was in plenty, for after all the building in the sixteenth century the great number of convents was further increased in the days of the later Medici by many new ones on a large scale. One of the new streets of that time—behind the Servites' church—bears the name of Via Laura, after Lorenzo. Quieter times and increase of riches naturally strengthened the taste for building, and fine houses with their extensive courts and gardens called for adornment with antiquities and works of art. The palace, the gardens, the villas of the Medici were the richest; but they were not without rivals. The Strozzi, Acciaiuoli, Soderini, Capponi, Tornabuoni, Sassetti, Benci, Ricci, Valori, Alessandri, Pucci, Rucellai, Pandolfini, and many others ordered works of painting and sculpture for

their homes and villas as well as for their chapels in the city churches. The house of the Martelli, the garden of the Pazzi, the villa of the Valori at Majano, and many others, were full of antique statues. In the palace of Niccolò da Uzzano might be seen the antique porphyry lion which Lorenzo greatly admired,¹ and which still adorns the staircase of the house. Artists, too, had many fine things. In the house of the Ghiberti, for example, was a precious sculptured marble vase which the famous artist Lorenzo Ghiberti was said to have received from Greece.

¹ Fr. Albertini, l. c., p. 442.

CHAPTER XIV.

SCULPTURE AND PAINTING.

THE first man to whom Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici gave a commission for a great piece of sculpture, after they became independent, was Andrea del Verrocchio. He was a disciple of Donatello, and had worked with the master in San Lorenzo. This was of itself a recommendation to the Medici, who found him also employed by their relatives, the Tornabuoni. Vasari rightly observes that a certain severity is even more prominent in his works than in those of his master, because he lacked the creative versatility of the latter and tried to supply by study what Nature had denied him. In bronze-casting he displays a delicacy which recalls the goldsmith. The monument to Piero and Giovanni de' Medici was finished in 1472. Like Donatello, Verrocchio restored damaged antique sculptures for the Medici house and garden, and executed for Lorenzo some bronze busts which were sent to Matthias Corvinus. For the palace of the Signoria he furnished a bronze statue of David, now in the Podestà Museum, not very remarkable either in conception or execution. His shortcomings, however, are amply atoned for by the charming bronze group over the fountain in the court-yard, representing a boy, half-fighting, half-playing with a dolphin, full of easy grace that seems almost above this artist. It was a commission from Lorenzo, and intended for the fountain in the court at Careggi, but placed in its present position by Duke Cosimo. Verrocchio's capabilities in more serious work were shown in Florence by the

group of our Lord and the apostle St. Thomas, which in 1483 received the most prominent place in front of the church of Or San Michele—and in Venice, by his equestrian statue of Colleone. Though the former, with its broken and angular drapery—recalling the Umbrian school—does not exactly conform to the rules of plastic art, it is penetrated with a depth of feeling that renders it highly attractive; and in the latter the defiant self-conscious bearing of the old *condottiere* brings his position and character vividly before the eye. Among Andrea's marble works is a relieve, very naturalistic, representing the death (in her confinement, September 24, 1477) of Francesca Pitti, wife of Giovanni Tornabuoni; it was intended for her tomb, and is now to be seen in the palace of the Podestà.¹

Equally intimate with the Medici, if not more so, was Antonio del Pollaiuolo, whose family connections linked him to the school of Ghiberti. In his sculptures the goldsmith is more closely discernible than in those of Verrocchio. They both, while painting and sculpturing, continued to work as goldsmiths, and Pollaiuolo was regarded in his native city as the first master of this branch. 'A man unique in his art,' wrote the Signoria, after his death, to the ambassador in Rome, 'well deserving that we, who are wont to value praiseworthy qualities of whatever nature, should honour his memory by supporting his heirs.'² Lorenzo's high esteem for him is shown by passages in his letters to Giovanni Lanfredini. The silver helmet presented in 1472 to the conqueror of Volterra was by Pollaiuolo; so was also the oft-copied medal representing the criminal attempt of the Pazzi, more valuable in a historical than in an artistic point of view. No great works of sculpture by him are known in Florence, the labour of his latter years being chiefly devoted to Rome, where his masterpiece is the tomb of

¹ Cf. A. v. Zahn's *Jahrbücher*, vi. p. 136.

² Florence, February 13, 1498, in Gaye, l. c., p. 340.

Pope Sixtus IV. in the chapel of the Holy Sacrament in St. Peter's, and where he died in 1498.¹

As Verocchio and Pollaiuolo passed from goldsmith's work to sculpture, without abandoning altogether their original occupation, so Benedetto da Majano rose from artistic cabinet-work to sculpture and architecture. The monument to Giotto in Sta. Maria del Fiore—a marble bust in a richly ornamented circular frame—was, according to the inscription, erected by the citizens in 1490.² The bust of Antonio Squarcialupi, in the same church, is only ascribed to Benedetto by a later tradition, which the merit of the work by no means justifies.³ The erection of both monuments was, doubtless, due to Lorenzo. Benedetto's greatest work was a pulpit, executed for a Florentine citizen—Pietro Melini—of whom he also made, in 1474, a most natural and expressive marble bust, which he signed with his name. The pulpit is decorated with reliefs, representing scenes in the history of St. Francis of Assisi—the richest and finest work

¹ The monument of Sixtus IV. was finished in 1493 for Card. Giuliano della Rovere (Julius II.). That of Innocent VIII. must not be judged from its present mutilated condition.

² *Monuments sépulcraux*, plate iv. Inscription (by Poliziano):

ILLE EGO SUM PER QUEM PICTURA EXTINGTA REVIXIT
 CUI QUAM RECTA MANUS TAM FUIT ET FACILIS
 NATURE DEERAT NOSTRÆ QUOD DEFUIT ARTI
 PLUS LICUIT NULLI PINGERE NEC MELIUS
 MIRARIS TURREM EGREGIAM SACRO ÆRE SONANTEM
 HÆC QUOQUE DE MODULO CREVIT AD ASTRA MEO
 DENIQUE SUM IOCTUS QUID OPUS FUIT ILLA REFERRE
 HOC NOMEN LONGI CARMINIS INSTAR ERAT
 OB. AN. MCCCXXXVI. CIVIS POS. B. M. MCCCCLXXX.

³ Del Migliore, l. c., p. 36. Richa, vi. 121. *Monuments sépulcraux*, plate vi. Inscription (attributed to Lorenzo):

MULTUM PROPECTO DEBET MUSICA ANTONIO
 SQUARCIALUPO ORGANISTE IS ENIM ITA ARTI
 GRATIAM CONIUNXIT UT QUARTAM SIBI VID
 ERENTUR CHARITES MUSICAM ASCIVISSE SO
 ROREM FLORENTINA CIVITAS GRATI ANIMI
 OFFICIUM RATA EIUS MEMORIAM PROPAGARE
 CUIUS MANUS SEPE MORTALES IN DULCEM AD
 MIRATIONEM ADDUXERAT CIVI SUO MONU
 MENTUM POSUIT.

of the kind since that of the Pisani. In imitation of Ghiberti, the reliefs are freely handled; landscapes and backgrounds in perspective are introduced, but with a careful subordination of the pictorial elements which afterwards became too prominent.¹ In Sta. Maria Novella is Benedetto's monument to Filippo Strozzi. The artist who built the palace, of which the owner lived to see only the beginning, also erected in his beautiful family chapel this mausoleum, which was begun before his death.² Above the black marble sarcophagus, in the middle of a panel under an arch delicately carved in arabesques, is a large medallion of the Virgin and Child, in white marble, surrounded by a rich garland of flowers and foliage; at the sides are four angels in adoration. The charm of expression and delicacy of treatment recall Antonio Rossellino and Desiderio da Settignano. Filippo's bust, preserved by his descendants in the Strozzi Palace, shows the marked, expressive features of the energetic man. Benedetto's capabilities in decorative sculpture are displayed in the marble doors of the audience-chamber in the palace of the Signoria, where he worked, as has been mentioned, with his brother. Time and ignorance have not spared this fine work, and the statuette of the youthful Baptist, which once adorned it, is now in the Uffizi collection.

The two finest works of Mino da Fiesole which adorn the Benedictine Abbey-Church, were executed about 1470; one represents the artist's own time, the other the earlier days of Florence. They are the monuments of Bernardo Giugni, and of the Marquis Hugo. The former, and his services to the State have been already mentioned. The figure of an elderly man, in his long robe, with his hands crossed on his breast, lies on the sarcophagus; between Ionian pilasters is a semi-circular niche, in which is a figure

¹ Engraved in seven plates by G. P. Lasinio (Flor. 1823). Mellini's bust is in the Uffizi collection.

² *Monuments sépulcraux*, plate liii.

of Justice in relief, and in the lunette is a medallion profile of the deceased.¹ The other monument, finished in 1481, is richer, but very like the first in general arrangement. It is a token of gratitude from the monks to their founder—the half-mythical Marquis who, in Emperor Otto's days, is said to have come from the neighbourhood of the Elbe and the Havel—the 'great Baron' of the 'Divine Comedy,' whose arms are quartered on the armorial bearings of the chief Florentine families.² His effigies rest on a low couch on the top of the sarcophagus, two genii support shields at his head and feet; there is a group in relief, representing Charity, and in the lunette a medallion of the Virgin and Child. As in all Mino's sculpture, careful workmanship is manifest in the accessories. This attention to detail and richness of ornamentation long remained a characteristic of the Florentines, who carried it to Rome and Naples. In the early decades of the following century, when the revolution in monumental style, introduced chiefly by Michel Angelo, was beginning to make its way, and ornamentation was compelled to take refuge in painting, admirable works in the old manner were raised in Florence. Such were the tombs of Oddo Altoviti, and Pier Soderini, both by Benedetto da Rovezzano; also the monument to Cardinal Luigi de' Rossi, cousin of Leo X., said to be by Raffaello da Montelupo. With regard to ornamentation, a distinct position is held by two monuments, companions to each other, which tradition ascribes to Giuliano da Sangallo—those of Francesco Sassetti and his wife, in their family chapel in Sta. Trinità.³ They consist of black marble sarcophagi, decorated with rams' heads, and standing beneath an arch adorned with antique arabesques and medallions, and a frieze, in the middle of

¹ *Monuments sépulcraux*, plate xxiv. Inscription: 'Bernardo Junio eq^{ti} Flor^{no} pu^{ca} concordiae . semper . auctori . et . civi . vere . populari . pii . fratres . fratri . de . se . deq . rep^{ca} opt^o merito . posuerunt.—Vixit ann. LXVIII. men. VI. di. XII. Obiit ann. MCCCCLXVI. Opus Mini.—Cf. i. 145.

² *Paradiso*, xvi. 127. *Monuments sépulcraux*, plate xxiv.

³ *Monuments sépulcraux*, plate xlv. Cf. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, iii. 230.

which are medallion heads of the husband and wife, surrounded by small figures representing ceremonies of heathen worship. They are clearly the work of an artist well acquainted with classical antiquity; who, in this case, has certainly made rather a strange use of his studies. That Giuliano da Sangallo was expert in the use of the chisel and thoroughly understood the working of the Fiesolian stone, employed in this monument, is shown by his famous mantelpiece in the Gondi Palace, which served as a model for that by Benedetto da Rovezzano in the Casa Rosselli del Turco, near Sant' Apostolo.¹ Tuscan sculptors of ornamental work, particularly those from Fiesole, Settignano, Rovezzano, and the neighbourhood, found occupation all over Italy, like the architects and sculptors from the Lake of Como, the *maestri Comacini*, in the Middle Ages. In our own days the Tuscans still show great ability in working both marble and *macigno* (the greyish stone of the neighbourhood of Florence) in which they produce objects of beautifully delicate workmanship.

Other arts at this time rose to a highly flourishing condition. The connection between architecture and cabinet-making, and that between sculpture and goldsmith's work, have been repeatedly referred to. The architect and cabinet-maker were often one, down to the middle of the following century, when the Del Tasso family continued their double occupation. But artistic cabinet-work was also connected with sculpture and painting, as may be seen by the rich choir-stalls of many churches; the ceilings and other wood-work of the palaces, with their fine reliefs, elegant panelling, and wood-mosaic (*tarsia*), much used to represent perspective as well as to imitate flowers and foliage. Many of the artists mentioned furnished work of this kind to the cathedral of Sta. Maria del Fiore, and to the palace of the Signoria. The goldsmith's art was in its glory, followed as

¹ Represented in Cicognara, vol. ii. plate xv.

it was by great sculptors, who found excellent assistants in those who never rose to the height of sculpture. The finest work of this kind in Florence is the silver reredos for the Baptistery (mentioned at p. 130), which was never quite finished. The growing taste for ornamental vessels and other objects favoured this branch of art; as did also the custom of presenting silver helmets or pieces of plate to commanders and others who had deserved well of the Republic. As early as the summer of 1397, 436 florins were paid to the goldsmiths Piero, Matteo and Donato, for silver gold and enamel, for dishes (*bacinetti*) intended for the generals Paolo Orsini, Giovanni Colonna and Bernardin de Serre. Antonio del Pollaiuolo made a large silver dish for the Signoria, and various ornaments for rich families; and the churches were adorned with silver crucifixes and elegant lamps.

Die-cutting was only a branch of sculpture and the goldsmith's art, sure to be practised where these two arts flourished, and contemporary history furnished a store of materials. But here the Tuscans do not hold the foremost place, either in time or in excellence of workmanship. Natives of Northern Italy, Lombards, and Venetians, came before them in the great cast portrait-medallions, by which Vittore Pisanello made a name in the fifteenth century. Donatello's followers strove to follow but never came up to him. Three of the Tuscan medallists—Antonio Pollaiuolo, Bertoldo, and Andrea Guazzalotti of Prato, had dealings with the Medici. Only the first is known to have struck a medal referring to his country's history, namely, one relating to the Pazzi conspiracy. Guazzalotti, who was in correspondence with Lorenzo and cast statues for him, commemorated the Pope and the Duke of Calabria as victors over the Turks; the medals are characteristically conceived, but lacking in delicacy of treatment. Medals of Cosimo and of Filippo de' Medici, Archbishop of Pisa, are attributed to Pisanello, the latter probably

incorrectly; a medallion with the head of Lorenzo seems to be the work of a Florentine, Pietro di Niccolò.¹

Yet another branch of art reached a high perfection in Florence—that of engraving precious stones. The taste for engraved gems, which kept pace with the increasing knowledge of antiquity and the passion for books and antique works of all kinds, revived the art of cutting cameos and precious stones. A good example of the growth of this taste is related by Vespasiano da Bisticci in the ‘Life of Niccoli,’² whose house was full of antiquities. Passing along the street one day, he saw a boy wearing round his neck a chalcedony with a figure engraved, which the learned man thought he recognised as a work of Polycletes. He inquired the name of the boy’s father, and sent to ask him whether he would sell the stone. The man was willing to let him have it for five florins, which he thought good payment. Now, in the days of Pope Eugene, the future Cardinal Luigi Scarampi—who had much taste for matters of this sort—being in Florence, asked Niccoli to show him the stone, and offered him two hundred ducats for it. Niccoli, who was not rich, accepted, and the chalcedony passed into the hands of Scarampi, then to Paul II., and, after his death, to Lorenzo de’ Medici. Lorenzo’s uncle, Giovanni, had collected many gems, of which not the least famous was the carnelian representing Apollo and Marsyas. It was supposed to be Nero’s seal, and was set in gold by Lorenzo Ghiberti.³ Lorenzo considerably increased the collection of antique gems inherited from his father, and formed a treasury, of which numerous remains still exist, after all the disasters that befell his posterity. He and Paul II. inspired this branch of art

¹ Plates and details in Cicognara, Litta, and Colas’ *Trésor de Numismatique et de Glyptique*. See Vasari’s *Life of Pisanello*, ii. 152, *et seq.* On Guazzalotti, see Julius Friedländer (Berlin, 1857), trans. by Cesare Guasti (Prato, 1862), with notes and documents, among which is a letter from Guazzalotti to Lorenzo, dated September 11, 1478.

² V. da Bisticci, l. c., p. 476.

³ Vasari, l. c., iii. 112. On the Medicean treasures. Cf. *ante*, p. 132.

with new life, and enabled modern workers to enter the lists against the ancients. The first modern gem of known date, is a portrait of Pope Paul in 1470, now in the Uffizi collection. Giovanni delle Corniuole formed himself on the models in the Medici collection, and attained the perfection conspicuous in his famous head of Savonarola. He had a competitor in the Milanese Domenico de' Cammei, who worked chiefly for Lodovico il Moro, and to whom is attributed the portrait of Lorenzo on an onyx of three strata, placed with that of the great Dominican in the Uffizi collection. Many other stones, with subjects taken from mythology, sacred history, &c., are works of this period, when, also, much antique work was copied. The name of Lorenzo de' Medici, to be read on many gems in Florence and elsewhere, recalls the former wealth told of in Latin verses, and in the testimonies of contemporaries.¹

In painting we now witness the development of the tendencies which first appeared in Masaccio, and were so actively reciprocated by the sister-art of sculpture. Here the two branches of art frequently met, and their reciprocal influence is discernible in the character of the work. It was thus with Verrocchio, and the Pollaiuoli. The former, of no great distinction as a painter, recalls his bronze works in his picture of the Baptism of Christ.² The brothers Pollaiuoli,

¹ Vasari, *Life of Valerio Vicentino*, ix. 236, *et seq.* G. Pelli, in his *Saggio istorico della R. Galeria di Firenze* (Flor. 1779), i. 8, *et seq.*, ii. 9, *et seq.*, gives some account of the Medici collections. In the Museum of Naples alone (formerly in the palace of Capodimonte) are preserved more than twenty cameos with Lorenzo's name, and a great number of gems set as rings. They came from a Bourbon-Parma inheritance, many of the family treasures having passed, through Margaret of Austria, wife of Duke Alessandro de' Medici, to her son by her second marriage, Alessandro Farnese, and, at the extinction of the Farnese family, to the Spanish Bourbons. The question whether all the stones marked with Lorenzo's name or with the initials L. M. are modern, or whether the name or initials were also engraved on antique gems to indicate the owner, cannot be discussed here. The epigram:

COELATUM ARGENTO VEL FULVO QUIDQUID IN AURO EST
EDIBUS HOC LAURENS VIDIMUS ESSE TUIS, &c.

is in Bandini's Catalogue of the Laurentian MSS., iii. 545.

² Perfetti, *Galeria dell' Accad. delle b. Arti* (Flor. 1845). The collection in the Academy contains many important works of this period.

whose grave, quiet faces may be seen together on their tomb in San Pietro in Vincoli at Rome, cannot well be separated in their works; and, though Piero occupied himself with painting more than Antonio, the inscription by the latter on the monument of Pope Sixtus IV. shows his excellence in gold and silver work, in painting, and bronze casting. Antonio painted for Lorenzo the Labours of Hercules, of which some small copies are still in existence. The picture of St. James was painted for the chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal; that of the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian,¹ the most famous work of these painters, was executed in 1475, for the Pucci chapel in the entrance-court of the Annunziata.² In these works may be recognised the sculptor, and the student of anatomy, to whom fidelity in representing the figure is more important than the feeling for beauty. Alesso Baldovinetti, who was probably a pupil of Uccello, and a fellow-worker of Andrea del Castagno, experienced the influence of sculpture indirectly; and where he might have learned from it, in regard to modelling, he has only acquired a constrained, angular style, which is far from pleasing. An example of this may be seen in his picture of the Madonna enthroned with saints, painted for the villa at Caffaggiuolo, and now in the Uffizi collection. More satisfactory is a work executed from a design of his—the picture of Dante in Sta. Maria del Fiore which represents the *aitissimo Poeta* in the attitude of speaking, with his open book in his hand; on his right is hell, on his left the city of Florence, in the background the Mount of Purgatory, above his head the firmament. This picture was actually attributed to Orcagna, till the artist's name—Domenico di Michelino—and the date of execution, 1466, were discovered.²

Benozzo Gozzoli's most important works—his Pisan

¹ Now in the English National Gallery. Outline in Crowe and Cavalcaselle, iii. 132.

² Cf. *ante*, p. 40. Engraving in the *Metropolitana fior. illustr.*, plate xxxvii. Remarks in Gaye, l. c., ii. 5. Cf. *ibid.*, i. 563.

frescoes—were executed from 1469 onwards; they display great creative power, though the harmony is defective and the masses and spaces are ill distributed. It is observable in the works of Filippo Lippi, Gozzoli, and Baldovinetti, a far inferior artist, that the custom was growing in Florence of introducing into historical and religious compositions portraits of spectators who had nothing to do with the subject. Nothing remains of the frescoes painted by Baldovinetti for the Gianfigliuzzi in the choir of Sta. Trinità; they contained portraits of Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici, Bongianni and others of the Gianfigliuzzi, Luigi Guicciardini, Luca Pitti, Diotalvi Neroni, Filippo Strozzi, Lorenzo della Volpaia, and Paolo Toscanelli.¹ This branch of painting reached its highest development in the hands of Baldovinetti's famous pupil, Domenico Ghirlandajo. Sandro Botticelli and Filippino Lippi pursued the same branch of art. The former learned the goldsmith's trade in his youth, and shows traces of the influence of the Pollaiuoli. He was the pupil of Fra Filippo and became the master of his son, whom he survived; though Filippino was his junior by twenty years. In the paintings of both there is a peculiar fantastic element, attractive and interesting at first, but tiresome after a time. In the faces it degenerates into a constantly recurring type, and in the composition becomes mannerism. The way, too, in which both painters employ allegory increases the appearance of affectation. Yet both were men of great talent, with a fine and delicate sense of beauty when not marred by superficiality and exaggeration. Both had much to do with Lorenzo. None of the pictures painted for him by Botticelli are now in existence, but his fine picture of the Epiphany must have been a commission from the Medici, for in this work (formerly in Sta. Maria Novella, and now in the Uffizi) the Three Kings have the features of three members of the family—Cosimo the elder, his younger son Giovanni, and his

¹ Vasari, iv. 102, 103.

grandson Giuliano.¹ The colouring is more like that of Ghirlandajo, to whom the picture was long attributed, than the brighter, thinner tone of most of Botticelli's works. Florence contains many of his allegorical pictures, as well as Madonnas and saints; among them the Coronation of the Virgin, painted for the church of San Marco, as a commission for the Silk-workers' Guild.² Botticelli not only introduced likenesses into his historical pictures, he painted separate portraits; among them those of Lorenzo's mother and Giuliano's early lost love, the 'bella Simonetta,' very pleasing in the gentle simplicity which characterises her expression, her attitude, and even her dress. Both heads are in profile, the contour a little exaggerated, in the manner of this artist.³ Botticelli's close connection with the Medici is shown by the circumstance that after the conspiracy of the Pazzi he undertook to paint the likenesses of the conspirators on the wall of the palace of the Podestà.⁴

Only one work of Filippino Lippi is mentioned as having been executed for Lorenzo—the unfinished fresco, representing a sacrifice, in the hall at Poggio a Cajano—but their intimacy is well known. The commission given to Filippino by Cardinal Olivieri Caraffa for the painting of his chapel in Sta. Maria sopra Minerva is said to have been procured by

¹ Vasari, v. 115.

² *Galeria dell' Acc. delle B. A.*, engraved by F. Livy.

³ Lucrezia Tornabuoni Medici, in the Berlin Museum (No. 81), wrongly described as the wife of Lorenzo, a mistake repeated in Crowe and Cavalcaselle (l. c., p. 173) from Vasari, but corrected in Lemonnier's edition, l. c., p. 121. The Bella Simonetta is in the Pitti Palace; there is an engraving by L. Calamatta in his work on the Bardi gallery.

⁴ Cf. i. 405. G. Milanesi, *Sulla Storia dell' Arte Toscana*, p. 292. Crowe and Cavalcaselle (iii. 159) strangely see in this commission a proof of the estimation in which Botticelli was held as an artist. These pictures of shame, with which tardy debtors were also punished, e.g. Ranuccio Farnese in 1425 (Gaye, l. c., i. 550) were not much relished by artists, and seem to have been only executed at a high price; in this case it was forty florins. Andrea del Castagno, to whom Vasari erroneously attributed these paintings, which were executed more than forty years after his death, received from a similar commission in 1445 the surname 'degli Impiccati,' which poor Andrea del Sarto seems to have likewise dreaded during the siege in 1530.

Lorenzo, and so, probably, were those of Matthias Corvinus. The influence exercised on the views and tendencies of the son by his father's works, especially those at Prato—where Filippino passed most of his youth—was mingled with that of Botticelli. The former comes out most in the earlier works, notably in the frescoes of the Brancacci chapel at San Pietro in Carmine, painted about 1485; the latter in the wall-paintings begun for Filippo Strozzi, but not finished till long after, in the chapel in Sta. Maria Novella. The immediate neighbourhood of Masaccio's works had, no doubt, a beneficial effect on the young artist in his earlier works, for Filippino, not yet thirty, shows in the Brancacci frescoes infinitely more fidelity to nature and feeling for historical composition than in the paintings of the Caraffa and Strozzi chapels. The scenes in the last,¹ from the Acts and legends of the Apostles, display undeniable tokens of spirit and imagination, giving a vivid representation of the passions. But there is affected mannerism, inharmonious colouring, and an apparent delight in light tints playing into each other. Some of these defects may be partly laid to the account of restoration. The preference, noticeable in Botticelli, for antique accessories, produces in Filippino an effect of artificial overloading. Among his easel-pieces, the great Madonna with saints, painted in 1485 for the council-chamber of the palace of the Signoria, is distinguished by grace and earnest work.² Filippino, too, was fond of introducing figures of contemporaries. In his frescoes at S. Pietro in Carmine may be seen Tommaso Soderini, Piero Guicciardini (father of the historian), Luigi Pulci, Antonio Pollaiuolo, Sandro Botticelli, Francesco Granacci, and the painter himself. In an altar-piece (now in the Uffizi), representing the Epiphany, are portraits of several members

¹ Contract dated April 21, 1487 (remarkable for the reservations on the part of the employer), in Lorenzo Strozzi's *Vita di Filippo Strozzi il Vecchio*, p. 60, *et seq.*

² Now in the Uffizi. Gaye, in the *Kunstblatt*, 1836, No. 90, and Carteggio, i, 579-581.

of the younger branch of the Medici, doubtless benefactors of the convent of San Donato, for which the picture was painted four years after Lorenzo's death. There are Pierfrancesco, grandson of Giovanni di Bicci, his son Giovanni, father of the famous leader of the Black Bands and grandfather of the first Grand-Duke, and the younger Pierfrancesco, father of Lorenzino, the murderer of the first Duke of Florence.¹ Other portraits, such as those of the Nerli family in Sto. Spirito, represent donors. In Cosimo Rosselli's greatest work, the Procession with the Chalice in the church of Sant' Ambrogio, only one portrait is named, that of Pico della Mirandola. In Lucca, where Rosselli painted a good deal, he fell into the reigning fashion. He had formed himself on the model, first of Fra Angelico, then of Benozzo Gozzoli, and with moderate talents endeavoured to combine the conventional with the naturalistic tendency.²

The highest achievements of painting in Lorenzo's days were those of Domenico Ghirlandajo. He is a nobler Benozzo, guided by a refined sense of symmetry. His power of drawing figures and groups is combined with variety and animation. He has a strong feeling for historical character, and makes a moderate use of architecture and accessories that heighten the interest of his compositions without seeming obtrusive. What he lacks in point of ideality is compensated by his love of nature and that cultivated sense of form which makes him select natural beauty and avoid whatever is repulsive in the reality. His scenes from Scripture and the history of the Saints are full of figures, and produce a grand, often a solemn, effect without being at all forced or far-fetched. They transport us, undisturbed by anything foreign or strange, into the Florence of his day. We seem to stand in the middle of that gay and busy life,

¹ Engraved in Litta, *Fam. Medici*.

² The fresco in Sant' Ambrogio is dated, not 1465, as it was read by Rumohr (*Ital. Forsch.*, ii. 262), on the picture, which is much blackened and varnished, but 1486, according to G. Milanesi, in Crowe and Cavalcaselle, l. c., p. 291.

among the gallant active citizens and the stately, beautiful women of that city, which, according to the inscription—doubtless Poliziano's—on the picture in the choir of Sta. Maria Novella of the Angel appearing to Zacharias, was rich in the spoils of victory and the treasures of art, in noble buildings, in plenty, health, and peace.¹ Ghirlandajo's frescoes are a sort of monumental glorification of Lorenzo's latter years. Among the many portraits which give these works a value, independent of their qualities as works of art, may be seen Lorenzo's in the Sassetti chapel in Sta. Trinità, which was decorated in 1485 with scenes from the history of St. Francis of Assisi. The frescoes in the choir of Sta. Maria Novella make quite a portrait gallery. They were begun in 1490 for Giovanni Tornabuoni, and after five years' work were finished four years before the death of the painter, who is here seen at his best. Here are limned many members of the Tornabuoni and Tornaquinci families (between whom there was a connection), as well as numerous friends—Ficino, Landino, Poliziano, Gentile of Urbino, the most distinguished scholars of the time. Baldovinetti, too, is there; David Ghirlandajo, Domenico's brother; his brother-in-law Bastiano Mainardi and himself; Andrea de' Medici, Federigo Sassetti, Gianfrancesco Ridolfi—a partner in the Medicean bank—besides noble ladies and matrons, among whom is Ginevra de' Benci, a famous beauty also painted by Leonardo da Vinci, and another pleasing face, that of Giovanna degli Albizzi, who married Lorenzo Tornabuoni in 1486.²

Like the Brancacci chapel, the choir of Sta. Maria Novella was a school for painters in the palmy days of art; Andrea del Sarto, in particular, received a great impulse

¹ An. MCCCCLXXX., quo pulcherrima civitas opibus victoriis artibus ædificiisque nobilibus copia salubritate pace perfruebatur.

² Father Della Valle gave the various names in a note to Vasari (also in Lemonnier's edition, v. 76) from documents in the Tornabuoni family. On the female portraits, cf. Palmerini, *Opere d'intaglio del cav. Raff. Morghen* (Pisa, 1824), p. 108 *et seq.*

from the compositions of Ghirlandajo. When it is considered that the latter was taken away in the full strength of manhood, at the age of forty-five, and that his development was not rapid, it is hard to understand how he could have executed so many works in Florence and elsewhere. The frescoes may have been done in part by his pupils, but the easel-pieces—of which there are so many, executed with the most careful technical perfection—must have come chiefly from his own hand. Of those in Florence it will suffice to name one, the fine Epiphany painted in 1488 for the church of the Foundling Hospital. For Lorenzo, in 1488, he painted in the villa at Spedaletto some mythological subjects of Vulcan and his comrades, of which little now remains. For Giovanni de' Medici he did two altar-pieces in the abbey church of San Giusto near Volterra, of which one, 'Christ in the act of Blessing, with Saints,' still exists. But Ghirlandajo's chief patrons were the Tornabuoni, family connections of the Medici. That he and several other Tuscan artists were sent for to Rome to decorate the Sistine Chapel may safely be attributed to these two families. About twenty years before the close of the century—when Sandro Botticelli, Cosimo Rosselli, and his pupil Piero di Cosimo, were painting there with and after Ghirlandajo—the Pope and Lorenzo were reconciled; and as in Florence nothing was ever done in matters of art without him, he and Giovanni Tornabuoni doubtless procured these commissions.

The diplomatic, literary, and artistic intercourse between Florence and Rome had never been so active and fertile as in those days when the predominance of Florentine influence in Rome was openly acknowledged. Almost all the remarkable works of the time of Sixtus IV. are due to Florentine architects, sculptors, and painters. They may have commenced even before the Pazzi conspiracy, for Baccio Pontelli began to build the chapel in 1473, and Sixtus was urgent for its completion. Beside the Florentine painters above named two other Tuscans were employed, Don Bar-

tolommeo della Gatta, abbot of a small Camaldulensian convent at Arezzo, and perhaps a Florentine by birth, and Luca Signorelli of Cortona, who by his connection with Piero della Francesca forms a link between Tuscan and Umbrian art. His chief works belong to an Umbrian city, Orvieto, where indeed Tuscan masters had long taken the lead. Luca Signorelli also painted for Lorenzo. A Madonna, once in the villa at Castello now in the Uffizi, and a mythological picture, the 'Education of Pan,' seem to have been offerings of the artist to his patron. The last-named picture recalls the grandeur of conception and strong feeling for form noticeable in the frescoes in the chapel of San Brizio in Orvieto Cathedral.¹

The head of the Umbrian school in the latter decades of the century, Pietro Perugino, made repeated and long visits to Florence, and was considerably influenced by Florentine art, though with an admixture of other elements. Thus was formed a style which, opposed on the one hand to the naturalism of most of the Florentines, on the other to the enthusiastic tendencies of some among them, gave expression to the religious element which long remained dominant in the master's own country and beyond it. It is ascertained that Perugino was in Florence in 1482 and in the beginning of 1491, but nothing is known of what he did then. His chief works in Florence are of later date, as are those of his school, first among which is the 'Last Supper,' in Sant' Onofrio, probably by Bernardino Pinturicchio. In 1496, Perugino had thoughts of building a house in Florence, and in 1515—when his talent was on the wane—he purchased a future resting-place in the Annunziata; such tokens did he give of his attachment to the city which, spite of the super-human activity of Rome, was yet the focus of all artist-life and work. Of paintings by Perugino for the Medici nothing is known.

¹ The 'Education of Pan,' formerly in the Corsi Palace, is now in the Berlin Museum. Sketch in Crowe and Cavalcaselle, iv. 5.

Miniature painting¹ rapidly approached its highest development. Great illuminated church-books, antiphonaries, psalters, hours, breviaries, &c., had come forth from Benedictine, Camaldulensian, Dominican, and other convents, and were lodged in cathedrals and churches. The art of illumination was extended by Dante's contemporaries, Oderigi of Gubbio and Franco of Bologna, to prayer-books for private use and to works of profane literature, when men of rank and citizens took to forming libraries and beautiful manuscripts became objects of luxury. The field for representation was correspondingly enlarged, and from figures of angels and saints the artists of the fifteenth century passed to scenes from the classic poets or the 'Divine Comedy.' In this century the Florentine churches were filled with the finest works of this kind, most of which are now in the National Library or that of San Marco. The Dominican order were especially rich in miniature painters after Giovanni Dominici had given an impulse to this branch of art. In Cosimo's time, Fra Angelico and Fra Benedetto worked in San Marco under the eyes of St. Antonine. Don Bartolommeo della Gatta, Attavante degli Attavanti, Gherardo and Monti di Giovanni, Zanobi Strozzi, Francesco Rosselli, brother of Cosimo, and many others, distinguished themselves in this art, in which they were emulated by foreigners connected with Florence: Liberale of Verona, Girolamo of Cremona, several Sienese, and others. From the middle of the century miniature painting underwent the influence of the Van Eyck school. Many beautiful works found their way into the Medici collections. Lorenzo's

¹ Miniature painting can only be treated of very briefly here. The editors of Lemonnier's *Vasari* have added much information to the biographies of Fra Angelico (iv. 25, *et seq.*), Don Bartolommeo (v. 44, *et seq.* [on Attavante, see p. 55]), Gherardo (*ibid.* p. 60, *et seq.*), &c., and furnished materials valuable for a history of Florentine and Sienese art, in a detailed commentary (vi. 159-351). On the Dominicans, cf. V. Marchese, *Memorie*, i. 171-210. In the same author's work on San Marco are drawings of two miniatures by Fra Benedetto. The passages referring to the treasures of Urbino, Upper Italy, &c., may be passed over here.

tastes and traditions were inherited by his son Giovanni, whom Raphael's famous portrait represents with a book adorned with miniatures, and a glass for looking at them lying before him. Many miniatures went abroad, and foreign ones came to Italy. Gherardo, Attavanti, and others worked for Matthias Corvinus; and in the Burgundian Library at Brussels is preserved the mass-book painted for the king by the last-named artist in 1485, and brought to the Netherlands by Mary of Hungary, sister of Charles V. At Matthias's death Lorenzo acquired several of the manuscripts, probably ordered at his own instigation, and some of which were still in hand. Lorenzo was deeply interested in the revival of mosaic. Vasari's statement that Alesso Baldovinetti learned the long-forgotten principles of this art from a German pilgrim going to Rome must rest on its own merits; anyhow, the art was revived in Lorenzo's latter years. In 1482-83, Baldovinetti undertook to restore the mosaics in the Baptistery. About 1490, Gherardo di Giovanni and Domenico Ghirlandajo began for Lorenzo the mosaic decoration of the chapel in the choir of the cathedral, where stands the shrine of St. Zanobi. This work was never finished. The same year Domenico executed the pleasing mosaic picture of the 'Annunciation,' over the side-door of the church, towards the Via de' Servi. Baldovinetti's pupil Graffione, and Ghirlandajo's brother David, took part in these works; the latter, who busied himself with the technicalities of glass-making at Montaione, in the Elsa valley—where there are potteries and glass-houses to this day—afterwards worked both in Florence and in the cathedrals of Siena and Orvieto.¹

Thus varied and fruitful was the development of art around Lorenzo, in a great measure stimulated and shared in by him. Like his grandfather, he was not content to profit by ripe talents and pluck the fruits, he sowed for the

¹ Vasari, iv. 105; v. 60, 83; vi. 167; xi. 286.

future; he, more than any one else, contributed to bring on the most brilliant period of art. He founded a nursery for choice spirits in the collection of works of art of all kinds, ancient and modern, which he laid out in his garden at San Marco and the neighbouring casino, and the superintendence of which he confided to Donatello's pupil, Bertoldo. At a time when antique sculptures were rare, and the means of study limited, and when young men of talent had to remain for years in a dependent position which checked their individual development, advantages like these, offered to youth, were as unusual as they were invaluable. Lorenzo's sound judgment was no less useful here than his good-will. 'It is no small matter,' remarks Vasari in the 'Life of Giovan Francesco Rustici,'¹ 'that distinction was attained by all those who went to school in the Medici garden, and were assisted by the illustrious Lorenzo. This can only be ascribed to the uncommon perspicacity of that noble gentleman, who was a veritable Mæcenas, who knew how to recognise genius and merit, and to encourage them by rewards.' The painters Francesco Granacci, Lorenzo di Credi, Niccolò Soggi; the sculptors Giovan Francesco Rustici, Pietro Torrigiano, Baccio of Montelupo, Andrea Contucci of Monte San Sovino—who on Lorenzo's recommendation was summoned to Portugal, where he executed works of architecture and sculpture for King John II.—these, and others, came forth from the garden of San Marco. The variety of their gifts and accomplishments bears witness to the freedom they had there enjoyed in the development of the most diverse intellectual powers. But the one who gave to the Medicean garden a world-wide fame was Michelangelo Buonarotti. Before he was fifteen he passed from the school of Ghirlandajo into this new world. His sculptures soon disclosed the marvellous talent which his sympathetic teacher had foreboded when he recommended him and Granacci to Lorenzo;

¹ xii. 11. Cf. *Life of Torrigiano*, vii. 204, and of Michel Angelo, xii. 157.

the latter having, as the story goes, expressed to his artist-friend a regret that sculpture did not keep pace with painting. The youth came of a good family, but without property.¹ During the few remaining years of Lorenzo, he enjoyed a sympathy and kindness which had a decided influence on his life up to the threshold of old age, although the independent spirit of the free citizen often rebelled against the attachment which, as artist, he continued to feel for the Medici.

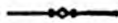
It has been generally believed that the greatest Florentine artist of the second half of the fifteenth century—Leonardo da Vinci—was a stranger to Lorenzo. The fact appeared the more strange because Leonardo was the son of a chancellor or notary of the Republic, and a pupil of Andrea del Verocchio, who was in constant intercourse with the Medici. Newly discovered documents² show that Leonardo, if not among those admitted to study in the San Marco gardens, was at least acquainted with the Medici, and that it was Lorenzo who sent him, when thirty years old, to Lodovico il Moro, in company with one Atalante Migliorotti, famous for playing on the lyre. The date hitherto assigned to his first visit to Milan—1482 or 1483—is confirmed; but there is no explanation of the fact that his name is never mentioned during the war of 1478–79. He was then twenty-six, and might have done good service to his country by that knowledge of mechanics and hydraulics which he afterwards turned to such good account in Lombardy. On January 1 of

¹ The old tradition which has come down to our own days, which derives the Buonarrotti Simoni from the Counts of Canossa (and which was believed in the family itself in Michelangelo's days, as must be concluded from Ascanio Condivi's words in his biography, published during the artist's lifetime), rests on no historical foundation. Cf. G. Campori, *Catalogo degli artisti sc. negli Stati Estensi* (Modena 1855), p. 100 *et seq.* The noble family of Buonarrotti has of late years become extinct in Florence. Lodovico, Michelangelo's father, was already connected with the Medici when holding an official post in the Casentino, where his son was born within view of the great mountain of Alvernia—the *crudo sasso* of the *Divine Comedy*.

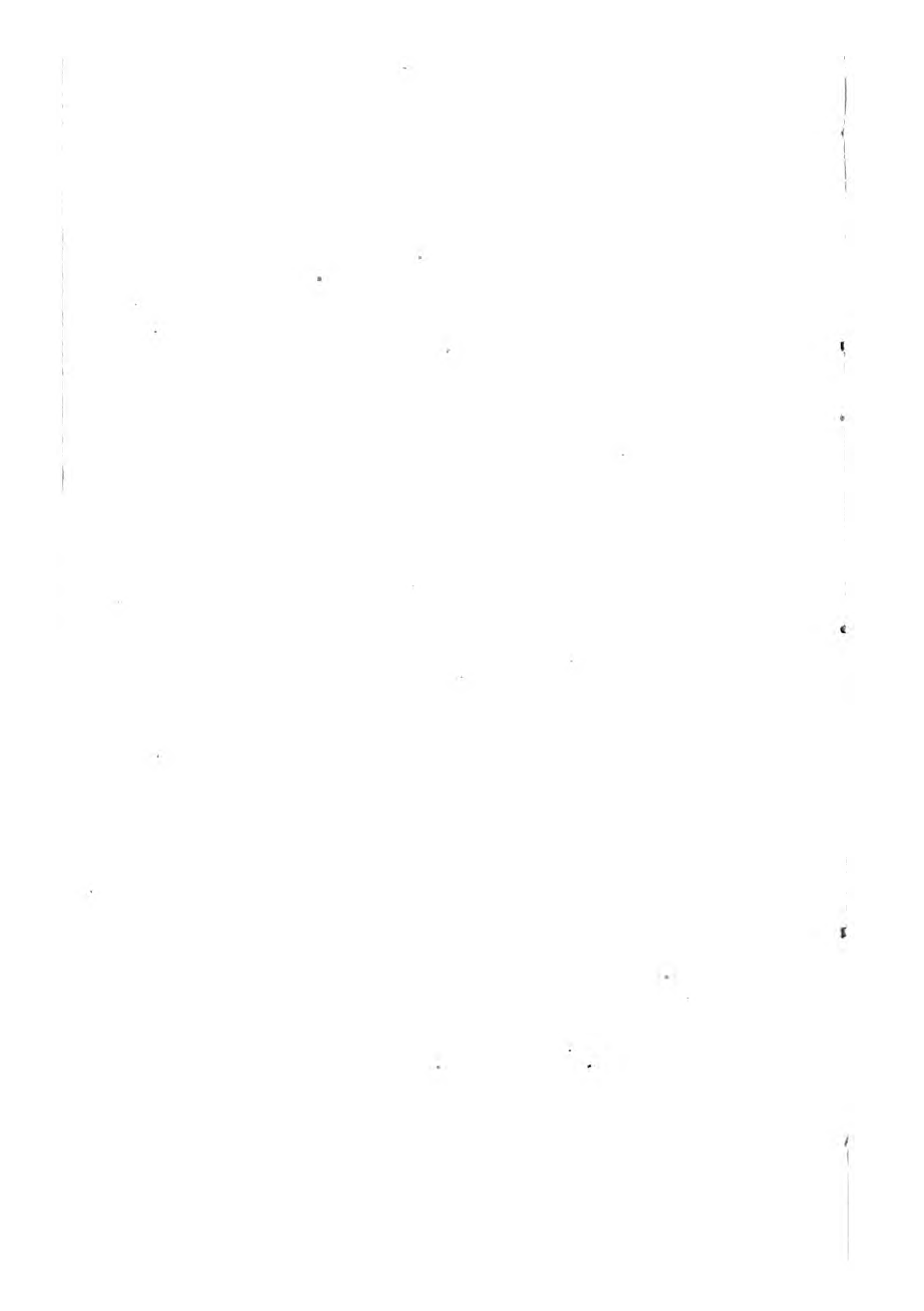
² G. Milanese, *Documenti inediti riguardanti Leonardo da Vinci*, in the *Arch. stor. Ital.*, ser. iii. xvi. 219.

the fatal year 1478, the Signoria commissioned him to paint an altar-piece for the chapel dedicated to St. Bernard in the palace. This commission, like many of the same kind, was not executed, but was transferred after Leonardo's departure for Milan to Filippino Lippi, whose beautiful Madonna (see p. 175) was placed not in the chapel, but in the council chamber. Under the rule of the two Sforzas—Gian Galeazzo and Lodovico il Moro—Leonardo founded at Milan a school of painting which gave a new direction to Lombard art. When he returned to Florence after the downfall of the Moro, Lorenzo had been seven years in his grave, and his sons were in exile.

FIFTH BOOK.



THE GROWTH OF THE MEDICEAN SUPREMACY.



CHAPTER I.

CHANGE IN THE FLORENTINE CONSTITUTION.

THE events of two years had shown that Lorenzo was not quite so secure of the direction of public affairs as he had seemed to be immediately after the conspiracy of the Pazzi. The vicissitudes of the war had produced an abrupt change in public feeling; it had become clear that internal affairs were in a great measure subject to external influences. Even when Lorenzo's position was far stronger, a diplomatist justly observed that his authority in the city depended on the estimation in which he was held by the other Italian powers and by foreign sovereigns.¹ The traditions of independence were too fresh, party interests too various and too powerful, not to create constant difficulties. The great art of the party leaders had always consisted in excluding from office any but their own partisans. But it was by no means easy to prevent internal divisions between sections of the parties themselves. During the war, a college of magistrates had to be dismissed, on account of the opposition they offered to a measure which aimed at reducing their jurisdiction to its original limits. Lorenzo's standing difficulty was the necessity he was under of controlling parties in the state, without altering constitutional forms except in apparent agreement with the popular sentiment. The ostracism known as the power of *ammonire* had proved just as dangerous as the excitement caused by the frequent summoning

¹ Ant. Montecatino to Ercole d'Este (Flor., December 17, 1482), in Cappelli, l. c. p. 265.

of parliaments. His only plan therefore was, by creating a docile following, to exclude, without the use of strong measures, all elements he could not rely upon, and to accustom the multitude to the gradual extension of his influence on home as well as foreign policy. Lorenzo had another motive. He had not been fortunate in business matters. During his grandfather's time the State finances had become entangled with those of the family. Cosimo, who was a financial genius, took care of his own interests without letting those of the State suffer. With his grandson the case was different. Cosimo had advanced money to the State; Lorenzo, on the other hand, stood in need of public money for private objects. The expenses of the war, sacrifices and losses of all kinds were the ostensible cause of irregularity in the payment of interest on the national debt, and in the settlement of marriage portions by the establishment existing for that purpose. This state of things could not last if the public bonds were to retain any value and the national credit to be maintained. For further operations, rendered hazardous by the embarrassment that already existed, men were needed who were both familiar with business and willing to go hand in hand with the director of the State. The embarrassment was already so publicly known, that it was thought advisable to avow it with apparent frankness before taking measures which really aimed at withdrawing the direction of the banks from public control, although their object was made to appear a reform for the general welfare.

On April 8, 1480, scarcely a fortnight after peace was proclaimed, the Signoria, who were all in Lorenzo's confidence, proceeded, without the intervention of a parliament, to make sweeping changes in the constitution. They carried through the three legislative councils a resolution empowering them to create a new college, in whose hands were to be placed all the appointments to public offices. This college was divided into a smaller and greater council: the former

consisting of thirty citizens capable of holding office, elected with the Signoria; the latter containing 210 members not under thirty years of age, who with the Signoria and first college filled up the required number of offices. The presence of two-thirds of the members and a proportionate majority of those present sufficed for the validity of the proceedings. One-fourth of the councillors were to come from each quarter of the city; if a family or *consorteria* had sent but one representative among the thirty, two of its members were eligible as councillors; otherwise only one, except in the case of two houses to be named by the Signoria and the thirty, for which there was to be no limit as to number or age. The 210 then added to their body 48 other members, and thus formed a great council of 288 members, which was to meet in November for the elections. On April 11 the Signoria proceeded to nominate the thirty. But a few days later a considerable modification was made in the scheme, for on the 19th the smaller council of thirty was increased by a resolution of the Signoria to seventy; the additional members being chosen by those already nominated. The new members were to be at least forty years old, and, if belonging to one of the great guilds, must have held the office of Gonfaloniere. This permanent senate of seventy, which now took the place of the former electors to the offices (*accoppiatori*), was divided into two equal parts, alternating every half year. When united, it had in fact the direction of the whole state; the more so because it had the right of filling up vacancies in its own body from among those who had held the office of Gonfaloniere, provided they had done nothing to displease the ruling party. To this senate no proposal or petition could be addressed by private persons, but only by the Signoria.

The Council of Seventy then appointed two committees of its own members. The first, commonly called from its number the *Otto di pratica*, took the place of the Magistracy of Ten. It sat only in time of war, and assumed the control

of political and military affairs, which, after deliberation in full session, it submitted to the Seventy. The other committee, consisting of twelve members, was intrusted with all affairs concerning the national credit, and all matters of jurisdiction. Both were nominated for a period of six months, and any vacancies caused by death or an appointment to offices abroad were to be filled up from the same college.¹ The existing magistracy, called the *Otto di balia*, whose authority in both civil and criminal affairs had almost extinguished that of the podestà but had lately been reduced within narrower limits, was likewise chosen from among the Seventy.

However widely the opinions of contemporaries and posterity may differ as to the character and scope of these institutions, which were afterwards greatly modified in the direction of centralisation, all agree that the measures just described contributed most effectively to the establishment of personal government. 'One must perceive,' observes Alamanno Rinuccini on the first resolution, 'that all freedom was taken from the people and they were made the servants of the Thirty, as I, Alamanno Rinuccini, though a member of the Council of the Two Hundred and Ten, testify in accordance with truth.' And further, on the completion of the scheme: 'The decree contained many things dishonourable and opposed to citizen-life and to the freedom of the people; and, indeed, from that day their freedom seemed to me dead and buried.' The general opinion on the connection of the administration with the financial affairs of the Medici is shown by the remarks of both friends and foes. Giovanni Cambi remarks: 'Lorenzo was always thinking how he could increase his authority. After the new reform had conferred

¹ Provisioni della Repubblica fiorentina dei 10 e 19 Aprile 1480, per la formazione dell'ordine dei Settanta, in the Appendix to Jacopo Pitti, l. c. p. 313 *et seq.*, with Gino Capponi's introduction. Cf. Cambi, l. c. ii. 1 *et seq.*, for the names of the Signori, the colleges, the original thirty and the two hundred and ten citizens entrusted with the election business. A. Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, p. cxxi. *et seq.*; J. Pitti, p. 25; Fr. Guicciardini, p. 61.

on the electors a power formerly belonging to the whole body of citizens, the former took into their own hands the money matters that needed regulating. The state finances had been used to support Lorenzo in his private affairs. More than a hundred thousand gold florins went to Bruges alone, where Tommaso Portinari was at the head of the Medici bank, then in danger of failure. The unfortunate community had to pay it all, for the members of the new elective body cared for nothing but to keep their own position, and assented to everything. Thus a servile feeling gained ground; the citizens sacrificed their freedom to obtain office. Yet what they did obtain was not enough to satisfy them; for all looked enviously on the inner council, to which each thought himself worthy to belong.' The voice that carries most weight is perhaps that of Alessandro de' Pazzi, who gives a sketch of his uncle in his disquisition on the Florentine constitution of 1522. 'As Lorenzo,' he says,¹ 'spent a great deal of money on a thousand things, and was not a good man of business, his fortune suffered considerably. Cosimo had spent large sums of money; perhaps because he believed that the glory of building churches and monuments would be of more advantage to his family than stores of gold; and in this his example was followed by Piero and his sons. When their credit fell, they would have been driven from their position but for the events of 1478, which gained for the Medici new friends and confirmed the attachment of old ones, and altogether strengthened their power. The same events furnished Lorenzo with the means of using both his private means and the moneys of the State, which before he would not have dared to touch, to fulfil his own obligations, and re-establish his political influence on a permanent basis while rectifying his financial embarrassments.'

The altered constitution with respect to finance is thus described by Niccolò Valori:² 'Although no new taxes were

¹ Cf. *ante*, vol. i. bk. ii. ch. 4.

² L. c. p. 174.

imposed, the revenues of the State increased so much after peace was assured, that State-creditors had reason to be satisfied. The Republic has such good resources that she can hold out long in time of war, and recover rapidly in time of peace.' This sounds very well; but, according to Alamanno Rinuccini,¹ the public credit had to be supported in the course of the very next year by a sale of State property. The bad name which Lorenzo acquired by his arbitrary appropriation of public moneys seems to have induced him to restrict his banking operations, which depended for success on changes of fortune and on the skill of agents, and to lay out his means in landed property rather than trust to foreign speculations.

If Niccolò Valori is to be believed, no new taxes were imposed in 1480. But an examination of the proceedings of the board of taxation shows how little this statement is to be relied on. The progressive scale of 1447, which originally produced the large sums laid out in supporting Francesco Sforza, and which was to be in operation for three years only, the tax being collected in small instalments as need arose, had remained in force during the remaining years of Cosimo, and with some modifications under Piero and his son. According to a calculation of the payments in 1471-1480, the sum total amounted to 1,682,888, or on an average 168,288 gold florins annually. In 1479 the tax had risen to 367,450 gold florins. The new law issued by the new finance committee on May 18, 1480, and modified on the following January 30, introduced a double progressive duty in place of the former one. The first, fixed for seven years, was on immovable property, so that the lowest class, with an income extending beyond the actual necessities of life but under fifty gold florins, was to pay seven per cent., and the highest, having an income of 400 and over, twenty-two per cent. The second was a personal tax, which, according to

¹ *Ricordi*, l. c. p. cxxxv.

the same scale, amounted to one gold florin and four-twentieths for the lowest class, four florins and four-twentieths for the highest. This mode of taxation, whereby a quota of the national debt could be discharged, lasted with some changes till Lorenzo's death; its real aim being to keep the lower orders in good humour and weaken the great families; while those that governed always found means to indemnify themselves and their friends, so that equality of taxation was merely apparent. The taxes were collected according to the needs of the Government. More than once they were paid seven times in the year. The proceeds at one collection of the first of these taxes had been estimated at about 30,000 gold florins, but only yielded 25,000; in 1487 it fell to 18,000; and in the following year to 15,000. From 1481 to 1492 the sum of the tax payments amounted to 1,561,836 gold florins, or, on an average, 130,153. The largest revenue was that of the year 1483—that of the Ferrara war—viz. 164,665, and the smallest those of the years of peace, from 1489 to 1492, viz. 105,000. Under Lorenzo's son the total annual amount was reduced to 90,000. On calculating the various duties on both movable and immovable property, appearing under manifold names, ever changing with circumstances, alternately rising and falling, it becomes evident that the direct tax, which by the old financial system of the Republic was limited to 25,000 or 30,000 gold florins, a light weight in the balance against the duties estimated at 250,000 to 300,000, had increased twelve-fold in Lorenzo's time. The taxpayers were indeed registered at the Monte, and might discharge part of their payments in its bonds. But the Monte more than once stopped paying interest altogether, often paid only half, and sometimes only a fifth. The exchequer then took the quotas of taxes in question not at the nominal value of the bonds, but according to the rate of payment then current at the Monte. All these manipulations, which made the artificial financial system of Florence a perfect labyrinth of perplexity, could

not but be injurious to the interests of the community, while they deprived property of its secure foundations.¹

At the same time, the repeated modifications in the constitution which had been going on ever since Cosimo's time had thrown it completely off the balance. People had long been accustomed to see the exercise of popular sovereignty by means of parliaments converted into a mere party manoeuvre. The men in power, in order to gain a formal legal countenance for their measures, would have some extraordinary authority conferred on them by the so-called people, i.e. by that portion of the citizens who were either on their side or were coerced into becoming so through fear. The constant change in the mode of election to the offices, either by lot or by nomination, produced in the end no great difference, for all were excluded who were not thought to have been made sure of. In Lorenzo's time, at least after the restrictions subsequently imposed on the scheme introduced in 1480, there was no more trouble in that respect. In defiance of democratic forms, everything tended to a personal government. As if enough had not already occurred to increase the power of the Medici, another circumstance—unimportant in itself—occurred to raise Lorenzo's position. On the evening of June 2, Amoretto Baldovinetti, natural son of a citizen of good family, was arrested, and on the following morning Battista Frescobaldi, formerly consul at Constantinople. Scarcely were they in custody when an attempt was made to seize the brothers Francesco and Antonio Balducci, but only the latter was captured. Immediately a report was spread of a conspiracy against Lorenzo's life. Frescobaldi had once greatly assisted in delivering up Giovanni Bandini to justice, and seems to have thought himself insufficiently rewarded for having spent some of his private means in the affair. In Rome he met some Florentine emigrants who put him in communication with Amoretto,

¹ Canestrini, l. c. p. 237 *et seq.*

just the man, he considered, for a hazardous undertaking. Provided with weapons and poison, these two came to Florence. Their efforts to gain supporters had little success; even the brothers Balducci seem to have been undecided. Nevertheless they resolved to attempt the assassination, and again in a church; according to some it was to be in the cathedral, according to others in S. Pietro in Carmine, where Lorenzo was expected on Ascension day. The plot failed and the three conspirators were condemned to death. A legal objection was raised against the sentence, as the case was only that of a criminal project; but the Signoria and the Council of Seventy pronounced it high treason, and enacted that in future every act by which Lorenzo was injured or his life threatened was to be regarded in the same light. 'Lorenzo's position and authority,' remarks the Ferrarese agent,¹ 'was certainly heightened by this event, but many are of opinion that it did him more harm than good, by increasing the number of his enemies.' When sentence was pronounced many citizens went to console the prisoners; but they answered cheerfully that they regretted not so much the sentence they had to undergo as the failure of their scheme to free the city; they had tried to do what ought to be the duty of every citizen, and if they had only had two hours more it would have been seen of what they were capable. They met their doom on the morning of the 6th, on the gallows in the palace of the Podestà. Lorenzo took care to announce to the courts and to his noble friends throughout Italy, either by private letters or through the ambassadors of the Republic, the danger with which he had been threatened 'by that traitor Battista Frescobaldi and his companions.' The consequence was that the following of friends and clients which had served to protect Lorenzo since the Pazzi conspiracy formed

¹ Bartolommeo Signippi, chancellor of the Ferrarese embassy, to Ant. Montecatino, Flor. June 3 and 6; Montecatino to Ercole d'Este, June 9, 1481, in Cappelli, l. c. pp. 253-255.

itself into a regular body-guard, and the capital became accustomed to see him appear in public with a suite differing from that of a tyrant only by the civil character of its members.

Three months after this Otranto was re-taken. In the beginning of the year the plenipotentiaries of the Italian States had met at Rome to consider an alliance in which foreign countries were invited to join against the Infidels. Sixtus IV. bestirred himself actively. With help from various quarters, King Ferrante made great exertions to meet the danger that was threatening not only Apulia but all Italy. Alfonso of Calabria besieged Otranto with a large force. As he could not succeed in completely cutting off the approach by sea, the town might have held out a long time, particularly as a new Turkish army was gathering on the Albanian and Dalmatian coasts; but the death of the Grand Signor, and the strife of his two sons for the throne, put an end to the resistance of the place. On September 10, Otranto opened its gates, but it never recovered from these heavy strokes of fate. The duke, whose easy victory was commemorated by medals, did not keep to the conditions of the surrender. A year later, Rome, so lately threatened by the Turks, saw many of them within her walls, not as victors but as doubly vanquished; they were those who had taken service in the Neapolitan army, which thus once again—as in the days of Frederic II.—numbered unbelievers in its ranks.

CHAPTER II.

THE FERRARESE WAR.

THE Pazzi conspiracy was only a prelude to the events which caused a Neapolitan army to stand as an enemy before the walls of Rome. The Pope and the Venetians had had no time to give free course to their spite against old enemies or former allies so long as the storm was hanging over the Apulian coast. Sixtus IV. even showed himself friendly to the Florentines, and Guid' Antonio Vespucci, who, towards the end of January 1481, returned to Rome as ambassador, endeavoured to strengthen this good understanding. But no sooner had the imminent danger from the East disappeared than the object of clearing the coast of Albania and Western Greece of the Turks, which might have been more easily attained than at any previous period, passed out of sight. A dispute between Venice and Ferrara furnished an occasion for fresh strife. Ercole of Este refused to recognise any longer as valid certain old and burdensome obligations which kept him in a sort of dependence on the Republic with respect to the execution of justice in his capital by a Venetian vicegerent, and the procuring of salt from Venetian saltworks. The dispute rose to such a height that Venice threatened to take up arms; she thought the moment favourable on account of her alliance with the Pope. Sixtus IV. had sound reasons for avoiding everything that could favour the interference of Venice in the affairs of Ferrara and Romagna; but the requirements of prudent policy were driven into the background by the selfish am-

bition of his nephew, who hoped to strengthen his position in Romagna by Venetian influence. Duke Ercole vainly tried through Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere to make the Pope understand that it would be neither to the honour nor the advantage of the Holy See to leave him to be crushed by the superior power of Venice.¹

Girolamo Riario went to Venice, where he was most honourably received and presented with the patriciate. War was decided on. King Ferrante sided with his son-in-law, as did also Milan and Florence. The alliance of Bologna and several of the lords of Romagna was secure; Siena and Genoa adhered to the Pope and Venice. Most of the captains of the Tuscan war undertook the leadership again, under somewhat altered circumstances. Besides Roberto Malatesta, the Venetians gained Roberto da Sanseverino, who had fallen out with Lodovico Sforza and given him a great deal of trouble in his own territory. The command of the Milanese troops was entrusted to the Duke of Urbino. The Florentines were led by Costanzo Sforza, to whom the general's *báton* had been solemnly presented October 2, 1481.² In the spring of 1482 the struggle began in several quarters at once.³

A large Venetian fleet sailed up the Po, while two armies attacked the Ferrarese territory—Sanseverino from the Lombard side and Malatesta from that of Romagna. Rovigo and the whole Polesina fell into the hands of the Venetians, whose commander-in-chief encamped, on May 28, before Ficcarólo—a castle situated on the Po to the north-west of Ferrara—intending to take it, and then to cross the river and attack the capital, Malatesta co-operating with him

¹ Ercole d'Este to Ant. Montecatino, Ferrara, January 19, 1482, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 259.

² For a detailed account of the ceremony, see Ant. Montecatino to Ercole d'Este, Flor., October 2, 3, 8, 1481, in Cappelli, l. c. pp. 255-258.

³ Marin Sanuto, *Commentarii della guerra di Ferrara nel 1482*. (Venice 1829, ed. by Leonardo Manin). Sanuto was an eye-witness of the events of the war. Many details are given by Malipiero, who took part in the naval war. Romanin, book xi. ch. 4 (iv. 401 *et seq.*)

from the south side. But meanwhile the Duke of Urbino, with the Milanese troops, raised his camp at Stellata, on the right bank, to assist the besieged and cover Ferrara; and Malatesta was called away from the Po district to meet a threatened danger in an opposite quarter. Alfonso of Calabria had appeared at the Tronto, demanding a free pass to bring aid to his brother-in-law. The Pope had not yet declared himself; the envoys of Naples, Milan, Florence, and Ferrara were still in Rome. On the refusal of the pass they left the city, and the duke entered the States of the Church as an enemy. He met no serious resistance. Rome resounded with the clang of arms; as an annalist says, 'The city which had hitherto been wont to produce only bulls and briefs now produced nothing but arms.'¹ Girolamo Riario had the post of captain-general for the Church, but his incapacity soon became apparent. The Neapolitans were at Grottaferrata; their horsemen made excursions to the very gates of the city; vineyards and fields were laid waste. This state of things continued for weeks. At last the Pope saw himself compelled to appeal for help to Venice, and she ordered Roberto Malatesta to go to the assistance of her hard-pressed ally. Meanwhile, the Florentines had made a diversion; Niccolò Vitelli, supported by Costanzo Sforza, had taken Città di Castello on June 19, and the whole country around had fallen into his hands.

Thus far matters seemed to be going in favour of the Duke of Ferrara and his allies. The Pope was angry as well as distressed, and in his anger and distress he did not disdain the policy followed by one Italian state after another, to the ruin of Italy, the policy of seeking help from a foreign power. To Louis XI. he addressed the bitterest complaints against Ferrante, seeking to stir up the French king to an expedition against Naples, where the prevailing discontent was in his favour, and he offered the Dauphin an opportunity

¹ Fac. Volaterr., l. c. col. 173.

of becoming a standard-bearer of the Church.¹ Raimond Pérault, afterwards Bishop of Saintes and Cardinal, was sent to the king with positive proposals. Louis XI. was too practical to enter upon such far-reaching and uncertain projects, but, as in all similar proposals, the seed sown did not fall on barren soil. Meanwhile things had changed in Italy. Ficcarólo surrendered after a siege of rather more than a month, and the enemy crossed the Po unimpeded by the troops of the Duke of Urbino, which were no match for the Venetians, especially when their leader, having been seized with fever in the low unhealthy neighbourhood of the river, had to be carried to Bologna. Ferrara was threatened, and a Venetian fleet alarmed the coast of Apulia. But the heaviest blow was yet to come. On August 21, at Campomorto, on the road from Rome to Porto d'Anzo, Alfonso of Calabria was completely defeated by Malatesta, with heavy loss of men and artillery.² The victor died at Rome on September 8, of fever which he had caught in the infected Campagna. At the same time the other side lost their best general, Federigo da Montefeltro, who closed his eventful life in Bologna. These two, opposed to each other on the battlefield, but connected by the closest family ties, each ignorant of the other's mortal danger, commended in their last hour their states and families to each other's care. Girolamo Riario had tried to profit both by the victory and the death of Malatesta, on the one hand to retake Città di Castello, and on the other to get Rimini into his own power. Both attempts were frustrated by the Florentines, who supported Vitelli and enabled Roberto's widow, Elisabetta di Montefeltro, to preserve for her little step-son Pandolfo his paternal inheritance. Still the situation was very serious.

¹ Godefroy, *Histoire de Charles VIII.* (Paris 1684). Documents, p. 312. C. deCherrier, *Histoire de Charles VIII.* (Par. 1868), i. 32. U. Legeay, *Histoire de Louis XI.* (Paris 1874), ii. 444. [Very meagre with regard to Louis' Italian transactions].

² For details of the battle of Campomorto (S. Pietro in Formis), see the Roman diaries and Montecatino's reports to Ercole d'Este in Cappelli, l. c. p. 260 *et seq.*

Roberto Sanseverino established himself on the right bank of the Po, and raised strong fortifications at Pontelagoscuro, close to Ferrara. The duke began seriously to think of abandoning his capital and withdrawing to Modena, but the Florentine plenipotentiary, Bongianni Gianfigliuzzi, restrained him. Lodovico Sforza was kept in check by a rising in the Parmesan territory.

The way the war was carried on in the Duchy of Ferrara was regarded in Florence as very unsatisfactory. The Duke of Urbino had in nowise answered to the expectations formed of him. Jacopo Guicciardini remarked to the Ferrarese ambassador that the league had no head. Lorenzo de' Medici was anxious, but said in reference to the Duke of Ferrara, 'I cannot imagine you will lose, unless you fail for want of spirit. *Here* all will be done that can be.' The expedition against Città di Castello, he observed, had been made with the object of giving the duke breathing time. Ercole was always commending his interests to the Republic. If Ferrara fell into the hands of the Venetians, Florence would be likewise endangered. Military operations were not accounted sufficient; the old threat of a council was renewed. But just at this time the adventurous Archbishop of Carniola, whose character and history have never been thoroughly investigated, made a feeble attempt to revive the Synod of Basel, which had been dissolved for forty years. This man, a Dominican, whose name seems to have been Andrea Zuccalmaglio, was in Rome with commissions from the Emperor Frederic about the time of the Pazzi conspiracy. There he enjoyed high favour for a time, but afterwards he fell into such deep disgrace that he was not only deposed from his ecclesiastical dignity but imprisoned in the castle of St. Angelo, from whence the Emperor's intercession liberated him in the summer of 1481. He betook himself, *viâ* Florence, first to Bern and then to Basel, where, falsely giving himself out as still Frederic's messenger, and finally assuming the title of cardinal, he

proclaimed the opening of the great Assembly of the Church on the feast of the Annunciation, 1482. The moment for this proclamation was not badly chosen, for the Pope was just involving himself in a fresh war; but measures being immediately taken in Rome to put on their guard both foreign powers and the free city in which the fire threatened to kindle once more, the wretched man—whose sanity had begun to be doubted, and who was not joined by one single prelate from France or Germany—rushed into extremities, and in the beginning of the summer launched the wildest invectives against Francesco da Savona, who was no Pope but a son of the devil, against whom he called Christ and the œcumenical council to witness.

Not long before, Lorenzo had found out that it is not safe to play with spiritual weapons, however much they might be blunted by misuse in temporal projects. It seems, therefore, hardly intelligible that he could think of letting himself appear to take part in such a senseless enterprise. Possibly he had seen the archbishop when the latter passed through Florence, with his heart full of rancour against the Pope and his nephew. In Lorenzo's defence it may be urged that affairs in Italy were in a sad plight while the Pope blindly allowed himself to be led by the ambition of his kinsmen. In a letter written about this time to Pier Capponi, ambassador at Naples,¹ Lorenzo says plainly that the authority of religion itself is endangered by a mode of government so unbecoming the supreme pastor. King Ferrante nominated ambassadors to the council, and proposed that the Italian League should be represented, as well as the individual states. He hoped to induce the Kings of Hungary and Spain to favour the cause. But in vain. On September 14, by Lorenzo's orders, Baccio Ugolini arrived in Basel, in company with a Milanese delegate—Bartolommeo, Archpriest of Piacenza. They at once entered into communication

¹ Gino Capponi, *Storia della Repubblica Fiorentina* (Flor. 1874), ii. 149.

with the *Pronunciator* of the Council, as Andrea called himself, but they soon became convinced of the utter groundlessness and hopelessness of the whole proceeding. The Florentine's idea of proposing Pisa as a more suitable spot than Basel, where matters were going wrong already, is interesting only as an echo of the Council of 1409, and a foreshadowing of the *conciliabulum* of 1511. On December 18, the two delegates, with Philip of Savoy, Lord of Bresse, and other princes and nobles, were present at a solemn sitting of the town-council of Basel, at which the case was decided against the archbishop. Having avowed his obedience to the head of the Empire, and his zeal for the good of the church, but declining to retract his accusations against the Pope, he was arrested; he was then prosecuted, but at the same time, the town council of Basel refused to deliver him up to Rome. Legal proceedings were taken against the imperial city, and were the cause of great trouble, until the dispute was ended by a compromise arising out of the suicide of the rash man who had originated this melancholy episode.¹

While Baccio Ugolini and his colleague were taking part in these deliberations, a revolution was preparing in Italy which altered the whole position of affairs and placed Florence and Milan in quite a different attitude towards the Pope. Sixtus was influenced less by distant apprehensions than by the consideration, to which he could not shut his eyes, that he was helping to strengthen the very power which threatened to become most dangerous to him by its constant endeavours to obtain control over the cities on the Adriatic coast. Giuliano della Rovere—who, twenty years after, as his uncle's successor, opposed in arms the power of this Re-

¹ Coletti, in Farlati's *Illyricum sacrum*, vii. 438 *et seq.* Jacopo Volterrano, Stefano Infessura, and the unpublished histories of Sigismondo de' Conti and Rinaldus, give many details. Jacob Burckhardt's *Andreas Erzbischof von Krain* (Basel, 1852) gives an authentic account of the proceedings at Basel. Cf. *Arch. stor. Ital.*, N. S., vol. ii. pt. ii. p. 249 *et seq.* Ugolini's letter to Lorenzo, in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 227-233.

public, his uncle's old ally—seems to have been the means of finally inducing the Pope to break with Venice. Girolamo Riario, the soul of the war party, might be gained over by a prospect of the Malatesta fiefs. First, a truce was made with the Duke of Calabria, who was still in the Campagna; then, on December 23, peace was agreed upon between the Pope, Naples, Florence, and Milan, with a proviso that Venice was to accede to it. The Florentines were not satisfied with the conditions, and seem to have accused the Milanese of lukewarmness both in regard to the war and to the negotiations. Yet, considering the state of affairs and the losses already sustained, the conditions were not unfavourable. The Duke of Ferrara, who was in the utmost need, was to be reinstated in his possessions. The next point, however, was to persuade or compel the Venetians to accede to the treaty, and thus give reality to the peace, in commemoration of which Sixtus built the church of *Sta. Maria della Pace*. A congress was to be held at Cremona to regulate everything.

There was no time to lose, for Ferrara was besieged and could not hold out much longer; and the conduct of Costanzo Sforza, who had strengthened the garrison with his own troops after being repeatedly urged to do so by the Florentines, inspired but little confidence. In spite of the unfavourable time of year, King Ferrante was not behind hand. A thousand men, among whom were the Turks who had fought bravely at Campomorto, were sent by sea to Piombino, to march through Sienese and Florentine territory; while the Duke of Calabria advanced by way of Orvieto towards the valleys of the Chiana and the Arno. On January 5, 1483, he was in Florence, where he abode in the house of Giovanni Tornabuoni. At the end of three days he set out for Ferrara, from whence he intended proceeding to Cremona. The Cardinal-Legate Gonzaga also passed through Florence on his way to Cremona; and now Lorenzo de' Medici, who was to represent the Republic at

the congress, also set out on February 12. A week before he received the customary instructions,¹ relating principally to the contingents of troops and money for the prosecution of the war; in fact, he went as master of the city and the State, to decide on war and peace according to his own judgment. His brother-in-law Bernardo Rucellai was to accompany him. Louis XI. warned him of possible danger. 'As to the meeting about Ferrara,' he wrote on January 20, 'at which you tell me you have agreed to be present, I, who know neither the people nor the place, would have advised you not to go, but to take care of your own safety. I would have sent a messenger with excuses. Since, however, you have consented to go, I must leave the rest to you and trust in God that all may go as you wish.'² Even in Florence the matter seems to have been thought somewhat serious. When Lorenzo, on January 30, announced to the Duke of Ferrara³ his intended departure, he added that he had to contend with the general opposition of the citizens, who were unwilling to let him go. At the same time he remarks that his presence cannot be of much consequence at a meeting of so many mighty lords; but it is not necessary to take him at his word. He announced his impending journey to the French king on the same day.

The lords who met at Cremona were, besides the Legate, the Duke of Calabria and Lorenzo de' Medici, Lodovico and Ascanio Sforza, Ercole d'Este, Federigo Gonzaga Marquis of Mantua, Giovanni Bentivoglio, Girolamo Riario,⁴ and various envoys and plenipotentiaries. On the last day of February, 1483, the treaty was settled, according to which Venice was to be compelled by active prosecution of the war to cease hostilities against Ferrara. At the end of the first week in March,

¹ Instruction of February 5, 1483, in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 241-243.

² Fabroni, l. c. ii. 243.

³ Cappelli, l. c. p. 245.

⁴ Fr. Guicciardini, l. c. p. 66, is doubtful as to the presence of Riario; he is not mentioned in Ant. Campo, *Cremona fedelissima città* (Milan, 1582), p. 133. He is named as one of those present by Malevolti, l. c. pt. iii. p. 90.

Lorenzo was back in Florence. The Venetians had no idea of yielding. They had already begun negotiations with the Duke of Lorraine, that he might alarm King Ferrante once more by raising the standard of Anjou, while their fleet desolated the Apulian coast and took the important post of Gallipoli. Their ambassador Francesco Diedo had quitted Rome at the end of February. The Pope had refused to give him an audience; Diedo complained that no Turk would be treated so, but he feared a crusade would be preached against the Republic, and declared that in that case they would never obtain peace—they might give themselves up for lost.¹ In March, Ferrara seemed near its fall. All the country within a mile round was in the enemy's hands. The Venetian Chronicler Marin Sanuto, who was in Sanseverino's camp, gives a lively description of the doings before the city-gates. 'We eat with the most illustrious Roberto, and then to horse. We were about five hundred horsemen and many foot; we left the camp and rode to the park of Ferrara, where we proceeded *more solito* as far as a small canal, about a mile and a half from the city. Sanseverino was wont to march into the park every morning to escort the plundering bands. I saw the enemy's troops under the Duke of Calabria and the Count of Pitigliano; we advanced towards them as far as the canal, but, *sic volente fato*, it did not come to a fight. Only, to mock them, we let fly our falcons. The park comprises a space of seven miles, full of game and fruit of all kinds; now it lies open and deserted.'² Costanzo Sforza, who had thoughts of making terms with Venice, evacuated Ferrara in defiance of orders. Giovanni Bentivoglio and Galeotto Manfredi were hastily ordered thither; but the most effectual help was the victory gained over the Venetians at Argenta by Alfonso of

¹ Ant. Montecatino to Ercole d'Este, Flor. February 28, 1483, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 265.

² *Itinerario di Marin Sanuto per la Terraferma Veneziana nell' anno 1483* (ed. by Rawdon Browne, Padua, 1847), p. 51.

Calabria, captain-general of the allies. From thenceforth matters took a favourable turn for the latter, who were also benefited by the interdict laid on Venice by the Pope. An attempt made by Sanseverino to kindle a revolt in the Milanese roused Sforza to serious proceedings. By autumn the whole country as far as the Adige was in the hands of the Milanese; the Venetian fleet on the Po sustained heavy loss, and René of Lorraine, called by the Republic to its aid, was forced to retreat before the troops of Este.

In the beginning of January 1484, at Milan, another congress was held, at which Jacopo Guicciardini was present on behalf of Florence. By actively prosecuting the war by land and sea, it was hoped that Venice would soon be compelled to sue for peace—a consummation for which all longed, as the expenses were becoming burdensome, and each of the allies had its own separate interests. Peace did indeed come to pass in the course of the summer; but it scarcely answered general expectation. To obtain a little relief in their difficult predicament, the Venetians, beside their alliance with the heir of Anjou, now tried to stir up Louis XI. to an expedition against Naples, and the Duke of Orleans to an expedition against Milan, while their enemies were setting the Turks upon them.¹ At last they succeeded in detaching Lodovico il Moro from the league, of which he was but a half-hearted adherent. His own position and projects furnished them with a pretext, and now began the complications which in ten years brought Italy to ruin. In Milan things had drifted into a state that might easily have been foreseen. The duchess-regent, who, *par sottise*, as Commines unceremoniously expressed it, had put herself into Lodovico's power, now saw her truest counsellor dying in prison at Pavia, her own son used as a tool, and her unworthy favourite driven out of Milan; and when she tried

¹ Despatches to the envoy Antonio Loredano, January to February 1484. Cf. Romanin, iv. 415. Montecatino to Ercole d'Este, Flor. April 8, 1483, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 266.

to leave the country she was herself detained in the castle of Abbiategrasso, a prisoner, though the word itself was not uttered in her presence, and she was allowed to see her children occasionally. There she closed her sorrowful career in 1494, so completely forgotten that the exact date and manner of her death are unknown. Lodovico once rid of his sister-in-law, ruled supreme in Milan. His nephew was duke only in name; at sixteen he was still under a guardianship which became daily more oppressive. Alfonso of Calabria, to whose daughter the young duke was betrothed, was not inclined to let this state of affairs continue; Lodovico, on the other hand, was determined to make every possible effort to maintain his position. The Marquis of Mantua had contrived to prevent the rupture which seemed imminent when both princes were in Northern Italy; but his death put an end to all chances of mediation. The reciprocal distrust of Lodovico and the Medici was constantly increasing, and occasionally sharp words passed between them.

Venice profited in this state of affairs by employing Roberto da Sanseverino, an old confidant of Lodovico's and anxious to be reconciled to him, to make him perceive that he was acting against his own interest in taking part in this war, which, if it ended unfavourably for the Republic, must strengthen the authority of the Aragonese in Central and Northern Italy. Without troubling himself about his allies, Lodovico entered into negotiations, in which Naples and Florence participated, because they could not venture to carry on the war without Milan. Pier Filippo Pandolfini took part in the arrangements for peace, as Florentine plenipotentiary. Lorenzo de' Medici, who had need of Sforza, was full of distrust. 'We shall conquer,' said he after the Congress of Cremona, 'if Lodovico's words correspond to his thoughts.'¹ But he soon discovered that his doubts were

¹ Nic. Valori, l. c. p. 175.

well founded. He could not help seeing how all the advantages that had been gained were being given up, and that an inadequate result of the long and costly war was all that Este could obtain by the treaty. 'Antonio,' said he to the Ferrarese ambassador, 'thou rememberest that I was once in the same position in which thy lord is now—aye, and even worse. If I had not helped myself, I should have been lost. Then, too, the fault lay with Milan. I do not say that thy lord should do as I did.' 'My illustrious lord,' adds the ambassador in his report to the duke, 'I think he meant that if he was in your Excellency's place he would come to an understanding direct with Venice herself, and trust himself to his foes as he did at Naples.'¹

The conditions of the peace signed at Bagnolo on August 8, 1484, were dictated by Venice, who regained by the treaty the territory she had lost in the war. That is to say the peace was highly disadvantageous to Ferrara. Not only was Ercole compelled to admit the old demands of the Republic; the Polesina and Rovigo remained in its hands. 'When the Venetians were getting the worst of it, and their funds were becoming very much exhausted,' says Commynes,² 'the lord Lodovico came to the assistance of their honour and credit, and every man got his own again except the poor Duke of Ferrara, who had gone into the war at the instigation of his father-in-law and Lodovico, and now had to yield to the Venetians the Polesina, which they still possess. It was said that the transaction brought 60,000 ducats to my lord Lodovico; I cannot tell how the truth may be, but I found such was the belief of the Duke of Ferrara, to whose daughter, however, he was not yet married in those days.' Gallipoli and other places on the coast were restored to Ferrante. Sixtus IV. having thus seen the war continued contrary to his views, and ended without his par-

¹ Ant. Montecatino to Ercole d'Este, Flor. July 23, 1484, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 269.

² *Mémoires*, l. vii. ch. 2.

icipation, when he thought he had the decision in his own hands, did not long survive the conclusion of the peace, which made all his exertions useless and strengthened his opponent. He had an attack of gout on August 2; on the 13th he died. It was said that he, the restless one, had been killed by the peace. Scarcely five months before, he had given the red hat to the brother of the man who had since crossed all his plans—to Ascanio Maria Sforza, who thus began under warlike auspices a cardinalate destined to be devoid of peace.

The Florentines felt all the shame of the treaty, but they made a show of rejoicing after the war was over. There was indeed every reason to wish for quiet in that quarter, for there was no lack of troubles of all kinds. It was not long since a compromise had with great difficulty been arrived at about Città di Castello. The Pope had tried both arms and negotiations to regain possession of the town, and neither had succeeded. Niccolò Vitelli held out till 1484, by the Florentine assistance. Florence had indeed no intention of offending the Pope for his sake, and thereby damaging the far more important cause of Ferrara, and was inclined to let Sixtus have his will in the matter. But he wanted to give the town and neighbouring places as a fief to his nephew, and at the same time to enlarge the latter's possessions in the direction of Rimini and Cesena by a treaty with the Malatestas, neither of which things suited the Florentines.¹ Amid this uncertainty Vitelli resolved to imitate Lorenzo's example. He went to Rome, came to terms with the Pope, recognised the latter's supremacy, agreed with his rival Lorenzo Giustini, and accepted the office of a governor of the Maritima and Campagna. Peace was restored in the valley of the Upper Tiber, and Città di Castello was preserved to the Church; while the Vitelli, who continued to govern

¹ Guid' Antonio Vespucci to Lorenzo de' Medici, Rome, October 23 and November 3, 1483, in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 243-252. Ant. Montecatino to Ercole d'Este, Flor., May 25, 1484, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 268.

through various changes of form and destiny, maintained till their extinction their active relations with Florence and the Medici. On June 14, 1483, an agreement was made with Siena for the restoration of the places which Florence had been compelled to yield to her in the treaty of peace of 1480.¹ But another revolution in Siena, where the party raised to power by the Duke of Calabria's influence had been unable to maintain themselves, had been required to produce this restoration and decide the Sienese to form an alliance with Florence, to secure herself against the exiles supposed to be favoured by Rome and Naples. The Florentine opinion of the neighbouring state was still the same as that expressed nearly two hundred years before by the poet of the 'Divine Comedy,'² as may be seen by a letter from the Signoria to Lorenzo during his stay at Cremona. The treaty with the Sienese, say they, is a long process, and no real confidence can be placed in them and their doings, because of the changeableness of their nature.³

The long feud about Sarzana had not yet come to an end; the siege had dragged on all through the Ferrarese war. Things were in a bad position. Agostino Fregoso, who held the town, had made it over to the great commercial company of the Banco di San Giorgio, which formed in Genoa a state within the State, and owned many places on the Ligurian coast as well as in the far-off Crimea. Not only had the garrison of Sarzana been strengthened, but also that of its neighbour Pietrasanta, originally a Lucchese town, which cut off all communications while a fleet attacked the coast of the Maremma. As at the peace of Naples so at that of Bagnolo, to the great vexation of the Florentines, the dispute about Sarzana was left unsettled. The honour of the Republic urgently demanded a settlement. But instead of taking the place, a Florentine corps escorting a

¹ Malevolti, l. c. pt. iii. p. 87.

² *Inferno*, xxix. 122. *Purgatorio*, xiii. 151.

³ Letter of February 26, 1483, in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 243.

transport of ammunition was defeated near Pietrasanta. The necessity was now felt for rendering the castle incapable of further harm, but it was not done without heavy losses. The marshy atmosphere of the coast of the Lunigiana seized many victims from the Florentine camp; Bongianni Gianfigliuzzi and Antonio Pucci, army commissaries, succumbed to the fever in Pisa. Then Lorenzo resolved to go himself to the camp to spur on the troops. A few days after his arrival, in the beginning of November, 1484, Pietrasanta surrendered. An embassy from Lucca, demanding its restoration, was deferred with a reference to the coming accommodation with Genoa; but Florence was resolved beforehand to keep the place as an excellent check upon Lucca. When the castle was taken, which was to remain a boundary-mark on the Lunigiana side down to the dissolution of the Tuscan autonomy, many things had occurred to claim the whole attention of those who governed the Republic.

CHAPTER III.

THE EARLY YEARS OF INNOCENT VIII. LOUIS XI. AND FRANCE.

THE last years of Sixtus IV. were disturbed in Rome as well as elsewhere. In both cases Girolamo Riario was the chief person to blame, though it was a great pity that such a gifted and superior man as the Pope should be led astray into crooked ways by a petty tyrant devoid of talent, hesitating before no violence, and versed only in intrigue. Sixtus could not be deceived as to the nature of his unworthy nephew; all Rome was full of his wickedness, though the excesses committed by the Florentines after the Pazzi conspiracy had damaged their cause and would have added to the power of the Pope if he, too, had not overstepped all bounds in his impetuosity. Of Riario's part in the matter there was but one opinion. Two years later a painful occurrence took place in the Pope's family. One of his numerous nephews, Antonio Basso della Rovere, son of his sister Luchina and brother of Cardinal Girolamo Basso, had been married only a year to Caterina Marzano, daughter of the Prince of Rossano and grand-daughter of King Ferrante, when he was seized with a fever from which he never recovered. Girolamo Riario was visiting his cousin when the latter (whether, as the chronicler suggests, in the delirium of fever, or venting long-restrained malice), instead of thanking him for his sympathy, attacked him as if he were his bitterest enemy. 'He vehemently reproached him with various actions which were universally condemned, and with his manner of life, which was a subject of general complaint,

and denounced against him the judgment of God, which no human favour or power could enable him to escape. The sick man's excitement was so great that those who had been intimate with him for years could no longer recognise his usual gentleness. The count, however, wisely bore it all patiently as the words of one delirious with fever, and openly expressed his compassion for his cousin's state. All we who stood round the bed blushed for shame, and several tried to leave the room.'¹

Since 1482 Rome had been constantly filled with the clang of arms. The stronghold of the spiritual power was scarcely to be recognised. After the immediate anxieties consequent on the Ferrarese war were ended by the battle of Campomorto, and the Romans had stared to their hearts' content at the Duke of Calabria's captive troopers and janisseries, feverish excitement was again aroused by fresh disputes between the Colonna and Orsini factions, in which many other families—the Savelli, Santacroce, Tuttivilla, Della Valle, &c.—took part. The city was divided into two hostile camps; palaces were besieged and destroyed; the streets and the neighbourhood filled with armed bands. One Colonna lost his life in defending the cause of his family. Girolamo Riario was mixed up in all this, and through him the Pope also became a party to it. Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere, who favoured the Colonnas, quarrelled so desperately with Girolamo that the latter threatened to attack his palace. Even after a compact was agreed upon by the two great families, peace was not restored. In the beginning of July, 1484, the Pope's nephew, with a considerable body of troops, attacked the Colonna possessions, which surrounded Rome on the west like a girdle. He took Capranica and Cave, and was laying siege to the stronghold of Paliano when he was startled by the news of the Pope's death. He felt the ground give way under his feet. On

¹ Jac. Volterrano, *Diarium Romanum* for 1480. Muratori, l. c. col. 109.

the morning of August 13 the populace stormed and plundered his palace at Sant' Apollinare; his magazine in the Campagna, that of his brother-in-law and of the Genoese—hated by the people for their usury—the papal galleys at Ostia, everything was sacked. His brave wife, Caterina Sforza, was safe in the castle of St. Angelo. The siege of Paliano was raised at once; the troops marched to Rome, but only to turn towards the north-west to seek a junction with the Orsini, for from all sides, even from the Abruzzi, armed auxiliaries were flocking to the Colonna, to whom Florence and Siena also proffered assistance. Deifebo dell' Anguillara retook several castles; the city and neighbourhood were in complete anarchy; every man was in arms, and the palaces were barricaded. At last a compromise was arrived at, which, by the departure of the party leaders and the surrender of the castle of St. Angelo to the College of Cardinals, put an end to the worst disorder. On August 26 the conclave met, and at the end of three days Giovan Battista Cybò was chosen Pope under the title of Innocent VIII.

Thus, amid all this confusion, ended the reign of a Pope who had thought he could govern the policy of Italy, and, in a certain sense, did control it better than anyone who had preceded him. He brought together the finest library of his time, carried out legal reforms for the benefit of the Roman Municipium, did more than anyone else to transform Rome from a mediæval city into one more suited to modern requirements, and enriched it with churches, palaces, bridges, and beneficent establishments. Innocent VIII. was far from possessing the striking qualities of his predecessor, but he was free from the latter's immoderate self-confidence. He sprang from a Genoese family believed to be of Levantine origin and connected with the Tomacelli, relatives of Boniface IX.¹ But the first Cybò known to history is the Pope's

¹ G. Viani, *Memorie della famiglia Cylò*, Pisa, 1808.

father Arano, who married into a Genoese patrician house—that of the Mari—held important offices in Naples under René of Anjou, and later on, though still leaning towards the Angevin party, under Alfonso of Aragon, and in 1455 was a senator of Rome. Giovan Battista Cybò studied in Padua and Rome, was appointed Bishop of Savona by Paul II., and afterwards translated to Molfetta, from whence he took his usual appellation after being created a cardinal in May 1473. In the Pope's absence, during the plague in the summer of 1476, he acted as his representative. He was in his fifty-second year. 'The disposition of the new Pope,' wrote Guid' Antonio Vespucci to Lorenzo immediately after the election, 'was, during his cardinalate, benevolent and kind, and he was far more affable in society than he whom you wot of. He is not versed in either matters of state or of learning, but he is not wholly ignorant. He belonged completely to the party of San Pietro in Vincola (Giuliano della Rovere), who procured him his hat, and of whom it may be said that he is now practically Pope, and will have far more power than under Sixtus if he only knows how to manage his successor cleverly. The latter, as a cardinal, was on bad terms with the count (Riario). He is of middle height, strongly built, full in the face, has a brother and several grown-up natural children, at any rate a son and a married daughter. He gives one the impression of one who will let himself be counselled by others rather than rule by himself.'¹ Luigi Lotti wrote: 'If he governs and proceeds according to his own judgment and not by that of others, I think he will be a good quiet Pope, and keep clear of all strife of arms. His court will resemble him, as the general opinion is that he will show a gracious disposition.'

Lodovico il Moro had proposed that the allied states should send their congratulatory embassies to Rome together. The Florentines were all the more eager to offer their

¹ Rome, August 29, 1484, in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 256, 259.

congratulations because they wanted to secure the favour of a Genoese Pope in their differences with Genoa. Immediately after his election Lorenzo heard, from his brother-in-law the archbishop, that Innocent had expressed the most friendly interest in his position and the affairs of Florence, and declared his readiness to be of use to him; adding that all his hopes were founded on Lorenzo's wisdom, as there was no knowing whether the end would correspond with the beginning.¹ At the close of November the embassy started for Rome, where it arrived on December 8, and was received, according to custom, by the papal court, the household officers of the cardinals, and the foreign envoys. Its members were Francesco Soderini, Antonio Canigiani, Bartolommeo Scala, Angelo Niccolini, and Giovanni Tornabuoni, besides the resident ambassador Guid' Antonio Vespucci.² In the 'Instructions' reference was made to the earnest desire of the Republic to have a speedy ending put to the strife in the Lunigiana. 'Should the new Pope or anyone else turn the discourse on the subject of the war, ye shall answer that your commission deals solely with the duty of congratulation; but add, as if from yourselves, in justification of late events, that we were compelled to fight contrary to our intention and will; as indeed ye very well know that our city is ever faithful to her natural desire for peace, as far as is consistent with honour and fair advantage.'

Lorenzo had sent with the ambassadors his eldest son, a lad of fourteen, as it was then customary for solemn embassies to be accompanied by youths of high rank, who might contribute to the splendour of processions and ceremonies. He gave the boy detailed instructions, such as were usual in such cases on the part of wise and careful fathers.³ At Siena he was to proclaim the readiness of both Lorenzo and the Government to be of use to the authorities

¹ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 262.

² *Johannis Burchardi Diarium*, ed. A. Generelli (Flor. 1854), p. 57. *Ibid.* Instructions, from the Florentine Archives.

³ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 263. Doc. of November 26, 1484.

there. 'Everywhere, when the other young companions of the envoys are together with thee, behave thyself gravely and discreetly and with politeness towards thine equals. Beware of taking precedence of anyone older than thyself; for although thou art my son, yet thou art nothing but a Florentine citizen like the rest. If Giovanni (Tornabuoni) thinks fit to present thee to the Pope at a special audience, take care to be previously well instructed in all the customary ceremonies; then, when thou comest to his Holiness, kiss the credentials which I give thee for the Holy Father and beg him to read them. After that, if thou hast to speak, thou shalt commend me with reverence to his Holiness, and say that I well know it was my duty to appear before him in person as I did before his predecessor of blessed memory, but that I trust he will be graciously pleased to excuse me; for at the time when I went to Rome I could leave my brother at home, who was well able to represent me, but now I should have no one to leave behind numbering more years or possessing more authority than thyself. Therefore, I think I should have pleased his Holiness less by coming than by sending thee, whereby I express in the best way possible my desire to appear in person. Moreover, I send thee in order that thou mayest have an early opportunity of learning to know his Holiness as thy father and lord, and of fostering for many years those feelings which, I hope, will be shared by thy brothers, whom I would rather not have as sons if it is not to be so. Hereupon thou shalt declare to his Holiness my firm resolve not to swerve from his commands, for my innate devotion to the Apostolic See is increased by that towards the person of the Holy Father, to whom our house has long been under obligation. Moreover, I have experienced what disadvantages were brought upon me by the loss of the late Pope's favour, although I believe I suffered many persecutions without fault of my own, and more on account of the sins of others than for misconduct towards him. But I leave this to the

judgment of others, and however this may be, my resolution is fixed, not only never to offend his Holiness, but to meditate day and night on what may be pleasing to him.' Doubtless Lorenzo was as much in earnest in this as in his sensible advice. It would have been well for Piero de' Medici had he never forgotten what Cosimo had impressed on his son and the latter again on his, who, as a father, now repeated it to the boy—that he was a Florentine citizen like all the rest. But this tradition came to an end with Lorenzo. The further contents of the instructions will be referred to again. Innocent VIII. afterwards said to Pier Filippo Pandolfini, the new ambassador of the Republic, that after the Genoese quarrel had been laid aside Lorenzo would perceive there had never been a Pope who took the interests of his house so much to heart as he did. 'For as I have learned by experience how great is his honesty and wisdom, I will most willingly be guided by his counsels.'¹

Lorenzo must have been the more anxious to obtain the lasting favour of the head of the Church since a change had taken place abroad which might possibly have an important influence on the political circumstances of Italy. A year before the death of Sixtus IV. the monarch was called away, who, amid all his dependence on the clergy and his devotion—approaching to superstition, and heightened by suspicion and torments of conscience—raised the most vehement opposition to the Pope and the papacy. Louis XI. died at the age of sixty, at his castle of Plessis-les-Tours, on the evening of August 30, 1483. Two years before, when out hunting, he had had his first apoplectic fit, which was repeated without destroying his clearness of intellect, though his physical strength gradually sank. He had seen his approaching end with a terror which prayers and sacraments could not soothe, which drove him ceaselessly from pilgrimage to pilgrimage whenever he was not staying at Plessis.

¹ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 263.

There, tortured day and night by the consciousness of hatred which his cold treacherous tyranny had excited in the breasts of others, he shut himself in with a few confidants, surrounded by double and triple guards of all kinds. To the end of his days the king maintained friendly relations with Florence and the Medici; of all his political connections, this was perhaps the only one in which he never changed. In his instructions to the ambassadors sent to Rome in November 1478,¹ he expressly mentioned that the Florentines had always, time out of mind, shown themselves true and loyal friends to France, had never done anything against the crown, and lived according to the laws and customs given them by Charles the Great.² A few weeks before his death, Louis wrote to Lorenzo. Not content with having called to his bedside the holy hermit of Calabria, St. Francis of Paola, and procured relics without end from Rome, he tried through Lorenzo to obtain the episcopal ring of St. Zanobi, which was preserved at Florence in the Girolami family, and believed to have the power of curing skin-diseases. His wish was gratified. 'Cousin and friend,' thus wrote the dying man on July 9, 1483, from Notre-Dame de Cléry near Orleans, whither he had gone on a pilgrimage,³ 'I have seen the ring which you sent to Monsieur de Soliers (Palamède de Fobrin, governor of Provence). But I wish to know for certain whether it is really that of the saint, and whether it works miracles; whether it has cured anybody, and whom; and how it is to be worn. I beg you to inform me of all this as quickly as you can, or to write about it in detail to the general of Normandy; also whether you have out yonder any particular cure which has the virtues of the said ring. If you can find one, send it to

¹ Desjardins, l. c. p. 175.

² 'Les Florentins se sont tousjours monstrés et exhibés, de tel et si ancien temps que ne est mémoire du contraire, vrays et loyaux François. . . et si trouvent les lois et coutumes qui leurs furent baillés par Monseigneur Saint Charlemagne.'

³ Desjardins, l. c. p. 191.

the said general, I beg you, for the sake of all the pleasure you can give me. Now farewell, cousin and friend.'

In the last years of Louis XI. the male line of the house of Anjou became extinct. We have seen how the king obtained from the last of the house, who could no longer escape from his powerful arm, the cession of their French provinces and their Italian claims: of the former he took immediate possession, the latter remained in abeyance waiting for eventualities which did not fail to come, to the ruin of Italy, whose old sins were expiated centuries later. René, a king of shadows if ever there was one, saw his son Jean and his grandson Nicolas both die before he himself was laid to rest at Angers on July 10, 1480. His nephew Charles, Count of Maine, to whom his French possessions passed with the consent of Louis XI., followed him to the grave within seventeen months; and the sole heiress was now René's daughter Yolande, widow of Ferry, Count of Lorraine-Vaudemont. She too died in the beginning of 1483, a few months before the king. Her marriage with her cousin had been intended to reconcile the claims of the Vaudemont branch to the Duchy of Lorraine with those of primogeniture in the female line on behalf of which René, as the husband of the heiress Isabelle, had fought unsuccessfully with Antoine de Vaudemont, father of Ferry. Yolande's son, René II., now succeeded to the dukedom of Lorraine, as well as to the French fiefs of the Vaudemonts. It was he who defeated Charles the Bold at Nancy, and was led by the Venetians into the war with King Ferrante in Italy, where years after, in the war against the Spaniards, his son revived the old family claims to the Neapolitan crown—those claims which were to be practically made good once more in the middle of the seventeenth century by a scion of the French branch of the old house.

Lorenzo could not fail to notice that in Louis XI. he lost both a friend and a supporter. The political situation of France foreboded the worst vicissitudes. A delicate ill-

trained boy of thirteen was left heir to a kingdom which a long, skilful, and despotic reign had considerably enlarged, but also filled more terribly than ever with the elements of discord. The Queen-mother, Charlotte of Savoy, was an invalid, and incapable of acting; according to Louis' arrangements his elder daughter Anne, wife of Pierre de Bourbon, Count of Beaujeu, was to conduct the government for Charles VIII. without the title of regent. Amid the opposition of the nobles, of whom one, Louis of Orleans, was the next heir to the throne, this task was fulfilled with no little skill by the Princess, then aged twenty-two, of whom her father once said that 'no woman was wise, but Anne was the least foolish.' It was she who thwarted all the plans of the restless nobles and put down their attempts to arm. She paved the way for the union of Brittany with the crown, by interfering with the views of Maximilian of Austria who, after the early death of Mary of Burgundy, contemplated extending the new possessions of the house of Habsburg into the very heart of France by his marriage with the heiress of the great western duchy. It is evident, however, that under all the circumstances there was not much chance of French influence extending into Italy or anywhere beyond the borders of the country itself.

Immediately after the death of Louis, Florence despatched an embassy to present to the young king good wishes on his accession, and to express sincere regret for the loss of his father.¹ Gentile Becchi, Antonio Canigiani, and Lorenzo de' Medici the son of Pier Francesco, were the members of this embassy, which was to visit the potentates of Northern Italy on its way. Its chief object was the fulfilment of formalities. If any intention should be shown on the French side of interfering to restore peace in Italy, the envoys were instructed to take care that this should appear to proceed from an independent resolve of the French

¹ Instructions of November 8, 1483, and other documents relating to the embassy, in Desjardins, l. c. p. 193 *et seq.*

government, and not from the influence of the allies (for at that time the war with Venice was still going on). This would be the best way 'to avoid dangerous conjunctures which might arise in Italy from these obstinate dissensions,' and at the same time remain most honourable for the young king. But Anne de Beaujeu, who had just summoned the States-General in order to checkmate the allied princes by the same move which they had intended to make against her, had other things to think of than Italian complications; and the Florentine embassy, after all due ceremonies had been gone through, seems to have had to deal merely with commercial and personal interests.

Five years later the Regent of France remembered the old friendship with the Medici, when she was looking about her on all sides for help against the great feudatories who supported Maximilian in his alliance with the mightiest of them all, the Duke of Brittany. On April 5, 1486, Maximilian was crowned king of the Romans at Aachen; and in spite of the great difficulties with which he had to contend in his Burgundian provinces, his position was a very threatening one for France so long as internal peace was not restored, and every addition to his power was an addition to the cares of Anne de Beaujeu. The advanced age of Frederic III. pointed to a speedy vacancy of the imperial throne. That the idea occurred to France of trying to prevent Innocent VIII. from confirming Maximilian's election is, however, somewhat startling. The Pope was on friendly terms with the emperor and the king; just before, at the end of 1487, he had given proof of this by signing the treaty which put an end to the long-standing war between Venice and Archduke Sigismund of Tyrol. On February 8, 1488, a letter was sent in the name of the young king Charles to Lorenzo de' Medici, claiming his friendship for the royal house of France and soliciting the employment of his influence with the Pope, in order that Maximilian's kingly dignity, as injurious to the interests of France, should

remain for a time unconfirmed. 'You may assure the Holy Father that if the matter is delayed, we will so conduct ourselves that his Holiness and all who have anything to do in the matter shall perceive the result.'¹

It is very clear that Lorenzo, with all his attachment to France, was reluctant to mix himself with such an intrigue as this. 'By the copy of a letter from the King of France to me,' he wrote on February 8 to the ambassador at Rome, 'you will see the king's desire and the importance of the affair. For practical reasons I do not think it fitting to write to his Holiness; but I am for your informing him of it with your usual adroitness as soon as you think good, and pointing out to him its importance and possible consequences; for I am of opinion that mature reflection and deliberation are needful, that the investiture in question may not give occasion to embarrassment and offence. According to my judgment, the Most Christian king is so powerful and has so much influence in the affairs of Christendom, that it will always appear to me advisable to keep in harmony and friendship with him. I shall always order myself according to the wise judgment of his Holiness; but wish first fully to express my own view. The rest I leave to you, and I shall be glad if you can manage so that the king's plenipotentiary is pleased. But you will not neglect any precautions which may appear needful, that we may not lose in one quarter what we gain in another.' Lorenzo was right in his caution. 'The French envoys,' reports the Ferrarese ambassador at Florence to his duke on March 10,² 'have petitioned the Pope that he should not invest Maximilian with the dignity of King of the Romans, declaring that, should he do so, their king will set every influence to work at Naples to avenge the insult. The Pope gave them a very

¹ *Med. Arch.*, f. 56. Printed in A. Gelli; rev. by De Cherrier, *Arch. stor. Ital.*, ser. iii. vol. xv. 289.

² Cappelli, l. c. p. 298. The expression is: 'Che non voglia investire Massimiliano de l' Imperio de' Romani.'

sharp reply, saying that no request had as yet been addressed to him in relation to this matter by Maximilian's orators; and, moreover, he thought that such a message as that just delivered to him must have come not from the King of France, but from his evil counsellors. If he had only the latter to deal with, he would soon be able to make them understand how unworthy of a Pope was such a message, and how his footstool deserved greater reverence.'

CHAPTER IV.

POLITICAL CARES. THE BARONS' WAR.

AFTER the disturbance and unrest which ended the pontificate of Sixtus IV., the reign of Innocent VIII. seemed destined to commence in peace and tranquillity. The Pope's desire to terminate the long dispute about Sarzana, which had distracted the Lunigiana for years, and threatened to assume dimensions greater than the worth of the cause, was very honourable to him, especially as it did not arise from partiality for his Genoese home. On September 17, only three weeks after his election, the Pope summoned the ambassadors of Naples, Florence, and Milan¹ to discuss the political situation. After the recent conclusion of peace, he said he considered it a duty of his apostolic office to ensure that peace, in order that all the Italian states might really enjoy its fruits and recover from the heavy expenses which had burthened the holy see with a debt of more than 250,000 ducats. The dispute about Sarzana, complicated by the Florentine attack on Pietrasanta, made him anxious in consideration of the disposition of the Genoese; for the latter, where their honour was at stake, would not scruple to set the world on fire, and had already, in times past, called the foreigner into Italy. He knew that they were not only in league with the Marquis of Saluzzo and Philip of Savoy, lord of Bresse, but were trying

¹ Report of Guid' Ant. Vespucci, Rome, September 18, in Burchard, *Diarium*, p. 51.

to stir up the Duke of Orleans against Milan and the Duke of Lorraine against Naples ; in which they would get support from France, as the regent was desirous to find occupation for these princes, and sustenance for their numerous troops in a foreign land. The commonwealth of Genoa had applied to him to bring the matter to a legal conclusion. He knew that his predecessor had made an unsuccessful attempt to do so ; but as a native of Genoa, and being in a more favourable position than Pope Sixtus, he hoped to attain his object, as the Signoria would doubtless do all in their power to compose the strife.

The ambassadors of Naples and Milan kept to generalities, though the former could not help owning that Sarzana had been taken from the Florentines in time of truce ; that the blame really lay with the son of his king he naturally could not admit. Vespucci, however, went thoroughly into the matter. Sarzana, said he, was sold to the Republic by Lodovico Fregoso, the lord of the place. After we had held it for several years, his son Agostino took it by surprise in time of truce, and as he did not feel able to keep it, made it over to the bank of San Giorgio. In defiance of law and custom, which forbid the acceptance of an object in dispute, the bank received it just as if there were no such place as Florence in the world. Florence has a perfect right to make every effort to get back her own. She has equally a right to attack Pietrasanta, because Pietrasanta is an obstacle and an enemy to her. The Signoria, he added, has no thought of giving your Holiness advice, which you do not need, and is willing to agree to any reasonable compromise. But after all the unsuccessful efforts of Pope Sixtus, there is not much to be hoped. As to the possible introduction of foreigners by the Genoese, that is a matter not to be deemed unworthy of consideration, but it is not a ground for anxiety. The Dukes of Orleans and Lorraine personally are not in a condition to begin such an undertaking ; and in the exhausted state of France her rulers will never think of giving them a

sou towards it. The Genoese alone would be utterly incapable of holding out long, even were they differently inclined. The Ferrarese ambassador offered his Duke's mediation in case of a negotiation. The Pope had also consulted on the matter with Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, and expressed his anxiety to him; whereupon Lodovico il Moro declared that nothing but the voluntary surrender of Sarzana on the part of Genoa could render a satisfactory termination possible.¹ Innocent's mediation came to nothing. The Florentines took Pietrasanta, as has been already related, and the contest went on amid numberless suggestions of compromise for fully three years more.

In vain the Pope honestly desired to make and to keep peace; misunderstandings arose on all sides. In defiance of their ostensible relations to each other, there was no true understanding and confidence between Lorenzo de' Medici and Lodovico Sforza. The Moro's conduct was always ambiguous; not only in the matter of Sarzana, where there was much underhand work going forward, but also in the constant miserable disturbances in Romagna, where Girolamo Riario, supported by him, was operating against the Manfredi, they having given shelter to the Florentine's *protégé*, the claimant of Forli, Antoniello Ordelaffi, and being in alliance with the Bentivogli, who stood in equal fear of Lodovico and the Pope's nephew. Giovanni Bentivoglio was in Tuscany in the beginning of 1485. He visited Siena, Pisa, Lucca, and in May he came to Florence, where he stayed with the Medici. He spoke out his mind unreservedly about the Moro's intrigues.² Lorenzo was absent at the time; gout, the hereditary disease of the family, obliged him constantly to visit various baths, and just then he was at Bagno a Morba. During his stay there he had to devote his attention to the Sienese affairs, which were of some conse-

¹ Letter of Pier Filippo Pandolfini, Milan, September 24, 1484, l. c. p. 51.

² Reports of the Ferrarese ambassador, A. Guidoni, Flor. April 1485, &c., in Cappelli, l. c. p. 269 *et seq.*

quence to Florence. He had perceived the mistake once committed in the Fortebracci affair, and thenceforward strove to keep on good terms with the neighbouring commonwealth. With regard to the frontier disputes, chiefly in the Chiana valley, where the small places were always in a state of feud one with the other, Florence showed herself disposed for an amicable settlement. 'God is my witness,' wrote Lorenzo to the Signoria of Siena on February 28, 1484,¹ 'that my personal mediation and that of others was little needed in the negotiations for the advantage of your Republic, namely, in the matter of the frontiers; for the whole city recognised, just as if acting in its own behalf, our common interest in a close and friendly connection. As the thing has been settled now with the agreement of all, so also in future we shall not fail to give active proofs of our sincere friendship.'

This friendship was soon put to the proof. The party which had been defeated on the departure of the Duke of Calabria from Siena could not forget the mortification. In the beginning of April 1485, the Sienese ambassador at Florence announced that a body of 2,000 men, under the command of Giulio Orsini, was meditating an attack; whereupon a considerable force under Ranuccio da Farnese was despatched to the threatened ally.² It was believed that Perugia, Spoleto, and Todi served as places of meeting for the discontented, and that the Cardinal della Rovere had a hand in the undertaking. On May 4, Lorenzo wrote from Bagno a Morba to Siena³ that they must look to the security of the frontiers. It was said that the Pope was inclined to maintain peace, and had spoken to the ambassadors to that effect. By the Florentines he had been urged to give practical proof of his good intentions, and not to suffer his dominions to be a harbour for designs against neigh-

¹ Archives of the Riformagioni at Siena.

² A. Guidoni to Ercole d'Este, Flor. April 6, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 269. Ranuccio was first cousin to Pope Paul III.

³ Archives at Siena.

bouring States. 'Your Lordships must know,' he continues, 'better than I who am at a distance, what is your internal state and the mind of the citizens. If you are united, then, in my opinion, you have nothing to fear: for Siena is not to be taken with 2,000 men, and if the number of the aggressors increases, you will also receive increased assistance. Of that you need not doubt. Therefore, if there is among your citizens the amount of concord and love which is reckoned upon, your affairs will take a favourable course. I do not believe that this movement of the exiles can count on much support; for we hear from Lombardy that all the chief powers are desirous of peace. Nevertheless it is your and our duty to prepare for the worst and to have all available means in readiness. Thereunto I desire to encourage your Lordships, assuring you that we are of one mind with you, as events will prove.'

A few days after this the exiles made a raid from Umbria into the Arezzo territory and thence turned towards the valley of the Arbia, where they attacked the castle of San Quirico, on the Roman road, but were beaten back; whereupon the troop dispersed. 'The Signoria here,' wrote the Ferrarese ambassador, 'is delighted at the news and in good spirits. But the Sienese must be more delighted still; now they must be convinced that the number of participators is less than they suspected.' On May 14, Lorenzo wrote from Pisa to the Sienese Signoria that Florence regarded their danger as her own; but he advised them to look to their internal condition. 'It would be best to prevent the recurrence of such troubles by removing the occasion of your distress and of reproach from others. It seems to me time to come to a settlement of everything, provided that the origin of all this evil is rooted out. If this is done the past must not be too strictly inquired about. If such attempts against your Lordships are continued you will not want for protection, but the most effectual protection will be good and just government and true unity.' More than

two years later, Lorenzo wrote on another occasion: 'Your Lordships know what has always been my conduct with respect to attempts at revolution and dangers which have befallen your citizens, and that I regard your welfare even as that of our own commonwealth. This seems to me to suit our friendly and neighbourly relations, as well as my devotion to your Signoria.' Both by word and deed Lorenzo displayed his anxiety to maintain his political principle that it was important for the Republic to make herself secure by a good understanding with her neighbours, and to surround herself with a circle of bulwarks by keeping friends with Siena, Lucca, Bologna, Faenza, Perugia, and Città di Castello.¹ He remained faithful to this principle, with a few trifling exceptions, during the remainder of his life.

His other principle was to do all he could to prevent any Italian state from gaining such an increase of importance as to destroy the balance of power. In the summer of that same year, 1485, a complication arose which threatened the peace of Italy and put to the proof Lorenzo's political skill. It was a quarrel between Innocent VIII. and Ferrante of Naples. The kingdom of Naples, the greatest territorial power in Italy except Venice, was suffering from internal evils which both in earlier and later times proved incurable, and brought about the ruin of the fairest and richest portion of the peninsula. The political parties were as old as the monarchy; they were connected with deep-seated national divergences; and their differences were heightened and embittered by repeated conquests and changes of dynasty, by the feudal connection with the Holy See—dating from the time of the Normans—and by the passionate temper and moral degradation that poisoned and corrupted all civil and political relations in Southern Italy. The crown was completely held in check by the higher nobility; it would have been powerless had not the nobility been torn by factions.

¹ N. Valori, l. c. p. 175.

The split between the Aragonese and Angevin parties was of very long standing. The times of the second and of the first Joanna, the Sicilian Vespers, the French conquest, were all steps of a ladder ascending up to the Hohenstaufen Kaiser Henry VI. and the last of the Norman kings. The wars were fresh in the memories of all. It was not much more than twenty years since Ferrante had quelled the dangerous rising, the calamitous consequences of which never gave him any peace. His policy differed considerably from that of his father. King Alfonso's hand had borne heavily on the party who had so long disputed his sovereignty over Naples, but when peace was restored he not only richly rewarded his own adherents, but tried to win over to his side his opponents. His son had a deep distrust of both parties, and his only aim was to increase the royal power at the expense of feudalism.

Ferrante was not lacking in kingly qualities. He was sagacious, skilful, energetic, and a good financier according to the fiscal principles of the day—principles which of themselves would have sufficed to kindle rebellion among the nobles had political reasons been wanting. Numerous and important improvements in all branches of administration were due to him; increase of industry and commerce, great works for the general good, constructions for the enlargement and embellishment of the capital and other places, which assumed quite a different appearance under him. The disposition to promote the interests of science, art, and education he inherited from his father; and under both kings the Neapolitan Court, adorned by graceful and intellectual women, took a prominent place among the many Italian princely houses which distinguished themselves in this respect. Alfonso of Calabria equalled, if he did not surpass, his father in his love of literature and art. Ferrante had some regard for the condition of his people: 'It is our will,' he wrote, in November 1486, to the superintendent of

finances in Terra di Bari and Otranto,¹ 'that our subjects shall receive good treatment at the hands of all our officers, and that they may not have to complain of oppression and undue burthens.' Again, to the governor of Castrovillari, an important place in Calabria, and one which had been in the power of the enemies of the crown: 'You are to treat all well, and not suffer any to be oppressed on account of the past. You are to bridle the passions which create discord among the people, and to see that every one obeys the laws.' He formed a considerable military force, which enabled him to take a fitting part in Italian affairs, and to preserve peace for many years within his own dominions.

But Ferrante's good qualities were overshadowed by many bad ones. His illegitimate birth placed him from childhood in a false position. As a boy he learned to master his passions, and acquired a control over his words and manner which too often degenerated into dissimulation to secure his ends. Philippe de Commines (a contemporary somewhat prejudiced, it is true, against the house of Aragon), says, when speaking of Alfonso of Calabria, 'The father was more dangerous than the son, for nobody ever understood either the man or his real thoughts. With an assumed smiling manner he would deceive and betray people; there was neither grace nor mercy in his disposition, as even his relatives and adherents acknowledged; he knew neither mercy nor pity for his poor people where money was concerned.' In trying to promote trade and commerce he thought first of the interests of his own exchequer, and burdened the people with socages, requisitions, and duties which too often defeated his own object. From the very beginning of his reign he had to contend with difficulties with his relatives, with his subjects, with the Popes, till his natural distrustfulness had deepened into gloomy suspicion. The remembrance of past (and by no means always justi-

¹ *Regis Ferdinandi primi Instructionum liber*, 1486-87 (ed. by Scipione Vopicella, Naples, 1861), p. 87 *et seq.*

fiable) opposition and the dread of fresh outbreaks, increased by the frequent threats on the part of foreign countries to revive the claims of Anjou, led him astray to unjust and cruel actions whereby he undermined the throne, to strengthen which was his constant and never-ceasing aim. The feudal arrangements of the kingdom not only weakened Ferrante's political power, but had the inconvenient consequence of keeping him poor. It is difficult to believe that the ruler of such a fertile country, though in great part uncultivated, was in almost continual want of money, and was always obtaining drafts on foreign, and especially Florentine, banks, to which, in his turn, he had to give drafts on the current revenues. He once asked Lorenzo for a loan of 10,000 gold florins, which Lorenzo cut down to half; and Filippo Strozzi advanced him 20,000 on one occasion, besides undertaking the expense of provisioning the capital.

As Ferrante advanced in years his eldest son acquired a baleful influence over him. Alfonso was by no means equal to his father. He was considered a tolerably good soldier, and was certainly not wanting in energy, nor apparently in personal valour; yet he never carried out any campaign of real importance, though the recapture of Otranto was looked upon as a brilliant success. He was not lacking in cultivation and interest in learning, but his bad qualities outweighed his good ones. He was haughty, violent, faithless, and cruel. He hated the barons of the kingdom from a despot's instinct, he hated the influential servants of his father because their wealth excited his covetousness. As he had not inherited Ferrante's power of dissimulation, enough was known of his sayings and projects to put others on their guard, and his hatred was paid back in kind. He was not more successful in making those beyond the kingdom favourably disposed to him. The quarrel with Milan, of which, however, the blame did not rest with him, was already beginning, though it did not come to an open rupture till after the death of his wife Ippolita. In Tuscany there was

a secret grudge against him on account of the events of 1478—his intrigues at Siena and the loss of Sarzana. He must have known how unpopular he was at Florence, but he did nothing to regain the favour of the government or the people. 'On October 8,' observes Alamanno Rinuccini, speaking of the year 1484,¹ 'the Duke of Calabria arrived in Florence on his way back from Lombardy, where he had been captain of the league against the Venetians. He was accompanied by about eight hundred horsemen in bad condition. On his entry he did not go to the palace to greet the Signoria as he had hitherto done, though the Signoria had made preparations to receive him, and summoned many citizens for the purpose of honouring him. This was considered a great piece of insolence. Nevertheless, in pursuance of a shameful order, he was left unmolested during his passage through our territory—to our shame, considering what he had done five years before.' Commines has drawn in a few words a fearful picture of Alfonso: 'Never,' says he, 'was seen a more cruel, wicked, vicious, base man, or one more addicted to excess.' The Frenchman and the courtier of Charles VIII. speaks here, but the portrait drawn by the Venetian, Marino Sanuto, is not at all more flattering.²

In the face of the Duke's ill-will, now no longer doubtful, aggravated by a suspicion of encroachments on the part of the king, the most powerful of the Neapolitan barons had entered upon a league for mutual protection, when the outbreak of hostilities was precipitated by two distinct causes. Ferrante and his son, however pleased they professed to be at the election of Innocent VIII. as Pope, were in reality anything but satisfied, as they feared to find him an adherent of Anjou. The Duke had even made an effort to get him

¹ *Ricordi*, p. cxl.

² Commines, *Mémoires*, l. vii. ch. 11. M. Sanuto, *Chron. Ven. (Comment. de Bello Gallico)*, R. Ital. Ser., xxiv. pp. 12-16. Alfonso was called 'the idol of the flesh' (*dio della carne*).

excluded from the list of candidates for the pontificate. The embassy sent to Rome to present the congratulations of Naples was to try to procure the remission of that everlasting apple of discord, the feudal tribute. The Pope refused to remit it, the king held to his resolve not to pay, and the coming strife might be the more clearly foreshadowed as Cardinal della Rovere was opposed to the Aragonese claims. In the summer of 1485 the rupture took place. The Duke of Calabria persuaded the king not to allow the schemes of the discontented nobility to come to maturity, but to nip them in the bud by a sudden attack. The way in which he set to work furnished a new ground for heaping upon him accusations of fraud and violence. On June 23, by treacherously imprisoning the Count of Montorio, of the house of Cantelmo, the chief person in Aquila, and his people, he obtained possession of that city, which was an independent commonwealth under the suzerainty of the crown; shortly after, the same was done at Nola by arresting several of the Orsini, to whom the countship belonged. Many of the heads of the nobility were just then assembled at Melfi, in the Basilicata, on the occasion of a wedding in the Caracciolo family. In this manner a declaration of hostilities was hastened, which, from the intensity of opposition, could indeed hardly have been prevented under other circumstances, but which was now encouraged by the disagreement between the Pope and the king.

On August 10, 1485, the Duke of Calabria left Naples to begin the war against the barons.¹ He did not find them unprepared; their vassals were in arms, and they had formed an alliance with the Pope, who was angry, not only at the refusal of the tribute, but also at the incredibly arbitrary conduct of the king with regard to Church matters. This monarch, nominally a vassal of Rome, not only subjected the clergy to the most despotically imposed taxation, but

¹ *Cronaca di Notar-Giacomo*, p. 156.

treated the bestowal of ecclesiastical offices as a financial speculation. Affairs soon became complicated. On September 26 the inhabitants of Aquila rose against their oppressors, hewed the leader in pieces, set up the standard of the Church, and sent plenipotentiaries to Rome. Ferrante tried to avert the storm by sending his son, the Cardinal of Aragon, to Rome; but he died on October 16. On the 17th Ferrante caused a protest to be read in the cathedral of Naples, announcing that he had no intention of making war against the Pope. Next he tried to negotiate with the barons, sent his son Don Federigo to the Sanseverini at Salerno, and caused the Count of Montorio to be set at liberty. It was all in vain; no one trusted him. The people of Salerno kept the prince as a prisoner, and set up the standard of the Church on November 20; the king's own friends began to desert him, one of his natural sons went over to the insurgents. Ferrante had long been accustomed to put no trust in his own relatives. This time the crisis was rendered doubly serious by the now openly declared conduct of Innocent VIII.

The new Pope's desire to maintain peace and heal the wounds inflicted during the late pontificate gave way at the approach of the Neapolitan troubles, the point of contention between the papal government and its neighbours. Innocent can hardly have been drawn into the fight by the secret motive of which he was accused—a preference for the interests of his own family before the welfare and peace of the country; but he may well have been influenced by his own and his predecessor's repeated unpleasant experience of the Aragonese. He made the quarrel of Aquila and of the barons his own, accepted their tender of obedience, and began to arm. He had to be quick, not to give the Duke of Calabria time to scatter his opponents. While the king sought help from Florence and Milan, the Pope and the barons turned to Venice. The propositions of the nobles were very tempting to the Venetians, ever hankering after the cities on the

Apulian coast; but they had doubts about entering upon such a hazardous undertaking after all the losses they had sustained in the last war. They expressed regret for the oppression under which the barons described themselves as suffering, but they recommended a compromise through the mediation of the Pope; at the same time they dissuaded Rome from violent proceedings. But when Innocent, hurried on by the rapid progress of events, entered into negotiations with Roberto da Sanseverino to obtain his services, they contented themselves with half-measures. Roberto's Venetian *condotta* had expired at the peace of Bagnolo. The Republic might easily have restrained his ardour, for though his own people were deeply involved in the rising, the *condottiere*, long a stranger to his own home, would have preferred his own advantage to all other considerations. But after a few indifferent remonstrances he was left free to go 'according to his own pleasure,' as was announced to the Pope on October 7.¹

How disagreeable all these matters were to the Florentines, and above all to Lorenzo, may be imagined. A dangerous flame was being kindled. Towards the end of August the Neapolitan ambassador, Marino Tomacelli, made to the Signoria, on behalf of the king, the first announcement of the outbreak of internal hostilities, but without owning their real importance. Before the middle of September it became known that the Pope was causing troops to march over the border. On October 3 the deliverance of Aquila from the garrison placed there by the Duke of Calabria became known. Thereupon Ferrante sent his eldest son's confidant—Giovanni Albino—to Lorenzo, who had long been intimate with this learned and accomplished man, at once a politician and a historian:² 'You shall tell Lorenzo,' such were Ferrante's instructions,³ 'that we turn to him as

¹ Romanin, l. c. pp. 421, 422.

² On G. Albino, the historian of his time, cf. C. Minieri Riccio, *Memorie storiche degli scrittori nati nel Regno di Napoli*.

³ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 268.

the best friend we have in Italy, and one for whom, in case of need, we would risk our State, our children, and our own person. Beg him not to leave us in the lurch; he and his house shall be rewarded for their services to us.' Then followed negotiations with Lodovico il Moro, to whom Albino proceeded on leaving Florence. It was ill speaking of Lodovico at the latter city, because his intrigues with Girolamo Riario kept up a constant fear of disturbances in Romagna; nevertheless, in the present conjuncture, it was necessary to try to keep at peace with him. The Duke of Bari's policy was evidently to put the Florentines forward and watch the moment when he himself could most fittingly appear. He proposed that the Florentines should hinder Sanseverino's passage through Umbria; but they answered that it would be far simpler for *him* to prevent his crossing the Po, whence he would doubtless skirt the Adriatic coast and not turn inland at all. Next, Ercole d'Este gave notice that by a brief of October 1 the Pope had commanded him to grant a passage through the Duchy of Ferrara to Roberto da Sanseverino, who was leading 600 men-at-arms to his Holiness, and who, added the Duke, was expected to set out on the 10th from Cittadella, in the Paduan territory, cross the Po at Ficcarolo, and take the road through Romagna and the Marches—which showed that the Florentines were right in their answer to Sforza. Soon after news came from Siena that the Pope had asked that Republic for a body of 120 men-at-arms and 300 picked mercenaries.

The Florentines did all they could to prevent the Siense from yielding to the Pope's demand. As the armed force of Florence was small, they took the Count of Pitigliano into their service and decided to await the course of events. But there was no real feeling of security, from the impossibility of trusting to the little neighbouring state. 'The Siense,' wrote the Ferrarese ambassador,¹ 'being by nature

¹ A. Guidoni to E. d'Este, Flor., November 11, 1485, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 273. The Ferrarese despatches contain many details of all these affairs. Scipione Ammirato, in his twenty-fifth book, is a trustworthy guide.

at once frivolous and suspicious, and perpetually stirred up by the Pope, are in a violent fever, lamenting over the danger to which they would be exposed if the king got the victory over the Pope, as he would then employ their natural enemies—the Orsini—to avenge himself for the revolution of 1480. Their ambassador plagued the illustrious Lorenzo for two hours to-day with this nonsense, and it will cost a great deal of trouble to keep them neutral, for they are always getting troublesome.’ On October 10, the day on which Sanseverino began his march, Lodovico il Moro wrote to Lorenzo.¹ He represented to him the danger that would threaten the king if the enemy appeared on the frontiers of the already excited country. ‘As your Magnificence sees, prompt proceedings are necessary. The best way to help the king will be to break at once with the Church, as the Pope has done with the king. It appears to me necessary that you should induce the Signoria to consent to a declaration of war, that while awaiting reinforcements from hence they may set their armed force in order and despatch it to the frontier without minding the unfavourable season, which hinders neither the Pope nor the lord Roberto. What the foes think their troops capable of, ours can surely do. But there is no time to be lost in coming to a decision.’

When this new complication arose, Lorenzo was at the baths of San Filippo in the Siena territory. The Morba waters had greatly benefited him in the spring, and in May the Anziani of Siena sent a special envoy to congratulate him on his recovery;² but it was not lasting. The position of affairs was such as to embarrass even as practised a politician as Lorenzo. He thought it needful to support the king, but he was too clear-sighted and knew his native city too well to give way to illusions as to the feeling about Naples. The king and the duke were hated; to enter on their behalf into a war, which would entail certainly great

¹ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 269.

² Letter of the Anziani, May 15, 1485, Lucca archives.

expenses and possibly serious complications, was pleasing to no one. When Lorenzo proposed to the Council to give support to Ferrante of Naples he met with vehement opposition. 'At first,' relates Niccolò Valori,¹ 'the majority were decidedly against the proposal. In the midst of this long-wished-for peace, said they, did he want to kindle the flame of a fresh war? Had he forgotten in what danger they had been placed by arms and the censures of the Pope? What if Venice should take part in the contest? How were they to help the king, hard-pressed at once by internal feuds and external war? Let him beware of turning aside the war from Ferrante, and drawing it upon his own home. Notwithstanding, Lorenzo urged the necessity of taking a side with so much eloquence that those who doubted were encouraged, and at last all were brought over to his view. I never read anything more earnest and impressive or better put together than this speech, which was taken down at the time.' But while Lorenzo held it a political necessity to side with Naples, he clearly perceived the reason of this fresh disturbance of peace. The bad condition of the Neapolitan finances and army was no secret from him. 'I regret,' he wrote on November 3 to Albino,² after informing him of the proposals made by the insurgents in case of the neutrality of Florence, 'that the king is no longer reputed to have a rich treasury and a good army as of old, when he was regarded as the arbiter of Italy. That the contrary is now the case I regret on account of my devotion to his Majesty; but, however matters may stand, I shall always fulfil my obligations. I am most deeply grieved that my lord the duke is denounced as cruel; though it be a false accusation, yet his Excellency should do all in his power to rid himself of it, for it can only be to his advantage to do so. If the taxes are hateful to the people let them be abolished, and let the former contributions suffice; one

¹ L. c. p. 177.

² Fabroni, l. c. ii. 268.

carlo willingly and gladly paid is better than ten gained by compulsion and with ill-will; for no people willingly endures the imposition of fresh burthens.' He also recommended keeping the soldiers in good humour; never had this been more needed. If the king had faith in himself he would conquer; the Signoria would be true to him. Ferrante thanked Lorenzo for his wise counsels, but remarked that he did not altogether understand them.

CHAPTER V.

REACTION AFTER THE BARONS' WAR. THE STRUGGLE FOR SARZANA.

LORENZO'S position was anything but enviable. The Florentine merchants at Naples complained that the Duke of Calabria did not fulfil his obligations, and, moreover, treated them insolently, so that they found themselves compelled to leave the city.¹ The Pope, who on November 1, 1485, had issued a bull enumerating all the charges of the Holy See against the King of Naples, and threatening with excommunication all who should support the latter, exerted himself to prevent the Republic from taking part in the quarrel. The authority of the Medici even might receive a blow, for the position of affairs in the kingdom was considered bad in the extreme. Lorenzo was visibly full of cares. He proceeded very slowly. Towards the end of November Innocent sent the Archbishop of Florence to his cathedral city to try if he could change the mind of his brother-in-law. Rinaldo Orsini was a prelate of a type then but too common; from his youth up he had held benefices without spiritual functions, and so he treated his archbishopric as a sort of garrison, the revenue of which was sufficient for him. He was generally in Rome; leaving his vicar to look after the church affairs. Being in the habit of getting into debt, he afterwards tried to do a profitable piece of business with his see. At last, when things in Florence were altogether

¹ Lorenzo to Albino, l. c.

changed, and the powerful support of the Medici failed him, the universal dissatisfaction reduced him to resign for a pension and a title *in partibus*. Before this, during the persecutions that broke out against his family in the time of the Borgias, his insignificance as a mere man of pleasure had saved him from the tragic fate of his cousin Cardinal Orsini, with whom he had been placed in the castle of St. Angelo. It may easily be imagined that he was not the man to make any impression on Lorenzo, more especially as the latter well knew that he was entirely a creature of the Pope, in daily anticipation of obtaining the cardinal's hat. Rinaldo declared that Innocent was determined on war. For months past he had been warning the king, through the now deceased Cardinal of Aragon, through his brother Don Francesco, even through the Florentine ambassador; but Ferrante only went on more recklessly, and now at last allowed things to take their own course.¹

Meanwhile, November 10, Sanseverino arrived at Rome, and was solemnly received at the Porta del Popolo by the governor of the city, the papal court, the ambassadors of the Kaiser and of King Maximilian, and others. Twenty days after, in the Vatican basilica, he took the oath to the Pope as gonfalonier of the Church.² Innocent showed to the Florentine ambassador money and jewels to the value of 150,000 ducats, all of which, he said, was to be spent in carrying out the war. All recruiting and sales of horses in and around Rome, except for the service of the Church, were forbidden. But in Naples it was resolved not to await the attack. Alfonso of Calabria marched into the States of the Church, and was soon on the nearer side of the Alban hills, with the Campagna and the city lying before him; on the north-west the Orsini were taking up arms in alliance with him; Florentine troops were advancing under the Counts of Pitigliano and Marsciano and the lord of Piombino, and

¹ A. Guidoni, November 28 and 30, 1485, l. c. p. 274.

² Bureard, l. c. p. 72, 73.

100 Milanese men-at-arms under the Count of Cajazzo—for that was all Lodovico sent after all his assurances! Soon the Neapolitans and the Papal troops attacked each other in the immediate neighbourhood of Rome, by the bridges over the Anio. The whole city was in tumult. Monte Giordano, the Orsini stronghold in the Campus Martius, was burnt down; King Ferrante's ambassador, who with his colleagues of Florence and Milan had remained in Rome after the fighting began, had his house plundered and wrecked, and fled to the Vatican. The greatest distress and insecurity prevailed; cardinals and others brought their valuables to the Pope's palace and to the castle of St. Angelo for safety. But the duke proved himself a wretched general. He could not manage to effect a junction with the Orsini, and Sanseverino pressed the latter hard, compelled some of them to accept a compromise, and obstructed the road into Tuscany. Within the kingdom itself matters were taking an unfavourable turn; Alfonso, seeing himself in danger of being hemmed in within the Campagna, decided to make a diversion against the Pope and gain breathing-time for himself by coming to a personal understanding with Lorenzo and Lodovico. On January 17, 1486, the news reached Florence that the heir to the Neapolitan throne had left the army in a dangerous position, and with only 300 horsemen taken the road through the lower part of the Viterbo territory. After riding sixty miles a day, like a fugitive, he arrived at Pitigliano, the little capital of the Orsini territory, on the west of the lake of Bolsena; from thence he intended proceeding to Florence and Milan.

The surprise in Florence was great. Negotiations had never ceased between the Pope and Lorenzo. It was said that the latter was trying to facilitate an accommodation; but there was a suspicion that he was playing a double game, that he had no confidence in the Neapolitan affairs, and that he had a hand in the defection of some of the Orsini, which put the Duke of Calabria into difficulties; and that

now he wanted to hinder the Duke coming to Florence, in order to escape his reproaches. The Signoria immediately sent a special messenger to the Duke to prevent his coming to the city; Piero Capponi followed the messenger, to have an explanation with Alfonso, and to remain with the army as Florentine commissioner.¹ For some time past Lorenzo had been suffering severely; an affection of the bladder was now added to his old complaint the gout. He was not in a happy humour. He said he would have nothing more to do with business, for everything was going contrary to his desires and expectations; he meant to spend his time more agreeably. He begged Ercole d'Este and the Marquis of Mantua to send him falcons, and it was said that he was going to Pisa for change of air. His ill humour was visible. Sometimes he was in the city, sometimes at Careggi. The Duke of Calabria was urgent to see him at Pitigliano, in Florence, anywhere he liked; but he was not to be persuaded. Pier Filippo Pandolfini and Giovanni Serristori went in January to Pitigliano to agree upon the necessary arrangements.

Meanwhile the situation had somewhat improved. The troops, deserted by the Duke whom all accused of cowardice and want of head, were guided by Paolo Orsini to Vicovaro in the valley of the Anio, beyond Tivoli; from thence the road into the kingdom was open to them. Gentile Virginio and others of the Orsini remained faithful. Letters from Milan announced an intention of abiding by this alliance. On February 3, Gian Jacopo Trivulzio and Marsilio Torello arrived in Florence with men-at-arms and archers, to join the Duke.² The latter came as far as Montepulciano, and wanted to make an attempt upon Perugia, where there was some understanding with a few of the Baglioni. But the

¹ Vinc. Acciaiuolo, *Vita di Piero Capponi*, l. c. p. 20 *et seq.*

² Trivulzio's letters to the Duke of Milan from Florence, Montepulciano, Cortona, Pitigliano, and afterwards from the camp of the League, from February 21, 1486, onwards, are in Rosmini, l. c. ii. 130 *et seq.*, with the despatches addressed to him from Milan.

Florentines had no desire to see the fire kindled so near their own borders; and as the Milanese were of the same mind, the plan was given up. The war was again transferred to the Papal territory, where the union between the Orsini and the duke was at last effected. But it was a feeble war, which only served to display the decay of Italian military skill. One single fight, however, in which the allies were victorious, and which took place in the beginning of May near Campagnano, a place belonging to the Orsini and situated twenty-one miles north-west of Rome, deserves the name of a warlike achievement. The Florentine commissioner, who was not a military man, but had seen a good deal of fighting in his life, was very little edified by the proceedings. On the papal side they were no better off. Innocent, ill and repeatedly in danger of his life, saw his means disappearing, his capital disturbed and discontented, almost besieged, and the neighbourhood devastated. He had little confidence in Sanseverino, who failed to profit by the favourable moment of the Duke's absence, and whose chief aim seemed to be to gain a red hat for one of his sons. This distrust was heightened by letters from Piero Capponi, which, by a not over-honourable artifice, raised doubts as to Sanseverino's honesty, and were put into the enemy's hands. Through the Bishop of Treviso the Pope tried to get help from Venice; through the Cardinal della Rovere, who went to Genoa at the end of March, he set on foot a negotiation with the Duke of Lorraine, who with the help of France was planning an expedition against Naples. But everything remained too long in suspense.

In the College of Cardinals the different opinions produced violent disputes. As has been observed, Lorenzo remained in communication with Innocent, although he was the very corner-stone of the league in favour of Naples, and without Florentine money the king would long ago have been unable to carry on the war. It was his representations that chiefly contributed to induce the Pope to arrive at the need-

ful accommodation. Ferrante on his part saw very well that unless he made peace abroad it was vain to think of restoring peace at home. Lodovico il Moro, though now less scanty in his contributions of assistance, was still more lavish of words than of deeds. His brother Ascanio was urging the Pope to an accommodation. On March 6 he spoke very strongly in the secret consistory in opposition to Cardinal La Balue, who was charged by France with supporting the interests of the Duke of Lorraine. The Pope, said Sforza, had a right to claim from King Ferrante the fulfilment of his obligations to the Church; but it was contrary to the duty of a cardinal to try and induce the Pope to drive the king from his hereditary throne and put a stranger in his place. He, Sforza, believed that he was not failing in his duty to the holy father in defending the rights of his relative. The cardinal of Erlau, the pious Franciscan Gabriel Rangoni, supported Ascanio, and said to the Pope: 'Your Holiness has threatened to go as far as the Acheron. If the war continues, I fear those words will come true. May your wisdom find means to prevent greater troubles!'¹

The Florentines were wearied with the whole affair. Ambassadors came from René of Lorraine to argue against the alliance with Naples, and to recall the old relations with France, and the old devotion of Florence to the Holy See. They were answered that the league which had existed for some time between the Republic, Naples, and Milan had for its object the preservation of peace; the disturbance had come from the Pope. The latter had never mentioned the Duke of Lorraine in his negotiations with the city; and if he was now making use of his name to help his own cause, they must first of all find out his real aims, and then consult with the allies. The old obligations to France would be remembered as far as was consistent with honour. The

¹ Letter of A. Sforza to his nephew the Duke of Milan, March 6, 1486, copies of which were sent on the same day to the Duke of Calabria, and by P. Capponi to Lorenzo. Appendix to the life of P. Capponi, *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, vol. iv. pt. 2, p. 66-71.

answer, remarks Francesco Guicciardini,¹ was prudent, for ambassadors had arrived not only from the duke but also from the King of France, and for the sake of the merchants it was necessary to be cautious. The occurrence caused a good deal of anxiety, so that Lorenzo, who well knew the attachment of the citizens to the house of France and their hatred to King Ferrante, was afraid of the burthen becoming too heavy for his shoulders, particularly as the alliance with Ferrante was displeasing to many of the chief citizens. He would, perhaps, have changed his policy, although Venice, where his brother-in-law Bernardo Rucellai was ambassador, and which did not like seeing foreigners in Italy, now sided with the king; but suddenly peace put an end to all troubles.

On the afternoon of August 11, 1486, this peace was signed at Rome by the Spanish ambassador, the Count of Tendilla, the Archbishop of Milan, and Gian Jacopo Trivulzio on behalf of Sforza, Cardinal Giovanni Michiel on behalf of the Pope, and Gioviano Pontano on behalf of Naples. King Ferrante was again formally to acknowledge the supremacy of the Church; to pay the tribute; to retain Aquila on condition of maintaining its liberties; not to oppress the barons who returned to their allegiance, and to give them complete freedom as to their abode and their family connections. These conditions were to be guaranteed by Milan and Florence. The Orsini were to beg the Pope's forgiveness, and to be taken back into favour under guarantee of the said States; all places taken on either side were to be restored. Sanseverino was dismissed from the service of the Church. In Florence the conclusion of peace was celebrated by ringing the bells; but Lorenzo was highly displeased, not at the peace as such, but at the manner and the conditions of it, on which he spoke sharply to the Milanese ambassador. The conclusion had been arrived at without reference to him,

¹ *Storia fiorentina*, ch. viii. The Ferrarese reports in Cappelli, p. 274-286, contain much that gives an insight into the position of affairs.

and there had been no mention of Sarzana. In reality this was better than what had been originally intended, for Cardinal Sforza had exerted himself to get his brother Lodovico appointed arbiter in the question; but this scheme was foiled by the decided opposition of Capponi, who was then at Bracciano.¹ The Republic had spent all her money for a cause not her own.² And what a peace it was! Sanseverino had most decidedly not proved himself a hero in the war, and his conduct had not deserved any great confidence. But the way in which he was treated was almost past belief. The gonfalonier of the Church, who as holder of one of the highest dignities had handed the holy water to the Pope at a solemn mass a little while before, suddenly found himself like an outlaw chieftain compelled to use force against force. He was told he might go where he liked, and a claim which he sent in for arrears of pay was left unnoticed. Then, when he was about to take the road to Romagna, to return to the Venetian territory, he found himself surrounded by Neapolitan troops. To fight was certain ruin. He had nothing for it but to dissolve his bands; many escaped to the Marches; others were taken, plundered, slain; others again took service with the Duke of Calabria. With about a hundred horsemen Roberto cut his way through, and after many difficulties arrived as a fugitive, on the Venetian frontier which less than a year before he had crossed at the head of a powerful army. The Republic took him back into her service, and he showed himself not ungrateful and far less selfish than was the usual fashion of *condottieri*. A year after the conclusion of a peace so fatal to him, he met his death fighting gallantly in the neighbourhood of Roveredo, in the war stirred up by the frontier disputes between Venice and Archduke Sigismund of Austria-Tyrol.

¹ V. Acciaiuolo, l. c. p. 24.

² A. Guidoni, Flor., August 13, 1486, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 285. G. J. Trivulzio to the Duke of Milan, from the camp at Ponzano, August 12, in Rosmini, ii. 150. Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, p. cxlii.: *poi per manco male si accettò*.

The Sanseverino affair, however, disappeared before what happened in Naples.

Two days after the conclusion of the treaty, at Castelnuovo, on the occasion of a marriage arranged by the king between Marco Coppola, son of the Count of Sarno, chief counsellor of the crown, and a daughter of Antonio Piccolomini Duke of Amalfi, granddaughter of Ferrante, the count and his family were arrested, as well as Antonello Petrucci the other private secretary of the king, the Count of Burello, formerly ambassador to Rome, and many of their relatives and friends, all distinguished and influential persons. They had been in communication with the insurgent barons, and as far back as October of the previous year Lodovico il Moro had given the king proofs of their guilt; but the latter had secured them and then waited till the conclusion of peace to draw in the net. Only a fortnight before he had called the Count of Sarno 'our best-beloved counsellor.' Three months later the culprits were condemned to death and executed; and the shuddering city beheld the bleeding limbs of the Count of Carinola, son of Antonello Petrucci, quartered by the executioner's hand. All their property was confiscated; not only were their possessions within the country sequestered, but Ferrante at once sent one of the superior officers of the chamber of accounts to take possession of sums deposited in the banks in Rome, Florence, Genoa, and Milan. A million in gold is said to have thus passed into his hands. Horrified at this fearful vengeance, warned by the fate of Aquila, which lost all its liberties, and putting no trust in the stipulated guarantee of Florence and Milan, the barons were long undecided if they should trust themselves to the mercy of the king. Ferrante himself did not believe they would. At last, however, they submitted, besought pardon, and promised fidelity and obedience. 'All the princes and lords who formerly rebelled against us,' wrote the king on February 17, 1487, to Giovanni Nauclero,¹

¹ *R. Ferdinandi Instruct.* L., p. 153. The Duke of Calabria had written to

his ambassador to Ferdinand the Catholic, 'are now with us at Naples. They enjoy greater security for their persons and possessions, and greater contentment and tranquillity than before the war; for they have their revenues as heretofore, and while we know that we are safe with them because their castles are in our hands, they are safe with us, and, thank God, we live together without suspicion. The past has vanished from our memory, and we treat them as dear sons. We hope it will last, for we are resolved to give them daily greater occasion to remain in this mind. Thus we keep all parts of our kingdom in peace and quiet.' Within three months came the confiscation of the principality of Salerno, whose lord—Antonello da Sanseverino—was absent from the country; and, later on, the arrest of those 'dear sons' the barons, who one after another disappeared and left no trace behind.

The complications which arose from this interpretation of the conditions of peace between the king and the Pope, and the sentiments it awakened in Florence, will be mentioned later on. There can be little difference of opinion as to this melancholy episode and its influence on the destinies of Naples. But the whole blame must not be laid on Ferrante. A nobility so powerful and warlike, so rebellious, and among some of whom disaffection was an inheritance, rendered government impossible. Defection had penetrated the king's own privy council, nay even his own family. How little unity there was in the latter is shown by the fact that the barons hoped and attempted to gain over to their side Don Federigo, who was as much beloved as his brother Alfonso was hated and feared. At Salerno they offered him the crown, which he refused. Ferrante conquered by prudence and force of arms, but he abused his victory by cunning, avarice, and cruelty. In the use of foul means he outdid his old enemy Louis XI.; but while the latter, who person-

the same effect to Filippo Strozzi, on November 27, 1486, from the camp. *Vita di Fil. Strozzi il vecchio*, p. 36.

ally was not a bit better, strengthened the royal power, Ferrante overshot the mark and cut the ground from under his own feet. Other men of the time were not more honest, yet they never enacted such horrible tragedies as those witnessed at Naples in 1486 and 1487. Ferrante's reign lasted seven years longer, externally more quiet than before, more prosperous, more unlimited, less disturbed; but all his sagacity could not save him from the phantoms called up by the consciousness of past crimes and the fear of new dangers. In his strivings after despotic power, and in the interests of the latter, he made havoc of the old nobility. He could not destroy it so completely as to prevent its remaining one of the factors in all great political changes, or the enmity of a large portion of it from becoming fatal to his house, but he diminished the strength of the country, which was founded on the old feudal order of things. He hoped to find support from the people, but could not really raise them because his system of monopolies and finance oppressed them no less than the outgrowths of the feudal state, and he had not time to carry out the change in public matters which he might possibly have projected. The people, who had not forgotten old grievances, were bound by no ties of affection to their sovereign and his heir-apparent, who had come out of the Barons' war with a greatly diminished reputation for military capacity and a yet more greatly increased reputation for faithlessness and cruelty.¹

Like the peace of 1484, that of 1486 did not take into consideration the Florentine desires and demands in the vexed question of Sarzana.

Lorenzo was ill and out of humour. Repeated attacks

¹ Camillo Porgio's masterly account, *La Congiura dei Baroni del Regno di Napoli contra il Re Ferdinando I.* (first printed at Rome in 1565) contains many illustrations and corrections from the *Regis Ferdinandi Instructionum Liber* (unfortunately not printed complete), and from the two suits against the king's private secretaries and barons, which were printed in 1487 and 1488 by Ferrante's command and sent to the foreign courts, and reprinted with notes by Stanislao d'Aloe as an appendix to his edition of Porgio (Naples, 1859).

of gout either laid him up at home, as in July 1486, or compelled him to go to Bagno a Morba, where he passed the September of the same year. He often sojourned at Careggi for a time or at the villa at Poggio a Cajano, where he sought refreshment and relaxation from the exciting affairs which never left him free. He was at no pains to conceal his irritation. One ally compromised him by faithlessness and severity, the other endangered his policy by double-dealing and the pursuit of selfish aims. The more lavish were the assurances of friendship, the nearer treachery was lurking. As to the treaty of peace and Trivulzio's part in it, he declared the proceedings of Milan were downright disgraceful. When Ferrante began to meddle with the barons whose safety had been guaranteed by Florence and Milan, and it became evident that he aimed at their destruction and the confiscation of their property, Lorenzo remarked that from a political point of view the king was becoming too powerful. If he went on thus he would soon be master in Italy, in which case Florence and Milan would fare badly, as the predominance of his influence had repeatedly been injurious to them. From the Duke of Calabria the worst must be expected, as he was of a malicious and vindictive temper setting aside that, when once his object was attained he regarded neither friendship nor past services. Lorenzo saw that he must bring the Sarzana affair to a conclusion if he did not wish to endanger his own position. The thing could not be done in the year which ended the Barons' war, but the next must not be allowed to pass without profit. There was not much to be expected from the allies. King Ferrante well knew how much he was indebted to Lorenzo and to Florence, and remarked that one good turn deserved another; but added that where an alliance was so sure and the will so entirely the same on both sides, conduct must be measured, not by the extent of the obligation, but by the power to serve. Then came the usual references to the exhaustion of the treasury, difficulties with the Pope, and

the danger from the Turks, all of which Bernardo Rucellai, the ambassador at Naples, likewise had to listen to.¹ To Lutozzo Nasi, another Florentine diplomatist, Ferrante said: 'Lorenzo knows that I really love him and his city, for I have had practical proof of his attachment to me and mine. But for him, they and I would no longer be in this kingdom. He has conferred on us a benefit which we and our posterity never will or can forget, and we will always display our gratitude to him and the Signoria.' But all this was mere talk. It was not of much use that Ferrante occasionally condescended to flatter the Signoria, as, for instance, when in the autumn of 1486 he appointed a house in Naples for their embassy, as King Ladislaus had once done for Venice; or when he sent back trophies of the war of 1478, declaring that he did not wish to preserve memorials of past strife when nothing should be thought of but reciprocal friendship.²

In Lodovico il Moro Lorenzo had still less confidence, but on account of the situation in Northern Italy, and especially on account of the Venetians, he was yet more anxious to keep on the best terms possible with Milan. Lodovico was jealous of the close relations between his allies; so, in order not to increase this jealousy, Lorenzo found it convenient to point out the common interest of Florence and Milan in preventing the king from becoming too powerful. Moreover, the Sarzana affair still prevented the conclusion of a good understanding. Lodovico was always thinking of regaining Genoa, and was the more unwilling to turn the Genoese against him for the sake of a quarrel which kept them in continual suspense, because they had applied to Venice herself for aid against the Florentines. Innocent VIII. had made an attempt at mediation, whereby the Bank of San Giorgio was to give up Pietrasanta and receive Sarzana

¹ The King to Lorenzo, Castelnuovo, June 3, 1487. Fabroni, l. c. ii. 275.

² Giov. Lanfredini to the Signoria, Naples, September 27, 1486, in Bandini, *Collectio*, &c. p. 10.

in exchange; but the matter fell through, nominally on account of disagreements between the Pope and his native city, but no doubt also because, after all the sacrifices that had been made, public opinion in Florence would have been in nowise satisfied with such a settlement. A trifling occasion, the occupation by the Florentines of a small castle beyond the Magra, sufficed to cause high words between Lorenzo and Lodovico. The former had sent Baccio Ugolini to the Duke of Calabria in 1486, and Sforza took it amiss that he had not been informed of the fact. 'Milan and Lord Lodovico,' returned Lorenzo, 'seem to forget that this city calls herself a city of freedom, and that she would be in a sorry plight if she could not even send a man on an unofficial mission to the Neapolitan prince without taking advice from Milan about it.' In Florence, he continued, nothing had been said when Lord Lodovico, without asking anybody's opinion, made his agreement with Venice. Such things were tokens of disaffection, and should it ever befall that Milan was in need of Florence it would be impossible to incline the people in her favour if they had been previously driven to extremities. Such were the relations in which these Italian States, calling themselves allies, stood to each other! Then fine words followed again, and assurances of friendship, which kept up appearances and deceived nobody as to the real state of the case. To Lorenzo's honour it must be said that he did all in his power to support the tottering edifice of concord.

At the beginning of 1487 the Florentines were firmly resolved to make an end of the Sarzana affair, which was really becoming a disgrace to the Republic. But the Genoese were beforehand with them. On a hill to the east of the town of Sarzana lies the fort of Sarzanello, begun by the brave Ghibelin leader Castruccio Castracani when he extended the Lucchese territory as far as the Magra. It was a hill-fort, still worthy of notice for its construction, and it had always been held by the Florentines. In March 1487

the commandant of Sarzana, Gian Luigi Fiesco of Lavagna, made a sudden attack on Sarzanello, took the outworks, and began to fire on the fortress. The famous Sienese architect Francesco di Giorgio, who, together with Giuliano da Sangallo, did more than anyone else for the military architecture of the time, was serving as an engineer in the Genoese camp, and he seems to have first adopted the mining system against Sarzanello. Florence saw there was no time to lose. The Count of Pitigliano and the lords of Piombino, Faenza, and Mirandola commanded the troops, to which Naples and Milan sent scanty contingents. On April 15 the besiegers of the fort were completely beaten, and their leader, Obietto Fiesco, fell into the hands of the victors. But the fight for the town of Sarzana dragged on, though the troops were better than some of their leaders. The place was in increasing misery, yet the defenders held out amid the distress and ruin of the inhabitants.

In the beginning of June Lorenzo went to Pisa to be nearer the scene of action. On the 8th he was in the camp and ordered the town to be more closely surrounded. An attempt to relieve it failed. On the 21st it was decided to storm it, but a white flag was hoisted on the walls, and the next morning the gates were opened. The inhabitants were spared, the garrison remained prisoners of war. Two days before midsummer Lorenzo returned to Florence. 'Never,' writes the Ferrarese ambassador, 'was he received with such acclamations by the people, who attribute the recapture of Sarzana to him before all others.'¹ It was not the importance of the place itself that Florence cared for; she regarded its seizure as an insult. 'After you have saluted in our name the illustrious Signoria, my lords the Eight, and the

¹ Guidoni's reports (in Cappelli) contain a number of notices and hints from which Lorenzo's state of mind at the time of the treaty of 1486 and his relations with the allies may be clearly made out. On Sarzanello, see Carlo Promis, *Storia del forte di Sarzanello* (Turin, 1838). From one of Guidoni's reports it appears that the Florentines also used mines: '*sperasi per certe cave fatte. . . che S. Francesco si acquisterà fra due di.*'

illustrious lord Lorenzo,' thus ran Ferrante's instructions¹ of July 27 to Antonio Sperandeo, whom he was sending to Florence, 'you shall express to them our joy at the recovery of Sarzana; a joy which beseems true and sincere friends on such a happy occasion, and is meet for a connection which makes the advantage and welfare of the one the advantage and welfare of the other. Therefore we rejoice at the conclusion of this affair as at a piece of good fortune to ourselves, and pray God that He may further the interests and well-being of us both, and lead us from good to better through a continuance of our reciprocal friendship.' How much of these assurances of friendship should be laid to the account of the complications at home, may be left undecided.

Lodovico il Moro took no trouble to hide his ill-humour, and immediately recalled his troops from the Florentine camp on the Magra, whereat the Florentines were highly indignant. Lorenzo said he supposed the Duke of Bari thought Genoa and the Castelletto would be given up to him next. But it actually came to pass. The Cardinal-Doge, Paolo Fregoso, perceived that he could not hold his ground amidst his many enemies, even if the Florentines—as they were certainly disposed to do—did not advance further towards the Riviera, where the neighbourhood of the gulf of Spezia was almost unprotected. While he began negotiating with Sforza the Adorni party were negotiating with France. Lodovico was quicker than the counsellors of the young king, and, after much debating in one form and another, the matter ended in Genoa once more acknowledging the Duke of Milan as her superior; whereupon the doge was pensioned and went to end his much-disturbed days at Rome. The Florentines were not destined long to enjoy the possession of Sarzana, which had cost them so much blood and still more money. During Charles VIII.'s

¹ R. Ferdinandi Instr. L., p. 245.

campaign against Naples, both the town and the fortress passed into the hands of the French, who, when Florentine troops and commissioners came to demand their restoration, sold them to that same bank of San Giorgio with which the Republic had fought so long for their possession.

CHAPTER VI.

LORENZO AS MEDIATOR BETWEEN ROME AND NAPLES.

FOR a long time past there could have been no question as to Lorenzo's earnest desire to arrive at a good understanding with Innocent VIII. Immediately after the latter's election circumstances appeared favourable, and the Florentines had reasonable hopes of putting an end to the contest for Sarzana. Unfortunately, the dispute between the Pope and the King of Naples interfered to retard the good understanding, but, though Florence took the king's side, no declarations of war were published, and the negotiations with the Pope were never broken off. Lorenzo always remained in communication with Innocent. It was through him that at the peace of 1486, the Orsini, who were left unprotected, were reconciled with the Pope. He attached great importance to the latter's friendship on both public and private grounds. He fully understood the instability of the Italian league and the extent of the influence of the States of the Church on those at home. With regard to family affairs he had to take into consideration not only money matters relative to an advantageous marriage for his eldest son and his daughters, who were now growing up, but also of preferment for his second son, who, by his father's wish, was early to enter on the career once designed for his uncle. All these various interests were fully developed in Lorenzo's conduct during the year 1487.

In April 1486 a distinguished and warlike citizen of Osimo in the Marches of Ancona, by name Bocalino de'

Guzzoni, having acquired great influence over the people, profited by the Pope's hour of difficulty to take forcible possession of that town, which, like many other Papal possessions, was somewhat inclined to be rebellious. He pleaded in extenuation of his proceedings that there was a certain sum owing to him from the Apostolic Chamber.¹ Lodovico immediately remarked that if the man was inclined to join the league against the Pope he should have help, as the matter had fallen out very seasonably.² But Boccalino had no intention of accepting the foreign aid, which he would not trust, without first trying his own powers. The peace between Naples and the Pope at first turned to his advantage, as many of Sanseverino's dispersed soldiers entered his service; but he very soon saw that he was lost, and, yielding to the remonstrances addressed to him in the name of the young Duke of Urbino, he came to terms with the Pope. The accommodation, however, did not last long; Boccalino again set up the standard of revolt, whereupon it was decided to besiege Osimo. Boccalino then conceived the adventurous idea of applying to Constantinople and stirring up Sultan Bajazet to an attack on the Marches, which he himself would administer as a vassal of the Turkish empire. The messenger who was to carry this proposition, a nephew of Boccalino, was arrested at Lecce, and the letters fell into King Ferrante's hands. He disclosed the story to Trivulzio, who had been in the kingdom with Milanese troops ever since the Barons' war, and to the ambassadors of Florence and Milan, through whom it reached the ears of the Pope. Rome determined to prevent the rebellion from spreading further. On March 2, Cardinal della Rovere was appointed legate for the Marches,³ and Giulio Cesare Varano, lord of

¹ The fullest detailed account of Boccalino de' Guzzoni is given by Bernardino Baldi in the second book of his history of Guidubaldo of Montefeltro (Milan, 1821). Cf. Ugolini, *Storia dei conti e duchi d'Urbino*, ii. 49, *et seq.*

² Lodovico to G. J. Trivulzio, Milan, April 29, 1486, in Rosmini, ii. 158. *Ibid.* other documents relating to this affair.

³ Burcard, *Diarium*. p. 88.

Camerino, commander of the troops. Both proceeded to Osimo, but failed in their object, for Boccalino managed to blind the cardinal with the eloquence of his speech; so the Pope addressed Lodovico il Moro with a request that he would lend him Trivulzio and some of his troops. The Duke of Bari acceded to the request; on May 8, Gian Jacopo reached Rome, and on the 31st he was in the camp before Osimo.

For a long time this gallant soldier accomplished nothing; he lacked money, artillery, and ammunition. Part of the Milanese troops deserted and left the camp because their pay was in arrears; the papal contingent was quite useless; Boccalino kept on negotiating with the cardinal and with Francesco Gaddi, whom Lorenzo, through the Bishop of Arezzo, had sent to arrange an accommodation with Boccalino.¹ At last Rome grew weary. Cardinal La Balue, the deep intriguer who had reason to congratulate himself that Louis XI. had done no worse than shut him up in an iron cage, but who was not wanting in capacity and had gained some influence at the papal court, was sent in the latter half of June, with money and fresh troops, to relieve Della Rovere. When he arrived, Trivulzio had fortified a height which overhung the town, and had thus rendered further resistance impossible. On July 12 the inhabitants offered to capitulate. The Florentine envoy helped to arrange the terms: Boccalino agreed, on payment of 8,000 ducats, to leave the town and settle at Florence. 'This evening,' wrote Trivulzio to Milan on August 1, 'I have caused 200 foot soldiers and a squadron of men-at-arms to march into Osimo. Early to-morrow morning Messer Boccalino will leave the city, and then my lord the legate will hold his solemn entry. The matter could not have been more happily or honourably settled.' More happily or honourably! For sixteen months a town by no means strong had held

¹ The Medicean Archives, F. 57, contain numerous documents relating to Osimo and Boccalino.

out in rebellion against the lord of the land, and after a five months' siege it had surrendered for money and pardon. It was fortunate for the inhabitants, but it showed the deplorable condition of military affairs.

Boccalino de' Guzzoni betook himself to Florence, where he was honourably received, and Lorenzo was commissioned to pay him the greater part of the sum allotted to him, of which he had received 1,000 ducats on his departure. But there were other difficulties to contend with, and Lorenzo's letters to Giovanni Lanfredini, the ambassador at Rome, show how indignant he was at the delay in fulfilling the promises made him from thence, and how he feared to be compromised by this delay. As the promised money did not arrive and Boccalino pressed for payment, Lorenzo advanced him 500 ducats and charged the ambassador to see to the settlement of the matter. 'I do not believe,' he wrote to Lanfredini,¹ that the Pope is by nature spiteful or quarrelsome. But even if he were so, which I have never observed, he ought not to be so towards me. Try to arrange the matter, for I should regret the least stain on my honour more than life or all else that is dear to me on earth. Make no secret of it that, if no regard is paid to my honour, I shall make no scruple of showing my displeasure. I cannot believe it, but shall act according to experience.' The Florentines seemed to expect that Boccalino would settle among them and claim the freedom of the city, in which they were willing to help him; they also offered him a military post in their service. After staying awhile, however, he went to Milan, whence Lodovico, who disliked having him in his neighbourhood, got rid of him by force.

When Lorenzo performed this service for the Pope, a family alliance had already been sealed between them. The course of political events has caused us to lose sight of the

¹ Florence, August 8, 1487. Med. Arch. F. 57. In a letter of November 24, referring to Boccalino's nephew, who was kept in prison at Rome, and afterwards executed, he expresses himself still more strongly. 'Stimo questa cosa. . . quanto la vita propria, perchè mi pare mettere una gran parte dello honore e fede mia.'

Medici family since the complications and conflicts which sprang from the Pazzi conspiracy. The house in the Via Larga was full of children; besides the three sons, Piero, Giovanni, and Giuliano, there were four blooming daughters, Lucrezia, Maddalena, Luigia, and Contessina. Lucrezia, the eldest of all, was early betrothed to Jacopo Salviati, for the sake of blotting out the memories of 1478. Luigia, the third daughter, was the bride of Giovanni de' Medici, the younger grandson of Cosimo the Elder's brother Lorenzo. When the eldest daughter's marriage took place in 1487, her grandmother was dead. Lucrezia Tornabuoni died on the Feast of the Annunciation, 1482. The loss of his excellent mother was deeply felt by Lorenzo. 'My reverence for your Excellency,' he wrote on the same day to the Duchess of Ferrara, Eleonora d'Aragona d'Este,¹ 'commands me to announce to you the sad and overwhelming event which has this day befallen me, the death of my dearest mother Madonna Lucrezia. It has plunged me in a grief which your Excellency can imagine, for I have lost, not only my mother, but my only refuge amid my many cares and difficulties, the only helper who could aid and counsel me in my many troubles. It is true that we must submit with patience to the will of God, but I have not enough strength of mind to bear such a calamity with calmness. I pray God to send me more composure and comfort, and to grant peace and blessedness to her soul. Your Excellency, towards whom I give free course to my sorrow, will understand the state of mind of your faithful servant, who commends himself to you as heartily as he can.'

It is self-evident that Lorenzo had to consider his peculiar position in planning the future connections of his children as they grew up. He strove to reconcile the political needs of this position with the traditions of the country, which

¹ Cappelli, l. c. p. 244. *Ibid.*, letter, same date (March 25, 1482), to the Duke. In the register of Lorenzo's letters are no less than 27 despatched on the same day to princes and ambassadors to announce Lucrezia's death.

were against foreign marriages. The family alliance which he formed between the Medici and the Cybò has this peculiarity, that in this case, for the first time, the son of a Pope was in some degree recognised and brought on the political stage, the sad beginning of a grievous error in the history of the Popedom. Before the middle of March, 1487, Giovanni Lanfredini went to Rome to arrange preliminaries for a contract of marriage between Lorenzo's second daughter, Maddalena, and Franceschetto Cybò, son of Innocent VIII.¹ On the 22nd Lorenzo publicly announced 'the family connection concluded with me by his Holiness.' The allies, Naples and Milan, had been informed of the negotiations in question. Lorenzo attached especial importance to the king's approval, because there had once been a project of marriage between Franceschetto and a daughter of Ferrante, and it was not till he had made sure of the latter's agreement that he formally concluded the contract with Rome, or even discussed the matter with the Florentine magistrates, to whom he submitted it for approval. 'Our opinion of the illustrious Lorenzo,' so run Ferrante's instructions addressed, on May 1, to Trojano de' Bottuni, who was going as ambassador to Rome, Florence, and Milan,² 'is so firmly established that the whole world could produce no change in us. Wish him joy of the new connection, which, in my opinion, is likely to be no less useful to us than to him; for his influence on the Pope will operate favourably to smooth the misunderstandings between his Holiness and ourselves, and we only regret not having known of the plan earlier that we might immediately have given it our full agreement.'

'Now may God guide all for the best,' wrote Lorenzo to the Florentine ambassador at Naples,³ 'and give me grace that the thing may benefit ourselves and others, and be for our personal and the general advantage. Such things

¹ A. Guidoni, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 292.

² R. Ferd. Instr. L., p. 222.

³ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 313.

are wont to be judged by their results more than by the rules of reason.' And he adds these honourable words: 'As the king wishes that the new connection shall have no disturbing influence on our alliance, I give my word that this connection shall not make me other than I was; for I have never been so exclusively and passionately interested in my own private affairs as to forget public honour or that which beseems a straightforward and honest man. I believe the king considers me as such, and he may be sure that if the Pope should intend anything that might disturb peace I should be the first to resist him. I know where to seek the foundation of things, and what difficulties arise from the daily events which go on gradually evolving themselves. I think I have with no little trouble, care, and expense proved my devotion to the king, and he may be sure that I shall not sacrifice a substance to a shadow.'

Franceschetto Cybò has left no brilliant name in the history of his father's pontificate. He is supposed to have been born in 1449 at Naples, where Giambattista Cybò—then only seventeen—was living with his father Arano before taking holy orders. When the father became Pope, Franceschetto had a sister, Teodorina, who married into the Usodimare family of Genoa. The mother's name and rank are unknown, and of Franceschetto himself nothing is known till the time when he made this sudden appearance on the world's stage. He naturally was in no want of external honours. He was made governor of Rome and captain-general of the Church; his brother-in-law, Leo X., afterwards gave him the government of Spoleto, and he was made a count of the Empire by the Emperor Frederic. Fiefs were added to his titles. But he was without talent, at once greedy of gain and a careless spendthrift. One night, when taking part in the disorderly doings of some young nobles, he lost 14,000 ducats at play to Cardinal Raffaello Riario. When the Pope lay in a seemingly hopeless condition, struck by apoplexy, his son tried to get pos-

session of his treasures; the result of which attempt was that the cardinals made an inventory of them and entrusted one of their own college with the care of them, though it was said that Franceschetto had already managed to convey a portion safely to Florence. His bride was still so young that the marriage was put off. In the interval many things happened which might have tempted Lorenzo to change his mind, but for his earnest desire to gain a hold on Rome and his hope of dominating the weak Pope, which was strengthened by the events of 1487.

Only a few weeks after the conclusion of the treaty disputes again arose between the Church and Naples, when Aquila was subdued, the papal governor put to death, and the papal banner torn down. An outbreak of persecution against the barons increased the disagreement, and then the king broke his word to the Pope by denying that either he or his son had consented to pay the actual tribute. The management of benefices went on in the usual arbitrary manner. Innocent saw himself and his authority openly set at naught. In January 1487, the Prince of Salerno, who had quitted the kingdom before the net could be drawn tight round him, arrived at Rome, where he was received with all honours.¹ His report of the proceedings added fuel to the flame. Lodovico il Moro, who was always playing a double game, declared himself unreservedly in opposition to the king—with whom he was nevertheless at that moment treating for the marriage of his nephew Gian Galeazzo—and held out a threat of Venice taking part with the Pope, all of which did not dispose Innocent to regard Ferrante's conduct calmly. The king soon discovered that his position was one of some danger. On May 1, he sent Trojano de' Bottuni as envoy-extraordinary to Rome, Florence, and Milan.² He was to make the most of the undecided affair of Osimo and the services therein rendered to the Pope; to put prominently

¹ Burcard, *Diarium*, p. 87.

² R. Ferd. Instr. L., p. 217 *et seq.* Cf. *supra* p. 265.

forward the danger from the Turks ; to explain the king's financial difficulties caused by the long-continued wars ; and to appeal to Lorenzo and Lodovico for support in case of invasion. All this was mere show. If the Pope proved obstinate the ambassador was instructed to explain that the tribute was a formality rather than a contribution of money. The king did not hold himself bound to the Pope, and he had never ratified the consent given to the treaty of peace. Moreover, the conditions of this peace had not been fulfilled by his barons, and after the Pope had brought him into endless difficulties and dangers, he was in nowise minded to weaken his own forces still further in order to elevate his Holiness. As for the Duke of Bari's threat about Venice, the ambassador might take the opinions of the Florentine Signoria and Lorenzo, and try if possible to obtain a written promise of help. The conduct of the barons had required renewed and severer measures ; their discontent greatly astonished the king, as it would only bring trouble on the Pope and the Venetians, and perhaps occasion a more troublesome disaffection than the last. He relied entirely on Florence and Lorenzo ; the whole world should not be able to change his opinion of the latter. Gioviano Pontano, the same man who had made the treaty with the Pope, drew up by the king's orders instructions which repudiated all the obligations undertaken at the peace.

Ferrante was not mistaken in his expectation that Lorenzo would do all in his power to prevent another conflagration ; but he was very much mistaken if he believed, as he pretended to believe, that Lorenzo approved of his proceedings. On his return from Sarzana, free at last from that care, Lorenzo spoke out unreservedly his opinion respecting his allies. He must have been angry indeed when he, the true representative of Italian national policy, in his delight at the progress of the French arms against Maximilian in Flanders went so far as to declare that he still

hoped to see the king of France lord of all Italy.¹ 'This shows,' adds the Ferrarese ambassador, 'how greatly his Magnificence is put out; may God turn his heart to the best.' 'The arrest of the barons,' reports the same writer, July 11, 'has greatly displeased not only the illustrious Lorenzo but also the whole city, and it is spoken of to the king's dishonour.' The annexation of Genoa to Milan, and the losses of Venice in the war with Archduke Sigismund (so thought the ambassador), would probably incline the Signoria to extreme caution, but Lorenzo's expressions against Lodovico, whom he regarded as the real disturber of peace, were most violent. If the Duke of Bari continued his crooked policy, Lorenzo believed the end would be that the King of Naples would lay down the law for both Florence and the Pope. If they both acted reasonably they would keep together like their fathers before them and not plunge Italy into danger. Lorenzo said he wished he could go and bury himself for six months in some place where no rumour of Italian affairs could reach his ears.

Lorenzo's ill-humour and anxiety is displayed in the many letters written by him at this time to Lanfredini. It was necessary, he wrote on July 17,² that the Pope should make sure of the attitude of Venice, but at the same time take up a firm position, that he might not be suspected of believing the king's assurances that his proceedings against the barons had been occasioned by their conduct since the peace; for that suspicion would deprive him of all firm security. Ten days after, he expressed his irritation at the double-dealing of Sforza, who, pressed by the Neapolitan envoy, wrote at the same time letters to his brother the cardinal in favour of the king, and others to his agent in Rome in agreement with the Papal views. The object of Sforza's apparent partisanship with Ferrante was probably

¹ A. Guidoni, Flor., July 7, 1487, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 295.

² *Med. Arch.*, fol. 57. There are a number of despatches of this and a somewhat later time relating to this affair.

to hinder the latter from forming an alliance with Venice if he saw Florence and Milan arrayed against him. But the first thing to be done was for all the Italian States to stand fast by the Pope and show no wavering. 'Certainly all desire peace, but I think no one will suffer the Pope to be insulted and oppressed.'

The king's defence of his proceedings convinced nobody. In the latter half of July, Innocent held a consistory on the condition of affairs in Naples. The whole college of Cardinals agreed with him that the honour of the Holy See no longer permitted him to look on unmoved. Letters were to be written concerning the breach of the treaty to the King of Spain, to Milan and Florence, who had guaranteed its fulfilment. A nuncio was to be sent to Naples to protest, and, in case the barons had recently failed in their duty, to move for proper legal proceedings against them, with the participation of the Pope. Instructions to this effect were drawn up on July 24 for Pietro Vicentino, bishop of Cesena.¹ But the king treated the nuncio in the most unworthy manner.² He refused him an audience; and when the bishop, having watched the moment when Ferrante was starting for the chase, stopped him in the doorway and compelled him to listen to his demands, he gained nothing by it. He demanded in the Pope's name three things; payment of the tribute, abstinence from all unlawful meddling in spiritual affairs, and the cessation of proceedings against the barons. To the first point Ferrante answered that he had no money, having spent everything on the war begun against him by the Pope, so that the latter must still be patient for a few years. To the second, that *he* knew what persons in the kingdom were fit for benefices, but the Curia did not, and it was sufficient for the Pope to confirm those appointed by the King. Lastly, as to the third point; as the Pope had upon treasonable practices imprisoned Cardinals Colonna and

¹ Rainaldi, *Ann. eccl.* in anno 1487, Doc. x.

² Stef. Infessura, *Diarium*, in Muratori *R. It. Scr.* t. iii. pt. 2, p. 1218, 1219.

Savelli, and set them free again at his own will and pleasure, so the king had a right to arrest traitorous subjects and let them go again just as he thought good. Thereupon he caused the horns to be blown and rode away to the chase, without even turning to salute the bishop. 'If I have lately been silent as to the Neapolitan business,' wrote Lorenzo to Lanfredini on August 10,¹ 'the reason is not that I have changed my mind, but that I will take no more trouble for nothing. If his Holiness has confidence in me, as you say, it is my duty to regard only his Holiness's honour. The more I think over the matter, the more I am confirmed in my view, that the Pope must neither yield his rights to the king nor make war upon him. The way to avoid both extremes seems to me to be this: that the Pope should without delay take every measure to maintain his rights as to the question of homage, but on the other hand avoid everything that might lead to a passage of arms or to an interdict. We are not in a fit condition for making war, and the circumstances of Italy in general, as well as those of the States of the Church in especial, will not sustain a shock. An interdict unsupported by arms produces little effect; therefore I think for the present the matter is best left alone. But this would not be the case if the Pope gave in about the tribute, whether by diminishing or remitting the debt; for at this moment it would do no good, and be a clear loss. If the king attaches to this affair the importance he seems to do, then, should a concession be needed, a time more favourable to the Pope's interests could be found. I do not in the least fear that because the Papal rights are upheld, the king will proceed to a hostile demonstration. He would stand without justification, and others would not support him. This is my opinion, expressed only for the Pope himself; for it is better for our object that I should appear to be persuading him to come to terms with the

¹ *Med. Arch.*, l. c.

king. My lord Lodovico and many others hold the same view. If the Pope agrees, he must manage so as not to get me and others into trouble, but wait for time and opportunity.' The attitude of Venice confirmed Lorenzo still more in his view that Rome must not push matters to an extremity. 'The Venetians' answer,' he wrote on August 31, 'seems to me to be very vague and gives little response to the confidence placed in the Republic by his Holiness. I think it would be well if the Pope showed some little vexation at it, without exactly taking the thing really amiss, particularly with regard to their war with the Germans, and the defeat and death of my lord Roberto [Sanseverino]. In any case, however, they must be impressed with the king's power, and the ease with which he could damage the States of the Church, so as to get their views in case of such an event, and find out how far they may be reckoned on. It would at the same time be an opportunity for urging them to peace with the Germans; for, in truth, all sorts of evil fruits arise from their being busy in that quarter; and I think the Pope would do well to exhort the Venetians to make peace, and to support them, that they may regain freedom of action.'

Thus did Lorenzo look to the distant as well as the immediate prospect. But Innocent VIII. was not the man to take up a firm position; he let himself be ruled by momentary impulses. On September 3, Gian Jacopo Trivulzio, loaded with honours by the Pope after the settlement of the Osimo affair, on his return to Milan came to Florence; here he was splendidly received by the foreign ambassadors and many distinguished citizens, with Piero de' Medici at their head, and lodged in the convent of Sta. Croce. The cardinal of S. Peter in Vinculis was with him. Lorenzo was at Pisa. Trivulzio was commissioned by the Pope to tell him that he trusted entirely to him, and would be guided by him; but if he guided him amiss it would be the ruin of both. And hereupon the Pope broke into violent complaints against the

king. But the Milanese captain's account of Innocent was not such as to strengthen the confidence of the Republic in him. 'Messer Gian Jacopo,' wrote the Ferrarese ambassador, 'tells of the Pope's faint-heartedness and want of head and spirit, and that he acts after the fashion of an utter simpleton;' and adds that 'if somebody does not put a little spirit into him and keep him alive, he will come to a most pitiful end.' On the 6th the news reached Florence that the king had appealed to the council. Though Innocent regarded the appeal as null, and declared it contrary to Ferrante's own agreements with his predecessor, still it was believed that the threat would frighten him.¹ This, however, proved a mistake.

About the beginning of the second week in September Lorenzo went from Pisa to the hill-country of Volterra, where he had an estate on the heights that slope down towards the lower part of the Era valley; a district beautifully cultivated, but less fertile than the valley of the Arno. This estate had been during the thirteenth century a settlement of the Hospitaliers of Altopascio, and had thence taken the name of Spedaletto.² Here Lorenzo was wont to take the waters of Morba, brought to him daily by messengers on horseback; for Spedaletto was more healthily situated and more convenient for communication. Hither, on September 10, just as he had despatched Francesco Valori with commissions to Naples, recommending him to consult with Lanfredini at Rome, there arrived at his residence a Papal secretary who had vainly sought for him at Pisa. This was

¹ Stefano Taverna to the Duke of Milan, Flor., September 14, 1487, in Rosmini, ii. 188. A. Guidoni, Flor., September 6 and 12, in Cappelli, p. 296.

² Spedaletto, which passed after Lorenzo's death to Maddalena Cybò and later to the Corsini family, to whom it still belongs, was visited in November 1654 by Cardinal de Retz, coming from Spain by sea, before he proceeded to the Grand-duke Ferdinand II. at the Ambrogiana near Empoli, and thence to Rome. He knew that the villa, which he calls L'Hospitalità, had belonged to Lorenzo de' Medici, but he wrongly places here the scene of the battle in which Catiline fell. *Mémoires du Card. de Retz*, pt. iii. ch. i. Ed. by Champollion-Figeac (1866), iv. 246.

Jacopo Gherardi of Volterra, sent by Innocent with secret commissions to Lorenzo and Lodovico.¹ The object of the interview was to draw both, together with Venice, into a formal league against King Ferrante. Lorenzo's reception of the Pope's proposals shows that he, who, notwithstanding his friendship and connection with Innocent, had anything but a high opinion of the latter's political tact and firmness, was anxious not to risk the peace of Italy, attained with so much difficulty. However much he might be angered by Ferrante's faithlessness and violence, yet the weakness of the Pope, the trickery of Sforza, and the ambition of Venice caused him such grave anxiety that he determined to ward off a new conflict as much as possible. He held to the views expressed to Lanfredini, and warned the Pope against using either his spiritual or temporal power in arms. The Papal treasury was exhausted, the armed force slight, there was no good leader at hand equal to the responsibility, nor would it be easy to find one; the king was prepared, the inhabitants of the States of the Church were not at unity among themselves, and many were discontented. Neither was there harmony in the College of Cardinals. The circumstances of the Pope and his State were not such that he ought to enter on a fresh war; the interests of all the other Italian States demanded peace. As for honour, which in Innocent's opinion was endangered by the conduct of the king, Lorenzo thought that a Pope's honour could never be endangered through his defending his rights by means of just protestations, without disturbing the peace of Italy.

Lorenzo's advice was that the Papal envoy should not proceed to Milan. But the Pope insisted, and Lorenzo, with

¹ *Lettere di Jacopo da Volterra a P. Innocenzo VIII.*, published with a commentary by M. Tabarrini in the *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, s. iii. vol. viii. pt. ii. p. 3, *et seq.* Jacopo Gherardi had been formerly in the service of Cardinal Ammanati. His writings passed into the Venetian archives after the sack of Rome in 1527. The Medicean archives contain a series of despatches relating to this mission. Lorenzo writes from Spedaletto on September 11-19; on the 21st he was in Florence; on October 2-10, at Spedaletto again. He says once: 'I am here according to my custom, for the care of my health'

his permission, drew up for Gherardi's benefit fresh instructions which would prevent any real engagement, however much Sforza might wish to meddle. These negotiations continued till the end of the first week in October. Who would believe that while the bow was so tightly strung and the danger of a rupture was hovering nearer and nearer, the king, who was openly defying the Pope and seeking to defend his own conduct by embassies to all the allied courts, proposed to this same Pope a special alliance, which was to put an end to all differences? Yet so it was, and the Bishop of Carinola came to Rome with such a proposition. The Pope informed the Florentine ambassador of it, and gave him a copy of the bishop's instructions. Lorenzo already knew of the matter, but was in doubt as to the views of Innocent. He spoke out plainly, in his answer to Lanfredini, intended for communication to the Pope,¹ his own opinion—that the king only intended to mislead the Pope and keep him occupied, while he himself kept to the course he had begun; and all the more so, because the instructions contained nothing but generalities. Secondly, Ferrante might be trying to separate the Pope from him, Lorenzo, well knowing that then he could do as he pleased with the former. Lastly, his object was to make sure whether the Pope stood firm to his resolves and counted on foreign support. 'As for me,' he continued, 'you know I will never advise his Holiness to do anything unworthy of him, or which may disturb the peace of Italy. But as I warned the holy father through you, only a little while ago, not to build on hopes of foreign help, so I am now of opinion that he must not let himself be turned by what seems to me fair words and figures of speech from a design which he considers reasonable. If his Holiness is minded to come to terms with the king, in order to put out this spark which may light a great fire, then I think it can be done by means

¹ Despatch of October 22, 1487, in Desjardins, l. c. p. 214.

of a general Italian alliance. From such I should expect three results. First, a vindication of the agreement between the Pope and the king, so that the first would appear to postpone his own interest to the general good and the tranquillity of Italy. Secondly, greater security for the king's fidelity to the treaty, which the Pope must require after the experience he has had. Thirdly, a confirmation of the good understanding with the other Italian powers, particularly with Venice; which understanding would be endangered if the Pope should close with the king alone.' The whole despatch is a clear proof how little confidence the writer felt, on the one hand, in the Pope's firmness, and on the other in Ferrante's honour, and how his own desire to preserve peace outweighed everything else. He requested the ambassador to do all he could with Innocent, at whose court there was no lack of intrigues and counter-intrigues, that the king might not be led to suspect him, Lorenzo, of opposing an accommodation, which suspicion would damage his own position with Ferrante; but this was the fruit of oft-repeated experience. That he should try to keep in the Pope's good graces was only natural. 'My first desire,' he wrote, 'is to agree with the views of the holy father. This is my duty, rather than to give him advice. For I believe the Pope to be more conversant with the things of this world than the king's instructions seem to assume; and he has reigned long enough not to need directions from the king as to his bearing towards us and others.'

During all this negotiating backwards and forwards, Lodovico il Moro, who was a person to be considered in the matter, had fallen seriously ill. In August 1487, he was seized with such an alarming disorder of the stomach that the Duke of Ferrara expressed a wish that Lorenzo would send to Milan his own physician, Piero Leone, who was considered the most skilful man of his time. In November, Sforza's condition was so much worse that the friends of the family summoned his only living brother, the Cardinal Ascanio, in

order to be prepared to take his place if he died. On November 18, the Cardinal came through Florence incognito, with a few horsemen, and in such haste that he changed horses at every post. Lorenzo and he had not always agreed well together; but now he said that he would, in case of need, support him, and try to go hand in hand with him and the Pope. The danger in which Lodovico lay passed slowly by. The Papal affair made no progress at all. Venice, having made peace with Sigismund, threatened war against Naples; Milan let King Ferrante know that he must not reckon on her alliance if he did not alter his conduct towards Rome; the king persisted in his defiance and in his measures against the barons; the Pope tried to make money, and threatened him with an interdict. Lorenzo, highly displeased at the whole state of affairs, did all in his power to restrain Innocent from taking the extreme steps he meditated.

CHAPTER VII.

FAMILY EVENTS. MARRIAGES AND DEATHS.

THE marriage of Maddalena de' Medici with Franceschetto Cybò took place about this time. When her journey to Rome was partially decided on, Lorenzo wrote to Lanfredini,¹ without making any positive statement on the subject: 'Clarice, my wife, is partly minded to visit her relations there, and at the same time to try the effect of the Roman air, as you know that of our neighbourhood does not suit her in winter. You formerly mentioned a desire that Maddalena should go to Rome. If this is still the case, she might conveniently accompany her mother. These are our own present plans, which you can communicate to the Pope and Signor Francesco. If they are pleased with them, the thing shall take place, but not otherwise.' On November 4, 1487, Madonna Clarice set out for Rome with her daughter the bride, her eldest son, the Bishop of Arezzo, Jacopo Salviati, and a numerous suite. Lorenzo did not omit to give his daughter on her departure from home precepts and advice such as he knew how to give wisely and well. He reminded her of her own descent and family, as well as of the position she was about to take; of the consideration due both to the Roman people and to the Pope, with whom she was to be so nearly connected; of her duty towards her husband; of the precepts of honour and obedience, and of respect to her elders and superiors in rank. On arriving

¹ October 22, 1487, in Desjardins, l. c. p. 219.

near the city the travellers were met by the bridegroom, with some prelates of the Pope's household, several ambassadors and members of the Florentine colony at Rome, amid whom they were conducted to the Leonine city. Here Franceschetto dwelt in a house built by his uncle Maurigio, near that in which Charlotte de Lusignan, queen of Cyprus, had died after a long exile, on June 12 of that same year. The servants of the prelates and those of the ambassadors and the Medici rode foremost. On Franceschetto's right rode his future brother-in-law, Piero, on his left, Jacopo Salviati, with whom he was to be similarly connected. The bride rode between the Archbishop of Cosenza and the Bishop of Oria, her mother between the Milanese ambassador (the Bishop of Roveredo) and the Bishop of Volterra. Prelates, jurists, ladies and others followed.¹ On the Sunday before the 24th, the day on which the Venetian envoys Sebastiano Badoer and Bernardo Bembo were received in a secret consistory, the Pope gave a banquet at his palace to Clarice and her daughter, at which the bridegroom, the Florentine ambassador, and several prelates were present. To the bride he presented jewels to the value of about eight thousand ducats, to Franceschetto, one of two thousand.² On January 20, 1488, the marriage contract was signed.³ Franceschetto was in his thirty-ninth year; his bride was yet in her girlhood, gentle and bashful. One of those sent by her father to accompany her always calls her *la fanciulla*. Her dowry does not seem to have been large; four thousand ducats, part in cash, part in state bonds. From a letter of Lorenzo to Lanfredini,⁴ it appears that this sum was not ready at the time of the wedding. 'You know how many

¹ A. Guidoni, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 296. Burcard, p. 95; the date is wrong. On the house of the Cybò in the Borgo, see P. Adinolfi, *La Portica di San Pietro* (Rome, 1859), p. 119 *et seq.*

² A. Guidoni, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 297.

³ F. Gregorovius, *Das Archiv der Notare des Capitols in Rom und das Protocollbuch des Notars Camillus de Beneimbene; Sitzungsberichte d. kk. Acad. d. Wissenschaften in München*, 1872, p. 503.

⁴ Flor., August 8, 1488, in Fabroni, ii. 312. Cf. i. 405.

holes I have to fill up.' But Franceschetto was no loser. In the days of Paul II. the countship of Anguillara had been taken from its ancient lords, on account of their repeated rebellions, and given to the Apostolic Chamber. The relatives of Everso of Anguillara had never ceased to protest, and we have already pointed out that after the death of Sixtus IV. Deifebo regained possession of the castles. Lorenzo made terms with the claimants by means of a considerable sum, and offered the county to Cybò as an addition to Maddalena's dowry; whereupon, on February 21, 1490, Innocent VIII. conferred on Franceschetto the fief of Anguillara, without mentioning the transaction, so as not to call in question the rights of the Chamber. In 1487 Franceschetto had bought of Bartolommeo della Rovere the Roman castles of Cerveteri and Sta. Severa.¹ These places, alienated after the Pope's death to the Orsini of Bracciano, were, at the beginning of Alexander VI.'s reign, near kindling a war which threatened to set all Italy on fire. This was not all the wealth that the Cybò gained by their connection with the Medici. In Tuscany they acquired property. The palace of Jacopo de' Pazzi passed to Lorenzo's son-in-law, whose descendants long possessed both it and the country-house of the Pazzi at Montughi.² The Medici's estate in the Volterra district, which also passed to the Cybò, has been already mentioned. The intended acquisition of the unfinished Pitti Palace came to nothing.

Lorenzo, who always knew how to combine his love of splendour with useful aims, and judged others from the same point of view, had no very high opinion of his son-in-

¹ Gregorovius, l. c. [purchase of Cerveteri, June 14, 1487]. Lorenzo to Lanfredini (1490), in Fabroni, ii. 388. Nibby, *Diutorni di Roma* (Rome, 1848), i. 348.

² The palace (afterwards called Quaratesi) and the villa (for a time Catalani-Valabègue, now Lavaggi) passed after the death of Franceschetto's son Lorenzo, to the latter's natural son, Ottavio, with a reservation of the usufruct to Lorenzo's sister Caterina, the widowed Duchess of Camerino. The villa belonged for a time to Eleonora Cybò, daughter of Lorenzo, and wife of Gian Luigi Fiesco, Count of Lavagna, the hero of the conspiracy of 1547.

law. 'As you have before heard from me,' he wrote to Lanfredini before the marriage on November 4, 1487, when Franceschetto had got himself made captain-general,¹ 'I think Signor Francesco should not pursue mere smoke; things without moderation do not suit me. A captain ought to have seen service and made himself a reputation. I wish he had rather sought to secure a maintenance, and I wonder it does not strike him that the day after the Pope dies he will be the poorest man on earth, and I shall have to provide for him and his wife. Endeavour to make this clear to him if you see that he hankers after titles and vanities; I must speak to him freely and then help him, however he may take it. I hear he keeps aloof from frivolous people and those of evil report, and that he avoids play. We must support him as much as possible, and lovingly point out to him what is becoming, if we are to fulfil our duty.' Lorenzo did not wish his son to remain in Rome longer than was absolutely necessary. On December 9, he wrote to his wife desiring that Piero should return with the bishop and Jacopo Salviati as soon as he had despatched certain business of his own, of which more will be said hereafter. Piero returned to Florence, the bishop remained. Lorenzo wrote repeatedly to Clarice leaving the length of her stay to her own decision, but expressing a wish, towards the end of the winter, that she might stay somewhat longer.² Everything did not go according to Lorenzo's wishes. The elevation of his son Giovanni to the cardinalate, undoubtedly one of the motives for the match, was delayed; Clarice was ill; and the home arrangements of the Cybò seem not to have suited Florentine and Medicean ideas. 'I have received,' wrote Lorenzo to Lanfredini on April 11, 1488,³ 'your information about Clarice, and am grieved at it, though her ill-health is no-

¹ *Med. Arch.*, fol. 57. The bull of Innocent VIII. is dated December 5, 1487.

² Letters of December 9 and 10, 1487, February 23, March 9, April 14, 1488, in the above-mentioned *Ricordi di lettere*.

³ *Med. Arch.*, fol. 59. Cf. Isid. del Lungo, *Una Lettera di Ser Matteo Franco*, in *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, s. iii. ix. 32 *et seq.*

thing new to me. I have informed her of the cause which will somewhat delay Piero's departure from here, but let her not trouble herself about it if she wishes to return here sooner, though I should be glad if she could wait for Alfonsina [Piero's bride]. I wish Maddalena might come with her, for the latter is still quite a child, and Signor Francesco's household is badly managed; and, besides, she would be a comfort to Clarice. But I should wish this to be done with the full consent and without the slightest dissatisfaction of his Holiness or Signor Francesco, and I should take it as a favour.' And after recurring to the insecure position of his son-in-law, he adds: 'His Holiness seems to me to go to work with great lukewarmness in all these things. Independently of Signor Francesco I also regret that my daughter should find herself in unfavourable circumstances, and I am in a kind of despair over this and other matters when I hear of the slowness and carelessness yonder.'

Madonna Clarice stayed in Rome till May 1488, when her son Piero came with Giovanni Tornabuoni to fetch her back. From a letter written to Lorenzo by their companion Poliziano, on May 2,¹ it appears that on that day Piero set out from Acquapendente to Viterbo, and that the travellers were all in good health and spirits and did not forget to celebrate the merry month of May with songs and various amusements on their journey. Piero's expedition had also another object, he was going to bring home his own bride. On April 16 Lorenzo wrote to Lanfredini:² 'My Piero starts in a few days to go and fetch his wife, and also to help Clarice. If the latter is able to travel I shall be very glad.' As well as an unknown son-in-law Lorenzo had chosen an unknown daughter-in-law; but she came of a family which had long been intimately associated with his and had many relations with the Republic, at the same time enjoying the special favour of the ruling house of Naples.

¹ Poliziano, *Prose volgari inedite*, p. 74.

² *Med. Arch.*, fol. 59.

Alfonsina Orsini was the daughter of a man who had preserved and displayed his loyalty to the house of Aragon when most of his own people were in the enemy's camp. Roberto Orsini was a younger son of that Carlo from whom sprang the line of Bracciano, afterwards the principal branch of this wide-spreading race. He had fought for King Ferrante against the Angevins, and for the Florentines against Bartolommeo Colleone, and died of sickness at Siena in 1476. One of his children by his second marriage with Caterina da Sanseverino was Alfonsina, thus named in honour of Aragon. She was married by proxy at Castelnuovo towards the end of February 1487, in presence of the royal pair and other members of the reigning family. Ferrante laid aside his family mourning on this day, and after supper there was a festival and a ball. The bridegroom was represented by Bernardo Rucellai; the bride's next of kin by her cousin Gentil Virginio, lord of Bracciano. Alfonsina brought a dowry of 12,000 ducats, which popular belief magnified to 30,000.¹ A whole year passed before Piero brought her home. Her entry into Florence was to have taken place on May 22, 1488, but the Medici family were in mourning for the death of the third daughter, Luigia; so, instead of coming to the city, the young couple went to Careggi. About ten days afterwards Lorenzo gave, in honour of his daughter-in-law and her suite, a grand banquet, at which the chief men of the city and the foreign ambassadors were present.²

There was no lack of festivities in Florence, and the Medici contributed not a little to their splendour. Maddalena Cybò came with her mother and sister-in-law; Franceschetto followed her on June 22. He was accompanied by Giorgio Santacroce of an old Roman family, Girolamo Tuttavilla, son of Cardinal d'Estouteville, and many others.

¹ A. Guidoni in Cappelli, l. c. p. 292. Fabroni, l. c. i. 172, 173; ii. 316. On Roberto Orsini, see Litta, *Fam. Orsini*, table 23.

² A. Guidoni in Cappelli, l. c. p. 301.

‘We received him,’ wrote Lorenzo to Lanfredini two days after,¹ ‘heartily rather than splendidly. Yesterday he made a visit to the Signoria; his appearance, bearing, and mode of speech give general satisfaction. As yet I have been little alone with him. I will endeavour to fulfil the Pope’s wishes; you will then report to me what he thinks of us on this first meeting. I will take care that he find’s occasion to come to us often.’ The Florentines helped Lorenzo in this. In honour of his son-in-law’s presence numerous diversions for the people and magnificent spectacles were arranged. It was long since Florence had beheld such triumphal processions, such improvised buildings, arches, and other decorations, though they had long been customary there. Franceschetto, who had been presented with the freedom of the city, did all he could to make himself popular, and succeeded. When he rode through the streets on the feast of St. John the children shouted, ‘Cybò and Palle!’ From the piazza of the Signoria to that of the cathedral there was such a throng that great wax candles and other consecrated gifts could not be carried to the Baptistery; and when the street officials tried to clear a space, the people cried out that they wanted to see Lorenzo’s son-in-law, the Pope’s son. Franceschetto occupied the place of honour next to the Gonfalonier at the public banquet given by the Signoria to the distinguished nobles who were in the city and the foreign ambassadors, among whom, besides those of the friendly Italian powers, the Turkish envoy was present. Giovanni Tornabuoni, Bernardo Rucellai, Lorenzo, son of Pier-Francesco de’ Medici, and others, gave banquets and festivities; the latter gave one at his villa at Castello, situated to the west of the city on a gentle slope overlooking the valley of the Arno where it spreads out into a beautiful plain. Lorenzo saw his daughter and son-in-law daily. But throughout all the rejoicings of which his house was the centre, he

¹ *Med. Arch.*, fol. 57.

was not free from cares of all kinds. The bad state of affairs in Romagna will be mentioned presently; in his own home there were other causes for discomfort and anxiety.

Lorenzo himself was ill and overwhelmed with business. Ser Piero da Bibiena wrote to Lanfredini on June 26:¹ 'Lorenzo has ridden out to Monte Paldi [a factory now belonging to the Corsini, in the neighbourhood of San Casciano] to get a little air and freedom from this mass of business. For two months he had not left the city; he intends to be back on Saturday.' A few days before this the Ferrarese ambassador wrote that Lorenzo positively must go to the baths, but it was very difficult for him to get away. His own health was not his only trouble; for a long time past Clarice had been ill. It was hoped that native air would do her good, but not only did her condition not improve, but, even before her return from Rome, it became such as to cause anxiety; and the interior of the household must have been little suited to the festivities occasioned by the presence of two newly-married couples. The mother could not bear the thought of parting from her daughter. 'Signor Francesco,' wrote Lorenzo to Lanfredini on June 30,² 'thinks of setting out in a week, and, as I understand, taking Maddalena with him. I have not yet spoken of it to him, but I should be glad if you would mention the matter to his Holiness and get it arranged that she should remain here the rest of the summer and autumn. I have two chief motives for this wish. First, Clarice is very ill, so much so that the doctors are doubtful whether the disease will soon end fatally or whether it will drag on and the immediate danger pass over; secondly, the air yonder is unhealthy, and Maddalena is not used to it. For these reasons, and also because I have never yet had time to see my daughter comfortably, I earnestly beg his Holiness that of his kind-

¹ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 386.

² *Med. Arch.*, fol. 57.

ness he will let me have her a few more months and write to Signor Francesco accordingly, so that the occasion may not appear to have come from us.'

Lorenzo's desire was fulfilled. On July 4, he received from Rome the news that the Pope had determined to entrust Franceschetto with a mission to Perugia, and to leave his wife in Florence for a time. It may easily be imagined how pleasing this last arrangement was to Lorenzo; the former seemed rather questionable to the experienced politician. 'This Perugian affair,' he wrote at once to Lanfredini,¹ 'seems to me very grave, and such as may create embarrassment; all the more so as Signor Francesco has had no practice in such things, and has no one near him to whom anything important can be entrusted.' Then, after relating how he dined the day before with his son-in-law at Careggi, and they had visited the Petraja and other places, which he had much liked, he continues: 'Maddalena will remain here, to which Signor Francesco seems quite agreed. Clarice could not be worse than she is now, and I fear we shall soon lose her. You can imagine what comfort she finds in the presence of her daughter, who has always seemed to me to be the apple of her eye (*l'occhio del capo suo*); so we are both very grateful to his Holiness. Of myself I say nothing, for you know how I love my children, especially in the present case.'

On July 6, Franceschetto Cybò left Florence. His experiences at Perugia will be mentioned hereafter. Lorenzo, though much in need of the baths, was detained in the city by the weak state of Clarice and the pressure of business. At last, on the morning of July 21, he set out for Filetta in the Merse Vale in the Sienese territory. It is a small village consisting of only a few houses, in a valley surrounded with woods; the waters of the neighbouring sulphur-springs of Macereto have been brought thither, and it lies lonely

¹ *Med. Arch.*, fol. 57. Cf. *post*, p. 380 *et seq.*

and deserted on the road leading from Siena to Grosseto and the Maremma. In the summer of 1313 Emperor Henry of Luxemburg was carried thither, with the hand of death upon him; in 1459 Pope Pius II., who repeatedly visited the waters of his native land, sought relief from his inveterate enemy the gout in these springs. Scarcely had Lorenzo arrived at Filetta when the fatal news reached him—Clarice died on the afternoon of July 30. The day before, Ser Piero had written to Lanfredini:¹ ‘I know not what to tell you of Madonna Clarice; she gets better for a day or two, and then gets worse again, so that she is slowly approaching dissolution.’ The dissolution came much quicker than was expected, yet it hardly looks well that Lorenzo should leave the city when her state was so critical, and that he did not return on hearing that she was worse. ‘If you should hear Lorenzo blamed for not being present at his wife’s death,’ wrote Ser Piero to Lanfredini on July 31, ‘excuse him. Leoni (the physician) considered it necessary for his health for him to go to the baths, and no one thought death was so near.’ The Ferrarese ambassador confirms the statement that, according to the doctors’ advice, Lorenzo’s stay at the baths was absolutely necessary, and all his friends had entreated him not to return till the cure was completed. On the evening after her death Clarice de’ Medici was entombed without pomp in San Lorenzo, and on the following morning all the ambassadors present in Florence went to Piero to offer their condolences. The solemn obsequies, at which the whole city was present, took place on August 1.² Lorenzo’s wife was not quite forty. No notice is to be found in his writings of the woman who shared the lights and shadows of life with him for nineteen years; an idea of their conjugal relations can be formed only from a few words of his in earlier days, and the inadequate testimony of contemporaries, which seems to indicate that their views and inclinations

¹ *Med. Arch.*, fol. 57.

² Fabroni, l. c. ii. 384. A. Guidoni, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 302, 303.

did not always agree. Clarice's disagreement with such a celebrated man as Poliziano has tended to bias the judgment of her contemporaries against her. Nevertheless, this daughter of an old Roman baronial house, obliged, when young and inexperienced, to enter a strange world as the wife of a man for whom she had no affection, displayed in all things tact and sound judgment; without putting herself forward she did honour to her position and her husband, and she brought up her children tenderly and carefully. Her feelings and her relations to Lorenzo are indicated, amongst others, by the following letter, written to her husband from Caffaggiuolo on December 13 of the year they were so long separated, 1478, on behalf of a servant who had been dismissed for some misconduct.¹ 'Illustrious husband,' she wrote; 'Andrea your messenger has been up here for two days, and earnestly begged me to put in a good word for him as he is deeply grieved for his fault. I therefore beg you to keep him with you or procure him another situation; for, as he has formerly shown his fidelity, you would be acting contrary to your nature if you did not forgive him his error, besides being responsible for his falling into worse ways; also you might inadvertently by this means discourage others who are faithful to you. He has a mother who was delighted at his position in your service, and is now in like measure distressed, fearing that her son may, if you dismiss him, go astray and bring her to sorrow. He has already expiated his fault by grief and shame; for, since you sent him away, he has been like one beside himself and has never had a moment's happiness. I think he is especially touched on the point of honour, which is a good sign and should have weight with you. I beg you therefore to be indulgent to him, whether for the sake of his proved fidelity, or from pity for his mother, or because he shows right feeling, or, lastly, for the sake of my intercession,

¹ From the *Med. Arch.*, in A. Gelli, Lorenzo de' Medici, in the *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, s: iii. xvii. 431.

either by taking him back or by providing for him in some other way.'

A letter written to Innocent VIII. the day after Clarice's death¹ displays a warmth of feeling which, after the passages that have been mentioned, one would hardly have expected from Lorenzo, and which give a favourable impression of him: 'I am too often obliged to trouble your Holiness with what is daily sent me by fate and prepared for me by the will of God, against which all striving is vain, and to which everyone must bow with patience and humility, accepting His ways as tokens of goodness and love. But the recent death of my sweet and beloved companion Clarice is for numberless reasons such a grief and loss to me that it has conquered my resignation and endurance amid the trials and persecutions of fate, against which I thought myself proof. Bereaved of the pleasant society to which I was accustomed, I feel the limit is passed, and I can find no comfort or rest for my deep sorrow. As I do not cease to pray the Lord God to give me peace, I trust that of His goodness He will put an end to this sorrow and spare me any more such trials as have visited me lately. I humbly and from my inmost heart beseech your Holiness to pray for me, for I know your prayers will do me good. Filetta, July 31.' August 6, Lorenzo returned to Florence, from whence he wrote to the ambassador at Rome on behalf of an Englishman who was going thither to procure a Papal brief and had been specially recommended to him by the Queen, Elizabeth of York. Two days later, he apologised to Lanfredini for not having answered some business questions:² 'You know the cause; when my mind is entirely occupied with one thing, it cannot think of anything else.'

Clarice's death obliged Lorenzo to seek a companion for his daughter to take her back to Rome. He chose a distant

¹ *Lettere di Lorenzo il Magnifico al S. P. Innocenzo VIII.* [ed. by D. Moreni, Flor. 1830], p. 18.

² *Med. Arch.*, fol. 57.

relative, Maria de' Medici, widow of Galeazzo Malatesta. 'Maddalena,' he wrote to Lanfredini on September 3,¹ 'starts to-morrow for Rome. She will be accompanied by my Piero and my uncle Giovanni, who will take her as far as Acquapendente, as arranged by Signor Francesco. I have chosen for her companion one Madonna Maria de' Medici, widow of Signor Galeazzo Malatesta and daughter of Madonna Ciulla. She is a very well-bred and truly venerable lady over fifty, who since her widowhood has lived the retired life of a nun. I think that the more Signor Francesco thinks over this choice of mine, the better pleased he will be.' Maddalena remained with her husband in Rome, whence she wrote to her father, September 1 of the next year, that she was about to become a mother. The young wife's days seem not to have been very cheerful ones. When she went to Rome with her mother, Lorenzo sent with her a man whom he trusted and who was faithfully attached to his house—the same Ser Matteo Franco whose name holds a place in the history of burlesque poetry. He was Maddalena's adviser and confidant, her man of business and, perhaps, her house-chaplain; and his many letters to members of the Medicean household display a sympathy and warmth of feeling doubly pleasing in such a jovial man. Franceschetto neglected his young wife, who fretted continually, while he passed the nights in play and feasting. With no one to keep her company, she soon languished and lost her health, thinking regretfully of her father's house and the pleasant villas around Florence, where she had passed her happy childhood.²

A few days after the loss of Clarice, another death took place which did not affect the Medici family personally, but whose consequences had no little influence on the family relations which were closely connected with later political

¹ *Med. Arch.*, fol. 57. On Maria [not Maddalena] de' Medici, cf. Litta, *Fam. Medici*, table 7, and Passerini, *Fam. Malatesta*, table 7.

² Del Lungo, *Lettere di Ser Matteo Franco*, l. c.

events. On August 19, at the castle of Capuano near Naples, died at the age of forty-two Ippolita Maria, Duchess of Calabria.¹ Her death broke the ties which bound together the Houses of Aragon and the Sforza. This was probably not perceived at the moment, for not only did the alliance continue which seemed to unite the two states, but the death caused no change in the plans for the new connection long decided on between the two families, whereby their interests were to be yet more closely and firmly linked together. But the death of this clever and accomplished woman dissolved the union between Ippolita's husband and brother, two men who were willing and accustomed to sacrifice every consideration and every scruple to their ambition, greed and hatred, and who, since the Ferrarese war, had regarded each other with ever-increasing distrust and ill-will. The longer Lodovico il Moro held the reins of government in Milan, the less disposed he was to surrender them to his nephew, who, although now nineteen years old, was still duke only in title. Whether the accusation is true that Lodovico had neglected the youth's education to such an extent that, delicate as he had been from childhood, he was unfit to govern, must be left an open question. At all events, Gian-Galeazzo took no part in public affairs, and though everything was done in the name of the Duke of Milan, it all went through the hands of the Duke of Bari. From early childhood Gian-Galeazzo had been betrothed to his cousin Isabella. Alfonso of Calabria had already often pressed for the completion of the marriage; and as the bride was now eighteen, Lodovico at last had to yield. The mourning for the Duchess was not yet over, when, on December 11, Hermes Sforza, Gian-Galeazzo's younger brother, arrived in the bay of Naples with six galleys, and with a brilliant suite landed to fetch his future sister-in-law, whose father came to meet him and conducted him to the king and

¹ *Cronaca di Notar Giacomo*, p. 167.

queen at Castelnuovo. On the 21st of the same month Hermes, in his brother's name, placed the wedding-ring on Isabella's finger. The court mourning prevented all festivities. A gloomy shadow seemed to hang over this marriage, which was destined to bring nothing but suffering and misery to the contracting parties.

Its early days, however, were not lacking in splendour. On December 30 the young Duchess of Milan embarked, accompanied as far as the Molo by her father, her grandparents and their court. Many distinguished Milanese and Genoese had come with Hermes Sforza; among them Vitaliano Borromeo, Gasparo Visconti, Ambrosio del Maino, and Giovan Francesco da Sanseverino Count of Cajazzo (son of Roberto). Ten galleys were filled by these and the Neapolitan suite, the Duke and Duchess of Melfi, the Countess of Terranuova, the Counts of Potenza and Consa, and others. They touched at Civitavecchia, Piombino, and Livorno. At the first-named port the bride was received by the Cardinals Sforza, Riario, and de Foix, with the Senator of Rome; at Piombino by Jacopo IV. Appiani. At Livorno, Lorenzo, again confined at home by the gout, was represented by his son Piero, accompanied by Pier Antonio Carnesecchi and Alessandro Nasi. The Republic sent Jacopo Guicciardini, Pier Filippo Pandolfini, and Paol' Antonio Soderini as envoys to welcome the Duchess; but Lorenzo's son put them all in the shade by his princely appearance. It was the same at Milan, whither Piero went towards the end of January 1489, to be present at Isabella's triumphal entry and the final marriage, which took place on Candlemas day. On reaching the Milanese frontier, Piero was received by several nobles sent by il Moro to form his train. At the wedding in the cathedral, where the ceremony was performed by Federigo Sanseverino (another son of Roberto, and afterwards a Cardinal), Piero outshone everybody; though the splendour was such that, as a reporter wrote to Lorenzo, the very cooks were in velvet and silk. After the

ceremony the Ducal couple sent to Piero to fetch his attire and admire it again. Lodovico exhausted himself in attentions towards the son of the man in whose hands were the destinies of Florence. 'It seems a perfect marvel,' wrote the Florentine ambassador, Piero Alamanni, on January 31, 1489, 'to all these Lombards, as well as to the ambassadors, that young as he [Piero] is, he maintains such a dignified bearing and discourses on everything with so much readiness. Yesterday morning my lord Lodovico spoke for half an hour in his praise before the ambassadors, and assigned to him a place of honour next Messer Galeotto della Mirandola, Rodolfo Gonzaga, and Annibale Bentivoglio.' After the nuptial ceremony Alamanni was knighted by the young Duke and presented with a splendid robe of brocade, and his spurs were fastened on by Galeazzo and Gian Francesco da Sanseverino. The splendour of the festivities was such as the Milanese court had been wont to display since the days of Galeazzo Maria.¹

¹ *Cronaca di Notar Giacomo*, p. 169. Tristani Calchi, *Nuptiæ Mediolanens. Ducum*; cf. Ratti, *Della Famiglia Sforza*, ii. 54-60. Fabroni, l. c. i. 168, ii. 295-298. Several letters of Alamanni relating to these festivities are in the *Med. Arch.*

CHAPTER VIII.

TROUBLES IN ROMAGNA. TUSCAN AND UMBRIAN NEIGHBOURS.

THE same year 1488, which brought to Lorenzo's family festivals and family mourning, involved him in political complications with the Republic of a very serious character. The territory on the side nearest Romagna was threatened, and the amicable relations of Florence with her allies, and especially with Milan, was thereby greatly endangered.

After the death of Sixtus IV. Girolamo Riario retired within his own little state, and for a time his grand political schemes remained in abeyance. He had forcible reason to congratulate himself on being able to retain possession of his territories, hemmed in on one side by the Pope, Venice and Florence, and on the other weakened by the dominion of Faenza, which divided them asunder. At the beginning of his reign Innocent VIII. showed himself very unfavourable to Riario. When Lorenzo, through Guid' Antonio Vespucci, confidentially suggested a project for an undertaking against him, the Pope appeared to have no objection, but to prefer to keep aloof himself and let others act for him. The execution of the project was delayed, partly on account of its difficulty, for Girolamo was on his guard, and there was a fear of encroachment from Venice; and also because of the doubt as to who should be enfeoffed with the two cities. Later on, the Pope and Florence being in difficulties, the project was entirely given up.¹ When it is remembered

¹ G. A. Vespucci to Lorenzo, Rome, September 25 and December 14, 1584, in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 316-318.

that in the lifetime of Sixtus, Lorenzo had made use of Girolamo's mediation to procure tokens of favour and even benefices for his young son,¹ this intrigue throws no favourable light on his character.

During the four following years the lord of Forlì kept on tolerable terms with the Florentines. The latter had not forgotten their old grudge against him for the events of 1478 and 1479; and the Count had but one genuine ally—Lodovico il Moro, who upheld him, first, on account of the ties of blood between them; and, secondly, because of his constant dread of the extension of Florentine sway on the north side of the Apennines. Confined within a narrow circle, Girolamo pressed the more heavily on his subjects. Indulging in splendour and expense when the inexhaustible funds of Rome were at his command, he still endeavoured to continue living in the same way; he embellished his two cities, Forlì and Imola, with many fine buildings, and kept up a military force far too oppressive for such a small state; and to cover the expenses of all this he was obliged to have recourse to levies and imposts, thereby strengthening the disaffection towards himself, already nourished by the old attachment to the Ordelaifi, which was not yet extinct in Forlì, and increased by his harsh arbitrary rule and cruel punishments. Under such circumstances, it was not difficult for a people accustomed to deeds of violence and to taking the law into their own hands, to form a conspiracy. At its head was Cecco dell' Orso, the captain of the guard, who was at enmity with the Count on account of arrears of pay and other private matters, and having been threatened by him, resolved to be beforehand with him. On April 14, Cecco, with two accomplices, entered the chamber of the unsuspecting Riario, and a few minutes afterwards, before the eyes of his own attendants, threw him from the window into the street below, a naked, bleeding, still quivering corpse. That was the

¹ *Ricordi di Lorenzo*, in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 299.

signal for a rising. While the people, shouting for liberty, dragged the corpse through the streets, the murderers struck down the chief of the municipality as he was hurrying to the spot, took possession of the wife and three sons of the Count, and hastened with their followers to the citadel to take immediate possession of it. But the commandant declared he would surrender to no one but the Countess, and not even to her if she were a prisoner. Thus repulsed at this important point, the heads of the conspiracy could not attain their object in the city either; for as a security against betrayal, they had admitted only a few to share in their secrets. The new ruling family had not many adherents; some favoured the old dynasty; the majority desired the direct government of the Church. The Papal governor of Cesena, Monsignor Savelli, was called upon to take possession of the city. Without the fortress this possession was incomplete, and as the negotiations fell to the ground, Riario's widow took advantage of the difficulty and made herself mistress of the situation. Urged by the prelate and the insurgents to come forward as mediatrix, she promised, on condition of receiving compensation, to induce the castellan to surrender if she was allowed to speak to him. Her sons remained as hostages in the hands of the citizens. The gates were opened to her, and she raised the standard of the Sforza. A threat to kill the boys if she did not surrender was received with a defiant answer. The brave woman reckoned that every hour's delay was in her favour, while the disunion among the opponents strengthened her hope that they would not proceed to extremities against her helpless children. She was not mistaken. On all sides there was a stir. Lodovico il Moro wrote to Florence, appealing to the Republic to guard the endangered rights of the sons of Riario. At the same time, without consulting the allies, he despatched Galeazzo da Sanseverino with horse and foot, while Giovanni Bentivoglio and Galeotto Pico della Mirandola set out towards Forlì with numerous troops. The

Florentines, as soon as they heard of these military movements, sent part of the troops which they still kept in the Lunigiana to the frontiers of Romagna, under the Count of Pitigliano and Ranuccio Farnese. In Forlì no one knew what to do. The enemies of Riario hoped for active support from the Pope; but Innocent, though he caused a few troops to advance from Cesena, was either unwilling or unable to take part in their favour.

The heads of the movement turned their eyes to Florence, well knowing the inward dislike in that city between the Medici and the Riari. The Ferrarese ambassador wrote that in Florence nothing had been known of the conspiracy; but the people rejoiced at the misfortune which had befallen the Count, and, mindful of the past, were not in a frame of mind to grieve if in the course of events his family should be destroyed root and branch. A letter addressed to Lorenzo by the perpetrators of the deed, four days later, sets forth their motives and proceedings, as well as the resolve of the citizens no longer to submit to a single ruler, but to give themselves up to the Church, on whose assistance they reckoned. Lorenzo, the letter added, must rejoice at an event which freed him and the Republic from a crafty foe, and avenged his innocent brother's blood; and therefore the citizens hoped for active support from Florence. There was nothing, however, to indicate a previous understanding. Lorenzo sent to Forlì a confidential agent, Stefano da Castrocaro, who described the circumstances and state of the city, its confidence in Florentine help, and its idea of remaining under the direct government of the Church.¹ From expressions afterwards used by Lorenzo about this matter, it is clear that this very inclination of the majority of the people would have cooled his ardour to help them against the Riario party, if, indeed, he had ever felt any. Moreover, the progress of events was more rapid than was probably

¹ Letters of Lodovico and Cecco dell' Orso, April 19, and of Stefano da Castrocaro, April 21, in Fabroni, ii. 318-325.

expected in Florence. Before the twisted threads of propositions and negotiations could be disentangled, the advance of the Milanese and Bolognese troops settled the matter. Those who were most deeply compromised betook themselves to the neighbouring Florentine territory, and on April 29, Girolamo's little son Ottaviano Riario was proclaimed lord of Forlì and Imola. Caterina Sforza, who assumed the regency, took bloody vengeance on those within reach of her hand, for the murder of her husband and the danger of her children. This affair, however, brought upon Florence a difficulty which shows how uncertain were her relations both legal and political. In a rugged part of the Apennines, north-east of the road from Florence to Bologna, lies Piancaldoli, now a village of less than a thousand inhabitants. In the war of 1478, Girolamo Riario took possession of it, and the Florentines had never been able to make him give it up. Now they thought the time had arrived to obtain justice and avenge the insult. Their troops marching towards Romagna, in the direction of Imola, received orders to secure Piancaldoli. At this Lodovico became highly excited, not so much for the sake of the unimportant town as because he suspected that it might be the commencement of greater acquisitions. Giovan Pietro Bergomino, his commissioner with the troops sent against Forlì, came to high words with the Florentine commissioner Averardo de' Medici. Both sides grew so excited that Ercole d'Este thought it necessary to step between them. Lorenzo showed not the slightest disposition to yield. He told the Ferrarese ambassador that things must be bad indeed if the Republic could not seek to recover her own property by means of her own people without asking leave of Milan, which at that very moment had sent her troops against Forlì without any agreement with Florence, this being an expedition of far more importance than that against Piancaldoli, and one which ought to have been carried out only in alliance with the Republic.

Lorenzo's conversations with the ambassador show the ill-will and distrust on all sides. He avoided stating plainly whether the Republic aimed at extending her dominions on the Romagna side, though it was observed to him that she would thereby become involved in a disastrous conflict with Sforza, who regarded the Forlì affairs as his own and thought his honour at stake in them. Lorenzo only promised to wait and see how events would develop themselves. He thought the Pope had the best prospect, as he considered it impossible that Forlì would again submit to the Riari; but he did not conceal the fact that a family dynasty, whether of Riari or any other, seemed to him a less evil than direct Papal government or an increase of the influence of the Sforza. Still, the aggrandisement of the latter would be less injurious than that of the Church, as they would probably be more willing to confer fiefs in Romagna on family dynasties, than the Church, which had long treated her barons with increasing disfavour and would not give up what she had once secured within her own grasp. The Church, he once observed, was at present more to be feared than even Venice, and this had chiefly induced him to support King Ferrante against the Pope.¹ Such were Lorenzo's views at that time, when his chief care was to keep on good terms with the Pope—views which were always shared by the Neapolitan king. Piancaldoli was taken by the Florentines two days before Forlì came to terms with the Riari. But a few years after Lorenzo's death an event happened to which he was most averse; all the small lordships of Romagna, whose interests were bound up with those of the Republic, came to a violent end.

The ill-feeling against Milan remained even after this vexed question was settled and after Florence, from consideration for Lodovico, had refused to receive Riario's murderers, who thereupon applied to Rome. Lorenzo de-

¹ A. Guidoni, in Cappelli, p. 298-301. The date of the despatch at p. 298 is wrong; it should probably be April 23 instead of 3.

clared that if the Duke of Bari's demands were reasonable, Florence would always be willing to please him, but he must not come upon her with anything against the honour of the state; he also begged the Duke of Ferrara not to support such demands. About this time, towards the middle of May, he went to the baths, and his representative in politics, Pier Filippo Pandolfini, replied to Lodovico's urgent demands for the restitution of Piancaldoli that it was in vain to ask for anything against their honour; Florence was no Pavia or Cremona, where the Duke of Milan could command. Scarcely had these first vexations passed off when a similar case occurred in which the Republic became still more deeply involved. The cause of the dispute this time was Faenza, the only state yet left to the Manfredi, and to which, as has been previously described, Florence stood in the relation of a protecting power. Galeotto Manfredi was married to Francesca Bentivoglio, one of the many daughters of the lord of Bologna; and in arranging this marriage Lorenzo had had a considerable share.¹ Her husband's unfaithfulness excited the passionate woman to such a pitch of revenge that on May 31, 1488, she had him killed in their sleeping-chamber by hired assassins. She then, with her two sons, of whom the eldest was only three years old, hastened to the citadel and informed her father of what had been done. Giovanni Bentivoglio lost not a moment. He set out with the troops collected at the Forlì disturbances, and sent to Bergomino, the Milanese commissioner who was still in the latter town, directions to join him. At first all went well. The lord of Bologna and his troops were peaceably received in Faenza, and it seemed as if the proclamation of little Astorre Manfredi would settle everything; but some disagreement between the inhabitants and the rude mountaineers of the Lamone valley who had rushed

¹ Letter of Lorenzo to Giovanni Bentivoglio, Cafaggiuolo, July 1, 1481, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 242. Galeotto Manfredi had been with him at the villa, and the matter had been arranged there.

into the town, caused a riot in which the Milanese commissioner and more than fifty of his men lost their lives, and Giovanni Bentivoglio saved his own with difficulty. When the worst of the tumult was put down, Astorre was proclaimed under the protection of the Republic of Florence, to whose commissioner Antonio Boscoli the more reasonable of the two parties had at once applied for mediation and support.

The news from Faenza caused great excitement in Florence. There was a suspicion abroad that the Milanese and Bolognese intrigues were at the bottom of the whole affair, and it was at once resolved to grant the desired protection both to the people of Faenza and to the young Manfredi, and to send the desired troops; measures which, in consideration of the old protecting relation of Florence to Faenza, could not justly be taken amiss by anyone. Faenza was occupied; Bentivoglio taken prisoner and transported to Modigliana, the neighbouring capital of Tuscan Romagna; Madonna Francesca was sent to her mother at Bologna; and a regency was established consisting of certain inhabitants of Faenza and of the Lamone valley. Bentivoglio, who had only the Florentines to thank for not having escaped unhurt from the mountaineers, thought it hard that he was kept in confinement on Florentine ground. Lodovico Sforza, King Ferrante, and Ercole d'Este all interceded for his release; his wife was loud in her lamentations, Bolognese troops assembled on the frontier, and the city of Bologna sent an embassy to Florence. But Lorenzo, knowing that the frontiers were sufficiently secured, replied that Messer Giovanni must have patience till things were settled in Faenza.

At last the commissioner at Modigliana, Dionigi Pucci, received orders to release the prisoner and send him to Cafaggiuolo, where Lorenzo awaited him; this was on June 14. Lorenzo declared himself perfectly satisfied with his interview with Giovanni, and appeared to believe in a re-establishment of their former good understanding. But

after a while the lord of Bologna sought to obtain the consent of Florence for his daughter's return to Faenza, and at the same time offered the hand of another daughter for Giuliano de' Medici. Both propositions were decisively refused, at which Bentivoglio was so angry that the Florentines began to consider Lorenzo's residence at Poggio a Cajano unsafe, as the villa lay exposed to a raid from Bologna. Lorenzo himself was uneasy though he tried to hide it. When Giovanni appealed to him to procure the Pope's absolution for Madonna Francesca that she might either marry again or enter a convent, he fulfilled the request in the hope of making friends again. His letter to Innocent VIII.¹ reminding him of the willingness he had displayed, proves that he was anxious about the matter. He 'most earnestly besought,' he said, 'these tokens of favour.'

A good understanding was soon established with Caterina Riario Sforza; Lorenzo endeavoured not only to thwart the attempts of the Ordelaffi and their party against her, but also to arrange a betrothal between her daughter and the young Manfredi, whom the Republic regarded and treated as a ward of its own.² So bad was the state of affairs in Romagna, especially in Faenza; so great was the insecurity caused by the enmity between families and individuals, and increased by political disturbances; and so powerless to secure lasting quiet were the efforts to procure peace and reconciliation made on the part of the Church, after the precedent of S. Bernardino of Siena and others before and after him, that the Florentine influence was doubly needed in these small states as a softening element for a people difficult to control, and as a support for their rulers. It was Lorenzo who protected the interests of Astorre Manfredi when Cotignola, the home and countship of the Sforza, tried

¹ Florence, March 29, 1489, in Moreni, *Lettere, ec.*, p. 21.

² Letters of Piero Nasi and Dionigi Pucci, in Fabroni, ii. 325-328. To this project refers a letter of Giovanni Bentivoglio to Lorenzo, September 7, 1489 (*Med. Arch.*), and one of Caterina Riario Sforza, January 21, 1490 (*ibid.*). The latter begs for a decisive answer, 'cum un bel si o cum bel non.'

to extend its little territory at the expense of Faenza. At the end of 1489 Giovanni Bentivoglio made another attempt to procure his daughter's return to the last-named city. 'I have never,' he wrote to Lorenzo,¹ 'striven for this return, nor do I strive for it now, without the approval of your Magnificence; for in this, as in all my affairs, I wish only to act in accordance with your benevolent and wise counsels, as beseems our old friendship and brotherhood.' That Francesca should return and undertake the guidance of her son he considered the only means of putting an end to the confusion, but he would do nothing without Lorenzo.

These disturbances in Romagna were the last during Lorenzo's lifetime in which there occurred political and military interference in the affairs of neighbouring states, and which threatened to create complications with other powers. But the southern side of the Apennines was not altogether quiet. It is a strange but undeniable fact that the man whose efforts in general were directed to preserve peace and secure political equilibrium could not always resist the temptation of forging intrigues against little neighbouring states, and employing restless, discontented parties for this purpose. He must have been urged on by that thirst for aggrandisement which was an inheritance of the Republic and the Medici as well as of Venice and of the Visconti. The fine words about union and brotherhood were belied in action. Lorenzo was, indeed, too prudent and cautious to be easily caught by foreign bait; but he only kept out of a thing when it seemed to him unprofitable or dangerous to himself. In March 1488, Franceschetto Cybò tried to draw him into an attempt against Jacopo IV. Appiani, who had long been quarrelling with Rome; in this attempt he hoped also to gain the support of Ferrante, thinking that the latter would gladly seize an opportunity of reconciliation with the Pope. Lorenzo showed no disposition for the undertaking.

¹ Bologna, December 19, 1489. *Med. Arch.*

If Piombino could not be won for Florence, he naturally preferred to see it in the hands of a petty native lord rather than in those of the Pope, even if the latter was willing to give it to his son, which was not certain; and he did not at all want to push the King of Naples into Tuscan affairs. He well remembered having heard how the king's father had said in 1448 that if he took Piombino he hoped to get possession of all Tuscany; words which he recalled to the remembrance of the Sienese, who held the little state under their protection, when he sought to inspire them with a good opinion of his friendly and neighbourly views.¹ But towards Siena herself his policy was anything but straightforward. Internal disquietude had never ceased in that city, and was paving the way for a government similar to that of Florence, only that the rising families of Siena—the Petrucci and Piccolomini—could not succeed in gaining a firm footing like the Medici, and the fickleness of the people and the nobility, violently at strife among themselves, far outdid that of the Florentines. The party among the nobility once supported by Alfonso of Calabria returned from exile in 1487, and brought about an apparently sweeping change in the constitution; raising the old classes, or *Monti*, long degenerated into hostile and exclusive parties, and extending eligibility for office to all sections of the community. This change in the constitution was hailed and joyously celebrated as the restoration of harmony; but it was not long before the reforming faction, who had hitherto ruled, discovered that they were getting the worst of it at the elections, and that all the authority was passing into the hands of their opponents. Dissatisfied with this, they secretly applied to Lorenzo; and he, who not long before had assured the sister-Republic of his warm interest in the preservation of peace, now showed himself disposed to help the malcontents to regain their former position. In March 1488 he caused

¹ Letter of Franceschetto, Rome, March 10, 1488, in Fabroni, ii. 334-337, Lorenzo to Andrea da Fojano, *ibid.* p. 334.

troops to advance towards Arezzo and the Chiana valley, and himself proceeded to the former place. But the Siense got scent of the affair, arrested a number of suspected persons, banished those most deeply compromised, and sent Messer Niccolò Borghese to Arezzo to demand an explanation from Lorenzo. The latter, thus learning that the project was discovered, found out at the same time that the Pope, on whose aid he had seemingly reckoned, had no mind to be mixed up in the scheme, and had prevented his son from going to see his father-in-law. Naples, however, was ready to support her old friends at Siena. Altogether, Lorenzo thought it best openly to avow his intention of helping the reforming party to regain their rightful position. The ruling party in the city, excited by repeated disturbances in the district, caused by the Orsini of Pitigliano and by the exiles, fortified their frontiers and pressed harder than ever on their opponents. A rupture with Florence was, however, avoided. Lorenzo did not attain his object, but it is clear from his conduct that he was anxious to keep on good terms with his neighbours. In this he succeeded. His envoys were well received at Siena, and whenever he himself came to the city, or within its dominions, he was always most honourably received and loaded with presents. He was probably of the same mind as Franceschetto Cybò, who once wrote to him that Siena was a very rich morsel.¹ The state of friendly and neighbourly relations between them may be judged from the fact that, on account of a frontier dispute, the Florentine Signoria once had thoughts of making the high road through Siena to Rome practically impassable by imposing an utterly preposterous frontier-toll of one gold florin for every foot-passenger, two for every horseman, and five for every mule.²

Little more than a year after these matters Lorenzo was

¹ Pecci, *Memorie ec. della Città di Siena che servono alla vita civile di Pandolfo Petrucci* (Siena, 1755), p. 64 *et seq.* Letter of Fr. Cybò, l. c. Andrea da Fojano to Lorenzo, Siena, October 19, 1489. *ibid.* p. 331-334.

² A. Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, in anno 1470, Fabroni, l. c. p. cxiii.

again, outwardly at least, on such good terms with the Sienese Signoria that he could appeal to them for mercy on one of their imprisoned and condemned rebels: 'I know well, my Lords,' are his words, 'how serious a matter for the state is a crime like that in question; but, on the other hand, I consider what merit before God and praise from man is gained by those who show mercy and pity towards such delinquents, provided the common weal is not thereby endangered. I would earnestly beg your Lordships, now that the safety of the state seems ensured, to show mercy to Messer Maurizio.' When Lorenzo wrote thus he apparently forgot that five months before he had acted in a manner not exactly in accordance with these words and sentiments. A young man had killed an official of the Eight in a quarrel, fled to Siena, was from thence delivered up, and condemned to death. When he was led to the place of execution the people pitied him and shouted: 'Fly! fly!' and tried to free him from the attendant officers. Lorenzo was then in the palace. The foreign ambassadors and several of the youth's relations begged him to procure the prisoner's pardon. He put them off with words, caused the culprit to be hung at a window of the Palace of Justice, and four of the rioters to be seized, scourged, and banished from the city for several years. He did not return home till the tumult was completely put down; ¹ he feared the slightest attempt to create disorder in the city, being perfectly aware of the inflammable material it contained.

The Florentine policy was ambiguous towards the Sienese, as also in relation to Lucca. Reciprocal distrust and ill-will showed itself in many ways, and no blame can be attached to the far weaker Lucchese that they were on their guard. The dispute about Pietrasanta was never really settled, and when a money-compensation to Lucca came to be discussed the two parties could not agree as to the amount. At the

¹ Lorenzo de' Medici to the Signoria of Siena, Flor. June 27, 1489, MS. in the Sienese Arch. A. Guidoni, Flor., January 19, 1489, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 305.

end of March 1490, a plot was discovered whose only possible object was to betray Lucca into the hands of the Florentines, and in it a factor of the Medici appeared to be concerned. This occasioned a correspondence between the Anziani and Lorenzo, in which, despite all formal politeness and caution, the want of confidence was but too clearly shown. The Lucchese opinion of Florentine friendship was expressed, far more truly than in letters and embassies, by the trenches and ramparts with which they surrounded their unfortified places.¹

In Umbria and the Marches, too, Florentine interests were at stake, and Soderini, the ambassador to King Ferrante, was right in pointing out how anxious the Republic was to prevent any disturbance of the existing circumstances in Bologna, Perugia, Città di Castello, Faenza, or Siena, just as much as in her own state, and what large sums of money she expended with this object. Franceschetto Cybò, who was always on the look-out for something, would fain have made himself master of Città di Castello, and represented to Lorenzo that this was desired by both the factions—the Vitelli and the Giustini—who kept each other in check under a Papal governor. But Lorenzo was evidently not disposed to allow his son-in-law to have his will. Perugia was in constant excitement from the restless character of its citizens, culminating in a perpetual strife between the two most powerful families—the Baglioni and the Oddi—which filled the chief city of Umbria with tumults; day after day scenes of bloodshed occurred, and first one party and then the other was driven into exile. The Pope's brother, Maurizio Cybò, a brave and sensible man, to whom the government was entrusted in February 1488, vainly attempted to restore peace and order between the disputants. A citation of the heads of the parties to Rome had no better

¹ Tommasi, l. c. p. 341. Mazzarosa, *Storia di Lucca*, ii. 25. Documents, June 3 to July 18, 1490, in the Lucchese State Archives. Cf. Bonghi, *Inventario del R. Archivio di Stato in Lucca*, i. 164.

success; several positively refused to go, and though a reconciliation did take place in consequence of the citation, it was not lasting. Quiet was restored for a time by a general prohibition of the use of arms, but the strife soon broke out again.

When Franceschetto Cybò was in Perugia in July 1488, with a Papal commission to act as peacemaker,¹ many citizens came to him with complaints of the intolerable state of the city. They declared that right and justice had lost all power, and begged him to give his assistance in putting an end to the evil. Franceschetto was not lacking in goodwill; but to cure such a moral cancer required a different sort of man, and the result justified the opinion expressed by Lorenzo in a letter to Lanfredini when this difficult mission was conferred by the Pope on his son. Franceschetto's deliberations with the representatives of the great families, and the remonstrances made in Rome to divers noble Perugians, were all equally vain. At the end of October there was a bloody fight in and around the square before the palace of the Priori; small artillery was actually employed, houses were set on fire, the cathedral of San Lorenzo was used as a fortress, and barricades were constructed. Throughout the next day the street-fighting continued, with plundering and burning, and the prisons were broken open. The governor, who came back when the tumult was at its height, was received with shouts of 'Church! Church!' and notwithstanding all he could do his influence was powerless to quell the disturbance. At last the Oddi were beaten and forced to leave the city and flee to Castiglione del Lago (on Trasimene), where they and their numerous adherents set up a camp. The fight threatened to spread over the whole neighbouring country, as most of the fortresses belonged to the nobility; Spello, Fuligno, and other important places were already in arms and at open

¹ Brief addressed by the Pope to the Priori, July 9, 1488.

war with each other, the Vitelli, Orsini, and others taking part in the contest.

From the time of the Pazzi disturbances Lorenzo had had so much to do with Perugia, and so clearly recognised the importance of that city to Florence, that he was most anxious to put an end to this boundless disorder, the result of which would tend to weaken even the victorious party. He sided with the Baglioni, who had, moreover, sent one of their number to him. Maurizio Cybò declined to stay any longer at Perugia, whereupon Innocent appointed Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini, Cardinal of Siena, to be legate. On his arrival on November 16, 1488, Lorenzo tried to persuade him to declare for the Baglioni party and to further their interests; not merely with the object of securing their supremacy in Perugia with the Pope's consent, but also to keep them from forming a closer connection with Ferrante. They were already in communication with that king, to the displeasure of Lorenzo, who hated all Neapolitan meddling in the affairs of central Italy. 'The Baglioni,' he wrote to Lanfredini, 'would give themselves not merely to the king, but to the devil. Therefore I hold that all possible efforts must be made to extinguish this flame. Believe me, if the Pope uses this opportunity he will bring over the Baglioni completely to his own side, and be able to make them serviceable for his own ends. It would be well to tell the legate to deal with the exiles as he thinks good; I will then endeavour myself to induce the Baglioni to submit to the legate's will. At all events, some cure for this wound is necessary.' The Count of Pitigliano had already headed some Florentine troops against the Oddi. Cardinal Piccolomini was apparently not clearly convinced which party was right and which was wrong, and he was not inclined to be the tool of either. For a long time he withstood repeated persuasions to pronounce sentence of banishment on the exiles, urged upon him by the Baglioni in unison with the commissioners of Florence and Urbino, of the Orsini and

the Vitelli; Lorenzo had sent Messer Niccolò Vettori. At last the legate saw things could no longer remain in suspense; so he caused the heads of the ruling party to swear on the Gospels that they would keep the city in obedience to the Pope, lay down their arms, not hinder the course of justice, and hand over to his people the places they occupied in the district. Then on January 22, 1489, he confirmed the privileges of the city and issued a decree of banishment against the exiles, confining them for the next five years to various places in Tuscany, Romagna, and the Marches, under pain of outlawry if they left these appointed places.

All this was done with the participation of the commissioners, who thereupon took leave, after a state dinner given them by the Signoria. The next thing was the election of the magistrates; the troops of the legate, two hundred and fifty men, occupied the city and its environs; the decree of banishment was posted up at the Cathedral and the palace of the Podestà, and the chief persons concerned were informed of it by an executor of the commonwealth. When this official came to one of the heads of the Oddi party, Agamemnone della Penna, who was at Castiglioncello on the Urbino frontier, he closed the doors, drew his dagger and said to the messenger: 'Take your choice; either swallow the decree, or I will kill you.' The man did not take long to consider. Agamemnone took from him the papers destined for the other exiles, most of whom were at Gubbio, close by, and sent him back with this pleasant intelligence to Perugia. The feud, in which the Florentines were not idle, began again in the district; but neither the fighting nor the efforts at mediation repeatedly made by the legate, who kept wandering from one place to another, brought about a decision. In the city, except for a few occasional disturbances, peace was in some degree restored, while all power was in the hands of the Baglioni, who for a long time refused to let any foreign mediation persuade them to a reconciliation with their adversaries. In June 1491

however an attack on the city and fresh scenes of bloodshed obliged them to come to terms as soon as possible. Lorenzo, who had greatly contributed to the victory of the Baglioni through Lanfredini's negotiations with the Pope and Vettori's mediation in Perugia, and who was anxious that the Holy See should keep only a nominal authority in the latter city, could not help perceiving how difficult it was to restore to even the smallest degree of legal order a city torn by such wild passions and suffering under such unfortunate circumstances.¹

Of less importance to the Florentines than the affairs of Perugia were the disturbances at Ascoli near the Neapolitan frontier. On account of its position, commanding the high road from the valley of the Tronto towards Umbria, the state of this town was not a matter of indifference to the Republic. The quarrels in which from 1484 onwards it was involved with Fermo and other neighbouring places attracted considerable attention from the fact that on one side the Pope, and on the other King Ferrante, were drawn into them, and the lords of Urbino and Camerino found themselves obliged to interfere both for the sake of their own states and on account of their relations with Rome. These quarrels, which with short intervals of peace were perpetually recommencing, and did frightful damage to the smaller places and the unprotected country, had been profitable to some, amongst whom was Bocalino of Osimo, who had many connections in the Marches of Fermo. In 1487 Cardinal della Rovere vainly tried to make peace between Ascoli and Fermo. The strife was so furious that in an attack made by the Ascolani in April of that year on the fortress of Acquaviva, sixty men who had entered a building by treachery were burnt in it, and those who hurried to their assistance were slaughtered in the moat. Not long after

¹ *Cronaca del Graziani*, in anno 1488 *et seq.*, in *Cronache e Storie della Città di Perugia*, i. 677 *et seq.* Lorenzo de' Medici to G. Lanfredini, 1489, in Fabroni, i. 329, 330.

this the Ascolans attacked Offida, which lay between them and the sea, drove out the vice-legatè of the March, plundered, burned and murdered all and whomsoever came in their way, and repulsed the troops of Urbino which had marched to the rescue. Rome saw the need of putting an end to this anarchy, and entered into negotiations with the lords of Urbino and Camerino to overcome the resistance of Ascoli. But the Florentines, and still more the King of Naples, although they earnestly wished for peace on the Adriatic shores, were not willing that the Pope's authority should be strengthened in that quarter. 'The king,' wrote Piero Nasi, Florentine ambassador at Naples, to Lorenzo, 'is very anxious that the Pope should not get possession of Ascoli; for he sees that should this occur, the connection between himself and us will be for ever cut off. As we have managed to prevent the Pope from making himself lord of Perugia, so his Majesty's power should suffice to compass the same at Ascoli.'

Thus, in this so-called time of peace, there was strife and disorder, mistrust and selfishness, on all sides. Ferrante thought little enough of Florentine interests, in his unwillingness to let Innocent gain a firm footing on his own border. Even in Lorenzo's last year of rule these disputes in the Marches were not settled. It was Cesare Borgia who first made peace here, as he did in Romagna, after his own fashion.¹ Cares and troubles overtook De' Medici from another quarter. He was bound to the Orsini by other chains than family ties; the attitude taken by this old and powerful family towards the Popes, Naples, Siena, and Florence claimed his attention. The Orsini flattered themselves they were sovereign lords. So great was the number and importance of their possessions in the neighbourhood of Rome that they might well cause uneasiness to a stronger

¹ *Cronache della Città di Fermo* (Flor. 1870) p. 215 *et seq.* Ugolini, *Storia dei Conti e Duchi d'Urbino*, ii. 60, 65. Reposati, *Zecca di Gubbio*, i. 291. Fabroni, l. c. ii. 330.

government than that of most of the Popes; and the only thing that tended to neutralise their power was their almost ceaseless strife with the Colonna, who, however, at this present time were no match for them. Their numerous fiefs in the kingdom of Naples brought them into close connection with its rulers. Since the beginning of the fourteenth century they had held, through inheritance from a branch of the Teutonic dynasty of the Aldobrandeschi, the county of Sorano-Pitigliano, between the *Patrimonium Petri* and the Sienese territory; and they kept their neighbours in constant uneasiness by the disordered state of affairs there, caused by the constant disagreement between the members of the family, not likely by any means to be softened by the protectorate (*accomandigia*) of Siena, herself in a state of great unrest.

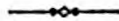
We have pointed out how much depended on the attitude of the Orsini in the days of the quarrel between Innocent and Ferrante. The relations of the most powerful of the family, Gentil Virginio, lord of Bracciano, with the Pope and the king, gave Lorenzo constant occupation, as is testified by his correspondence with the ambassadors in Rome and Naples. 'Should his Holiness proceed in the manner suggested,' he wrote to Lanfredini on March 24, 1489,¹ when Innocent for a moment thought of arresting Gentil Virginio for his suspicious conduct amid the Neapolitan troubles—'he would thereby gain nothing, save that the whole family would unite and be a prize for the king. If the Pope answers that this will happen in any case, I reply that it is far better that it should happen without our having a hand in it, than that we should give them ground for laying the blame on us. The minds and wills of these lords Orsini never agree. They cannot keep together well, and you will see when the king most needs them they will serve him worst, for they are ambitious and greedy, and

¹ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 359.

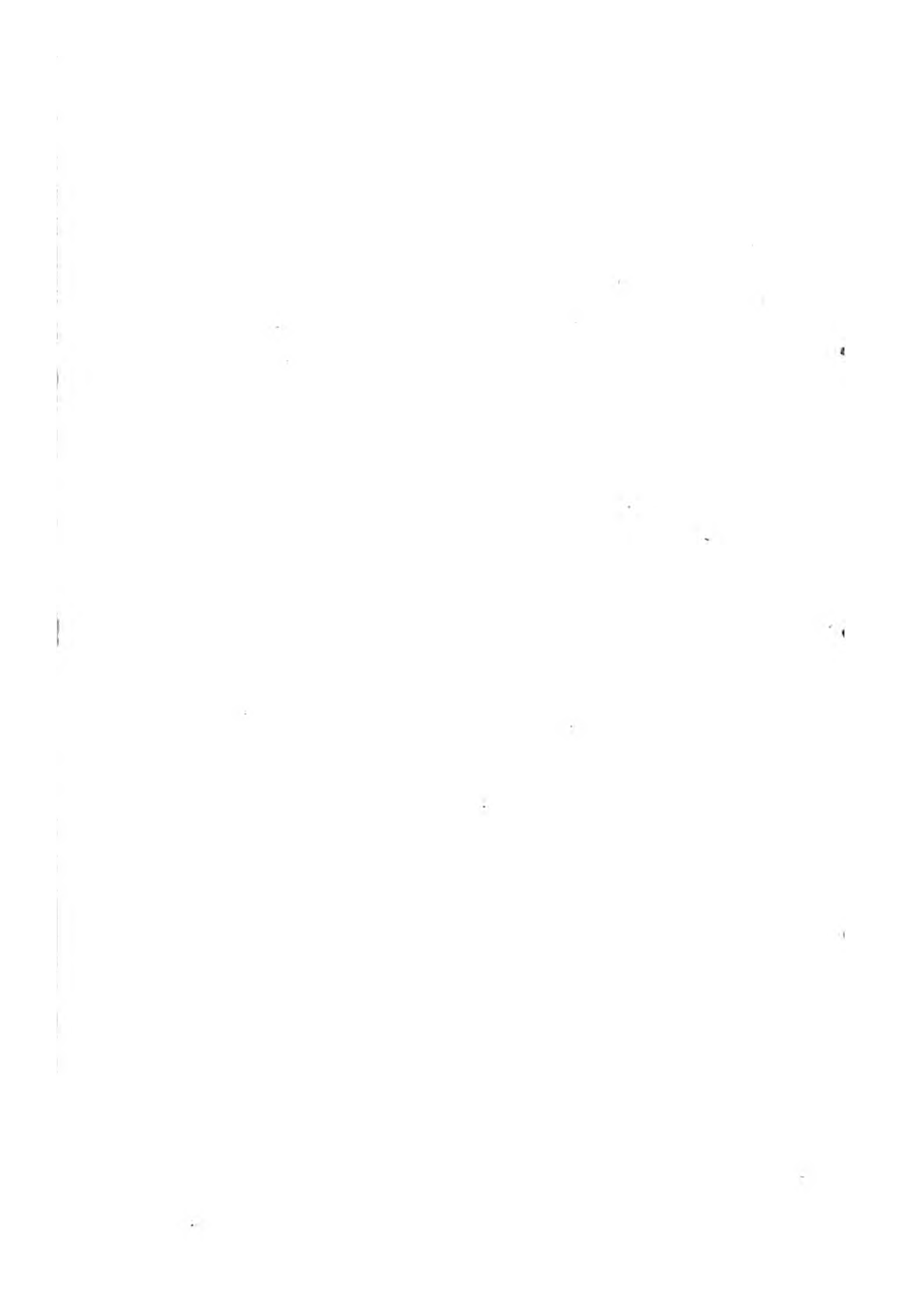
except when need compels them there is no constancy in them.' In later days Ferrante once remarked that lord Virginio was naturally very obstinate when he had made up his mind to a thing, especially if he thought himself in the right;¹ it may therefore be imagined how much trouble Lorenzo had in controlling a man whom his position in Rome, his rank as Neapolitan general, his experience in warfare, and his great landed property rendered more powerful than many princes. He always remained on good terms with the Medici personally. Niccolò, Count of Pitigliano and Nola, was, as has been seen, closely connected with the Republic. But even with this naturally prudent man there arose some difficulties whenever his interests or inclinations as chief of a family clashed with his position as general of a greater state. He too, like all the warriors of the time, though his personal valour and honour are unstained, contributed to display the corruption of the military science of the time, and the incompatibility of the prevalent mercenary system with the advantage and security of the state.

¹ Ferrante to Ant. di Gennaro, April 24, 1493, in Trinchera, *Codice Aragon.* vol. ii. pt. i. p. 381.

SIXTH BOOK



THE LAST YEARS OF LORENZO DE' MEDICI



CHAPTER I.

THE FLORENTINE STATE; PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND FINANCES
ABOUT 1490.

THE reform in the constitution made in the summer of 1480, whereby the decisive part in the affairs of the State was concentrated in the Council of Seventy, had now held its ground for ten years. These ten years, added to the fifty during which the house of Medici had risen to the head of the State, necessarily excluded all families which maintained not only a hostile, but even an independent position. Amongst the ruling portion of the aristocracy, including many popular but not therefore liberal elements, there were men who, in their hearts, detested both the system and its most illustrious supporter; but the majority were attached to it both from interest or from necessity. Others silently accepted what they could not alter without resorting to a great revolution and outward shock which, doubtless, few desired. The lower classes were so much influenced by the arts of those in power, and the governments preceding that of the Medici had oppressed them to such an extent, popular revolutions had been of so tumultuous a character, and had always so speedily paved the way for despotism, that there could be no serious thought of change. The upper class of citizens, who had a share in the government in the wider sense, who were represented in the councils and admitted to office, contented themselves with the measure and appearance of authority, influence, and other advantages given them by the constitution. All the hostile families of rank

were ruined by exile, confiscation, and taxes; their old chiefs were either dead or in banishment, they had completely lost their influence and were no longer to be feared; or they had allowed themselves to be gained over in one way or another, and now acted in concert with their former opponents.

According to the time of their fall these families may be divided into three groups: the Albizzi and their adherents fell in 1434, the partisans of Diotisalvi Neroni in 1466, the Pazzi in 1478. Lorenzo had no need to trouble himself about any of them. In the first part of this history we pointed out the extent of the misery into which the Albizzi of Messer Rinaldo's line had sunk. Forty-four years after their banishment the rights of citizenship were restored to Alessandro, a great-grandson of the former head of the Republic, for having, when far away from Florence during the war which broke out after the Pazzi conspiracy, discovered to the Signoria a plot whereby the town of Pistoja was to be betrayed into the hands of the Duke of Urbino.¹ The descendants of Rinaldo's brothers remained friendly to the Medici. The Neroni party were become powerless since the Colleone affair. Piero de' Medici himself had some idea of becoming reconciled with Agnolo Acciaiuolo, more than one of whose relatives were among his own warmest adherents; so the disunion was not likely to continue between their posterity. But for the Pazzi affair Agnolo's descendants, favoured by the Aragonese, would doubtless have been taken back into favour long before 1482. The enmity between the Medici and the Soderini ended with the death of Niccolò Soderini in 1474, though it came to life again later under different circumstances in the sons of that Tommaso who was so closely connected with Piero and Lorenzo. The Pazzi were thoroughly put out of the way; the scaffold and the prison of Volterra swallowed up both guilty and

¹ *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, iii. 681.

guiltless; and even when, in consequence of agreements with the Pope and Naples, the survivors were set free in 1482, they were still subjected to many restraints which lasted till the revolution of 1494. Lorenzo's brother-in-law, Guglielmo, after a long confinement in a house in the country, was sent to Faenza, where Galeotto Manfredi kept him in custody at Lorenzo's disposal, as is shown by a letter of Galeotto's dated February 25, 1483. Three days later he received orders for the liberation of his prisoner, and this decision was announced by Lorenzo to his sister Bianca, who had remained in Florence, and to his brother-in-law himself. In the autumn of the following year Guglielmo was in Rome, and in friendly intercourse with the Medici and Bernardo Rucellai.¹ After the revolution of 1494 he was re-admitted to political offices; but he showed little capacity for the work, and his son Alessandro (eleven years old when his uncle Lorenzo died), notwithstanding his sagacity and experience, was better fitted for scholarly work than for public life. Of the other families who arrayed themselves against the Medici in the attack before referred to, some never again played any important part in politics; others let themselves be chained to the victor's chariot. Thus it was with the Peruzzi, the Gianfigliuzzi, the Pitti, and others. The first-named—old, rich, and illustrious—were excluded from office after the return of Cosimo de' Medici. The two branches of the Strozzi, whose influence had formerly been considerable, were now in some degree estranged, and the most famous of the two was just rising to the height of its splendour.

Lorenzo, as he looked around him, had no need to fear the recurrence of such opposition as had endangered the authority of his grandfather and father. There seemed no room for even attempts at violence, and the tendencies which sprang forth after his death were at this time hardly

¹ *Med. Arch.*—*Ricordi di lettere*, February 28, March 2 and 6, 1483. Lorenzo's instructions to his son Piero, 1484, in Fabroni, l.c. ii. 268.

perceptible even in the germ. Francesco Guicciardini described the situation in a few sentences: 'The city was in perfect peace. The citizens in whose hands was the administration held firmly together; the government, carried on and supported by them, was so powerful that no one dared contradict it. The people were daily entertained with festivals, spectacles, and novelties; to their profit the city abounded in everything; trade and business were at the height of prosperity. Men of talent found their proper place in the great liberality with which the arts and sciences were promoted and those who practised them were honoured. This city, quiet and peaceful at home, enjoyed also high esteem and great consideration abroad, because she had a government whose head had full authority; because her dominions had lately been extended; because the deliverance of Ferrara and that of King Ferrante were mainly owing to her; because she had complete sway over Pope Innocent; and because, in alliance with Naples and Milan, she in some measure kept all Italy in equilibrium.'

Amid this happy state of things, however, symptoms showed themselves which decidedly pointed out something insecure in the foundations. From a moral point of view there were drawbacks whose influence on the general development and final determination of affairs was inevitable. Anyone who looked below the glittering surface must have felt yearly increasing care about the political situation. Putting aside foreign politics, the home affairs gave extra cause for anxiety. It was becoming more and more evident that everything, present and future, depended on one man alone. It could hardly therefore go unperceived that the necessary consequences of this man's position and career furnished a prospect, perhaps not a distant one, of a radical change in the constitution.

Alessandro de' Pazzi graphically described the difficulties of his uncle's position:¹ 'When Lorenzo came to the head

¹ Cf. i. 288, and *ante*, p. 238.

of the party after Piero's death he found a serious task before him, and, young as he was, he had need of great prudence to keep together and govern this party; so much the more because the citizens who were then powerful thought they could retain their commanding position, without allowing Lorenzo to usurp the same authority that his grandfather and father had enjoyed. In my opinion this was a mistake; discord would soon have parted them. But his exertions were great, and it was owing to him that no division occurred at that time. His patience with his adherents deserves as much praise as his prudence, activity, and liberality; and I know from my mother that in these first years he thought day and night of nothing but gaining over his friends for his own objects.'

Again, after referring to the dangers and consequences of the years 1478-1480, he says: 'By dint of skill and luck, without which nothing is to be attained in human affairs, he consolidated his position and maintained it all his life long, not merely as his grandfather had done, but a step higher and with fuller powers. He was in more danger than Cosimo, but he stood so high that the danger was outweighed. Nevertheless, with all his good fortune and the favour of circumstances, with his superhuman intellect and his great number of trustworthy friends, he gave himself an immense deal of trouble. He went to work with the greatest caution, with many arts and secret allies who knew nothing of each other, with inexhaustible patience and endurance. He was assisted, moreover, by his wonderfully acute judgment of foreign affairs, which he understood how to direct and balance better than any other living man in Italy. Herein also fortune favoured him, that he lived at a time when forces were more equally divided than usual, and there was little danger of foreign interference. Above all it was a happy circumstance that Cosimo had preceded him as founder of the position of the family, and for many years past no other and in some sense

no more popular form of government had been known in Florence. His merits, however, were his own; vigilance, patience, perseverance, splendour combined with elegance, whereby he made himself a great name among the Italian princes and in other lands, while at home he attracted and gained over all to himself. This also is to be highly esteemed in him, that he influenced his friends into moderation and kept their hands clean, so that it may be said that, with a few exceptions, there occurred no cases of rapine. In truth he directed the State and his party in the best manner possible under the circumstances. With all his good fortune and his uncommon qualities, however, it cost him great exertions, for he never spared himself, but took a personal share in all that occurred, whether in the square or in the palace.'

Although business was transacted not in the house of Medici but in the palace of the Signoria, where Lorenzo passed many hours as a member of councils and committees, still the government was becoming more and more a personal one. The constant change in the members of the Signoria, intended to prevent the authority of individuals from increasing, necessarily promoted this personal government; so much the more as a regular and consistent treatment became necessary for the direction of foreign affairs, ever increasing in continuity and importance. Only in this manner could Florence maintain her position against the larger Italian and foreign states—all monarchic except Venice, who preserved her constitution almost unchanged. Naturally, however, such a personal government had the grave defects of all political arrangements where legal right and hereditary prescription are not the fundamental principles, and whose internal nature is a negation of their external form. This State, apparently constituted on a broad basis, was in reality ruled by a comparatively small party with a recognised chief at their head. Lorenzo's contemporaries said that he had greater authority and more

personal power than any despotic ruler.¹ Nothing was done without his initiative and approval. Popes, kings, and princes applied to him; ambassadors corresponded with him; thousands besieged him with petitions for offices, posts of honour, favours, remission of taxes and imposts, and personal interests of all kinds both at home and in the neighbouring states. Each found him willing to listen; the letters he wrote were innumerable, many of them written by his own hand, to different parties of high and low rank, some personally known to him, others quite strangers. He would willingly help merchants, stewards, farmers, countrymen, and people of all sorts and positions in life. Besides the countless clients of the family there were those recommended by them—as he called them, ‘my good old friends.’ He applied to the Duke of Ferrara on behalf of the money-changers in the Prato, ‘these Jews, my friends.’² His correspondence contains the strangest medley of subjects, events, and persons; contraventions of the toll-regulations at the passage of the flocks coming down for the winter from the Casentino and the Pistoian hills to the Sienese Maremma; frauds by merchants; thefts from Florentine subjects; differences with the administration of salt; deeds of violence and murder, are all mixed up with recommendations for judicial offices, especially the office of Podestà, judge of the court of appeal, capitano, &c., and for spiritual dignities and benefices; settlement of boundary disputes; concessions about the corn trade; mediation on the passage of troops; and the affairs of the petty dynasties seated around the Siena district, the Sforzas of Santafiora, the Orsini of Pitigliano, and many others. His constant desire was to oblige as many as possible at home and abroad, and to have the influence of his personal position felt and understood on all sides.

This position was becoming year by year very glaringly

¹ G. Cambi l.c. ii. 65

² Cappelli, l.c. p. 248.

exceptional, not only to the eyes of foreign sovereigns but to those of Italian princes as well. The authority which Lorenzo was believed to possess with Innocent VIII., 'because,' as he wrote to Lanfredini on August 26, 1489, 'I am extremely devoted to his Holiness and obliged to him for many favours,' caused him to be applied to by all parties whenever a petition to Rome was to be presented. Almost simultaneously Guid' Antonio Arcimboldo begged his recommendation to obtain the archbishopric of Milan, and the Duke of Brittany sent a messenger to request his support for the nomination of one of the Duke's secretaries to the see of Nantes. Lodovico il Moro applied to him to procure the Sienese bishopric of Pienza, and Charles, Duke of Savoy, to have his uncle—that Francis so well known in connection with the episcopal troubles at Geneva—advanced to the cardinalate. When Federigo Sanseverino, Monsignor de' Grassi, the Archbishop of Auch, and others desired the cardinal's hat, he was asked to help them to procure it. It was he who recommended to the Pope the young Alessandro Farnese, who in 1489 was studying at Pisa and sought to obtain one of the posts of Apostolic Secretary created by Innocent at the end of 1487. 'I wish you to know,' wrote Lorenzo to Lanfredini on April 10,¹ 'that this gentleman, besides coming of such a noble family (*oltre allo esser nato della casa che è*) has many distinguished qualities, among them unusual learning and excellent morals, being at once very accomplished and a model of virtuous conduct. For these reasons, the weight of which with me you know, I recommend him to you as if he were my own son, and beg you to present him to his Holiness, for which I shall be very grateful.' This is perhaps the first testimony, and certainly a most honourable one, on behalf of Pomponio Leto's former pupil, then one-and-twenty, and destined forty-five years

¹ Fabroni, vol. ii. p. 376. In another letter on the same subject preserved in the *Med. Arch.* fol. 51, he says: 'Alessandro da Farnese, il quale dà opera alle lettere Greche et è persona dotta e molto gentile.'

later to succeed a Medici on the Papal throne. When the Duke of Ferrara and the lord of Camerino wanted help at Rome, they applied to Lorenzo; when the Duke of Savoy sent an ambassador thither, he recommended him to Lorenzo. King John of Portugal wrote from Santarem, Charles VIII. from Amboise, the Duchess Blanche from Savoy, Anne de Beaujeu and her husband Pierre de Bourbon from Moulins, to the 'Seigneur Laurens.' His friendly relations with Matthias Corvinus have been repeatedly mentioned; they seem to have been none the worse for the fact that Matthias was for a long time on bad terms with the Sforza, having, for the sake of his brother-in-law Don Federigo of Aragon, accepted among the conditions of the treaty with Kaiser Frederic in 1477 the proceedings against the ruling house of Milan, which was not recognised by the Empire. To the Pope Lorenzo often commended his own subjects, as, for instance, Giovanni Savelli, 'to whom I have especial goodwill because he is in the service of our army, and to whom I am bound by a friendship of many years' standing,' and the distinguished priest Francesco de' Massimi. Everyone considered a matter secured in Rome if once Lorenzo took it in hand; and perhaps the secret of his great success in many things arose from the shrewdness of his calculation as to what lay within the limits of possibility.

Lorenzo was surrounded by numerous friends and adherents, some of whom had inherited distinction, while others had been raised by him. It was only by their help that he could maintain his position at home and keep up his connections abroad. He was well and skilfully supported by the Acciaiuoli, the Pandolfini, the Vespucci, the Soderini, the Pucci, the Guicciardini, the Capponi, the Vettori, the Lanfredini, the Alamanni, the Ridolfi, the Gaddi, &c. They and their families had a corresponding share in the administration, in honours and privileges, and held a prominent position; the consequence of which was that when circumstances were altered there remained a powerful Medicean

party which at last gained the victory through external political circumstances; for the family which had risen to greatness with their support naturally seized the lion's share. But Lorenzo, while advancing his adherents in power, never allowed them to become too independent of him. For this purpose the means he chiefly employed was that of placing on the same level with citizens who had long been great others who had risen solely by help of the Medici; in matters which required entire devotion to his interests he rather gave a preference to the latter. The most active and influential of the Florentine diplomatists, Giovanni Lanfredini, sprung from a family originally Roman and which became extinct in the last century in the person of a cardinal, had become a business-partner of the Medici as early as Cosimo's time. Lorenzo's policy was to let one person keep another in check. He was probably suspicious by nature, a quality which developed as years went on, for he often employed the chancery-officers who accompanied the ambassadors to Rome, Naples, and Milan to send him special reports,¹ while his creatures in Florence, especially Ser Piero of Bibiena and Piero Michelozzi, kept up a correspondence in various other quarters. We have remarked before that Bartolommeo Scala, the chancellor of the Signoria, was in very intimate relations with him. The chancellors of the other government offices, the only really stable officials in whom the traditions of business survived, were all in his interest, most of them having attained their influential posts through him. Thus he let no family and no individual gain an influence inconvenient to himself, and kept his eyes on all. He even meddled in family affairs: hindered marriages if they seemed to him dangerous, furthered them if he thought them likely to prove useful. Those whom some special circumstances had unusually elevated, even when he himself profited thereby, he always kept in check; as exemplified in

¹ Guicciardini, *Del reggimento di Firenze*, p. 44; *Storia fiorentina*, cap. 9.

the case of Tommaso Soderini, and, after the Pazzi conspiracy, Girolamo Morelli. Of the former, indeed, there is nothing more to add, save that he was a member of the Council of Seventy and died as Capitano at Pisa in 1485. Lorenzo overlooked many things in his adherents, but he kept them under his control and took care that they should feel that their position and advantages were derived from him. A man who was, indeed, ill-disposed towards him on account of an event which concerned his family, remarked: ¹ 'The great citizens raised and supported Lorenzo in his youth; in later years he would not have as companions, but used as servants, those who had been like fathers to him.'

The event alluded to is characteristic of the political power and position of Lorenzo with regard to the official representatives of the State. It made no difference to him if the man on whom his resentment fell ² had his cause defended by others in power. When Neri Cambi degli Opportuni was Gonfaloniere in 1488, and at the end of the year the Signoria were to be elected for the following January and February, it was found that the legal number of members of the colleges was not complete, many having absented themselves without leave and gone to the chase. To the great irritation of the people assembled in the square the election could not take place till one of the missing members was fetched from his country-house, from whence he came booted and spurred to the palace, and the election then proceeded. Indignant at what had occurred, the outgoing Signoria determined to punish the delinquents, and condemned four of them to exclusion from office for four years. Lorenzo was in Pisa at the time. 'To him,' says Guicciardini, 'and to all the heads of the party it was a very disagreeable affair; for it seemed to them that if a Signoria could use the right of *ammonire* without previous deliberation

¹ G. Cambi, l.c. p. 68.

² G. Cambi (son of Neri), l.c. p. 41. A. Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, p. cxliv (very hostile to the Gonfaloniere). F. Guicciardini, *Storia fior.*, ch. viii.

with those in power, their own government was hanging in the air by a thread (*lo stato loro fussi a cavallo in su uno baleno*), and they might one fine morning be driven out of Florence by only six beans (votes). So, after that Signoria had gone out of office, the matter was again brought up before the Magistracy of Eight and the Council of Seventy; the decree against the four citizens was revoked, and Neri Cambi was declared ineligible for office for the rest of his life. The council was by no means unanimous, but Lorenzo's will carried the day.'

This was a pretty clear token of how matters stood with regard to the powers of the supreme court. But this was not all; participation in the government was to be yet further restricted. In the summer of 1490 a measure was carried which concentrated the actual direction of affairs in the hands of a small body. The Council of Seventy was to remain as a council of State; but the elections to the Signoria were transferred, as under the old system, to *accoppiatori*, named by a committee of seventeen, of whom Lorenzo was one. The members of this committee were chosen arbitrarily, and only one of them belonged to the minor guilds. On them was dependent every branch of the administration, more especially finances and the national debt.

The new committee's first measure concerned the coinage. In appearance it was sensible enough. The city and country were overwhelmed with small and base foreign coin; Sienese, Lucchese, Bolognese, &c. August 28, 1490, a decree was issued forbidding the circulation of foreign coins on and after September 8. As Alamanno Rinuccini remarked, it was not the first decree of the kind, and it was no more observed this time than heretofore. Indeed, it was practically impossible to distinguish the foreign *quattrini* from the Florentine, outwardly very like them. So on May 1, 1491, a radical reform was undertaken. The old native small coin, the so-called black quattrino, was called in, and replaced by a new coin containing two ounces of silver to

the pound of copper, and reckoned as equivalent to five danari, while the old one was called in at the rate of four danari. The public treasuries were in future to receive only the new white quattrini. The people were pleased, hoping to get rid of the confusion. Their rejoicing did not last long. Instead of melting down the old money, it was stealthily brought into circulation again, and the old quattrino remained in use side by side with the new one. Out of this confusion arose endless difficulties; and the people found that in taxes, duties, purchases of salt, everything where produce went into the treasury, they were the chief sufferers. The consequence was general discontent, directed principally against the heads of the government, as their limited number made them the more conspicuous.¹

The evil was great, but it had not yet reached its worst height. The increasingly demoralised condition of the administration of finance displayed itself in another way, which must have utterly ruined the credit of the State at the first serious political crisis. This was connected with the Medici finances. Lorenzo's pecuniary difficulties had been in no wise removed by the precautionary measures of 1480. His manner of life, establishments, purchases, the provisions for his children, his by no means disinterested liberality, the bribes in money paid for his influence abroad, required large sums. To try to meet these requirements with the produce of his personal property (because he considered this more secure and honourable),² would have been chimerical. He had limited his banking-business and commercial speculations; and to draw upon them never entered his head. During his very last years he did a great deal of business in Rome. Innocent VIII. was financially still more dependent on him than on his own Genoese fellow-countrymen, and he allowed him corresponding advantages. In 1489 he sold

¹ Cambi, l.c. p. 60. Pagnini, *Della Decima*, i. 162 *et seq.* contains details on the relative value of the coins.

² N. Valori, l. c. p. 174. 'Proventus certiores et justiores, nec principe viro indigni.' On his finances see *ante*, Bk. 5, ch. 1.

him 30,000 hundredweight of alum at a very low price, in compensation for losses sustained in the days of his predecessor; and the alum trade passed almost entirely into Lorenzo's private hands. The farm-rent paid by him for the works of Tolfa amounted to 100,000 florins. In May of the same year Lorenzo furnished the Pope with a loan to the same amount for one year; one-third of the sum in cash, the other two-thirds in silk and woollen stuffs. For the repayment, two-tenths, amounting to 60,000 florins, were referred to the Florentine clergy, the rest to the revenues of Città di Castello.¹ In 1490 Lorenzo redeemed from the Centurioni of Genoa a valuable tiara which had been pledged to them.² Cosimo Sassetti, one of the partners in the Medici bank at Lyons, was also a papal collector in 1490. In the case of smaller loans, princes sent valuables as pledges; the Marquis of Mantua gave a precious stone for the sum of 4,000 gold florins, and when at a marriage-feast he wanted to have it back, his brother-in-law, Ercole d'Este, offered the salt-office of Modena for security in its place. These transactions went on under Lorenzo's eldest son and even later.³ But the profits were uncertain, for all the parties concerned were not skilful and prudent. Even supposing that Lorenzo drew an income of 15,000 to 20,000 gold florins from the old family estate, and about 10,000 from the newly-acquired and gradually increasing one in the Pisan territory, still it was terribly insufficient for his outlay. He was driven to all kinds of shifts, at times even somewhat mean ones, such as must have been sometimes very unpleasant to him; as, for instance, in 1484, when he had to take a loan of 4,000 ducats from Lodovico Sforza, or sell for the same price the house given by Duke Francesco to his grand-

¹ Cappelli, l. c. p. 315, 316. In his correspondence with Lanfredini in Rome the alum-farming plays a great part.

² Gaye, l. c. p. 583.

³ Contracts and receipts of the Medici-Sassetti and Medici-Tornabuoni bank, Lyons, for 1478, 1485, 1494, in (Molini's) *Documenti di Storia Ital.*, i. 13-16.

father.¹ During the difficulties of 1478 he had been compelled to borrow from his cousins, the other Medici, 60,000 gold florins, for the repayment of which he gave security on his possessions in Mugello. There were Florentine business houses which paid him a yearly sum for lending them his name.

This mixing up of his private money-matters with those of the State brought about most unhappy consequences. In the war of 1478, the pay of the troops was furnished by the bank of the Bartolini, in which Lorenzo had a share. They deducted eight per cent., in return for which the commanders did not furnish the troops agreed upon, and the community had to make up the deficit. The wretched mismanagement of the military arrangements was all of a piece with this. Yet Lorenzo still thought himself entitled to venture on further operations of the same kind. The chief financial posts were held by his minions. From the treasurers (*camarlinghi*) of the offices of the national debt, of the customs, of salt, of judicial contracts, &c., he raised the needful sums, which they handed over to him without difficulty, first because they could refuse him nothing, and next because they thought their own responsibility covered and their personal security safe; for every newly appointed official had to recover the sum lent out by his predecessor; and as this process went on unchecked for years, it may easily be imagined what a deficit there was at last, after all the sham repayments one towards the other. The office of the national debt suffered most. The supreme provveditore, Antonio di Bernardo Miniati, had risen from the condition of an artisan by the favour of Lorenzo, who had actually made him a member of the Committee of Seventeen; and he proceeded quite arbitrarily, to oblige his patron and at once facilitate and hush up disgraceful embezzlement. During the revolution of 1494 the great book of the Monte was

¹ Guicciardini, l. c. ch. ix.

missing; nevertheless, there was an exposure of how many sums had gone to the numerous protégés and hangers-on of the Medici in and out of Florence. There was also another means by which to enrich them; and that was the furnishing of supplies, among which the supplying of cloth to the troops, in particular, brought great gain.¹ But all possible manœuvres and skill could not prevent the bad condition of this unprincipled finance from becoming known. How should they when, to mention only one instance, the Cardinalate of Giovanni de' Medici cost the State an expenditure of 50,000 gold florins, independently of the sums which found their way secretly into Rome, and were reckoned at 200,000 more?² The State-creditors suffered most, from the reduction in the rate of interest caused by the drafts deposited in the Monte, and from the arrears of interest. These bills, together with the extraordinary additional taxes constantly repeated under various names, reduced the national debt. What offended the citizens most and damaged Lorenzo's reputation with posterity more than anything else was the plundering of the before-mentioned *Monte delle doti*, the establishment intended for the dowries of maidens, and in which all citizens, great and small, were wont to make investments.³ It was a sort of bank of deposit, somewhat on the plan of modern insurance-offices, and its usefulness was increased by the changes of fortune only too sudden in Florence. This establishment took its rise in 1424, when it was decreed that for the liquidation of the shares in the national debt dating from 1325 to 1336, and originally bringing in eighteen per cent. interest, the creditors should be at liberty to convert a quota of what was due to them into a dowry for their sons and daughters; from 1468 it was limited to daughters. The conditions were very liberal. Whosoever paid or gave security for the amount of

¹ Guicciardini, l. c. ch. ix. J. Nardi, *Istorie di Firenze*, book i. (ed. by L. Arbib, Flor. 1842), i. 26.

² Rinuccini, l. c. p. cxlviii.

³ Cf. *ante*, p. 193.

104 gold florins, and had it put down to one of his children, received at the end of fifteen years the sum of a thousand florins in cash, or could, if he pleased, let it remain at five per cent. interest. If the child in whose name the money stood died, half the sum to which he would have had a claim, according to the time that had elapsed, was paid back to the father, and the other half went to the bank. The so-called reform of the *Monte delle doti*, which, like all such establishments, certainly needed improvement in its administration, was one of the avowed objects of the change made in the constitution in 1480; but it opened a door to the misappropriation of its funds. In 1485 a decree was issued whereby only a fifth of the dowry, i.e. two hundred florins in the case above described, was to be paid in cash; the rest was to be entered in a register called *libro non ito*, the unpaid book, and to bear an interest of seven per cent. This was not all. Six year later, the rate of interest was lowered to three per cent.¹ This came very near to bankruptcy, and this bankruptcy touched the citizens to the quick, while it brought the State into discredit. Hitherto the dower paid through the Monte had in most cases been sufficient; now the necessary additions to it became serious, and quite unattainable for many families. So the number of marriages diminished; that the consent of the head of the State had to be secured before they could take place would sound incredible, and it not belong to the system of such party-government.² 'For many years,' says Rinuccini,³ 'Lorenzo de' Medici was doing his best, by a series of laws and decrees, to ruin the great bank of the commonwealth, for the purpose of getting rid of its obligations for the payment of annuities and dowries, and obtaining arbitrary control over the State finances. For this work he selected in particular two helpers, Antonio di Bernardo and Ser Giovanni of Prato-vecchio (chancellor of the Riformagioni), worthless fellows,

¹ Varchi, book xiii., conclusion (iii. 37 *et seq.*).

² Canestrini, l. c. p. 163. Cambi, l. c. p. 55.

³ *Ricordi*, p. cxlvi.

who pointed out to him day by day the way to attain his object.'

Though the position of the Medici was secured for a time, their finances could not be set right. The banks of Lyons and Bruges, directed by Leonetti de' Rossi, Francesco and Cosimo Sassetti, Tommaso Portinari, and others, only saved themselves by compounding with their creditors. Lorenzo's correspondence shows what a vast deal of trouble these pecuniary embarrassments gave him, notwithstanding his levity in money-matters. As early as 1484 he had to write to de' Rossi to insist on withdrawing the name of Medici from the Lyons firm before next Easter. Eighteen months after, he ordered the balance of the Bruges bank to be sent to him, in consequence of Portinari's bad management. On one day, April 21, 1488, he despatched to the King of France, the Cardinal de Bourbon, the Duke and Duchess of Bourbon, the Seigneur du Bouchage, the Bishop of Valence, and others, no less than seventeen letters relating to the Lyons bank and Francesco Sassetti, after whose death in 1490 Lorenzo Spinelli took the direction of the Medici's financial interests in France.¹ It was inevitable that there should be a vehement outcry against this disorder. Many foreigners who had placed their money in the banks sustained heavy losses, and on the violent overthrow of the Medici, when their palace was plundered at the entry of Charles VIII., the king's quarter-master, the seigneur de Balassat, who had given the signal for the plundering, defended himself on the plea that the Medici bank of Lyons owed him large sums.² One of the sufferers by these shameful money-dealings was a man who had done much for Lorenzo, and who, on his side, was influenced in his relations with him and his business agents by a consideration of the advantages which Lorenzo's political position might give him. This

¹ *Ricordi di lettere*, for the said years.

² Commines, *Mémoires*, book vii. ch. ix.

was Philippe de Commines, who, at one of the most critical moments of his life, was greatly injured by the pecuniary difficulties of the Medici and their unwillingness or inability to meet their obligations. After the death of Louis XI., Commines, who had been an instrument of the king's tyranny and enriched by his confiscations, was first sent away from court for taking part in the intrigues of the Princes against the Regent, Anne de Beaujeu ; then shut up in one of the iron cages at Loches ; and, in the spring of 1488, sentenced by the Parliament to lose a fourth part of his property, and find security for ten thousand crowns. He found it impossible to realise his demands on the Medici bank and liquidate the sums which he had deposited there since 1478 through Louis' confidant Du Bouchage, and part of which had been employed in 1486 to support the opposition against the Regent.¹ Even when Commines, set free from his worst embarrassments, was again on the way to political influence, these difficulties remained, and a letter from Lorenzo to him² gives a glimpse into the financial troubles of the Medici.

'Illustrious Sir,' so runs the letter, 'I have received your lordship's letter, and my mind is penetrated with grief at learning into what a state of irritation Cosimo Sasseti's last statement of accounts has put you. My regret would be still greater could I imagine that you doubt the sentiments of my house towards you, whereas I am for many reasons so deeply indebted to you that I should deserve to be called the most ungrateful of men if I paid you now in any coin but such as I owe you for the numerous benefits received from you in good and evil days. When in my inmost mind I examine my obligations, I can assure your lordship that neither by me nor by any of mine shall anything be done which might indispose you towards me or give you

¹ Molini, l. c. i. 13. Kervyn de Lettenhove, l. c. vol. ii.

² Kervyn de Lettenhove, l. c. p. 70. Date, end of 1489, or beginning of 1490.

an unfavourable opinion of me. If Cosimo Sasseti's expressions with regard to your lordship's interests should produce such an unhappy effect, I should be most deeply grieved, as it would be contrary to the true position of affairs and my earnest intentions. I do indeed confess, and your lordship knows it, that for some time past our Lyons house has suffered such heavy losses that it was impossible to conceal them from my present or former business friends, of whom your lordship is one, and not to complain of them as Cosimo has done. This may have made a bad impression on you; but you may rest assured that there is really no occasion for difference between us, for you can always dispose, not only of the sum in dispute between you and Cosimo, but of my whole means as if they were your own. I therefore beg your lordship to put faith in me, that this matter may be ended and leave no cloud between us. For your lordship's friendship, whether in prosperity or adversity, is of more value to me than any sum of money.'

In spite of all these assurances, Commynes' demands were discharged in what he considered a very inadequate manner (*apointement bien mègre*).¹ Nothing but the high value which he set on the friendship of the Medici induced him to keep quiet. 'I believe,' wrote Lorenzo Spinelli to Lorenzo at the close of 1491,² 'the Sieur d'Argenton will remain our friend. In order not to make him angry, I have always told him that if God gives us grace to do well in business and make up some of the losses we sustained in Leonetto's time, you will give him his share. I am of opinion that this hope will induce him to further your interests, if he puts faith in my words.' Spinelli was right.

¹ Kervyn de Lettenhove, l.c. ii. 71.

² In Desjardins, *Négociations*, i. 417, there is a letter of Commynes to this Spinelli, dated Vienne, August 6, 1494, relating to the affairs of Piero de' Medici. Spinelli, whom Commynes (*Mémoires*, book vii. ch. vii.) calls *homme de bien en son estat et assey nourri en France*, had just then been sent out of France at the beginning of the war. Piero sent him to negotiate with Charles VIII. on his approach.

Commines' humour was likewise influenced by the favourable turn which his affairs took after the agreement between the young king Charles VIII. and the Princes, in the beginning of September 1491. His last letter to Lorenzo,¹ dated January 13, 1492, and signed 'more than entirely yours' (*plus que tout vostre*), treats not of money-matters, but of Charles' marriage with the heiress of Brittany, of the differences with Maximilian and England, and of the Duke of Lorraine's attempt on Metz, which it had been hoped might be gained by treachery and surprise; a prelude to the treachery and surprise in which a French king succeeded but too well little more than a century later.

¹ Kervyn de Lettenhove, l. c. ii. 83. The Metz affair was the unsuccessful and fearfully punished treachery of Jean de Laudremont, one of the provosts of the city; see Philippe de Vigneulles, in the book of *Memorials of Metz* edited by H. Michelant, p. 115 *et seq.*

CHAPTER II.

LIFE IN FLORENCE.

IN 1472 certain Venetians addressed to Lorenzo de' Medici and Niccolò Ardinghelli a pamphlet wherein they extolled the advantages of their city and its inhabitants, and abused Florence, her constitution, her policy, her commerce and society, and the house of Medici. The challenge was accepted by Benedetto Dei, a scion of an ancient family, a man of much experience in affairs of state and of commerce, and who had been for many years Florentine ambassador in Constantinople, from whence he went to Damascus on a commission for the Sultan. He defended his native city in a lengthy and rather warm reply; a curious testimony to the deep-seated differences between two states which were often bitter enemies and scarcely ever real friends.¹ 'Florence,' says the irritated patriot, who seems not to have been acquainted with the brilliant picture of the industry and commerce of Venice drawn in the Great Council in 1420 by the Doge Tommaso Mocenigo,² 'is more beautiful and 540 years older than your Venice. We spring from triply noble blood. We are one-third Roman, one-third Frankish, and one-third Fiesolan. Compare with this, I pray you, the elements of which you are composed! First of all you are Slavonians, secondly Paduans of Antenor's dirty traitor-brood, thirdly fisher-people from Malamocco and Chioggia.

¹ From the *Cronaca di Benedetto Dei*, 1470-1492; MS. in the Magliabecchianæ, printed in Pagnini, l. c. ii. 135 *et seq.*

² Daru, *Histoire de Venise*, ii. 295 *et seq.*

We hold by the Gospel of S. John, you by that of S. Mark, in which there is as much difference as between fine French wool and that with which mattresses are stuffed. We have round about us thirty thousand estates, owned by noblemen and merchants, citizens and craftsmen, yielding us yearly bread and meat, wine and oil, vegetables and cheese, hay and wood, to the value of 900,000 ducats in cash, as you Venetians and Genoese, Chians and Rhodians, who come to buy them, know well enough. We have two trades greater than four of yours in Venice put together—wool and silk. Witness the Roman court and that of the king of Naples, the Marches and Sicily, Constantinople and Pera, Broussa and Adrianople, Salonika and Gallipoli, Chios and Rhodes, where to your envy and disgust there are Florentine consuls and merchants, churches and houses, banks and offices, and whither go more Florentine wares of all kinds, especially silken stuffs and gold and silver brocades, than from Venice, Genoa and Lucca put together. Ask your own merchants who visit Marseilles, Avignon, Lyons, and the whole of Provence, Bruges, Antwerp, London, and other cities, where there are great banks and royal warehouses, fine dwellings, and stately churches; ask them who should know, as they go to the fairs every year, whether they have seen the banks of the Medici, the Pazzi, the Capponi, the Buondelmonti, the Corsini, the Falconieri, the Portinari, and the Ghini, the bank of the Medici and their partners at Milan, and a hundred others which I will not name, because to do so I should need at least a ream of paper. You say we are bankrupt since Cosimo's death. If we have had losses, it is owing to your dishonesty and the wickedness of your Levant merchants, who have made us lose hundreds of thousands—people with well-known names who have filled Constantinople and Pera with failures, whereof our great houses could tell many a tale. But though Cosimo is dead and buried, he did not take his gold florins and the rest of his money and bonds with him into the other world; nor his

banks and store-houses, nor his woollen and silken cloths, nor his plate and jewellery; but he left them all to his worthy sons and grandsons, who take pains to keep them and to add to them, to the vexation of the Venetians and other envious foes, whose tongues are more malicious and slanderous than if they were Sieneſe.’ Such was the Florentine’s retort to the attacks of the Venetians, whom he bitterly attacked in his turn, when in 1479 they concluded the disadvantageous treaty by which they ceded Negroponte and other of their Levantine poſſeſſions to the Turks.

‘Our beautiful Florence,’ ſays the ſame chronicler, ‘contains within the city in this preſent year 1472, 270 ſhops belonging to the wool-merchants’ guild, from whence their wares are ſent to Rome and the Marches, Naples and Sicily, Conſtantinople and Pera, Adrianople, Brouſſa and the whole of Turkey. It contains alſo eighty-three rich and ſplendid warehouses of the ſilk-merchants’ guild, and furniſhes gold and ſilver ſtuffs, velvet, brocade, damask, taffeta, and ſatin, to Rome and Naples, Catalonia and the whole of Spain, eſpecially Seville, and to Turkey and Barbary. The principal fairs to which theſe wares go are thoſe of Genoa, the Marches, Ferrara, Mantua, and the whole of Italy; Lyons, Avignon, Montpellier, Antwerp, and London.’ The number of the great banks amounted to thirty-three, that of the cloth-warehouſes, which alſo retailed woollen cloths of all kinds (*tagliare*), to thirty-two; the ſhops of the cabinet-makers, whoſe buſineſs was carving and inlaid work (*tarsia*), to eighty-four, and the workſhops of the ſtone-cutters and marble-workers in the city and its immediate neighbourhood to fifty-four. There were forty-four goldſmiths’ and jewellers’ ſhops, thirty gold-beaters, ſilver-wire drawers, and wax-figure makers; the laſt being in thoſe days a productive branch of induſtry, as it was the cuſtom to conſecrate in the churches and chapels wax-figures of all kinds (*voti*), chiefly images. ‘Go through all the cities of the world, adds the chronicler, ‘nowhere will you find, nor will you

ever be able to find, artists in wax equal to those we have now in Florence, and to whom the figures in the Nunziata (the Servite Church) can bear witness.' Another flourishing branch of industry was the making of the light and elegant gold and silver wreaths and garlands which were worn by young maidens of high degree, and gave their name to the artist-family of Ghirlandajo. Sixty-six was the number of the apothecaries' and grocers' shops; seventy that of the butchers, besides eight large shops in which were sold fowls of all kinds, as well as game, and also the native wines which were considered best with game, particularly the pungent white wine, called Trebbiano, from San Giovanni in the upper Arno valley; it would wake the dead, adds Dei, in its praise. The Florentine had a right to be proud of his 'beautiful' city. From 1422, when Gino Capponi, the conqueror of Pisa, introduced the art of gold-spinning (the gold thread hitherto used having been procured from Cöln and from Cyprus),¹ down to the time of Lorenzo, was the most brilliant period of the silk manufacture which brought great wealth to the city. The Emperor Sigismund's ill-famed consort, Barbara von Cilly, once sent one of her people with 1,200 gold florins and three bars of gold to buy silken stuffs. In 1422 the first armed galley was equipped for the voyage to Alexandria, and when she was launched there was a solemn procession to implore the protection of Heaven. Thus Florence began to do without the help of Venetian and Genoese vessels; and the two latter states never got over their vexation at this. The Florentines, however, never became famous sailors. Meanwhile the home-produce kept pace with this freer connection with transmarine lands. There seem to have been no silk-worms reared in Florence before 1423; this branch of industry was much older in other parts of Tuscany: in Modigliana, Pistoja, Pescia, Lucca, &c. In Lorenzo's days the artisans began to emi-

¹ Scip. Ammirato, book xviii. ii. 998. Pagnini, l. c. ii. 124.

grate, and transplanted their art to foreign lands. The restrictions of emigration by statute proved at first useless and afterwards injurious. The extent of the intercourse between Florence and other lands is shown by the list of commercial firms established in various countries in 1469; in France there were twenty-four; in the kingdom of Naples thirty-seven; in Turkey no less than fifty, which were under the protection of the consul Mainardo Ubaldini, whose general relations with the Turkish government became so much the better, as those of the Venetians, whose political and commercial interests too often clashed, grew less secure. Long afterwards it was known that the Florentines held in their hands the whole commerce of France; and in 1521, when war broke out between Charles V. and Francis I., and the Florentine merchant-colony at Lyons found itself in danger, a memorial requesting letters of safe-conduct was addressed to the treasurer Robertet, by no less than thirty houses, including the Albizzi, Guadagni, Panciatichi, Salviati, Bartolini, Strozzi, Gondi, Manetti, Antinori, Dei, Ridolfi, Pitti, Tedaldi, and other familiar names.¹ Many of these families married and settled in France.

In a city where prosperity was so general, it strikes one as remarkable that the rate of interest on money remained so high. When it is remembered that about 1420 the usurers were forbidden to take more than 20 per cent., and that about ten years later the hitherto excluded Jews were admitted in the hope of thereby finding a protection against the greediness of the Christians, it may be easily perceived how shocking the evil was. The complaints about compulsory loans are quite intelligible with such a high rate of interest. That the intended remedy proved fruitless, and Jews and Christians sucked the blood of their neighbours all alike, may be imagined. More than once there was some idea of a public loan establishment. This was the case in

¹ Pagnini, l. c. ii. 203 *et seq.* (Molini) *Documenti di Storia Italiana*, i. 101 *et seq.*

1488, when the popular orator Bernardino da Feltre, of the Minorite order, was preaching in Sta. Croce. He tried to obtain Lorenzo's support for the erection of a Monte di Pietà, but his efforts proved unsuccessful. It was an universally known fact that the execution of the project was prevented because the Signoria was bribed by a rich Jewish money-changer in Pisa, where this trade had found a special nest.¹ Not till three years after Lorenzo's death a temporary exclusion of the Jews took place, whose gains in Florence alone were reckoned at 50,000,000 gold florins, and the erection by voluntary contributions of the public loan establishment, which, together with that founded by St. Antoinine, and other similar ones, was in the course of years exposed to many vicissitudes.

It was natural that the wealth of the merchants should greatly influence their manner of life. The new aristocracy, which had risen in a great measure by trade and commerce, continued, after the pattern of the family at the head of the State, to combine politics with other business, and liked to display a splendour corresponding to their means, not only in buildings, pious foundations, and works of art, but also in the festive occasions of domestic life. Their houses were richly furnished. The numerous cabinet-makers and marble-workers, chiefly engaged on decorative works, were not solely occupied with churches and public buildings; both they, and painters and sculptors of a higher order, vied with each other in the decoration of dwelling-houses. Pictures were interspersed and relieved with marble and terra-cotta busts. At festive banquets fine table-linen, in keeping with the elegance of the plate, was always used. Up to this time there was little exaggerated luxury; the majority were too cautious for that; and if they wanted to honour a distinguished guest or celebrate a wedding, friends lent each other their plate, following the example of the Medici with the Alamanni,

¹ Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, vii. 323.

Della Stufa, Lanfredini, Nasi, Sassetti, Davanzati, and others.¹ The same thing occurred at a banquet given by Messer Antonio Ridolfi, ex-ambassador at Naples, to the Duke of Calabria, who had stood godfather to his child. On great occasions similar loans, to which all the wealthy citizens contributed, were made to the Signoria. For ordinary occasions people often used, besides silver spoons and forks, gifts of the community or of friends, chiefly brazen table-plate, dishes, cans, salvers, with silver centres and enamelled or niello edges, with the owner's arms and frequently also those of his wife.² Fine crystal was considered necessary for a well-furnished table. Venice provided most of this article, but Tuscany furnished many glass-factories.

The festivals, which increased in frequency in the days of Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici and the oft-repeated visits of princes, necessarily contributed to the increase of splendour and gaiety. More than once the cost exceeded the amount of supply. If Luca Pitti far outran his means it was, at least, the indulgence of a noble passion—that of building—which tempted him to such extravagance, and a miscalculation in politics which overthrew him. But others were ruined by senseless luxury. A striking example of this is Benedetto Salutati, who, it will be remembered, took part in Lorenzo's tournament. He was a grandson of the celebrated chancellor; his father had acquired a considerable fortune in business, in which the son succeeded him. Benedetto, we read,³ had made himself a fine position and was highly esteemed; but he was far from being able to enter the lists with many others as far as the age and nobility of his family were concerned, nor did his fortune put him in a position to maintain a lasting rivalry with them. Nevertheless, he did vie with them. When he rode

¹ L. Cibrario, *Legione sopra alcuni vocaboli usati nei registri della guardaroba Medicea*, in *Arch. stor. Ital.*, third series, vi. 152 et seq. *Ricordi di ariente ed altre cose prestate*, *Arch. Med.* fol. lxii.

² Borghini, *Discorsi* (Flor. 1755), ii. 164.

³ Borghini, l. c. p. 166.

to that tournament at five-and-twenty, the housings and trappings of his horse were adorned with 168 pounds of fine silver at sixteen ducats a pound, and the cost of the work was reckoned at 8,000*l.* That he united love for art with love for spending is proved by the fact that his silver helmet was wrought by Antonio del Pollaiuolo.¹ But the immoderate luxury into which he launched may be learned from the description of the banquet which he and his fellow-merchants gave, February 16, 1476, to the sons of King Ferrante at Naples, where the Salutati, like so many of their fellow-countrymen, had settled, and had intercourse with the royal house through their connection with the above-mentioned Antonio Ridolfi, whose daughter was Benedetto's wife. It was as if a Florentine merchant had tried to vie with the splendour shown by Cardinal Pietro Riario when Ercole d'Este's bride was in Rome. The very arrangement of the house gave a foretaste of what was to come. The staircase was hung with tapestry and wreaths of yew; the great hall was decorated with richly-worked carpets; and from the ceiling, covered with cloth of the Aragonese colours ornamented with the Duke of Calabria's arms, hung two great chandeliers of carved and gilt wood bearing wax candles. Opposite the principal entrance, on a dais covered with carpets, stood the dining-table, spread with the finest lace over a worked cover. One side of the hall was occupied by a large sideboard, on which stood about eighty ornamental pieces of plate—salvers, basins, fruit-baskets, tankards—mostly silver, some gold, besides the silver table-service, consisting of about three hundred plates of various kinds, bowls, beakers, and dishes. Adjoining the hall were two rooms opening into each other, hung with woollen stuff representing foliage, and handsomely carpeted. Here the

¹ *Ricordi d'una giostra*, etc., (cf. i. 267). Borghini, l.c. On the Salutati family cf. Mazzuchelli, in the notes to Filippo Villani, *Vite d'uomini illustri Fiorentini* (ed. Flor. 1826) p. 83 *et seq.*, and G. Palagi, in *Il Convito fatto ai figliuoli del Re di Napoli da Benedetto Salutati e compagni mercanti fiorentini il 16 Febbrajo del 1476* (Flor. 1873).

company assembled before and after dinner, and divers musicians contributed to the liveliness of the meal. The guests took their seats amid a flourish of trumpets and fifes. At one end of the table sat the Count of Altavilla, next to him Don Pietro of Aragon, the Duke of Calabria's younger son, a boy of four years old; then came the four sons of the king—Don Alfonso, Duke of Calabria, Don Federigo, Count of Altamura, Don Giovanni, and Don Arrigo.¹ Next to the latter sat the Count of Belcastro, then came the Count of Ventimiglia and Messer Carlo da Toralto. The Florentine consul, Tommaso Ginori, and Lorenzo Strozzi sat one on each side of Marino Caracciolo; next to them came Francesco Nori (one of the victims of the Pazzi conspiracy) and Andrea Spanocchi of Siena. The seats at the other end of the table were occupied by the Commander de Requesens, Ferrante di Gennaro, and Messer Federigo Carvajal, Commander of Rimini. The outer side of the long table was left for the sewers and cup-bearers, who served the guests and tasted the dishes before presenting them to the princes. Besides these, courtiers stood around the table, partly in attendance partly joining in the conversation. The order of the dinner was as follows: First the introductory course; to each guest was presented a little dish of gilt cakes made of pine-apple kernels, and a little majolica cup containing a beverage made of milk and called Natta (*guincata*). This was followed by eight silver dishes decorated with coats of arms and mottoes, and containing jelly made from the breast of capons; the dish intended for the duke had, in the middle, a fountain which threw up a shower of orange-flower water. The first part of the meal consisted of twelve courses of different kinds of meat, game, veal, ham, pheasants, partridges, capons, chickens, and blanc-mange; at the end there was placed before the duke a large silver dish, from which, when the cover was taken off, a number of birds flew

¹ Pietro of Aragon died in 1491, aged nineteen. Giovanni was made a cardinal in 1477, and died in 1483. Arrigo, Ferrante's eldest natural son, died in 1478.

out. On two large salvers were brought two peacocks, apparently alive, with their tails spread, burning perfumes issuing from their bills, and on their breasts, attached to a silken ribbon, the duke's arms and the motto *Modus et ordo*. The second part of the entertainment consisted of nine courses of sweets of various kinds, tarts, light and delicate pastry, with hippocras. The wines, mostly native—Italian or Sicilian—were numerous, and between every two guests was placed a list of the fifteen different kinds, of which the lighter found most favour. At the end of the banquet scented water was offered to everyone in which to dip his hands; then the table-cloth was removed, and on the table was placed a great dish containing a mountain of green boughs with precious essences whose perfume spread through the hall.

In the middle of the banquet some mumming¹ was announced. Eight youths entered dressed as huntsmen, with horns, hounds, and slain game; they were musicians of the chapel royal, and took leave after entertaining the company with some pleasing music. After dinner the guests went to the next room, where they entered into lively discourse and listened to music and singing. The duke and the Count of Belcastro conversed with the Florentine merchants and spoke of scarcely anything but Florence and the prince's stay in Tuscany. After about an hour the sewers brought the dessert; for each person a silver dish of various kinds of sweets, with covers made of wax and sugar; those for the princes and knights adorned with coloured coats of arms and mottoes, those for the merchants with escutcheons and trade-marks. Cup-bearers also brought wine in gold and silver goblets. Towards the fifth hour of the night the guests departed, having stayed about four hours. The whole house was full of the courtiers and servants of the princes

¹ The Italian account has the expression *mummeria*, which corresponds with the German, English, and French words, but is not admitted by Della Crusca. Annibal Caro uses the word *mommeare*.

and nobles. All praised the excellency of the dishes; never, it was said, had a more splendid banquet been known. Salutati's love of show, however, brought its own punishment; unless indeed he was ruined by the heavy troubles brought upon his home by these same Neapolitan princes and nobles not long after. Four or five years after this banquet, according to his own declaration to the registrars, he had returned to his native city a penniless man, intending to give up his business altogether, as, under the sad circumstances of the time and the heavy burdens of the community, he was working at a clear loss. About this time he changed his residence to Rome, where he was engaged in banking business in 1491.¹

Such doings as these, however, were exceptional; generally, the mode of life in Florence, as throughout Italy, was simple. In describing the English plenipotentiary who spent some time with Pope Eugene, Vespasiano da Bisticci remarks that he had given up his native custom of sitting four hours at table and adopted the Italian fashion of having but one dish, from which the whole household dined together. Even in the noblest houses there was no extravagance; they had only the produce of the immediate neighbourhood and, in particular, of their own estates. Thus it was that an increase of rural industry was doubly desirable. In later days it was wont to be related of Filippo Strozzi the Elder that he introduced the cultivation of the artichoke and that of a new species of fig, and both Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici carefully followed the progress of agriculture. At parties there was no lack of intellectual enjoyments, such as music and improvisation. Politian gives, in a letter to Pico della Mirandola, an account of a dinner at the house of Paolo Orsini, who was in the service of the Republic; on this occasion Orsini's son, a boy of eleven, stood up and sang some verses of his own composition.

¹ *Giorn. stor. degli arch. tosc.*, i. 96. *Arch. stor. ital.* third series, xx. 187.

Banquets given for entertainment, as well as for learned discourse, chiefly took place at the villas. The richer and more distinguished Florentines divided their time between the city and the country. It has been seen how the pleasant, healthy, fertile neighbourhood of Florence, especially the hills easily attainable for both pedestrians and horsemen, became covered with villas. These gradually spread further out in all directions, up and down the valley of the Arno, beyond Fiesole and Ponte a Sieve to Mugello, better suited for a real summer residence; along the line of hills towards Prato and the valley of the Bisenzio; on the left bank of the Arno through the valleys of the Ema, the Pesa, and the Elsa, and the rich grape-country of Chianti, to the Sienese border. In proportion to the number and beauty of the city residences the number and richness of the country-houses increased also. Hither came princes, kings, and popes; here they enjoyed hospitality at once grand, cordial, and cheerful. The country-life contributed not a little to arouse and maintain liveliness, freshness, fertility, and elasticity of mind in those who were overwhelmed with grave business of all kinds. The villas, far more than the town-houses, were the places where men met for social intercourse, partly because there they could keep themselves more free from business, partly because they were there not troubled with the want of space which was an inconvenience in the city. The villa-life of the *litterati* has been already mentioned. The remarks concerning country-residences and country-life made by Leon Battista Alberti, about the time now under consideration, in his book 'The Father of the Family,'¹ throw light on an important side of the condition of the citizens, and give a glimpse into the temperament and tastes of the classes who held the direction of the commonwealth. These men did not give themselves up to idle pastimes, but to gaining and keeping a clear survey of personal and civil

¹ *Il Padre di Famiglia*, ed. 1872, p. 67 *et seq.* On the villa-life cf. i. 508.

relations, and to increasing their own prosperity, and with it that of others, by a wise culture which looked beyond the limits of ordinary domestic economy.

There was a darker side to this country-life, and among its shadows was that of the gaming-table. As far back as 1285 a decree had been found necessary forbidding the use of dice and other games of chance,¹ and in the year before the Pazzi conspiracy another similar decree was issued.² These prohibitions, however, shared the fate of the sumptuary laws, and no doubt the relations with Naples in the fourteenth century did no good in this respect. Still the Florentines never went such lengths as disgraced the society of cardinals and great lords at Rome in the latter half of the fifteenth century in the days of Sixtus IV. and Innocent VIII. Alberti, who in another of his writings³ describes gaming and its attendant ruin arising from either loss or gain and the bad company inseparable from it, probably witnessed these corruptions more in Rome than in his native land. But while in the city, where they were more exposed to view, men proceeded more cautiously and chess was the game chiefly played, the villas were too often scenes of gambling. That this habit was by no means rooted out in the city is shown by the history of St. Antonine. After the holy archbishop had been preaching one day in the church of Sto. Stefano he passed, with the cross carried before him, through the Borgo Sant' Apostolo. As he was passing the Loggia of the Buondelmonti and saw a company at play, he entered and overthrew the tables; the gamblers, ashamed, threw themselves at his feet and begged for pardon.⁴

The games which were also bodily exercises, and lived on in another form, as the *giuoco del pallone*, have already been mentioned. They were not without danger; in 1487 a son

¹ Gaye, l. c. i. 417.

² Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, p. cxxv.

³ *Cena di famiglia*, in the *Opere volgari*, vol. i.

⁴ V. da Bisticci, l. c. p. 176.

of Ugolino Verino lost his life by a blow from a ball while engaged in the game of *Maglio*. During the uncommonly sharp winter of 1491 these games took place on the frozen surface of the Arno. Hunting of all kinds had always been a favourite pastime; in many country-houses may be seen places prepared for decoying birds. Hawking stood first of all in the lists of amusements. For graver exercises of the chase there was a better field in the woods of Mugello, the low country round Pisa, the Volterra country, and the bordering Maremma, than in the well-built and thickly-inhabited environs of the city. As for the stage, profane drama, as is shown by the remarks of Poliziano, was just in the dawn of its existence, and in its present antiquated form only suited for the higher circles. This last was also the condition of the Latin dramas, of which a great number had been composed since the beginning of the fourteenth century. Classical comedies were performed by students. May 12, 1488, the 'Menæchmi' of Plautus, a favourite and oft-copied piece, was acted under the direction of Messer Paolo Comparini, probably one of the professors at the university. Poliziano wrote the Latin prologue for this performance, at which Lorenzo was present.¹ The sacred plays continued to attract high and low; and, besides the customary representations on feast-days, they never failed to be performed for the edification of foreign princes and potentates who came to the city. The Florentines seem to have been especially skilled in these dramatic representations, for their companies acted in other places outside their own city, for example, at Rome. Famous artists, like Brunelleschi and the engineer Cecca, who met his death in the Faenza campaign of 1488, invented the apparatus for these mystery-plays and also for the processions in the open air, on which occasions mass was said on the *ringhiera* of the palace of the Signoria before

¹ Cappelli, l. c. p. 301. *Prolog. in Plauti comædiam Menæchmos*, in *Prose volg.* p. 281 *et seq.* Politian indulges in a side hit at the modern authors who write in prose.

the people who thronged the square. The most solemn procession of all was that on the eve of St. John; the scene was the precincts of the cathedral and the baptistery, where a gigantic machinery of clouds, with saints and angels, was built up under a lofty canopy of linen.¹ The feasts of the Church were many and splendid; most chiefly that of St. John, which was connected with the history of the city and the State. On the eve of this day and on the day itself the shops of the merchants and artificers made a display of their finest goods; Lorenzo lent his most valuable show-pieces to his friends; and in the Baptistery was exhibited the great silver reredos with its statuettes and reliefs. The splendour was heightened by the participation of the numerous clerical and lay societies, and by the influence of the festivals on the patriotism of the multitude through their connection with glorious events, the memory of which was kept alive among the people by these reciprocal relations. These historical reminiscences went back to the very earliest mythical times of the city. Mystery-plays, shows, and similar festivals were not confined to the churches, companies, and public occasions and places, but also took place in the houses of distinguished citizens, and artists constantly took part in them.² When it is considered that at the beginning of the next century the number of the civil companies or brotherhoods for religious exercises amounted to 370,³ partly for children and partly for adults, it may easily be understood how closely domestic life was intertwined with that of the Church.

Some of these societies, called Standard-companies (*Compagnie di Stendardo*) did not approve of social cheerfulness. But the unions of the lower classes for the purpose of festivities, shows, games, and merrymakings were those called *potenze*. Their origin is commonly referred to the time of the Duke of Athens; it was probably contemporary with the

¹ Vasari, iii. 232, v. 36 *et seq.*

² L. Cibrario, l. c. p. 153.

³ Varchi, l. c. ii. 107.

development of the democratic element in the commonwealth. These societies, whose festivals and performances strongly resembled a carnival, were also intended for spiritual exercises. Their number differed greatly at different times; their names are mostly fantastically derived from the occupation or residence of the parties concerned; there was an emperor of the Prato of Ognisanti, a king of the wool-carders of Orsanmichele, and various others with similar titles derived from localities in Camaldoli; monarchs of Sant' Ambrogio and Terrarossa, dukes of the Via Guelfa, of the Arno, of Camporeggi, of the moon, the dove, the owl; princes of the apple and of the standard-carriage, grand signors of the Pitti and of the dyers, lords of the chain, the swallow, the kitchen-range, the sword, the scourge, the elm, and such-like names. They all bore coats of arms on their banners; thus the emperor of the Prato displayed an eagle; the grand signor of the dyers, a caldron standing on the fire; the duke of the Arno, a pillar of the Rubaconte bridge, with himself majestically seated thereon, surrounded by players. These societies had for their chief object carnival-amusements, with games and pastimes which degenerated into wild orgies, till in the sixteenth century the license became so great, the waste of time and money and the annoyance to the other citizens so disgraceful, that, after restrictions had been tried in vain, the whole thing was put an end to.¹ Lorenzo has been reproached with having encouraged shows and entertainments in order to keep the people occupied and well-disposed towards himself. He probably acted with this view just as much as the Duke of Athens; and when the Medici came back in 1512 from their long exile, his son Giuliano and his grandson Lorenzo employed these same means, companies and pastimes, chiefly, as a historian of the Medicean party, Filippo de' Nerli, confesses, in order to keep the citizens and common people in good

¹ A. M. Biscioni, notes to Lorenzo Lippi's *Malmantile racquistato* (Flor. 1831), canto iii. stanza 8.

humour with triumphs, festivals, and public shows, and to gather the young nobles around themselves.¹ But the inclinations and habits of the people made the attainment of Lorenzo's object easy to him. The wide-spread feeling for art, which gave a special charm to all public displays, contributed not a little thereto.

Lorenzo revolutionised and developed the songs of the carnival. The romance writer Lasca relates² the state in which he found the carnival and what he made of it. Youths and men were wont to walk about the streets in women's clothes and mimick the girls and women on May-day. The songs they sang were all much the same; the variety introduced into their form and substance by Lorenzo was enhanced by the melodies of Heinrich Isaak. The first masquerade of this kind was that of the glass-blowers and pastrycooks, with a three-part choir. The Triumphs (*trionfi*) were great mythological or allegorical performances; the Chariots (*carri*), representations of works, &c. Richly dressed horsemen, to the number of 300, rode beside these chariots, which came out in the afternoon and often enlivened the streets till far into the night, accompanied by men on foot carrying white wax torches. There was also instrumental music and singing in four or eight parts, sometimes even fifteen parts. According to the style and contents of the songs, so the nature of these popular amusements was varied. In several of Lorenzo's carnival-songs the license of the day is but too evident; they were downright Roman saturnalia. Later on, when reaction took place against this worldliness, the first

¹ *I Capitoli della Compagnia del Broncone, pubblicati per cura di Giuseppe Palagi* (Flor. 1872). [Cf. I. del Lungo in the *Arch. stor. Ital.*, s. iii. vol. xvii. p. 147 *et seq.*] Lorenzo the younger was the head of the Compagnia del Broncone, and Giuliano that of the Compagnia del Diamante. There are still to be seen in Florence, in the Church of St. Ambrogio, in the Canto alla Mela, and the Canto di Monteloro, some inscribed tablets recalling the Potenze; but they are of rather late date.

² *Tutti i Trionfi, Carri, Canti carnascialeschi, etc.* (Flor. 1559; also *Cosmopoli*, 1750). The shows themselves were called *Canti* from these songs. Cf. *ante*, p. 22, 23. In 1475 the Florentines at Naples represented the triumph of Petrarch.

thing attacked was the carnival. It will be seen hereafter that this opposition had begun long before men's minds were biassed in a new direction in consequence of a revolution in the political circumstances of Italy and the foreboding of evil to come. The sobering change which followed this license is shown by a satirical dialogue in verse on the carnival, which was forbidden the houses and streets; a popular production of historical value on this account, that it expresses a foreboding of the many evils which were to befall Rome—Rome, the home of the saturnalia, which threatened to swallow up all life and effort as in a whirlpool: ¹

Questo è stato carnasciale
 C' ha 'l cervel nelle scarpette,
 Con suo certe gente grette
 C' han giocato il capitale :
 Hanno avuto certe strette
 Tu Fiorenza le lor mercie
 Stazonate brutte e lercie
 Sì che han perso ogni lor fede.
 Poi che vai, cammina presto
 Per l' Italia tutta quanta,
 Et a Roma tua ch' è santa,
 Tu farai questo protesto :
 Che tempesta a lei vien tanta,
 Che stupisce il cielo e 'l mondo :
 Lancie, spade e squadre a tondo
 Chiariran la sua gran fede.

Amid the coarse sensual doings of the time there were yet some festivals in which, although accompanied by immoderate display, poetic feeling found room for expression. During one carnival Lorenzo got up a brilliant procession representing the triumph of Paulus Æmilius; it was on this occasion that the young painter Francesco Granacci gave

¹ *Canzona d'un Piagnone pel bruciamento delle vanità nel carnevale del 1498, aggiuntavi la descrizione del bruciamento fatta da Girolamo Benvenuti* (ed. by I. del Lungo, Flor. 1864). [*Canzona che fa uno Fiorentino a carnasciale, trovandolo fuggirsi con un asinello carico di sue masserizie e col fardello in spalla.*] Carnival complains that his idols are broken, the red Cross and the Name of Christ have conquered, and he must yield to a mightier king.

the first proofs of his remarkable talent for decoration. In another procession of the same kind the planets were personified and easily recognised by their emblems, and were drawn through the streets in seven chariots amid the sound of music and songs composed for the occasion.¹ Allegorical representations of this sort were common. Twenty or thirty years later Raphael gave them the highest consecration of art in his pictures of the planets, and the multitude was not lacking in a sense of allegory. These gay scenes were rivalled by the carnival procession got up by Bartolommeo Benci in honour of Marietta Strozzi Giachinotti, a granddaughter of Palla.² Eight young men of distinguished families—Pucci, Altoviti, Vespucci, Girolami, and others—took part in it. On the evening of the carnival they all went together to the house of the Benci, whose name is still borne by a street in the Sta. Croce quarter. They were all dressed in vests of silver and crimson brocade, and mounted on horses with silken housings, each accompanied by eight grooms and thirty torch-bearers. After supper the whole party proceeded to the lady's house, followed by four men carrying a stage twenty ells high, made of branches of laurel, yew, cypress, and other evergreens, and adorned with a number of allegorical representations of the triumph of love, with the escutcheons of the lady and the author of the festival, surmounted by a bleeding and burning heart from which rockets flew up. Round about were pipers and mounted pages dressed in green. Bartolommeo Benci, with gilt wings fastened to his shoulders, came riding on a handsome and richly caparisoned horse, surrounded by fifteen youths of good family dressed in crimson, and 150 torch-bearers wearing his colours. Amerigo and Francesco Benci and the lady's brothers Nanni and Strozza Strozzi joined the party. The gentlemen, with gilt spears in their hands,

¹ Vasari, ix. 218. Naldo Naldi, *Carmina*, vi. 436.

² From the MS. in the Miscellanea Uguccione Strozzi, vol. cvi. in the Flor. Archives; printed by P. Fanfani in the Borghini, ii. 542 *et seq.*

showed off their horses before the windows; then Bartolommeo took the wings from off his shoulders and threw them on the triumphal stage, which at once burst into flames, while a number of rockets flew up from it, some high in the air, some towards the house. When the fireworks were over the party retired, the giver of the entertainment making his horse step backwards till he was out of the square. They then went round to the houses of the lady-loves of all the gentlemen, and finished with an aubade (*mattinata*) before the house of Marietta, who during the whole scene remained at the window, between four wax torches, 'with such a stately grace as Lucretia herself would not have needed to be ashamed of.' The show ended at dawn of day with a breakfast at Bartolommeo's house. All the Signoria's servants, who had kept order during the night, received stockings of the Benci colours.

The people always preserved their unwearied gaiety, which Ariosto called 'lo spirito bizzarro fiorentino.' They were always wide awake, ready for a jest, keen in perception, quick at a repartee, disposed to give merit its due, but with the eyes of a lynx for every weakness. The merry meetings with their stories, not inventions of the Decamerone but the links that connected it with the prevailing manners, easily degenerated into buffoonery, as many examples remain to show. As the Florentines went round as jesters to the courts of princes, so they had in the herald or knight of the Signoria a sort of official buffoon who was, however, employed in earnest as well as in jest. The best known jesters belong to the fifteenth century; of these, the barber Burchiello represents the literary type, while the chief example of the ordinary jester with his verbal witticisms is the Piovano Arlotto or Arlotto Mainardi, vicar of a little place in the diocese of Fiesole, who is mentioned in Lorenzo's 'Beoni,' a true mirror of the somewhat coarse-grained wit of these revels. Besides the tales of Francesco Sacchetti, written at its commencement, which are satirical in their

plot as well as in their too often licentious phraseology, the two best known examples of buffoonery overstepping the acknowledged limits of fiction, both in the form of romances, belong to the fifteenth century. The one story is that of the fat cabinet-maker, Manetto Ammanatini, a jest which is said to have driven its victim, a master of artistic cabinet-making and tarsia-work, away to Hungary. It originated with Brunelleschi and his artist-friends, and the actual authorship of the tale has been attributed to him. The other story treats of Bianco Alfani, who was made to believe that he had been chosen Podestà of Norcia, and had to suffer for the delusion.¹ The species of humour which distinguishes these compositions was long preserved in the *villeggiature*. Lorenzo was no stranger to it, and Leo X., in the story of Baraballo, gave himself up to it in a manner little becoming his dignity.

As regards moral weakness and defects this period was certainly not better than its neighbours; and there can be no hesitation in accusing it of having, by gradually accustoming people to the powers that then were, paved the way for the destruction of the commonwealth in favour of one man, who was not a Lorenzo. The lamentations over the corruption of the times were very frequent. 'O city of Florence!' cried the honest Vespasiano da Bisticci in 1480, 'thou art full of usury and dishonest gain! The one devours the other; greed has made thy people foes one towards the other. Evil-doing has become so habitual that no one is ashamed of it. In these latter days thou hast witnessed

¹ On the Piovano Arlotto, who died in 1483, see D. M. Manni, *Veglie Piacevoli* (3rd ed., Flor. 1816), where are many details of the jests and buffooneries. The *Novella del Grasso Legnaiuolo* has been often printed and imitated; there is an edition with introduction by D. Moreni (Flor. 1820). Gaye (l. c. i. 169) has produced some original documents which cast some doubt on the accounts of the 'fat cabinet-maker' collected by Manni; the claims of Antonio Manetti, known from his connection with the Dante-literature (cf. *ante*, p. 51), to the authorship of the story have been lately vindicated. Cf. Papanti, *Catalogo dei Novellieri* (Livorno, 1871), vol. ii. 11. The story of Bianco Alfani is in Manni's edition of the *Cento novelle antiche* (Flor. 1782), i. 21: *et seq.*

such unheard-of doings among thy citizens, such disorders and failures, and dost not yet perceive that it is a judgment from God, and thus thou continuest in thy hardness of heart. There is no hope for thee, for thou thinkest of nought but money-making; and yet thou seest how the wealth of thy citizens passeth away like smoke as soon as they have closed their eyes.' Whatever might be the state of affairs, however, such words as these are not to be taken literally. There was an immense amount of good sterling material left in the people who had outstripped others on the road to intellectual knowledge, civil order, and industrial development. The peculiar relation between the different classes, which, in the ultimate development of democracy, in some measure neutralised its evils, struck root so deeply that it was never completely destroyed by the predominance of Spanish manners which undermined and strove against it for centuries. The Tuscan countryman, raised by the old colony-system, which formed a sort of joint possession, assumed an attitude of freedom towards his lord; the hard and fast lines by which classes were divided in other lands were never known here. The Florentine nobility never forgot that by far the greater part of their number had risen from the ranks of the people in times which were not remote enough to be buried in the night of ages; and in their persons the people felt themselves to a certain extent ennobled. Feudalism never attained its full force here; even when its tendencies prevailed throughout all the rest of Italy except Venice, in Florence it had little more than a formal existence. Down to the extinction of the Medici race, with a few exceptions, they never cast off the traditions of the citizen element. Thus in Florence there were never, as elsewhere, violent conflicts aroused by the sharpness of social contrasts. Conflicts of another kind were avoided by the fact that, since the strengthening of the commonwealths, the higher orders of clergy, notwithstanding their considerable possessions, exercised no real territorial power and

almost always kept on good terms with the commonwealths. In the appointment of bishops, too, the popular element on the whole prevailed, though sometimes, and indeed repeatedly during the fifteenth century, single appointments were made from a purely papal point of view. The reaction which set in so soon after Lorenzo's death against the laxity of morals which is laid to his charge, and the heroic perseverance with which these Florentines defended their independence for nearly forty years, prove most clearly what wholesome qualities were hidden within the nature of this genuine, pliant, powerful citizen-people.

The picture of the Florentines in the last days of the Republic, sketched by an historian of the following century,¹ is equally true of Lorenzo's time: 'I do not share the opinion of those who refuse to admit that the Florentines can be noble-minded and consider them low and plebeian because they are merchants. I have often secretly wondered how people who from their childhood have been accustomed to handle bales of wool and silken threads, or to work like slaves all day and part of the night at the loom or the dye-cauldron, often, when needed, display such loftiness of heart and greatness of soul that they speak and act surpassingly well. The air, a medium between the keen atmosphere of Arezzo and the heavy air of Pisa, doubtless has some influence on this peculiarity. Whosoever considers deeply the nature and manners of the Florentines must arrive at the conclusion that they are more fitted to command than to obey. I do not deny that there are among them haughty, covetous, and violent men, such as are to be found elsewhere. Nay, they are even worse here than in other places; for as talent and merit are more brilliant there than elsewhere, so also evil qualities are more conspicuous—so hard is it for them to preserve moderation. Their manner of life is simple and thrifty, but distinguished by cleanliness such

¹ B. Varchi, l. c., book ix. (ii. 122 *et seq.*).

as is not met with elsewhere. It may be said that in this respect artisans and people who live by daily labour are a pattern to the citizens of higher position; for whereas the latter are easily led away to the taverns if they hear that good wine is to be had there, and give themselves a day of pleasure, the former stay at home with the thriftiness of tradespeople who work seeking for their enjoyment in advance, and with the modesty of citizens who understand moderation, rules, and discipline, and will not quit the safe path. Of course there are families which have a great household and a rich table, such as would become noblemen. People call each other by their Christian names, also by their family names, and usually say 'thou' unless there is a great difference of rank or age. The knights, doctors, prebendaries, and canons are entitled Messere, the professors Maestro, and the monks Padre.'

Leon Battista Alberti and the pious Fra Giovanni Dominici speak in similar terms of the respect for parents and superiors.¹ 'My father,' Alberti describes his cousin Francesco as saying, 'never sat down on public occasions when his brother, who had received the honour of knighthood, was present; and he pronounced it as his opinion that one ought not to sit down in the presence of one's father or the head of the family. Your Romans,' he added, turning to Leon Battista, 'who are now ill-conducted in all things (*in ogni cosa mal corretti oggi*), have likewise fallen into great error in this respect: they honour their parents less than their neighbours, and thus grow up in disorder and vice.' Fra Giovanni recommends Madonna Bartolommea degli Obizzi to teach her children before all things to reverence their parents, and thus secure earthly happiness. We have before remarked how Lorenzo impressed on his son the duty of showing proper respect for his elders; on this point he was always consistent. The good old habits of strictness were

¹ *Cena di Famiglia*, l. c. p. 173, 174. G. Dominici, *Regola del governo, etc.*, p. 164. Cf. *ante*, i. 483.

also kept up by many distinguished women. In Lorenzo's time there are no such charming portraits as those sketched in his grandfather's days by the good Vespasiano;¹ but Alessandra de' Bardi, wife of Lorenzo Strozzi; Francesca Giacomini Tebalducci, wife of Donato Acciaiuolo; Nanna Valori, wife of Giannozzo Pandolfini; CATERINA Strozzi Ardinghelli; Saracina Giacomini Acciaiuolo, and others, could not fail to have worthy successors; and the beautiful and dignified female portraits which give such a peculiar charm to Ghirlandajo's frescoes in Sta. Maria Novella would alone be enough to prove that the generation had not died out. Times had become more settled and peaceful, and since 1478 there had been no sudden overthrow or turn of fortune such as had hitherto rapidly succeeded each other. In the undisturbed peace of their homes good women found ample scope for the practice of the Christian virtues which had distinguished their mothers and grandmothers, often widowed or homeless in early youth, amid the stormy days of trouble.

Knighthood has been frequently alluded to in this work. While nobility of birth was attended by civil disadvantages, personal nobility, or knighthood, had a peculiar value of its own. This distinction was a relic of the romantic days of Charles the Great. In imitation of kings and emperors the commonwealth claimed the power of granting it, and in 1288 the first example is said to have occurred in the war against Pisa. Knighthood was a necessary qualification for the office of Podestà, and was conferred on those appointed if they had not previously received it. Knights of this sort were called *Cavalieri di popolo*. Two cases of strangely conferred knighthood occurred in the fourteenth century. After the rising of the lower classes on July 20, 1378, more than sixty citizens, with Salvestro de' Medici at their head, were knighted at the request of the multitude. When quiet

¹ *Notizie di illustre donne*, in the *Arch. stor. Ital.*, iv. 439 et seq. *Vite d'uomini illustri*, p. 525 et seq.

was in some degree restored these knights of the Ciompi, as they were called, were summoned to declare whether they wished to keep the dignity thus tumultuously conferred on them; in which case they were to be knighted over again by a syndic of the commonwealth who had himself attained that honour. Thirty-one accepted the offer. On October 15 they assembled in the church of the Annunziata and thence proceeded, in knightly attire, to the great square; and there, in presence of the Signoria, the Podestà—a Venetian nobleman—completed the ceremony as syndic of the commonwealth, whereupon they took the oaths of allegiance and received from the Gonfalonier their lances, standards, and shields with the arms of the people.¹ On April 26, 1389, two members of the Panciatichi family, one a child not much more than four years old, were made knights of the people. Great honour was shown them, and like Cola Rienzi in Rome of old, they, with many of their relations and friends, spent the night in the Baptistery, where seven great beds were set up; and the next day a banquet took place in the convent of Sta. Maria Novella² at which 250 citizens were present.

The knights of the people were divided into two classes—the *cavalieri di corredo*, knighted for civil services, and the *cavalieri di scudo* for military ones; the former named from the banquet which they gave after the ceremony, the latter from the shield; like the *noblesse de robe* and *noblesse d'épée* in France. Both classes bore on their breasts, or on their helmets, shields, &c., the arms of the people, usually with the red lily of the Republic on a round, white escutcheon, sometimes also with the arms of the Guelf party. Besides these

¹ The names are copied from a Strozzi document in the Magliabecchiana, in E. Branchi's treatise *Della croce vermiglia in campo bianco, insegna dei Cavalieri di popolo*, in the *Periodico di numismatico e sfragista*, iv. 75 et seq. (Flor. 1872.) This treatise contains numerous quotations from chronicles and histories relating to knighthood in the commonwealth, particularly in 1378.

² *Memorie storiche di Ser Naldo da Montecatini* (in the *Delizie degli Eruditi toscani*, xviii. 99).

there were other knights who had received their dignity from Popes or foreign sovereigns, especially the kings of France, on embassies and suchlike occasions; and others who had been knighted on the battle-field by a commander-in-chief, as a reward for their bravery. These last were entitled *cavalieri d'arme*, to distinguish them from the *cavalieri di scudo*. The wearing of the golden spurs, afterwards so much abused, was the prerogative of these military knights.

Embassies had always been important to the Florentines in a political point of view, as well as a means of obtaining personal distinction. In the first jubilee year, when twelve of them appeared before Pope Boniface VIII. as the representatives of various states, he called them the fifth element. They always preserved their reputation as good diplomatists. Not only did clergy, statesmen, and scholars take an active part in diplomacy, it was a career open even to the Grandi, the real nobility who were excluded from all the offices of state. In the fifteenth century the splendour with which the embassies were conducted corresponded with the importance of the state and the personal rank of the ambassadors. Their posts, however, were not lucrative; for if, as was the case in 1483, each ambassador received about ten gold florins a day, the expenses in excess of those which he could charge for were very heavy. Besides the solemn embassies on special occasions, there were resident envoys at Naples, Rome, Milan, and Venice. The former were numerous and brilliant, and comprised, besides the actual ambassadors, younger men (who, according to a later regulation, were not to be under the age of twenty-four), who went to learn the business of diplomacy and see foreign lands; there was also a chancellor and other officials. Only two examples need be referred to for the high honour in which Florentine embassies were held—Neri Capponi's famous embassy to Venice during the war of the Visconti, and that to Louis XI. on his accession. 'Never,' says Macchiavelli, 'did that Signoria receive a prince with so much honour as

they did Neri.' King Louis, with the Duke of Brittany and a suite of about forty horsemen, advanced two leagues from Tours to meet Monsignor Filippo de' Medici, Piero de' Pazzi, and Buonaccorso Pitti (Luca's son), envoys of the Republic, and kept his hat in his hand because the first-named would not be covered.¹ Travelling was slow; the embassy had left Florence on October 27, and reached Tours on December 23. With what splendour Piero de' Pazzi returned home has been mentioned already.

¹ *Il viaggio degli Ambasciatori fiorentini al Re di Francia nel 1461*, in the *Arch. stor. Ital.*, s. iii. vol. i. p. 7 et seq. Cf. *ante*, i. 173.

CHAPTER III.

THE HOUSE AND FAMILY OF THE MEDICI.

THE house of the Medici had not its equal in Florence, probably not in all Italy. Its inner arrangements corresponded with its outward stately and beautiful architecture. Three generations, with the whole world open before them, of highly-cultivated, art-loving owners had ruled in it. No other family ever existed in which the love of collecting, combined with a hearty appreciation of the value and importance of the most various objects, retained its ardour and thoroughness through so many centuries, as in the case of these Florentine merchants, who gradually developed and grew into a princely house, and intermarried with the royal houses of Hapsburg, Lorraine, Wittelsbach, and Bourbon. As in other great historical families, the same traits were noticeable in all the Medici. Even in the days when several members of the house fell victims to the curse that eventually destroyed many of the ruling families of Italy, when the Medici as a distinct family were fast perishing, though mourned for by thousands—even then the surviving members of the race preserved the many brilliant qualities which had made their ancestors famous. In every direction they had relations with grand-dukes and princes; beautiful, curious, and rare objects of art were sent to them from all quarters of the globe by their agents, diplomatists, scholars, artists, and merchants; and in their own country they constantly employed those who displayed talent, learning, or skill. The colossal wealth of the Florentine collections, chiefly inherit-

ances from the Medici, proves this; and the sudden bankruptcy which occurred in all these things at their extinction gives a striking example of the contrast which was brought about by years.

The history of art and literature from Cosimo's days shows what a treasury of paintings, sculptures, coins, engraved stones, manuscripts, gems, and antiquities of all kinds were collected together in that house in the Via Larga. Commynes, describing the shameless plunder of the Medici's houses begun in November 1494 by the French and continued by the Florentines,¹ estimates the value of the objects destroyed in one day at 100,000 crowns;—'the most beautiful rings, specimens of agate, admirable cameos, and near three thousand gold and silver medals, such as no other collection in Italy could equal.' Galeazzo Maria Sforza once said that he, too, could show treasures; but the finest things in all the world were collected in the house of a private man—Lorenzo. And what a quantity had been gathered together there since the visit of the Milanese Duke! 'Lorenzo,' says Niccolò Valori,² 'took the liveliest interest in all things antique. I have heard from Marsilio that on receiving from Girolamo Rossi of Pistoja a bust of Plato, found amid the ruins of the Athenian Academy, his delight was exceeding great, and he always held that bust in high honour. Those who wished to do this great man a pleasure vied with each other in bringing him coins and bronze works distinguished by their value and workmanship, and antiquities of all sorts, from all parts of the world. When I came home from Naples I sent him busts of the Empress Faustina and Africanus and several beautifully chiselled marbles. I cannot describe the manner in which he received them. What he had collected from all quarters he carefully preserved in his house. He did not

¹ *Mémoires*, vol. vii. ch. 9. B. Rucellai, who was as much at home in that house as in his own, describes in his Commentary *De Bello Italico* (p. 52), the plundering of books and other valuables, 'quorum pars a Gallis, pars a paucis e nostris, rem turpissimam, honesta specie praetendentibus, furacissime subrepta sunt, intimis abditisque locis ædium, ubi illi reconditi fuerant, perscrutatis.'

² L. c. p. 168.

show them to just anybody, but only to those who understood them, and at festive banquets he adorned his table with works of art to do honour to his guests. When the excellent Duke Federigo of Urbino saw these treasures of Lorenzo, he admired not only the materials and skilful workmanship, but also the almost incredible number of the objects. He is said to have thus addressed Lorenzo: 'How much can love and perseverance accomplish! I behold, here, a royal treasure-house; yet one such as no king is able to gather together, either by money, or power, or rapine.'

These treasures were collected in the most various ways. Sellers of antiques brought them to Florence or sent them from a distance. When Paul III.'s rich collection of engraved and precious stones was sold after his death, a considerable part of it passed into the hands of the Medici for a moderate sum, by means of Giovanni Tornabuoni. Lorenzo himself in his memoirs mentions the marble busts of Augustus and Agrippa, gifts of Sixtus IV., and the vases of chalcedony and engraved stones bought in Rome. In 1484, 1488, and 1490, Luigi Lotti of Barberino, Giovan Antonio of Arezzo, and Andrea of Fojano were commissioned to make purchases in Rome and Siena.¹ On Giuliano da Sangallo's return from Naples, King Ferrante gave him a bust of Hadrian, a nude female statue and a sleeping Cupid, for Lorenzo, who had sent him to the king.² Messer Zaccaria Barbaro, grateful for the sympathy shown to his son, sent a precious Greek vase. Carlo de' Medici bought antiquities, coins, &c., in Rome. Besides the manuscripts and objects of art, there were a quantity of curiosities and handsome household furniture of all sorts, porcelain and majolica, given by the Malatesta, and, as Lorenzo wrote,³ more highly prized by him than if they were of silver, because they were excellent, rare, and, till then, unknown in Florence. Much of what now adorns the great Uffizi collection came to Florence in those days. Most

¹ Gaye, l. c. i. 285, 286, 290.

² Vasari, *Life of Giuliano*, vii. 213.

³ Gaye, l. c. p. 304.

of the sculptures and larger works of art, however, were not placed in the house in the Via Larga, where there was no space for them, but in the neighbouring garden of San Marco. Opposite the left aisle, near to where the long street joins the large conventual and other gardens, the Medici had a casino, to which were attached grounds and plantations extending as far as the Via San Gallo. Casinos of this kind, intended for social purposes and walks, were usual among the great Florentine families even down to the last century. The whole place has been altered; a century after Lorenzo's time, Bernardo Buontalenti built a grand but heavy palace, which has been lately used for various purposes, and after the extinction of the Medici, part of the ground was cleared for the pretty house called Casino della Livia, after a favourite of the Grand-Duke Leopold I. About the same time the appearance of the adjoining Piazza San Marco was completely changed by the new façade of the church, the new front of the convent, and the building of the Academy of Arts on the site of Lemmo Balducci's hospital.¹ Here, in the alleys of trees, were set up the antique sculptures, and in the house were kept the cartoons and pictures which had been collected in the course of years; here young artists studied from old and new models. Lorenzo, most eager of collectors, knew how to appreciate love of art in others. Not only to allied princes did he give great assistance in this respect. When Commines returned from his embassy in 1478, he brought home several beautiful medals of which the 'Seigneur Laurens' had made him a present.²

The Medici did not confine their splendour to their town houses. Lorenzo divided his time between the city and the country. His appreciation of the beauties of nature made a sojourn at his villas particularly agreeable to him; and following the example of his father and grandfather, he

¹ Cf. *ante*, p. 228. The earlier appearance of the square may be seen in Richa, vii. 113.

² Kervyn de Lettenhove, ii. 279.

frequently went to stay at Careggi, whose nearness to the city facilitated the transaction of business; in the hot season he went up to the more retired and cooler Cafaggiuolo or Trebbio. After Careggi, however, his favourite abode was Poggio a Cajano. Half way between Florence and Pistoja, ten miles from either city, on a low hill, the last on the north-eastern slope of the Monte Albano, which separates the plain of Pistoja from the valley of the Nievole and the lower part of that of the Arno, stands Sangallo's handsome building, overlooking the green and fruitful valley watered by the Ombrone, and made famous by Lorenzo's poem of 'Ambra.' Travellers may now wander through the well-cultivated grounds of the farm, and the park, twenty or thirty years ago still full of gold pheasants, the descendants of those procured by Lorenzo from Sicily; or cross the stream by means of a suspension-bridge. The beauty of the place, and the admirable arrangements made for purposes of husbandry by the owner of the villa, were described by Poliziano at the end of his 'Ambra' (composed in 1485), and by Michele Verino in a letter to Simone Canigiani. An aqueduct brought water from the neighbouring height of Bonistallo. Besides the vegetable and fruit gardens there were large mulberry plantations for rearing silk-worms, still a profitable business in that district. On the low uplands were large stalls, paved with stone for the sake of cleanliness, and with their four turrets resembling little fortresses; here was kept a whole herd of fine cows which fed on the rich pasture-lands and supplied the city of Florence with cheese, an article which hitherto had had to be fetched from Lombardy. There were plenty of calves and sheep; a breed of uncommonly large pigs had been got from Calabria, and a breed of rabbits from Spain. Birds of all kinds abounded, particularly water-fowl and quails. The quantity of water made the soil fruitful, but there was ample provision for manure.¹ It is interesting

¹ Description of 'Ambra mei Laurentis amor' in the third Sylva, lines 594 *et seq.*; *Prose volgari*, p. 365. G. Fargioni Fozzetti, *Viaggi per la Toscana* (Flor. 1773 *et seq.*), v. 56 *et seq.*, where also is Verino's letter. Cf. *ante*, p. 13.

to see the statesman and patron of literature and art occupied with agricultural interests, a liking for which he had inherited from his grandfather, and to which he was specially attracted by his strong feeling for nature.

Down to our own time the villa of Poggio a Cajano has kept up these traditions side by side with its historic reminiscences. The very ancient and noble family of the Cadolingi of Fucecchio had property here which passed to the powerful Pistoian family of the Cancellieri, and in 1420, by sale, to Palla Strozzi.¹ How and when the Medici came into possession of it is unknown. That it should have changed hands twice in a century is nothing astonishing, considering the vicissitudes of families in those eventful times. Nowhere is one so vividly reminded as here of Lorenzo il Magnifico, who actually built the place as it is now. When his second son had mounted the Papal chair, he caused the great hall to be decorated with frescoes representing scenes from the old Roman world, and containing allusions to home events. Paolo Giovio, a client of the Pope and of Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, chose the subjects; the animals bringing tribute to Cæsar were painted by Andrea del Sarto; the triumph of Cicero, which Poggio Bracciolini had compared to the return of Cosimo, by Franciabigo; and some mythological representations by Jacopo da Pontormo. Leo's death interrupted the work, which was completed in 1580 by Alessandro Allori. In a Pietà forming the altar-piece of the village church Giorgio Vasari placed the two patron saints of the Medici beside the dead Saviour.²

¹ Repetti, l. c. i. 380. Palla Strozzi paid 7,390 gold florins for Poggio a Cajano; and his beautiful villa of Petraja, which he had bought of the Brunelleschi, served as security for the purchase. In the next century, after the attempt of the Strozzi and their friends against Duke Cosimo had failed, Petraja was confiscated and became state property. Angiullesi's *Notizie storiche dei palazzi e ville appartenenti alla R. Corona di Toscana* (Pisa, 1815) contain no notice of the earlier history of Poggio a Cajano.

² Vasari, *Life of Sarto*, viii. 276; of *Franciabigo*, ix. 101; of *Pontormo*, xi. 46. The compositions of the former are engraved in the work on the frescoes of the grand-ducal palaces (Flor. 1751).

In these stately and beautiful localities, both in the city and country, active, energetic, comfortable, and cheerful life went on its way in spite of a few natural troubles. Lorenzo never gave himself up to senseless luxury such as many princes and cardinals indulged in; but he was always a grand gentleman in the true sense of the words. He never forgot that he was a Florentine citizen, as he loved to describe himself; his correspondents adopted the same idea of him, and he impressed the fact strongly upon his sons. At the same time he never forgot that at home all eyes were fixed on him, and that abroad it was he who represented the State. In his house and his villas there was perpetual movement. Everybody and everything went to and fro in the house of the man who stood at the head of all. Besides politics, he was constantly engaged with family affairs and intercourse with scholars and artists. He had many relations, and made good use of some of them. Numerous families were intimately connected with his. Many were made great by him; others, great already, he tried to attach more and more to himself. He stood godfather to his own countrymen as well as to foreign princes. When in 1490, Duke Alfonso of Calabria consented to be sponsor for the son of Giuliano Gondi, a business friend of the Medici, he asked Lorenzo to act as proxy for him.

The Medici in some degree kept open house. We learn from the life of Michelangelo that whosoever was present at the beginning of the dinner took his seat after the master of the house, each according to his rank; and the arrangement of the table was not altered for those who came later, even though they were of higher rank. All the inmates of the house who were not servants dined together; the young Buonarotti, then in the earliest days of his apprenticeship, was a constant guest at his patron's table.¹ Besides the Academic and other learned symposia, banquets were fre-

¹ A. Condivi, in the biography prefixed to the *Rime e lettere di M. A. Buonarotti* (Flor. 1858), p. 26.

quently given, both in the city and at Careggi, in honour of distinguished foreigners or ambassadors, and on festive occasions. Cristoforo Landino has left an account of a banquet which was something between a dinner of scholars and a feast, and was given by Lorenzo in his young days, when a noble Greek named Philotimos, who traced his pedigree up to the time of Constantine and prided himself greatly thereon, came to Florence accompanied by an Athenian philosopher named Aretophilos, to condole with the young Medici on the death of his father. Lorenzo rode out four miles to meet his guests, and conducted them to his house, where he had assembled the most distinguished literary men and the friends of the family. Among the company were Gentile Becchi, Antonio degli Agli, Giorgio Antonio Vespucci, Leon Battista Alberti, Ficino, Landino, Poliziano, Argyropulos, his pupils Piero and Donato Acciaiuolo, and Alamanno Rinuccini. The discourse at table and the claims of the proud Greek furnished Landino with the materials for his treatise on true nobility, which he dedicated to Lorenzo.¹ On these and suchlike occasions the hospitality was on a grand and brilliant scale; but on ordinary days Lorenzo kept his table within the modest limits befitting a citizen. So Franceschetto Cybò discovered when he came on a visit in June 1488. Roman lords and a number of other people accompanied the Pope's son; they wished to see the splendour of the house of Medici, of which all the world spoke so much. Franceschetto stayed in his father-in-law's house; a fine palace was assigned to his companions. After a few days passed in festivities, the visitor found a simple table. He wondered; and when the dinner and supper were served in the same style, he began to suspect that his companions might be treated in the same way. The suspicion troubled him, knowing as he did with what expectations they had come to Florence. He was therefore delighted to learn that they

¹ Bandini, *Specimen*, ii. 105 *et seq.* The names of the two Greeks sound like *noms de guerre*.

continued to be most sumptuously entertained. Talking confidentially with his father-in-law he mentioned the circumstance, whereupon Lorenzo quietly answered that he had received him into his house as a son and was treating him as such; to act otherwise would be to make a stranger of him. The noble lords who had come with him to celebrate his marriage were strangers; Lorenzo was treating them accordingly, as became his position and theirs.

At the end of 1482 an illustrious German guest came to the Medici house: Eberhard the Bearded Count of Würtemberg, son-in-law of Lodovico Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua, a connection which formed a natural introduction to friendly relations with the Medici. The count's learned companions have been already mentioned. Eberhard surveyed the riches of the house, the handsome halls filled with plate and other valuables, the library, the terrace with its evergreen fruit-trees and the stables. What he saw here must have been a source of great enjoyment to this highly accomplished prince, who combined a love of native literature with a knowledge of antiquity, possessed a fine library, and four years before had conferred a lasting benefit on his admiring country by founding the university of Tübingen. He saw the whole family, Lorenzo and his sons, Clarice and her daughters, still all together in those days. He openly expressed his pleasure at everything, both the house and its inhabitants. When he admired the collection of books, greatly increased and with much discrimination since Cosimo's days, Lorenzo, with a play on the words *libri* and *liberi*, answered that his children were his greatest treasures. From Florence Eberhard went to Rome, where Sixtus IV. presented him with the golden rose.²

The German prince admired Lorenzo's stud, and no

¹ Borghini, l. c. ii. 167.

² Reuchlin, dedication of the *De arte cabalistica* (1517) to Leo X. Manlius, *Locorum communium collectanea* (Bautzen, 1565), p. 271. Stälin, *Württemberg. Geschichte*, iii. 591. Cf. *ante*, p. 27.

doubt with justice. Lorenzo had a passion for riding-horses, hunters, and racers. Presents, purchases, and borrowing of horses occur over and over again in his correspondence. In October 1488 he bought twenty mares at Naples, and only a short time before his death horses for him were on their way from Egypt and the coast of Barbary.¹ The taste of the Florentines for horse-racing, with or without riders, and for which even in those days there were regular horse-lenders, has been preserved down to our own time; in the house of the Alessandri is shown a room whose walls are entirely covered with brocades won as prizes by a horse belonging to the family. Lorenzo always kept race-horses; one in particular, called Morello from its dark colour, always came off victorious, and was so attached to its master that it showed signs of illness when he did not feed it with his own hand, and testified its joy at his approach by stamping and loud neighing.² In his young days a handsome Sicilian horse was presented to him, and its value was outdone by that of the presents he gave in return. He himself made presents of horses. In November 1479, when he was particularly anxious to keep on good terms with Lodovico il Moro, he sent to Roberto Sanseverino, who was at that time a confidant of the Moro, a fine horse and a falcon.³ Letters about their horses passed between Lorenzo and King Ferrante, the Este family, the Sforzas of Pesaro, and others. In January 1473 the king thanked Lorenzo for the gift of a horse about which his ambassador, Marino Tomacelli, had written to him. Four years after he announced that he was sending Lorenzo two racers, a Sicilian and another, from his own stud, and two hunters, as tokens of his attachment. Horses of the king's, lent for the Florentine races, were on their way at the time of the Pazzi catastrophe.⁴ It was, moreover, the custom to send horses

¹ *Ricordi di Lettere, etc.*

² From Poliziano's account, in Valori, p. 177.

³ A. Montecatino, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 252.

⁴ *Med. Arch.*, passim. Gaye, *Carteggio*, i. 302.

to allied nobles and cities, to keep them for the races; those of the Medici went to both Ferrara and Lucca. When Giovanni Sforza of Pesaro was going to be married to Maddalena Gonzaga at the end of the summer of 1489, he begged Lorenzo to lend him one of his horses for the tournament to be held on the occasion. In Lorenzo's latter years his eldest son had the direction of the stables.¹

Lorenzo has left in his pretty and cheerful description of the hawking-party a graceful memorial of his love of the sport. Hawking was an old pastime always in great favour with princes and nobles. Dante's master, Brunetto Latini, mentions in his 'Treasury' seven species of falcons which served for the chase. Two contemporaries of Lorenzo paid special attention to the training of these birds: the King of Naples, who imported the best falcons from Rhodes with the permission of the grand-master of the Hospitallers, and Ercole d'Este, to whom Lorenzo gave leave to catch the birds on his estates in the Pisan territory. In return for this the duke sent to Lorenzo some of his own well-trained falcons for the purpose of the chase or to help in training his wild ones, and the king several times made him presents of hawks, as he did also to Maximilian of Austria, Ferdinand of Castile, Galeazzo Maria Sforza, and others.² The wide, well-wooded and watered plain of Pisa, and the lowlands and hills round Poggio a Cajano, were the scenes of the chase. On December 1, 1475, Angelo Poliziano, who was seldom absent from either studies or sports, wrote from Pisa to Madonna Clarice, then expecting her confinement (the child was afterwards Pope Leo):³ 'Yesterday we went hawking. It was windy

¹ Cappelli, l. c. p. 303. (A.D. 1490). Letter of the Anziani of Lucca, September 16, 1490; Lucch. Arch.

² Lorenzo to Ercole, February 11, 1481, January 9, 1482, in Cappelli, p. 242, 243, with notes. Ferrante to Lorenzo, June 5, 1477, in Gaye, l. c. i. 302. The same to the Knights of St. John, Ferrante Ribadeneira, Juan Gasco, and others, December 27, 1467. In Trinchera, Cod. Aragonese, i. 373; in this work are many letters relating to the *falcuni* and *girifalchi*.

³ *Prose volgari*, p. 45. Cf. *ante*, p. 14.

and we were unlucky, for we lost Pilato's falcon called Mantovano. To-day we tried again, and again the wind was contrary; yet we had some fine flights, for Maestro Giorgio let loose his falcon, which returned obediently at a given signal. Lorenzo is quite in love with the bird, and not without justice, for Maestro Giorgio says he has never seen one larger or finer, and he hopes to make him the best falcon in the world. While we were in the field Pilato returned from the shore with the truant of yesterday, which redoubled Lorenzo's pleasure. We are hawking from morning till night, and do nothing else. On Monday I hear our sport is to be varied by a deer-hunt.'

Independently of hunting, Lorenzo liked being in Pisa, and it was not his fault that the unfortunate city's relations with Florence did not improve, and that she could not accustom herself to bear the position of a subject city. Even when not called there by business, he frequently stayed there. From his youth up he was in the habit of leaving Florence to meet friends for change, for hunting or to see after his great estate at Agnano. This place, first a fortress and then a villa round which had gathered a population of a few hundreds, lies on the western slope of the Monte San Giuliano, four miles from Pisa, near marshes which Valori says Lorenzo would have drained if he had lived longer, and which mostly are drained now. A large pine-wood forms part of the estate, which in Lorenzo's days furnished a considerable quantity of corn and oil, and with other possessions in the Maremma of Pisa, at Colle Salvetti (now one of the stations on the railway which passes through the plain to Civita Vecchia), at Colmezzano, and other places, formed a most important part of the Medici landed property. Lorenzo's letters bear testimony to the great care he took in the improvement of husbandry in this hitherto sadly neglected part. Like Spedaletto, Agnano passed to Maddalena Cybò; her son Lorenzo, who was not on very good terms with his wife—Ricciarda Malaspina, heiress of Massa and Carrara—

ended his days there in 1549.¹ After Lorenzo had re-established the University of Pisa, its interests frequently called him to the city. During the disastrous fight for Sarzana he made Pisa a sort of head-quarters. The house then inhabited by the Medici, now belonging to the Pieracchi family, stands not far from the upper bridge over the Arno—the Ponte della Fortezza—on the right bank, near the church of San Matteo. Here is said to have occurred, seventy years after Lorenzo's death, that domestic tragedy which has never been cleared up, and which casts a dark shadow over the history of the first Medicean grand-duke.

In Lorenzo's days the house was more cheerful. Here, probably, was the scene of his discourse with Federigo of Aragon on Italian poetry; here he passed some pleasant days in April 1476. He came by San Miniato, where a halt was always made, with six-and-twenty horses. 'We rode along,' wrote Poliziano to Clarice,² 'singing, and sometimes talking theology in order not to forget this season of fasting; Lorenzo was triumphant. At San Miniato we tried to read some of St. Augustine, but the reading was soon exchanged for music and for polishing up a figure of a dancer which we found there.' There was no lack of merriment and jesting wherever Lorenzo went; the Pisan students found him a ready supporter of their carnival gaieties, at which they were permitted to take away the instruction-books from the professors and to spend on festivities the money paid to ransom them. The attribution to Lorenzo of the combat on the middle bridge over the Arno (*Gioco del Ponte*), at which the ground was disputed between armed bands on either side, and which was forbidden by the Grand-Duke Leopold I. on account of its fatal episodes, is a mistake; traces of it may be found in much earlier times.

It was in Pisa, at the end of May 1477, that Lorenzo

¹ Valori, l. c. p. 174. Viani, l. c. p. 24. In Fabroni, ii. 73, is a list of the Medici estates in the Pisa territory, with an estimate of their revenues.

² April 8. *Prose volgari*, p. 47.

received Eleonora of Aragon, wife of Duke Ercole of Ferrara; she had come by way of Lucca to attend her father's marriage at Naples, whither she was conveyed by a royal fleet which had anchored at Livorno.¹ As long as Filippo de' Medici was Archbishop of Pisa, and his brother Tanai dwelt there, there was no lack of grand hospitality; Luigi Pulci mentions the festivities during the presence of the Duke of Calabria in the war of Colleone.² Other than cheerful purposes called Lorenzo to Pisa. He sought in its mild air relief from physical sufferings; as in the autumn of 1474, after being cured of fever by the waters of Porretta. He stopped at Pisa, at a critical moment of his life, before embarking for Naples. In the little church of Sta. Maria della Spina, whose spires and pinnacles are seen adjoining the quay on the south shore, in 1485 he ordered for the victims of the Sarzana struggle requiems to be sung, at which he was present together with the widow of Bongianni Gianfigliuzzi, who had met his death in the unhealthy air of the Lunigiana coast.³

Lorenzo's visits to the baths played a great part in his life, though they never took him beyond the borders of Tuscany. Gout was hereditary in his family; his grandfather, his father, and his uncle all suffered from it, and his mother too was not exempt. When only twenty-six he was obliged to take the waters of Porretta, which still attract so many invalids to the valley of the Reno in the Apennines, on the road between Pistoja and Bologna. His most frequent resort was Bagno a Morba, where Madonna Lucrezia had a house and stayed frequently, and in his latter years he had the water sent to Spedaletto. Most of the Tuscan baths were anything but inviting; some are not more so now. In the Roman territory they are still worse; Ser

¹ Piero, *Parenti's Chronicle*. Cf. Poliziano, l. c. p. 49. Cf. *Cronaca di Notar. Giacomo*, p. 134 (June 1, 1477).

² Pulci, *Lettere*, p. 28, 31.

³ L. Fanfani, *Notizie inedite di Sta. Maria del Pontenovo*, p. 148. Cf. *ante*, p. 257.

Matteo Franco, describing the baths of Stigliano near the lake of Bracciano, remarks that in comparison with this place Bagno a Morba was a Careggi. Lorenzo tried other medicinal waters. In the autumn of 1484, after the taking of Pietrasanta, he went to the baths of San Filippo in the Sienese country. These remarkable thermal springs are reached by turning out of the old Roman high-road at the little village of Ricorsi, at the foot of the inhospitable height of Radicofani, and proceeding through the valley of the Orcia towards the stately group of Mont' Amiata, covered throughout its 5,000 feet of height with chestnuts and beeches, and surrounded with a girdle of villages. The springs lie in a deep ravine encircled with woods; a precipitate of carbonic acid and lime forms a marble-like crust, and the waters are an efficacious remedy for arthritic disorders as well as for skin-diseases. It is a desolate place, with only a few houses destined for the reception of invalids, in the narrow valley where oppressive heat alternates with a damp cold atmosphere. In autumn of the following year, and several times afterwards, Lorenzo came again. In the spring of 1490 he spent some time at the baths of Vignone in the same valley of the Orcia, a little southwards of San Quirico. Powerful thermal springs, similar to those mentioned above, issue from a travertine hill in the middle of the village, and fill a large basin; they were known in Roman times. Here Ermolao Barbaro visited Lorenzo, and Franceschetto Cybò and his wife kept him company; at that season the place was safe, but in summer the air can hardly be borne even by natives. Lorenzo's stay at Filetto in the valley of the Merse has already been mentioned. All these water-cures only gave temporary relief to his malady, and the short time he usually devoted to them would have prevented any lasting result even if his maladies had been less rooted and less complicated. Besides, even after his health had suffered considerably, his mode of life was not exactly regular. He not only exerted himself too much in attending

to business of all kinds, public and private, which poured in upon him surrounded as he was by many cares, but he was always involved in love intrigues. Bartolommea de' Nasi, the wife of Donato Benci, held him in her chains for years; she was neither young nor beautiful, but graceful and attractive. Even in winter he would ride out in the evening to her villa to be back in the city before daybreak. Two confidants, Luigi della Stufa and Andrea de' Medici, were his usual companions. They got tired of it, and their remarks came to the ears of the lady; whereupon she managed to have them punished by being sent off on diplomatic errands, the one to Cairo and the other to Constantinople—an old and well-worn contrivance which, in this case, caused a sensation of a nature not very favourable to the great man, 'who behaved himself like an inexperienced youth.'¹

The princely dignity which Lorenzo enjoyed was as apparent in his relations with foreign rulers as in his position in his own country, in his own house, and in his journeys. The former have been repeatedly mentioned. Everyone made use of him; everyone applied to him; everyone gave him thanks and presents, from antiquities down to sweet-smelling essences, which the Duchess of Calabria sent him. He sent his friends and acquaintances presents of books, works of art, horses, wine, and other things. In June 1489 he presented a vase full of balm to Anne de Beaujeu, 'Madama di Belgiù.' Venison and fish seem to have been favourite gifts on the part of communities and individuals; on one day five wild boars were taken to Lorenzo's house.

A great event, which has left its trace in the history of art by a representation in a fresco at Poggio a Cajano, was an embassy from Abu Nasr Kaitbei, Sultan of Egypt, or of Babylonia as he was called, which arrived at Florence on November 11, 1487, and was honourably and joyfully re-

¹ Guicciardini, l. c. ch. ix.

ceived by the foreign ambassadors and many of the citizens.¹ It was a fortunate time for the Republic, which had a few months before got rid of the dreary affair of Sarzana, and had now entered on a period of comparative peace which was not disturbed till the revolution of 1494. Italian affairs were of considerable importance to the Egyptian sultan, not only on account of commerce but also politically, on account of his relations with Naples and Venice; difficulties with this latter state might easily have been created by the sultan's claims to the suzerainty of Cyprus, where Caterina Cornaro continued to reign as a queen of shadows till 1489, under the protection of Venice. The sultan's eyes often turned towards the west as the progress of the Osmanli threatened an attack on the loosely connected empire of the Mamelukes, which, indeed, fell before their better-compacted power within less than thirty years. After the subjection of Pisa, Florence had frequent commercial relations with Egypt, and a desire to enlarge and secure its privileges gave rise to negotiations for which an Egyptian ambassador named Malphet came to Florence in 1487, and in the following year a Florentine, the aforesaid Luigi della Stufa, went to Cairo.² The former was sent at once to the Signoria of the Republic and to the 'Hakim' (lord) Lorenzo de' Medici, and brought rich presents for both. On Sunday, November 18, he had a solemn audience of the Signoria in presence of many of the chief citizens. He had led before him a giraffe and a tame lion, gifts from the sultan. The giraffe was no novelty to the Florentines, for one had been already seen at the festivals with which the visit of Pius II. was celebrated; and the lion, the emblem of the commonwealth, was always carefully kept here, alive as well as in effigy. A street behind the palace of the Signoria took its name from the

¹ Rinuccini, *Ricordi*, p. cxliii. Cappelli, l. c. p. 297.

² M. Amari, *I Diplomi Arabi del R. Archivio fiorentino* (Flor. 1863), lx, lxxxvi, and the original Arabic and Italian documents, p. 181, 184, 363, 372, 374, 382. Cf. Pagnini, l. c. ii. 205 *et seq.* Bandini, *Collectio veterum monumentorum*, p. 12 *et seq.*

lion-cage, afterwards removed to the square of San Marco. A Sicilian interpreter translated the conversation, which turned on the privileges offered to the Florentines in Egypt and Syria. For Lorenzo the ambassador brought gifts of various kinds: an Arabian horse, rare animals, among which were rams and sheep of various colours, with long hanging ears and tails; several horns of civet, a lamp with balsam, a quantity of aloe-wood, beautiful many coloured porcelain such as had never before been seen, vases of preserves, and rich and finely woven silk and linen stuffs.¹ There was a great festival in the Medici household when all these rarities were brought home; Madonna Clarice was absent, being then at Rome with Maddalena. Among Lorenzo's gifts to the sultan is mentioned a bed, carried by a special messenger.

Whenever Lorenzo went to the baths or left home for any purpose, he was everywhere received like a prince. The municipalities within the Florentine dominions were accustomed to send yearly presents to the capital on certain feasts, and they did not neglect to send offerings to the head of the Republic. After the fashion of the times these gifts usually consisted of provisions and goods for the house. When Lorenzo was expected, early in 1485, at San Gemignano, on his way to Bagno a Morba, but took another route, the municipality, which had voted 100 lire for his reception, sent to Morba a load of Greek wine, capons, marchpane and wax.² The Signoria of Siena, though they had not a few complaints against Lorenzo, honoured him in a similar manner when he was in their territory. During his stay at Vignone they sent ample provisions for his table.³ His suite was unusually numerous. A list of the persons he once took with him to Morba⁴ names the following: a chaplain,

¹ Ser Piero Dovizj to Madonna Clarice, Fabroni, ii. 337.

² Pecori, *Storia di San Gemignano*, p. 285.

³ *Med. Arch.* Such supplies were needed at these places.

⁴ From the *Med. Arch.* fol. 88, in Del Lungo, *Un viaggio di Clarice Orsini de' Medici nel 1485 descritto da Ser Matteo Franco* (Bologna, 1868).

Filippo (Ubal dini) da Gagliano, Francesco degli Organi (Squarcialupi), a house-steward, two chancellors (secretaries) two singers, Bertoldo the sculptor, a barber, two valets, a butler, five crossbowmen, ten grooms, an equerry, a cook, a kitchen-boy, and a coachman. For these thirty-two persons fourteen beds were required. His family, too, when they travelled without him, were everywhere received in the most distinguished manner possible. A letter of their faithful, cheerful friend, Matteo Franco, gives a lively sketch of a journey on horseback made by Clarice in May 1485, from Morba, where she had been with her husband, through the Volterra district and the Elsa valley to Florence. At all the places where she stopped, especially at Colle, where the first halt for sleeping was made (the second was at Passignano, where stood the great abbey given to Giovanni de' Medici), everybody was astir; yet friendly intercourse was combined with a ceremonious reception.

Whether in town, in the country, or on a journey, Lorenzo was always surrounded by friends, whose names are inseparable from his. Most of them have become known in the course of this history; various characters, of whom more than one may be differently judged, according to whether we view them in private life and in their confidential relations, or as public men, authors or otherwise. First come those who were the guides of his youth or whom he knew in his father's house; Gentile Becchi, who remained a member of the Medicean household even after his appointment to the see of Arezzo, as bishops were not required to reside too strictly; Ficino, Landino, and Poliziano. Then those who, having been friends of his parents, attached themselves to him in his youth and manhood; or those who first came in contact with him in his mature years; Luigi Pulci, Matteo Franco, Bartolommeo Scala, Pico della Mirandola—besides those who were drawn to him by political and allied interests, and who zealously served him and, in his sense of the word, the State, without forgetting themselves. On each and all

Lorenzo had a deep and lasting influence; he was the centre around which all revolved, the link that bound all together, however much a few of the disaffected ones might try to fight against it. Their attachment to him was not forced or selfish; the affection expressed in Pulci's letters and Poliziano's verses had nothing artificial about it. Lorenzo was a genial man, cordial and kind, a born prince, simple and natural. In his intercourse with the scholars and artists who were in some sense dependent on him, the relation of patron and client was forgotten. Their letters to him, grave and gay, are proofs of their confidence and intimacy. If they address him as 'Magnifico,' they soon follow it up with a plain 'Lorenzo.' In the midst of the war-troubles of 1479, Donatello's pupil Bertoldo wrote Lorenzo a letter full of fun, to the effect that it was more profitable to be a cook than an artist;¹ and the famous Niccolò Grosso, called Caparra, in reality a blacksmith, but who executed works of art, would not fulfil Lorenzo's orders till he had executed others he had received first.² How entirely constraint was banished in intercourse with him is shown by his conversation with the mosaic-worker Graffione, a pupil of Baldovinetti. Lorenzo once said he would like to adorn the inside of the dome of the Cathedral with mosaics. 'For that you could not get masters,' replied Graffione. 'We have money enough to get masters,' was the probably half-jesting answer. 'Eh, Lorenzo,' exclaimed the artist, 'it is not the money that procures the masters, but the masters who procure the money!' He bore with their humours and oddities; he honoured them living and dead, feeling that their fame would add to his own. Had he done nothing for art beyond the cordial and almost fatherly reception which he, a powerful and much-envied man of mature years, gave to Michelangelo when the latter was almost in his boyhood, that alone would make his memory illustrious. On his death-bed

¹ Gualand i, *Nuova Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura, ec.* (Bologna, 1844), i. 14.

² Vasari, *Life of Simone Pollaiuolo*, viii. 119.

he desired once more to see the friends in whose society he had passed his happiest hours, and whose attachment followed him beyond the grave.

Notwithstanding many disturbances caused by political events, increasing bad health, and several deaths in the family, still life was cheerful in the Medici household. Music was a daily pleasure. Lorenzo's poetical talents attached him to this art, and his unmusical voice did not hinder him from taking a part in singing. Marsilio relates that he did so at a social gathering which apparently took its name of *La Mammola* (the Violet) from a still existing hostelry. Thus, too, one evening, when he was singing the mysteries of love, he originated a discussion as to whether subjects in which mourning occurred were appropriate, which Ficino decided in the affirmative.¹ In his poetical productions he reckoned much on musical effect, a necessary condition of songs for dancing and for the carnival. As long as his health permitted he was never absent from the merry processions at which popular melodies alternated with those of Heinrich Isaak; and on journeys, at the May-festivals and other times of gaiety there was no lack of musical accompaniments to the verses of Poliziano and other friends. Although from Guido Aretino down to the father of Galileo, Tuscany produced no remarkable composer or writer on music, yet the people were always musical. Ficino was doubly welcome when he appeared with his plectrum, after the pattern of the earliest half-deified apostles of Greek culture, to secure a better reception for ancient philosophy by his strains delighting the ear and winning the heart. As in Poliziano's 'Orpheus,' Baccio Ugolini accompanied on the lyre the ode in praise of Cardinal Gonzaga, so did Marsilio when extemporising, in which art he was a master.

One of Lorenzo's protégés was the organ-builder Antonio Squarcialupi, who, as a precentor, had been a familiar of the

¹ Ficino, *Epist.* x. 37.

house in Piero's time. His life and conversation seem not to have been blameless; but Lorenzo took him under his protection for the sake of his uncommon talent. 'If you knew,' he said once to those who blamed him, 'what it is to attain perfection in anything, you would judge him more gently and modestly.'¹ Squarcialupi set to music many of the songs of his patron, who, it is said, composed the inscription for his tomb. To the friendship of the Medici he owed the epigram in which Poliziano called upon Florence to honour with a marble monument him who had long been the voice of her temple.² The man really must have possessed rare artistic merits; for a son of the Count of Altavilla—one of the guests at the *Salutati* banquet—came to Florence with an introduction from King Ferrante to Lorenzo, to study the organ and other instruments under Squarcialupi; and ten years later a clergyman named Stephen came from Ofen, with a recommendation from Matthias Corvinus, to learn organ-building.³ In 1477 a lute-player of Lodovico Sforza's suite came to Florence to be heard by the famous master.⁴ Organ-building, as well as organ-playing, was a somewhat rare art. The difficulty of finding good masters is shown by the trouble and loss of time caused in Cosimo's days to the committee entrusted with the building of the Cathedral, through the untrustworthiness of Matteo da Prato, who had undertaken to furnish the new organs, to be decorated by Donatello and Luca della Robbia. Lorenzo took great interest in this branch of music. Many of his letters relate to organists recommended by him to various Tuscan towns, or sent from one place to another. At his death there were in his house no less than five organs; one large one with a finely-carved wooden case, the rest smaller, partly metal, partly paste-board, which was then used for these in-

¹ Valori, l. c. p. 176.

² ' . . . Diu templi vox fuit ille tui.' *Prose volgari*, p. 155. Cf. *ante*, p. 140, 165.

³ *Med. Arch.* February 5, 1473, August 20, 1483.

⁴ Poliziano to Lorenzo, October 17, 1477. *Prose volgari*, p. 54.

struments.¹ Musicians were included among the servants; and in the evenings there was singing and playing on the lute. Michelangelo in his later years used to tell of a man who was called the *Cardiere*, and who was a great favourite with Lorenzo on account of his wonderful talent for improvising songs to an instrumental accompaniment.² Lorenzo also looked after the musical education of his children. 'The evening before last,' wrote Poliziano to him at Bagno a Morba on June 5, 1490,³ 'I unexpectedly heard our Piero sing, and then he and his companions came to my room. He pleased me exceedingly, especially in the motetts and answers to the strophes, and also by his charms of articulation. I felt as if I were listening to your Magnificence.' Leo X. had through life a true passion for music and improvisation. As a cardinal, his palace near Sant' Eustachio (Palazzo Madama) continually resounded with instruments and singing; and in the Vatican music and poetry vied with each other, and both improvisers and musicians made their fortunes with the Pope.

It is needless to repeat how closely poetry was intertwined with the life of the Medici. The taste for it was hereditary. Cosimo the elder, Lorenzo, his brother Giuliano, all wrote poetry; so did the younger Piero and others of the family. As a child Lorenzo's daughter Lucrezia knew by heart the spiritual songs of her grandmother;⁴ and the songs of the 'Morgante' were first heard in the Medici house when Lucrezia Tornabuoni took part in them. Many of Poliziano's poems were evidently intended to be recited to his patron; and when he relates in a letter⁵ how one asked him for sermons for the brotherhoods, another for carnival songs, one wanted sentimental songs for the viola, another gay

¹ C. Guasti, *Di un maestro d'organi del sec. xv. in Belle Arti ec.*, p. 229 et seq. *Ricordi di lettere, etc.*

² Condivi, l. c., p. 30. It was this 'Cardiere' (from *cardatore*, wool-comber) who was said to have seen an apparition of the dead Lorenzo.

³ *Prose volgari*, p. 78.

⁴ Poliziano to M. Lucrezia, Fiesole, July 18, 1479. *Prose volgari*, p. 72.

⁵ Epist. l. ii. ep. 13.

serenades, it is probable that he referred to members of the society he met in the house of the Medici. One can fancy Pulci and Matteo Franco sending satirical shafts in the form of sonnets at each other across the table. In the 'Beoni' and 'Nencia,' evidently intended for gay meetings, Lorenzo himself gave the signal for poetical entertainments and contests; Pulci once answered him with the 'Beca da Dicomano.' The poetic gifts of his eldest son are displayed in the latter's productions; the verses written by him in exile show more depth of feeling than one would have given him credit for. In his youth, at least, his contemporaries seem to have judged him favourably. In a sonnet of Antonio da Pistoja on the poets of the time, both Piero and his father are mentioned, and the praise bestowed on them gains weight from the fact that Poliziano alone is placed above them:—

Who among Tuscans doth in verse excel?
 In vulgar tongue? Aye, and in Latin speech.
 Lorenzo and his son write passing well,
 But neither can Politian's glory reach.¹

Piero's letters to his father, on literary and other subjects, display sound judgment, information, and lively interest. His boyish letters, indeed, are of little consequence; and when, as a lad of fourteen, he writes from the villa to his father at San Filippo, giving an account of his own studies and those of his brother Giovanni, with whom he was reading Virgil's *Bucolics*, thereby, as he said, gaining double profit,² his master's hand is clearly traceable. But there are other letters worthy of consideration, such as that on the visit of Ermolao Barbaro. Although Poliziano's descriptions of his pupil and of the young Cardinal Giovanni lose much of their effect and even spoil their subjects by exaggeration, yet it cannot be disputed that Lorenzo's eldest son, though he did not

¹ Carducci, Introduction to Poliziano's poems, p. cxxxii. The remarkable political sonnets published by O. Fargioni-Tozzetti (Livorno, 1863) are by this Antonio Cammelli.

² Poggio a Cajano, September 11, 1485, in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 298.

possess his father's prudence and calculation (a want which may perhaps be explained and excused by the degree of splendour, fortune, and grandeur at which Lorenzo left the personal government in his hands), yet did possess many of his intellectual qualities. The time during which he continued to hold the government was too short and too much disturbed by preludes of the coming storm to furnish premisses for a decisive judgment of him; neither can such a judgment be fairly founded on his conduct in exile, which may be mistaken even by the keenest eye.

Piero's wife can hardly have had a good influence on him. Alfonsina Orsini was infinitely less fitted than her mother-in-law for Florentine life and manners. In her nature the pride of the Roman barons seems to have been combined with covetousness and hardness, whereby she made herself very much disliked in later years, when her brother-in-law was Pope and she was a great deal in Rome, where she died in 1520. Her husband's three sisters, Lucrezia, Maddalena, and Contessina, the wife of Piero Ridolfi, were frequently at their father's house. Maddalena, whose daughter Lucrezia was born at Rome early in 1490, became at Florence, on August 24 of the following year, the mother of a son who was christened Innocenzo after the Pope, received the red hat from Leo X., and, with his cousins Cardinals Salviati and Ridolfi, played some part in Florence after the murder of the first duke. All three sisters afterwards attached themselves to the court of Leo X. in a way which threw no favourable light on his financial arrangements; and the influence of Lucrezia, doubtless the most highly gifted of the three, lasted beyond her brother's lifetime throughout the whole reign of her cousin Clement VII., with whom her husband, Jacopo Salviati (father of the cardinal), was very intimate, till the Pope's proceedings in 1529 against the city of his fathers estranged the relatives. In one of Ariosto's satires, invaluable for a study of the manners and general circumstances of the early years of the sixteenth century, he

introduces Lorenzo's posterity and their friends rejoicing at the elevation of Leo X.,—a rejoicing destined to be of short duration.¹ There were numerous other members of the family, rich and poor, nearly and distantly connected. The nearest branch was, of course, that descended from Cosimo's brother Lorenzo, whose chief representative at this time was the oft-mentioned Lorenzo, son of Pier Francesco. One of those admitted to the closest intimacy was a distant cousin, Andrea. As long as the daughters remained at home Lorenzo insisted on their dressing modestly and simply, in conformity to the sumptuary laws. Certain materials he never would allow them, because they resembled the forbidden crimson cloth, although many other grand ladies wore them without scruple. He himself was never distinguished from other citizens in outward apparel. In winter he wore a violet mantle with a hood, and in summer the *lucco*: the long red robe of the upper class of citizens, still the usual dress of the magistrates. It is mentioned that he got Venetian silk for his dress. To elderly people he always offered his hand and gave the place of honour, and what he taught his sons he first followed himself.

Lorenzo's observations generally were very pointed without falling into the sarcasm of his grandfather. When the Sienese jurist Bartolommeo Sozzini repeated the old reproach against the air of Florence that it was bad for the sight ('An ancient saying calls her people blind') before Lorenzo, who suffered from weak eyes, Lorenzo replied that the air of Siena was worse still; it was bad for the brains. When the same man, having broken his plighted word in leaving Pisa secretly, on being caught and imprisoned complained of the punishment as unbecoming his position, Lorenzo answered that the dishonour was not in the punishment but in the unworthy action. He said of those who built recklessly that they were buying repentance dear; and when his cousin

¹ Satire VI. 'Quella famiglia d'allegrezza piena.'

Pier Francesco, having begun at Majano a building which he kept on altering as the work proceeded, complained that the expense far exceeded the estimate, he exclaimed: 'No wonder; others build according to their plans, you make your plans after the building.' When Carlo de' Medici, who seems not to have been over-nice in his methods of getting money, boasted of the quantity of water round his villa, Lorenzo remarked that he would have to keep his hands all the cleaner. That he also had a turn for practical joking, which, as has been seen, was an ingredient in Florentine life, is shown by the history of the troublesome parasitical doctor Maestro Manente, whom he caused to be taken one evening, when drunk, by two men in disguise, and shut up in a place unknown to him outside the city, and given out for dead. When the supposed dead man at last got home, his wife, who took him for a ghost, would not let him in till the enchantment of which he was supposed to have been the victim was cleared up by the intervention of others.¹ This trick evidently recalls the story of the fat cabinet-maker.

In a letter to Lodovico Odasio, Poliziano has left a description of his patron and friend in graver conversation.² 'Think not that any one of our learned brethren, even those whose very life's work is study, can surpass Lorenzo de' Medici in acuteness of disputation and in formulating a conclusion; or that he is inferior to anyone in the easy, graceful, and varied expression of his ideas. Historical examples occur to him as readily as to the most accomplished of his companions; and whenever the subject of the discourse admits of it, his conversation is richly seasoned with the salt of the ocean from which Venus rose.' Poliziano, the confidential friend of the house, who was never absent either from the literary symposia or from the narrower circle of friends, in time of joy or in time of mourning, understood

¹ Lasca, *Le Cene*, iii. 10.

² Epist. I. iii. 6.

Lorenzo thoroughly, and his judgment may be accepted. Many of Lorenzo's sayings have been preserved which bear witness to the soundness of his judgment, or in some way reflect credit on him. He said once: 'As a healthy body resists the influence of a storm, so a state can brave dangers when the citizens are of one mind.' When Filippo Valori (brother of his biographer) was desirous but yet afraid to try to reconcile Lorenzo with Antonio Tebalducci, against whom the latter had grounds for complaint, Lorenzo said to him: 'To recommend a friend to me would be no merit, but for making an opponent my friend I thank thee, and I beg thee to do it again in the like case.¹ Only he who knows how to forgive knows how to conquer,' he added.² The combination of prince and citizen, statesman and man of letters; the mixture of gravity and gaiety, of lofty intellect and cheerful participation in everyday life, of grandeur and simplicity in his household and family, of sagacious calculation and hearty unfeigned good nature,—all this makes Lorenzo de' Medici an unusual figure, very attractive in its individuality, and accounts for the impression he made on all; especially, and most lastingly, on those who were intimate at his house and had the opportunity of observing him in private.

¹ Valori, l. c. p. 167.

² Fabroni, l. c. i. 22.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CARDINALATE OF GIOVANNI DE' MEDICI.

BOTH contemporary and later writers have passed an unfavourable judgment on Pope Innocent VIII. 'Though the life of Innocent VIII. was useless for the general good,' remarks Guicciardini at the beginning of his great history, 'at least it was useful thus far, in that, frightened at his unsuccessful attempt to meddle in the Barons' War, during the remainder of his pontificate he directed his attention to trifles instead of planning for himself and his belongings things which might have disturbed the peace of Italy.' This negative praise is not without truth, but it gives little insight into the character and aims of the Pope. His greatest faults were weakness and inconsistency: hence the sorry part which he played as a ruler, although he had no tendency towards nepotism and was gifted with sound judgment. It was his weakness which made him abandon the affairs of Aquila and of the Barons, and caused his ever-wavering conduct towards the King of Naples. The latter alternately lured and contemptuously defied him, rendered the treatment of his own restless feudatories uncertain, and provoked disturbances in Rome which led to the robbing of the papal treasury by the Pope's own son. Yet that son, compared with the nephews of the last Pope—not to mention the one who followed—was but very modestly provided for; so barely indeed that, but for the resources of the Medici, Franceschetto Cybò, at the Pope's death, would have been, for one in his position, a poor man. It was long before

Innocent made up his mind to do anything serious for him ; and considering the traditions of all the Papal 'nephews,' the Colonna, Piccolomini, Della Rovere, and Riari, it may be well imagined that Franceschetto became impatient; more so, perhaps, as the Pope's health was failing owing to the two apoplectic attacks he had had in January 1485, and in February of the following year, during which he had been given up for dead. 'These occurrences,' remarks his biographer,¹ 'made his family anxious to secure their position for the future, and they begged the Pope to make provision for this while it was yet time.'

But they gained little, and not till after Franceschetto's marriage did his circumstances begin really to improve. Lorenzo was not behindhand with his persuasions: 'It is not without a blush,' he wrote on February 26, 1488,² 'that I commend to your Holiness the affairs of Signor Francesco; for it seems to me unreasonable to commend to your Holiness that which for natural reasons must be nearer your heart than anything else. My letters and intercession cannot in reason have more weight than the natural relationship between your Holiness and Signor Francesco; but as I see that his affairs proceed very slowly, I feel I ought not to refuse him my recommendation and every other support. As he is, he tells me, very happy in possessing Maddalena, this should be to your Holiness an occasion for treating him so as to please me too. This will be the case if his position becomes such as shall befit the dignity of your Holiness and set my mind at rest. I never had any idea that your Holiness should take anything from others, or give offence to any, in order to make him great. As this would be dishonourable and contrary to the nature of your Holiness, so, on the other hand, I think that it would not be in accordance with your natural kindness and goodness if your Holiness did not provide for him, as he can easily be portioned

¹ Fr. Serdonati, *Vita di P. Innocenzo VIII.* (Milan, 1829) p. 75.

² Moreni, *Lettere*, p. 5.

in a manner befitting his rank without any injury to others. I humbly beg your Holiness to relieve yourself as well as me of this trouble, and establish him so that further importunity shall be needless. Thus your Holiness will be doing a work worthy of your goodness, not only sensible and pious, but necessary, and greatly desired by me, as a good example for all those who set their hopes on your Holiness.'

Still the Pope was far too slow for Franceschetto's impatience, and seems to have had no great opinion of the latter's judgment. The son-in-law's letters to his father-in-law are full of complaints which really display Innocent in a more honourable light than those by whom he was thus beset. 'Like the ox, he needs the goad.' This was a son writing of his father, and that father the Pope! Lorenzo was not much behind his son-in-law. One of his letters to the Pope¹ is but too glaring an example of the profane tone in which this man, who could display such a refined sense of decorum in other things, addressed with the utmost coolness the very head of the Church. Innocent had had another of his attacks of illness, and Lorenzo was getting anxious: 'As St. Francis, by means of the stigmata, experienced in his own body the Passion of Christ, so do I feel in and about myself all the sufferings of your Holiness; for, putting aside other reasons, I have the situation of our dear Signor Francesco and of many servants of your Holiness very much at heart. Owing to your Holiness' conscientious holding back, all these remain almost empty-handed and have no part of the fortune and favour which God has given your Holiness for your merits; so that, should your Holiness be called away, which God forbid, they would sink likewise into the grave. More especially, however, am I moved, as must be the case with your Holiness also, by the position of poor Signor Francesco, who, after five years of your pontificate, is only just beginning to have something he can call his own.

¹ Faltoni, l. c. ii. 389-391.

Your Holiness knows better than I what supporters he has in the Sacred College. The history of the Popes shows how few have reigned much beyond five years, and how many have not waited so long before showing themselves as Popes, without giving way to such scruples and forbearance, justifiable no doubt before God and man, but which, if they last long, may be misconstrued. Perhaps I seem too bold; but zeal and conscience impose upon me the duty of speaking freely and reminding you that men are not immortal, that a Pope is what he chooses to be, that he cannot leave his pontificate to his heirs, and can call nothing his own but honour and glory and what he does for his relatives. Instead of depending on health and luck, your Holiness should not put off doing what you project, and for which later there might perhaps be no opportunity. Above all I commend to you your and my dear Signor Francesco and Maddalena, who pray God to grant your Holiness a long life that you may set their affairs in order. It is now about time to release these holy fathers from Limbo, that their fate may not be like that of the Jews waiting for the Messiah.'

While the Pope was thus plagued about secular matters, it was much the same with ecclesiastical ones. In both cases the object was one and the same—increase of riches and power. Everything was regarded and treated from this point of view; of anything beyond, politicians—even highly-gifted ones like Lorenzo—had no conception. Lorenzo was impatient to get property for Franceschetto Cybò, he was still more impatient to get the red hat for his own son. Giovanni was born on December 11, 1475, and was consequently in his ninth year when Innocent became Pope. Some preparations had been made even then: 'Cousin,' wrote Louis XI. from Plessis-les-Tours on February 3, 1483, in reply to Lorenzo who had applied to him on the death of Cardinal d'Estouteville, 'I have seen what you wrote to me

¹ Desjardins, l. c. p. 189. *Ibid.* another letter of Louis, dated February 17; also in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 298.

concerning the benefices of the Cardinal of Rouen, and much regret not to have known thereof sooner; for I should be very pleased if your son should obtain a good provision and benefice in my kingdom.'

The king was as good as his word; that same spring he conferred on the child not only the abbacy of Font Douce in the diocese of Saintes, but also the archbishopric of Aix, which was supposed to be vacant. 'On May 19, 1483,' says Lorenzo in his memoirs,¹ 'news came that the King of France, of his own free will, had conferred the abbacy of Font Douce on our Giovanni; and on the 31st we heard from Rome that the Pope (Sixtus IV.) had confirmed the appointment, declared him capable of holding benefices at the age of seven, and appointed him a protonotary.'² On June 1, Giovanni, accompanied by me, came from Poggio (a Cajano) to Florence, whereupon he was confirmed and tonsured by the Lord Bishop of Arezzo, and was thenceforth called Messer Giovanni. The aforesaid ceremonies took place in our private chapel, and in the evening we returned to Poggio. On the morning of June 8, Jacopino the courier came with a letter from the French king, whereof the contents were that he had conferred on our Messer Giovanni the archbishopric of Aix in Provence. In the evening he went on to Rome with letters from the king to the Pope and the Cardinal of Maçon (Philibert Hugonet), and at the same time a courier was sent to Forlì with a letter for Count Girolamo. On the 11th the courier came back from Forlì with letters from the count for the Pope and San Giorgio (Cardinal Riario), which were forwarded to Rome by the Milanese post. May God direct all for good. On the same day, after mass, all the children, except Messer Giovanni, were confirmed in the chapel. On the 15th, about the sixth hour of the evening, intelligence came from Rome that the Pope raised difficulties about the

¹ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 299.

² A letter to G. Lanfredini, February 16, 1489, recommending an Archdeacon, **Mario** of Osimo (*Med. Arch. F.* 57), is signed *Johannes Laurentii de Medicis protonotarius apostolicus*.

appointment to the archbishopric on account of Messer Giovanni's youth; of which news the king was at once informed by the same messenger. On the 20th came from Lionetto (de' Rossi) the announcement that the archbishop was still alive! On March 1, 1484 (1485), the Abbot of Passignano died, and an express was sent to Messer Giovan Antonio Vespucci, envoy at Rome, to beg the abbey from the Pope (Innocent VIII.) for our Messer Giovanni. On the 2nd, in pursuance of an ordinance of the Signoria, possession was taken of it, in virtue of the reservation made in Messer Giovanni's favour by Pope Sixtus and confirmed by Pope Innocent when our Piero went to Rome to do him homage.' These details show but too plainly how benefices were dealt with, and how at the mere rumour of a prelate's death temporal sovereigns disposed of a high spiritual office in favour of a child. A few years after this, King Matthias Corvinus conferred on a boy of seven—his nephew Ippolito of Este—the primatial see of Hungary, the archbishopric of Gran. Like Sixtus IV., Innocent VIII. at first refused to confirm the appointment, but he ended by yielding.

The abbey of Passignano, belonging to the monks of Vallombrosa, was one of the richest in Tuscany. The young abbot continued to enjoy its possession till 1499, when he gave it up to the General of the Order for a pension of 2,000 scudi. The grand fortress-like building, which remained in the possession of the Order down to our own day, stands in the valley of the Pesa, sixteen miles south of Florence, on the left of the Roman military road; its church is adorned with paintings by Domenico Cresti, who was somewhat of the Caracci school, and was called by the name of his birth-place, Passignano. Everything in the shape of benefices of all kinds, commanderies, rectorships, and so forth, that came within reach of the Medici, fell to Lorenzo's son; in 1486 he actually obtained, as a commandery, the abbey of Monte Cassino; King Ferrante having, in order to conciliate the Pope, given him free disposal of the famous convent of S.

Benedict.¹ How anxious the king was to appease the Medicean hunger after benefices is shown by his letter of August 23, 1486, in answer to Lorenzo's thanks.² 'Thanks from you were needless, for God knows we are ready and willing to do anything in the world to prove to you our gratitude for what you have continually done for our good and that of our state, on which you may reckon as on your own property. Our obligations to you demand this; and we can never do enough in favour of you and your house to satisfy the thousandth part of our desire, as we hope you will perceive more clearly every day.' Lodovico il Moro answered in the same strain when Lorenzo thanked him for giving his son the abbacy of Miramondo.³

All this, however, was but the prelude. There is something very repulsive in the impatience with which Lorenzo looked forward to his son's cardinalate, and pressed the Pope to confer it. For the ambassadors of the Republic there seemed to be nothing more important than this. Lorenzo always took special good care that men who were in his own deepest confidence should be sent to the Popes. In the spring of 1487 Innocent wished that Pier Filippo Pandolfini, who had formerly been in Rome, should be appointed to the vacant post of ambassador; but he could not leave Florence, and the place was taken by Giovanni Lanfredini, whose capabilities had lately been tested at Naples. 'I have used my influence with the Signoria,' wrote Lorenzo to the Pope on May 6,⁴ 'to procure the appointment of a man with whom your Holiness will be perfectly satisfied. For besides that Giovanni Lanfredini (he who is destined for Rome) is an excellent honest man and conversant with business, he also possesses my heart (*il core mio*), as I am much attached to him on account of his merits.' To Lanfredini himself

¹ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 374; *Vita Leonis X. P. M.*, p. 245. Fosti, *Storia della Badia di Monte Cassino*, iii. 199. It is but too well known how greatly the convent went to ruin through the misdoings of its commanders.

² Desjardins, l. c. p. 214.

³ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 374.

⁴ Moreni, *Lettere*, p. 8. Cf. *ante*, p. 326.

Lorenzo wrote on June 16 of the following year :¹ 'I have heard what his Holiness said to you about the creation of cardinals. I think the Pope should not put off the nomination any longer than is absolutely necessary. According to my view his Holiness will be quite another Pope after it. For whereas hitherto he has been a head without members, he must get some ; whereas he has been the creature of others, now others must be the creatures of him. Therefore persuade him, yea, urge him, to take the needful decision ; the sooner the better. *Periculum est in mora* ; as much as he gains by acting he loses by hesitating. Use all your influence to procure this blessed promotion as soon as possible. As the matter is before the Sacred College, it cannot be delayed without great damage to the holy father's dignity and power. As to the persons to be nominated, I approve of all the names which are marked ; they are those of which you have spoken to me. If he can do us that pleasure, let him do it. If the promotion were to be put off on our account, tell him he may act according to his judgment. If he thinks it well to begin with a single one to show that it is in his power, he can nominate more by degrees till everybody is satisfied.'

Months passed away ; the Pope's indecision was unconquerable, and Lorenzo's impatience increased. 'As I understand from our ambassador,' he wrote to Innocent on October 1, 1488,² 'that your Holiness intends shortly to create some cardinals, I should think myself deserving of grave censure did I not put you in mind of the honour of this city and my own, though I am sure that your Holiness in your goodness remembers both. I do not believe that in the whole course of your pontificate you could do anything that would deserve more gratitude from the city ; and as the dignity of a cardinal is lofty and much sought after, this city would feel it deeply should her hopes not be fulfilled.'

¹ Roscoe, *Life and Pontificate of Leo X.* Ap. II. (iii. 385.)

² *Ibid.*, Ap. III. p. 387.

It concerned the honour of Florence that a son of Lorenzo—a mere boy—should be received into the senate of the Church! Meantime, while Lorenzo thus unceasingly urged his claim, he was taking equal trouble to prevent the same dignity from being conferred on some fellow-countryman for whom he had no predilection. ‘The Pope,’ he wrote to the ambassador,¹ ‘does not know our people’s ways (*i polli nostri*) as we do. Not only the cardinalate, but any increase of position and dignity, would be dangerous if it came otherwise than in the right way.’ Who can tell whether the chief cause of this long delay in the only promotion undertaken by this Pope was not really a scruple, struggling with political considerations? Innocent himself had decided that no one under thirty should be admitted to the cardinalate, and Giovanni de’ Medici was not yet fourteen. Lorenzo never ceased writing,² Lanfredini never ceased talking. Cardinals Sforza, Borgia, La Balue, and Zeno, were pressed into the service. ‘The services daily rendered us by Monsignor Ascanio,’ says Lorenzo in a letter to the ambassador, February 21, 1489, ‘deserve better thanks than words. My obligations to him could not be greater if I were recalled from death to life.’ The story current in Florence—perhaps exaggerated—of the sums spent on the occasion furnishes a commentary on these words.

At last, on March 9, 1489, the promotion took place.³ It resulted in five cardinals, among whom were the Pope’s relative Lorenzo de’ Mari, who took the name of Cybò, and the Grand Master of the Knights of St. John, the heroic defender of Rhodes, Pierre d’Aubusson. But besides these five, at the same consistory, Innocent conferred the same

¹ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 374.

² Letters, from the *Med. Arch.*, in Fabroni, *Vita Leonis X.*, and Roscoe, l. c., App. IV. V. VI. VII.

³ Burcard, l. c. 110–112. He names the five publicly nominated Cardinals. Giacconio, *Vita Pontif.*, vol. iii. col. 124–144, where all the eight are mentioned. On March 9, the Ferrarese ambassador at Florence announced the signature by the Cardinals of the bull for Giovanni, and thought its publication would follow with that of the others.

dignity on three others, without publishing their names—what is now called a reservation *in petto*. One of these was Maffeo Gherardi, a Camaldulensian, patriarch of Venice; the second was Federigo Sanseverino, son of Roberto; the third was Giovanni de' Medici.

It was quite clear that the Pope was ashamed of himself. In the worst days of the Church no child had yet been made a cardinal. The nomination was to be kept secret for three years; whosoever divulged it was to be excommunicated. It was very soon seen how this was observed. On the day of the promotion, cardinals Sforza and La Balue, the Bishop of Cortona, prefect of the Apostolic Chamber, and the ambassador, announced to Lorenzo that his son had been made cardinal-deacon of Sta. Maria in Domenica.¹ 'God be thanked,' wrote Lorenzo to the last-mentioned,² 'for the good news received yesterday about Messer Giovanni; news which gave me all the greater pleasure, because I expected it the less on account of the importance of the matter and its difficulty bordering on impossibility, besides which it far exceeds my deserts. . . I know not whether the Pope is displeased at the rejoicings which have taken place here on all sides, and in such a degree as I never saw before; there would have been a yet more brilliant expression of general joy, had I not interfered. To prevent the demonstration was out of my power. As Messer Giovanni's promotion is secret, these festivities certainly seem out of place. But you at Rome have let the thing become so well known that it could not be otherwise here; and it would have been impossible for me to keep aloof from the congratulations of whole cities, small and great. If it is wrong, it cannot be helped. Now I want to know how we are to behave ourselves in future, and how Messer Giovanni's mode of life, dress, and servants are to be arranged; for I would not reward so great a benefit by not

¹ Letters in *Med. Arch.*: that of La Balue (*Andegavensis*—Bishop of Angers) in Roscoe, 1 c., Ap. VIII

² Fabroni, *Laur. Med. Vita*, ii. 300.

making a proper display according to the manner most likely to please the Pope. Messer Giovanni keeps at home; the house is full of people. (The foreign ambassadors had immediately come to offer their congratulations.) I wait to hear from you whether I shall, as I proposed to you, send Piero to Rome. Perhaps it would be more befitting the importance of the favour that I should go there myself.' Poliziano had written a letter to the Pope, taking occasion of the nomination to praise Innocent and describe the lad as worthy of his new distinction. He wanted to have it read out in the Consistory; but Lorenzo had too much tact to join in such an absurdity, and sent the letter to the ambassador, not concealing his own adverse opinion, and leaving it to Lanfredini to do with it what he thought fit.¹

On the same day, March 4, Lorenzo addressed to the Pope the following letter of thanks.² 'I have received with the utmost reverence your Holiness's brief of the 9th instant, concerning the promotion of Messer Giovanni. As this news had already reached me through our ambassador, I at once wrote to your Holiness, more to put into words my inability to thank you fittingly, than to give expression to my gratitude. That God alone can do, not I. This only can I say in reference to this undying benefit, that through what your Holiness has done for my son you have at the same time elevated me; and this increase of authority, as well as whatever more may accrue to me, I place at the disposal of your Holiness, to whom it belongs rather than to me.' Then comes an apology for the publication of the news, which had originated not with Lorenzo but in Rome. The Italian princes by no means undervalued this new proof of Lorenzo's influence over the Pope. The Duke of Calabria said to Vettori, the ambassador,³ that one could see how great was Lorenzo's

¹ A. Politiani *Epist.* l. viii. ep. 5. Lorenzo to Lanfredini, March 14, 1489, in Roscoe, l. c., Ap. XI.

² Moreni, *Lettere*, p. 14. (Dated wrong and placed out of right order).

³ Desjardins, l. c. p. 215.

power, and that the Florentine ambassador ruled Innocent. He wished he could be together with Lorenzo and Sforza to talk over the strife with Rome. He believed it would not be difficult for him to make the alliance of the three states such as should be apparent in their whole conduct. One could see how much the Pope did for Lorenzo, and how he had made his son a cardinal at an unheard-of age; so that one might conclude that everything could be arranged if he chose to do all he could.

The man who had contributed most to overcome the Pope's scruples, Giovanni Lanfredini, only survived his success a few months. In November 1488, he had lost at Rome his eldest son, Orsino, a youth of sixteen.¹ 'It is with much regret,' wrote Lorenzo,² 'that I have heard of your son's death; the news was the more painful to me as I had not known of his illness. If I did not know your strength of mind, and how accustomed you are to both good and evil, I should use more words of consolation than I do, and represent to you my own heavy losses, which are but too well known to you. Resign yourself to the decree of God; the more so as your son is far rather to be envied than pitied. You and yours will never want for friends who regard your concerns as their own. As for me, on account of the sympathy I feel for you and for the sake of your old and tried attachment, I shall always conduct myself towards you as your sentiments and actions, and my duty and gratitude, require. Be comforted, Giovanni; take courage, trust in God, and reckon on your friends.' Another letter³ is expressed in equally cordial terms. But the loss of the son broke the father's heart. 'Giovanni Lanfredini,' wrote the Ferrarese ambassador on March 16, 1489,⁴ 'is at Rome confined to his bed; and as business presses, the Signoria has

¹ Burcard, l. c. p. 110. The hints given as to the cause of death are a nice specimen of the town-talk recorded by a Papal master of the ceremonies.

² Roscoe, iv. 318 (wrongly dated).

³ January 21, 1489. *Med. Arch.*

⁴ Cappelli, l. c. p. 307.

ordered Pier Filippo Pandolfini, who is now at Pitigliano, to proceed thither immediately. Lanfredini has asked for leave of absence. He seems to have had quite enough of his post, and I think he feels he can now give it up with honour, after helping the son of the illustrious Lorenzo to attain the dignity of cardinal.' As soon as the promotion took place, Lorenzo had expressed his strong sense of what he owed to Lanfredini.¹ 'I recognise the duty of always remembering him who has directed the whole affair, and of putting those who shall come after me in mind of it. For no greater event has ever befallen our house, and I owe more than three quarters of it to your zeal and attachment.' Lanfredini's condition improved so that he could resume his duties; but this did not last. He died on January 5, 1490, in the house of the Acciaiuoli in the Leonine city.²

The Bishop of Rimini wrote to Lorenzo:³ 'The man is dead who kept this court at your service. Henceforth things may take another turn; and they have already gone so far that it has been said you will no longer have everything your own way.' It seems, indeed, that the weak-minded Pope had allowed some suspicious remarks to escape him, to the effect that he could not safely trust to Florence, where individual interests were in the ascendant. These expressions induced Lorenzo to send Bernardo Dovizi to Rome to consult with Pandolfini. The instructions drawn up by Lorenzo⁴ show his irritation at the changeableness of the Pope. 'Such as neither know me personally nor have seen me put faith in my word; and now I am met with want of confidence after all my trouble and exertions, and the experience there has been of my sentiments.' The ill-feeling, however, seems to have soon passed away.

One of the last affairs in which Lanfredini had to act was the canonisation of the Archbishop Antonine, in which the

¹ Roscoe, l. c. Ap. X.

² Burcard, l. c. p. 133. Adinolfi, *Portica di S. Pietro*, does not mention the house of the Acciaiuoli.

³ Fabroni, l. c. p. 375.

⁴ *Med. Arch.* F. 72. Fabroni, l. c.

Emperor Frederic III. was also interested. Lorenzo proposed that the Bishop of Arezzo and Volterra should undertake the cause. Lanfredini's successor Pandolfini continued the negotiations; but it was not till 1523 that the reverence of the Florentine people for this worthy and pious man received the sanction of the Church from Pope Hadrian VI.

CHAPTER V.

SETTLEMENT OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN INNOCENT VIII. AND
FERRANTE OF NAPLES.

DURING all this time the quarrel between the Pope and the king was assuming serious dimensions. One could hardly expect otherwise when the characters of the two men are taken into consideration. The one combined a full conception of lofty dignity with the consciousness of very little real power, was very excitable, wanting in perseverance, and continually going from one extreme to another; the other was slyly calculating, practised in all the arts of unprincipled cunning, and disposed to undervalue his opponent when the tide seemed to have turned in his own favour. When the king thought he had rid himself of all enemies and suspicious persons in his own country, he did not hesitate to disregard the stipulations agreed upon in August 1486, and defy the Pope. The dispute went on through 1488 even to the proclamation of ecclesiastical censures. This was unpleasant to Lorenzo for many reasons: 'I fear,' he wrote to Lanfredini, September 3,¹ 'people will think it is meal out of my tub, though you know that the Pope has acted not only without me but against my advice. Not only is the king ready and inclined to attempt aggression, but the Pope is utterly unprepared; in fact, his affairs are in such disorder that a most disastrous war may arise out of this.' Lorenzo's son-in-law begged him to go to Rome in the autumn, but he

¹ *Med. Arch.* F. 59.

refused, waiting to see whether the Pope and the king would come to terms. In the spring of 1489 the Spanish court made an effort at mediation through ambassadors in Rome. Ferrante's object seemed to be to increase the Pope's anger by personal attacks on him and his, so as to produce an immediate rupture. This conduct can be explained only on one of two suppositions: he either thought that he could treat his adversary as he chose without danger to himself, or he was determined to let things come to a pass which might, indeed, easily bring him to the gates of Rome, but might also just as easily call other nations to the rescue. All the misfortunes that befell Ferrante's family and dynasty in 1495 were provoked by his self-will of six years before. It was no thanks to him nor to his son, who was worse than he, nor to the Pope, that they were not overtaken then by the misfortune of which both parties—the one in his ambitious, tyrannical stubbornness, the other in his inconsiderate weakness—seemed to have no foreboding. That it was avoided for a time was chiefly owing to Lorenzo de' Medici, a fact the merit of which ought to cover many of his sins.

After the fruitless Spanish attempt at mediation, and while Ferrante was doing all he could to stir up the King of the Romans against the Pope, the latter resolved to act. On June 27, 1489, Niccolò Orsini, Count of Pitigliano, arrived in Rome. A dispute between this excellent soldier and the Republic of Siena had, in the previous April, resulted in his dismissal from the Florentine service; whereupon the Pope offered him the post of Captain-General of the Church. As the astrologers pronounced the constellations favourable, on the very day of the count's arrival the Pope presented him with his insignia of office, tunic, hat, sword, and commander's staff, and blessed the two standards, while Orsini knelt before him. On the following Sunday the new captain-general made his triumphal entry into Rome from Monte Mario. He was then forty-eight years of age, but can be best imagined as he is represented on his monument in SS. Gio-

vanni e Paolo at Venice, erected twenty years later, when he had fallen a victim to his exertions during the war of the League of Cambrai. He appears there as a fine-looking stately horseman with waving plume and rich scarf; his head is slightly bent as if in thought, and turned towards the right; he holds in his hand the commander's staff, and stands between allegorical statues of Prudence and Faith. On the 30th, after high mass, the citation of the King of Naples took place. He was allowed three months' grace to fulfil his duty as a vassal; that he would submit was not to be expected. The most zealous preparations were made for the war which seemed inevitable. Cardinal Sforza, on behalf of Lodovico, and Lanfredini, who was ill, sought to restrain the Pope from taking an extreme step. On the part of the Florentines, at least, this mediation was honestly meant.

Lorenzo went in July to the baths, whence, according to the new Ferrarese ambassador Manfredo Manfredi,¹ he came back refreshed and well on August 6. Scarcely was he home when he set to work at the Roman affair. 'As to the deliberations yonder,' he wrote on the 8th to Lanfredini,² 'I am of opinion that in considering my Lord Lodovico's proposals you must always keep in view that he can be a turncoat on occasion and may very likely have private aims, as the quarrel between the Pope and the king may be very convenient to him in many respects. Considering his nature, therefore, we must not rely on him too much, but must follow his example in profiting by his proceedings when they answer our purposes, but keeping the upper hand if he takes it into his head to change. First of all I wish the Holy Father to let the Venetians know that both Lord Lodovico and ourselves have induced him to conceal from the Republic nothing that concerns his relations with the king. This I say because in any case it seems to me important that the

¹ August 11, 1489, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 307.

² Fabroni, l. c. ii. p. 361. The letter goes on to treat of many other things.'

Pope should at least keep the Venetians in their present mind until we all see our way clearer. There is no real trust to be placed in those people, but their authority is useful; and it is quite possible to keep on tolerable terms with them without causing my Lord Lodovico to take fright. But above all I wish to be assured whether the Pope is determined to abide by the conditions already settled, or whether he thinks of agreeing to some modifications. As to the tribute-money, I think a compromise possible; as for the barons, I see no means, as the king has gone too far to be able to draw back. With regard to spiritual matters an arrangement will be easy, for the king will hardly raise difficulties where he has only to give promises. When it comes to keeping them they must just wink at each other, as all popes and all kings have done. The point therefore is to know exactly what we have to abide by before taking a decision which, according to my view, must depend on what the Pope really intends; and his will cannot be forced, particularly if peace is established in France. Endeavour therefore to give me sure information if possible. In any case it is my fixed opinion that the Pope's honour must be kept unstained, if my Lord Lodovico agrees with me, who, however, as before said, is not much to be trusted. A good understanding must be maintained with the Venetians, for the sake of having something to fall back upon. I think you must decline with thanks his Holiness' proposal to confide the negotiations in question to me. It would be a distinction for me, but would scarcely answer his Holiness' purposes. I, however, prefer his Holiness' advantage to that which would be an honour to me personally. In any future agreement with the king, the conditions of the last peace will have to be modified in some particulars, and stronger shoulders than mine will be needed to bear that burthen. I shall consider myself honoured enough if the interests of his Holiness are secured with honour.' Lorenzo's unwillingness to take part in negotiations between the Pope

and Venice was partly founded on the knowledge that the latter power was anything but well-disposed towards him. Two years after this his friend Guidoni, the Ferrarese ambassador, who had exchanged his post at Florence for the more difficult one in the city of the lagoons, wrote to him: 'The Venetians detest your name more than Satan does the Cross.'

As Ferrante showed no sign of returning from his ways, Innocent continued to proceed against him. On September 11, 1489, in presence of the Neapolitan ambassador Antonio d'Alessandri, the kingdom of Naples was solemnly declared to have lapsed to the Holy See through non-fulfilment of homage.¹ The ambassador protested and appealed to the Council. The next day he appeared in the Sistine Chapel with the other ambassadors, to celebrate the anniversary of the Pope's coronation, just as if nothing had happened. But he was startled on the 13th, when a French envoy, Guillaume de Poitiers, of the family of the Counts of St. Vallier, arrived with great pomp at the Vatican.² For a long time past the Pope had been negotiating with France, and the French showed their desire for a good understanding with Rome by delivering up the Turkish Prince Dschem to Innocent at the end of the winter. It was already suspected that as soon as affairs were settled in Brittany, where resistance was already broken, whose last duke was dead, and where union with the crown was in progress, the French king, now nineteen, would turn his eyes towards Italy. Rome, conscious of her own weakness, reckoned on foreign aid, thinking she had two strings to her bow—France and Spain—both of whom were supposed to be displeased with Ferrante. But the prospect of war in Italy and interference from abroad, no matter whence it came or what the result

¹ Bull in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 340.

² Burcard, p. 126, 127. The details of these events may be completed from Infessura.

might be, was highly displeasing to Lorenzo, and he renewed his efforts to change the mind of the Pope.

'From your despatch of October 13,' thus he begins a letter to Lanfredini four days later,¹ 'I perceive that his Holiness has taken some little offence at my remonstrances against proceeding with the citations. Any offence to the Holy Father grieves me; but it would grieve me very much if he thought my counsel and actions were determined by anything but zeal for his good. I repeat, the Pope must make up his mind about three things. Either he must get justice from the king by force; or he must make as good terms as he can with him; or, lastly, if this cannot be done with honour, he must temporise and wait for more favourable circumstances. The first would be the most honourable plan; but I consider it dangerous and expensive, and think it cannot be executed without calling in a foreign power to Naples. Thereto three things are needful: first, the consent of Venice and Milan; secondly, sufficient independent means, both in men and money, on the part of the said power; and thirdly, very great expenditure on the part of the Pope. For the point is to over-match the king, whom Milan may perhaps assist should Venice declare against him; so that Milan, too, must be kept in check. An understanding with the barons and those of similar rank would be useful in such a case. Now I may be mistaken, but I cannot see the possibility of realising all these presuppositions, and therefore I have dissuaded his Holiness. Of the foreign powers only Spain and France can be taken into consideration. Spain seems to me at this moment incapable of either acting or paying,² and how France is to be relied upon I do not see. Supposing, however, that she changed her nature, I would agree with his Holiness, provided that in an expedition against Naples the person to be benefited should be the Duke of Lorraine (as heir of Anjou), which would be the least dangerous thing; for the Duke of

¹ Fabroni, l. c. p. 365.

² The war with Granada had begun.

Lorraine is not King of France, and his relationship to the royal house is of no great importance. Naples and Spain are much nearer relatives, and yet not friends; and when a man is once King of Naples he will go his own way.

‘All these reasons, it seems to me, ought to dissuade the Pope from any undertaking of the kind. In such circumstances it is of no use exasperating the king by citations and suchlike. Nay, even if one was armed and ready, I should still think it advisable to let such challenges alone, in order to avoid the danger of the king’s proceeding from words to deeds—a danger not to be under-rated. Better arm in silence than excite others to the attack by expressing hostility. As for the second case, that of an accommodation, I am perhaps, speaking without an exact knowledge of the state of affairs; and possibly conditions are being fixed in consequence of which the citation may be an useful measure. But from what I know, I believe that such a proceeding, instead of facilitating an accommodation, only serves to irritate, and will lead to a rupture. As for temporising, I will say nothing, because an immediate agreement on the most honourable terms possible seems to me far more to the purpose than waiting for some favourable conjuncture; the more so that, as you know better than I, the king has plenty of means of doing harm. I can say no more at present, not being sufficiently conversant with the details. If the Pope’s fearlessness rests on any secure ground, take care to let me know it, that I may be relieved from this anxiety. For though I am not exactly faint-hearted, yet, from the confidence placed in me by the Pope, his affairs cause me more anxiety than my own. So long as I know of no better foundation for his security, I cannot possibly be easy. On the subject of my lord Lodovico and his nature, I have spoken my mind freely. I am conscious that I am walking uprightly, and have only the Pope’s interest in view. So I repeat what I have said often before: I think an honourable accommodation better than a successful war. If that

is impossible, he must temporise, provided the supposed possible favourable conditions do not exist. But if this should be the case, the king too would show himself more yielding, for he knows very well where he can be touched.'

Lorenzo's remonstrances were not entirely ineffectual. Innocent, who had been informed that the Neapolitan exiles, especially the Sanseverini, had been well received at the French court, and that the young king had promised to restore them to their homes, went cautiously to work at least with regard to foreign allies. Without making any engagements, he tried to keep on good terms with France and Spain. Remonstrances were also made on the part of France, through special ambassadors, to King Ferrante; but he never ceased defending at foreign courts what he called the justice of his cause, and calculating that the French had their hands full, he showed no disposition to yield. Letters from the Duke of Saxony, King Maximilian, and the Emperor, produced just as little effect.¹ The Duke of Calabria told the Florentine ambassador that his father would accede to reasonable demands from the Pope, but not to things that were against his honour. He would send the palfrey as a token of the feudal relation; but not one soldo of tribute would he pay, and not one guilty baron would he pardon.² So the matter dragged on. In May 1490, Florence was visited by a Neapolitan ambassador on his way to Milan, Messer Camillo Seruciati.³ The king instructed him to inform the Signoria and Lorenzo that he had hitherto endured many wrongs and insults from the Pope. If, however, the latter persisted in his wrongful obstinacy and hostility and did not leave off his threats of citation and excommunication, his majesty was not minded to endure such offences any longer. Without wasting any more words, the king

¹ January, 1490. Burcard, p. 135, 136. ['Portavit (heraldus) literas regi, a quo penitus nihil habuit, neque bonum verbum.']

² January 29, 1490, in De Cherrier, i. 341.

³ M. Manfredi, Flor. May 4, 1490, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 307, 308.

meant to appear in Rome, with lance in rest, and answer the Pope in such a way as to make him see his error. The Neapolitan ambassador, being refused admission to the Pope's chapel on Whitsun-eve, threatened to make his way in by force. To avoid scandal it was arranged that none of the diplomatic body should appear on that day.¹ But the affair seems to have been rather more seriously taken into consideration by France than Ferrante expected. On June 8, the Pope said to Lanfredini's successor² that if he were not peaceable by nature and a good Italian, he held in his hand the means of avenging himself on the king; for months ago Madame de Beaujeu had caused a proposal to be made to him for conferring Naples as a fief on the Duke of Lorraine, in exchange for which the latter should cede his claims to Provence and other territories to her husband, the Duke of Bourbon,³ the King of France in return assisting him to obtain Naples. This proposal had recently been renewed; he, the Pope, had said but little in reply, in order not to draw down the French into Italy. He wished that Lorenzo should be informed of the matter.

The situation was growing worse every day. There were already some hostile dealings on the frontiers. Papal couriers, carrying briefs that were never answered, were searched and roughly treated; people sent by the Pope to Benevento, and inhabitants of Pontecorvo going to Montecassino to perform their devotions, were seized.⁴ Innocent complained that the indulgence he had shown towards the king on account of the representations of the other Italian powers had only made the former more insolent; and the powers stood and looked on while he was being insulted. If the Italians cared so little about his honour, he must turn to foreigners. Pandolfini adds that he had never seen the

¹ Burcard, l. c. p. 143.

² P. E. Pandolfini. Fabroni, l. c. p. 352.

³ Pierre de Beaujeu had been Duke of Bourbon since the death of his brother, Jean II., in 1488.

⁴ Pandolfini, Rome, June 28, 1490, l. c. p. 353.

Pope so excited. The ambassador did what he could to soothe him, representing to him that the moderation shown towards the king had benefited his cause, and that he could depend on the support of Florence, Milan, and Venice. The Pope cut him short. He was always put off with fine speeches. Real support was to be expected from Florence alone. On account of Sforza's changeableness, Milan was not to be reckoned on; and Venice never proceeded to action. He was determined to make an end of it. He would excommunicate the king, declare him guilty of heresy, and lay the kingdom under interdict. He had a perfect right to do so. He would give notice of everything to the allied States. If the king, in pursuance of his threat, made war upon him, and no assistance was afforded him, he would go abroad, where he would be received with open arms and helped to get back his own again, to the shame and loss of others. He could not remain in Italy otherwise than with the dignity befitting a Pope; if they all left him in the lurch, resistance to the king was impossible, on account of the Church's want of military power and the untrustworthiness of the barons, who would only rejoice at his embarrassment. He considered himself fully justified in going abroad if the honour of the Holy See could not be saved otherwise. Other popes had done it, and had come back with honour and glory.

'I saw,' says Pandolfini, 'that he had thoroughly considered the matter, and was not talking merely to get something out of me, as he could have no doubt of our attachment and fidelity. I pointed out to him that he should deliberate well, and not take a resolution which might bring discredit upon him, perhaps without serving his purpose. Foreign lands were full of strife, and the relations of Church and State were all very different from what they had been in the times of Innocent IV. and other popes, who had sought refuge beyond the mountains.' But the Pope was not to be persuaded. He announced that he should **summon**

the ambassadors of all the powers, declare his resolve and the grounds which compelled him to it, and proceed against the king. The Neapolitan ambassador was sent away. The Pope said also to Pandolfini: 'If I go with the court to France, of all the Italian powers you will get the most advantage thereby, not only for your trade, but because I shall have all possible regard to you, and shall consult over everything with Lorenzo. Tell him these my words.'

It might have been thought that a conclusion was imminent. But after the lapse of a year matters were at exactly the same point. At the feast of SS. Peter and Paul, 1491, the king's ambassador again presented the palfrey by way of tribute, was again sent away, and again protested.¹ Shortly after, the Florentine ambassador at Naples, Piero Nasi, had an interview with Giovanni Pontano, who was at that time Ferrante's chief counsellor in political affairs, and had concluded the treaty with Rome in August 1486.² Pontano certainly must have felt that he was personally concerned, especially if, as is said, Innocent, having during his negotiations with him been warned of the king's faithlessness, answered, 'How can I be distrustful in dealing with a man who has never broken his word?' 'Ambassador,' said Pontano to Nasi, 'I most earnestly desire the termination of this strife, both for the sake of your Signoria and for my own sake. If the matter worries you in Florence, it worries me twice as much. Blame is laid on me which I do not deserve. What I promised in those days at Rome I had a right to promise; and it would have been kept; but no sooner was I away (would to God I had not gone in such a hurry!) than Cardinal della Rovere arrived from Genoa, and thereupon they re-arranged the conditions according to their pleasure. I certainly promised payment of the tribute, but the Pope himself gave me to understand that he would not insist upon it, and said: "I will come to an understand-

¹ Manfredi, July 3, 1491, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 309.

² Nasi, Naples, July 7, 1491, in Fabroni, l. c. p. 350.

ing with the king on that point." But Ascanio (Sforza) and the other cardinals laughed and said I might promise off-hand, nothing would be kept.' Pontano then went on to the affair of the barons, whose misfortunes he attributed to their own want of head. The king, he said, had not thought of taking them prisoners, after he had made them harmless by occupying their strongholds, and taken into his own hands the administration of justice within their territories. But they themselves had compelled him to proceed against them. For after the Prince of Salerno had gone to Rome and deluded the Pope with many things, he drew the barons into the plot, all of which became known to the king. Notwithstanding, the latter gave them plenty of time to place themselves in safety; but they were determined to wait for the end, and so it went ill with them at the last. The very man from whom proceeded this apology for the king, afterwards himself accused Ferrante and Alfonso of cruelty and covetousness!¹ Nasi thought the Pope cared far more about this affair than for the money question. King Alfonso had once paid 30,000 ducats to Pope Pius II. It was indeed maintained that this was not tribute-money; but yet such another sum would surely be granted. For the investiture to be extended to the Duke of Calabria they would be willing to pay 50,000. The Pope could then confirm the bull of Sixtus IV. and content himself during the rest of his pontificate with the gaily adorned palfrey. Lorenzo should carefully consider the matter.

In the autumn of 1491 Pontano was sent to Rome to arrange a compromise. The hint that Naples was willing to pay seems to have had its effect. On reflection it is easy to see in what financial difficulties Innocent had placed himself. Lorenzo had to lend him money and redeem his pawned valuables; as Lanfredini had said, he was applying to all the sovereigns for tithes, and had made debts to the amount of

¹ Letter to K. Ferrante II. (Ferrandino), February 9, 1495, in Colangelo, *Vita del Sannazzaro* (2nd edit. Naples, 1819).

300,000 ducats.¹ But further hindrances kept cropping up, chiefly through the double-dealing of Ferrante, whom no one dared trust even when he, perhaps, really did mean honestly. It was said both at Rome and at Florence that he was stirring up troubles for the Pope in the States of the Church, and confirming the inhabitants of Ascoli in their rebellion against the Holy See, for which purpose he kept a numerous body of troops on the Tronto.² Lorenzo never ceased advising a reconciliation. Many things were done by the soldiers, he wrote to Innocent, which it was not becoming a wise prince and thoughtful Pope to leave unhindered, and the peace of all Italy would be in danger if an end were not put to the quarrel.³ In the middle of November the king expressed his sense of obligation to Lorenzo, who was showing himself a true friend and mediator in these differences. He hoped, he said, soon to arrive at a settlement.⁴ In the beginning of December they did arrive at one; and two months later peace was announced in the Consistory.⁵ In the investiture to be given to the Duke of Calabria, for which the sum before mentioned was to be paid, his son, the Prince of Capua, was included. The new treaty was to be the only one in force. To the barons released from prison the king promised to pay a certain sum yearly. 'How much,' adds the Ferrarese ambassador, 'is not known; and it is supposed to have been agreed upon merely for the sake of the Pope's honour. Whether it will be kept, the future will show.' The future, and no very distant one, brought on the Neapolitan king far other troubles than those caused by his quarrel with the Pope. Scarcely was that quarrel ended, scarcely was the settlement effected for which Pontano went to Rome,⁶ when the king exhausted himself in demonstrations

¹ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 350.

² K. Ferrante to Pontano, October 2, 1491, and other letters relating to these disturbances, in *Codice Arag.* vol. ii. part i. p. 1 *et seq.* Cf. *ante*, p. 311.

³ October 5, 1491. Bandini, *Coll. vet. mon.*, p. 20.

⁴ P. Nasi to Lorenzo, Naples, November 18, 1491, in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 363.

⁵ Burcard, l. c. p. 157. M. Manfredi, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 310.

⁶ How, in the face of this long disagreement, Giannone (*Storia civile*, book

of gratitude and friendship towards the Pope, to whose blessing he attributed his own prosperity and that of all belonging to him, to whom he sent hippocras and twenty-four casks of choice Neapolitan wines, and with whom he formed a connection by betrothing his grandson, the Marquis of Gerace, to Battistina Usodimare, daughter of Teodorina Cybò.¹ Ferrante must have felt that the time was pressing for a reconciliation. French affairs gave him subjects for consideration. Charles VIII. had not only—thanks to his sister—overcome a dangerous opposition, but had reconciled the Duke of Orleans to himself and his house, and won Brittany, whose heiress gave him her hand on December 4, 1491. A double Papal dispensation was needed; for Charles was betrothed to Margaret of Austria, and Anne of Brittany already bore the title of Queen of the Romans as the bride of Margaret's brother Maximilian; besides which the newly-married couple were near relations. Doubtless with a view to what was coming, a French embassy consisting of ten persons, headed by Jean de Villiers et La Grosclaye, Bishop of Lombes and Abbot of St. Denis (afterwards highly influential at Rome), had been sent to Rome and received there on November 16. On December 3, a courier brought tidings of the marriage, which gave great offence, but for which the dispensations were given afterwards.² Another struggle with Maximilian was inevitable. But France was united and peaceful within, the last great fief was joined to the crown, and the work begun by Louis XI. was accomplished. Italy had reason to fear that the young king, whose ambition was greater than his intellectual capacity, would again take up claims which had never been really set at rest. In the very same year which closed with the agreement between Innocent and Ferrante the declaration of Charles VIII.'s rights to the

xxviii.) could say that after the peace of 1486, Innocent VIII. remained the king's friend during his remaining years, is incomprehensible.

¹ *Codice Aragon.*, vol. ii. part i. p. 43-46, 49, 52-54.

² Burcard, p. 154, 155.

crown worn by the latter was formulated. Five years before, the Duke of Orleans had put forward the claims to Milan which he afterwards enforced as king.¹

If it was to the interest of France to stand well with the Pope, Ferrante had more than one motive for doing so. His daughter Beatrice, the widow of Matthias Corvinus, was threatened with dissolution of marriage by her second husband, the Polish Prince Ladislas, to whose elevation to the throne of Hungary she had greatly contributed; and it cost her father much trouble and anxiety to avert a decision which touched his own honour and that of his house. But the king, now growing old, was occupied with another family matter. The marriage of his granddaughter with the young Duke of Milan was the immediate, if not the principal, cause of a disagreement which sowed the seeds of ruin far beyond palaces and dynasties. The ambassador, whose arrival at Florence in the beginning of May 1490 has already been mentioned, was to go to Milan 'to find out in what relation the lady duchess stood towards her most illustrious consort.'² The bad reports of Gian Galeazzo's state of health proved unfounded, and Isabella soon after had hopes of becoming a mother. But matters remained unchanged. Gian Galeazzo at one and twenty was duke only in name. The government was still as it always had been, in the hands of his uncle, who had filled up all state-offices and military commands with confidants of his own. Connected with this last fact was the circumstance that in June 1488, Gian Jacopo Trivulzio, being apparently suspected by the Moro of taking Gian Galeazzo's part, left the Milanese service and accepted a *condotta* offered him by King Ferrante.³

¹ *Traité des droits du Roy Charles VIII aux royaumes de Naples, Sicile et Aragon, mis par escript en 1491 du commandement du Roy par Léonard Barounet, maistre des comptes*; in Godefroy, *Histoire de Charles VIII, preuves*, p. 675.—Ascanio Sforza to the Duke of Milan, Rome, March 6, 1486, *Arch. stor. Ital.*, vol. iv. part ii. p. 70.

² Manfredi, *Flor.* May 4, 1490, in Cappelli, p. 307, 308.

³ Rosmini, l. c. p. 189, ii. 190.

The case became worse when, in January 18, 1491, Lodovico married. His bride, Beatrice of Este, was a near relative of Isabella of Aragon, for her mother was the sister of Isabella's father; but the relations between the two young wives soon became unbearable. Beatrice, the younger by five years, handsome, clever, ambitious, and proud, soon acquired great influence over her husband, now a man of forty; she went hand-in-hand with him in all his far-reaching plans, and induced him to yield to her desires with regard to outward position more than the cunning reserved man perhaps at first intended. She and Isabella soon came to open strife. The Duchess of Milan very naturally claimed the first place; the Duchess of Bari had no intention of contenting herself with the second. Lodovico's authority made it easy for her to satisfy her passion for ruling. Isabella bore with growing impatience daily insults to herself and the unworthy position of her husband; of him too little is known to furnish grounds for a decided judgment of his character and capabilities. At last she appealed to her father, representing to him her position and begging for his intervention.¹

There had been no love lost between Alfonso and Lodovico ever since the Ferrara war. Although in the disputes between the Pope and the king, the Sforza had not furthered the views of France against Ferrante, still the Moro's attitude had been questionable. If the Duke of Calabria had had his way, at the time when the treaty was concluded with the Pope, Italy would have been in flames; for his counsel was to cross the Tronto with an army and force Lodovico to lay down his usurped power. But the old king was afraid of a step which threatened to bring incalculable consequences; particularly as the Moro's intimate relations with France—

¹ In Giovio, Corio, and also in more recent authors (Ratti, *Fam. Sforza*, ii. 63; Niccolini, *Lodovico Sforza, Trag. Opere*, i. 242) will be found Isabella's letter to her father. The two copies, Italian and Latin, differ somewhat; but the rhetorical form of both gives them the air of imitated documents.

relations whose first fruits were the complete abandonment in favour of Milan of the French claims to Genoa—and certain events in Florence which will be mentioned presently, gave him every motive for extreme caution. Instead of arms he tried negotiation. A Neapolitan embassy was sent to Milan,¹ but it had no answer but empty phrases. Lodovico replied that his nephew was Duke and enjoyed all the privileges of his rank. He himself had for years only borne the burthen of affairs, which he would lay down as soon as circumstances permitted. The only result of the application was that the good understanding between the house of Naples and the Sforza, already much endangered, notwithstanding the continued ostensible alliance, received a very severe shock. There was, indeed, no lack of friendly protestations on either side; and on February 8, 1492,² not long before the departure of the embassy above-mentioned, Ferrante wrote to his ambassador in Milan that he regarded the Duke of Bari as his own son (it is true the latter married his granddaughter) and his interests as his own, and congratulated him on his good understanding with France. Lodovico, to secure the maintenance of a power which he knew he was in danger of losing sooner or later, used all the means supplied by his versatile and inventive genius, and deluded himself with the increasing consciousness of his superiority over all other Italian rulers, only to involve himself irretrievably in the machinations which brought to ruin the edifice of Italian polity.

¹ Sc. Ammirato, book xxvii. (ii. 187.)

² *Cod. Aragon.*, l. c. p. 38.

CHAPTER VI.

OPPOSITION TENDENCIES. FRA GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA.

THE Medici had always counted on the clergy for support. It would be unjust to attribute this entirely to selfish motives; they had other and nobler aims than merely that of more easily ruling the multitude in union with its spiritual directors. Other motives besides scruples of conscience actuated them in the building of churches and convents. The clergy, especially the regular clergy, were, with a portion of the nobility, still the chief representatives of the higher scientific and literary culture. Cosimo's grandson as well as himself found instruction, entertainment, and intellectual animation in the society of Camaldulensians, Dominicans, Augustinians, and Servites. But as Lorenzo endeavoured to keep under his own control the bishoprics of the district, he made use of the monastic orders in the same way. He employed them privately to discover and direct the stream of popular opinion and popular inclination. Owing to their constitution, their varied composition, their connection with all classes, and their comparative independence, they were at once more trustworthy and abler instruments than the lay communities of various kinds which he ruled by means of his confidants, high and low. These latter societies might prove dangerous to him through party-spirit and secret machinations; a danger which indeed afterwards became apparent, and was vigorously opposed by the rulers of Tuscany. The religious orders, when they devoted themselves to furthering the aims of the Medici, had

another advantage over the companies. The many little jealousies and enmities which divided them from each other gave better security for secrecy; and the fact that very much depended upon this may afford an explanation of the great liberality of the Medici towards the convents. In the annals of the Monastery of the Angeli, where Cosimo was wont to visit Ambrogio Traversari, and where Lorenzo's sons went to hear philosophical lectures and to be present at sacred representations, it is recorded that besides the usual yearly gifts of money, Lorenzo used on certain festivals to send to the monks, who were by no means rich, fish, cheese, and fruit; and also that he procured for them the bounty of the Signoria. 'We owe everything to God, through Lorenzo His instrument.' Don Guido, formerly a Cistercian monk, who became prior of the Angeli in 1484, was Lorenzo's confessor.¹

But it would be a mistake to suppose that even when his relations with the Papacy were most intimate, Lorenzo could reckon unconditionally upon the clergy. Those same disputes between the religious orders came in the way, as well as the democratic spirit prevalent among the monks, which saw through the tendencies of the existing government even when it seemed to be favouring popular objects. This internal opposition naturally developed more strongly as a more serious way of thinking gained ground; such a temper as had been fostered by the pious chief pastors Antonine and Orlando Bonarli, though their successors, under whom the diocese of Florence was chiefly administered by vicars, did nothing to maintain it. About the year 1490 it became apparent that the general life of pleasure and worldliness was about to take a turn in an opposite direction. No one could then foresee the ultimate scope and results of this opposition; but it showed itself in a manner which necessarily attracted

¹ Farcelli, *Storia del monastero degli Angeli* (Lucca, 1710), p. 66 et seq. *Libretto MS. nel quale D. Guido priore nota i possessi cc.*, in the collection of G. Palagi. Florence.

the attention of him who was accustomed to direct all things, and who had too much tact and too much practice in judging of moral and intellectual tendencies not to recognise the first symptoms of a turn of the tide. Its importance was the more apparent to him because it showed itself in a field, of which, as of those of politics and literature, he thought himself the ruler; but which was withdrawn from his influence as soon as the prevalent materialistic tendencies were combated by inward moral impulses and views. This resistance was in the highest degree dangerous to the Medici, because its chief strength lay in the moral consciousness of the people, hitherto artificially suppressed or put to sleep, but now awakened to new life; and it was this which enabled it to hold out so firmly long after it appeared to be conquered. It was the fate of the Medici that opposition sprang from ground which they had long been accustomed to regard as their own, and to treat in the light of an heirloom.

In 1482, there entered the convent of San Marco a brother of the order, who had been driven from his native city of Ferrara by the storms of war raging around it, in order to seek a more peaceful sphere of activity beyond the Apennines, little suspecting what other storms he would have to encounter there. The Porta Savonarola at Padua recalls to mind the neighbouring residence of that noble family; and in the Prato della Valle stands a statue of Antonio Savonarola, who manfully defended his native city in the middle of the thirteenth century. In 1440 Michele Savonarola was called to Ferrara, where he was presented with the rights of citizenship by the Marquis Lionello d'Este, and acquired a great reputation as physician in ordinary to the Marquis, as professor at the university, and also as an author.¹ His son

¹ N. L. Cittadella, *La nobile Famiglia Savonarola in Padova ed in Ferrara* (Ferrara, 1867); *La Casa di Fra Girolamo Savonarola in Ferrara* (*ibid.* 1873). [The house in which Girolamo was born was afterwards thrown into a house of the Strozzi, now belonging to the municipality]. P. Villari, *La Storia di Girolamo*

Niccolò married Elena Bonaccossi, and her masculine spirit was inherited by her son Girolamo, who has made the name of his race famous throughout the world. At the age of three-and-twenty this son, without consulting the wishes of his parents, entered the Predicant order at Bologna in the spring of 1475. In a letter to his father he pleaded, in explanation and justification of the step, his soul's cry of anguish against the worldliness to which he beheld Italy fallen a prey. 'I could no longer look upon the deep corruption of the blinded people, the oppression of virtue, the exaltation of vice; it was an unspeakable torment to me, and I prayed daily to God that He might take me out of this pit of destruction. Now, in His infinite goodness, He has vouchsafed this grace to me, notwithstanding my unworthiness.' But it was not the worldliness of the laity alone that shocked him; the corruption in the Church stood before the eyes of his soul in yet more glaring colours. He lamented it in his poems—highly imaginative and lofty outpourings of a soul brightened with the fire of love, penetrated with the consciousness of the need for a higher development, tortured by a foreboding of approaching judgment.¹ His first intention was to devote himself to teaching rather than to preaching; but in the seventh year after his entrance into the order, he was sent to his native city, where he lived as a stranger, rarely saw even his nearest relatives, and was not much appreciated as a speaker. Yet he cannot have been lacking in eloquence; for one day when he was travelling from Ferrara to Mantua his reproofs made such an impression on the soldiers who were in the boat playing and swearing, that they penitently fell upon their knees before him.

Fra Girolamo's reception in Florence was not encourag-

Savonarola (Flor. 1859–61). The Paduan branch of the family became extinct about 1816, the Ferrarese in 1844.

¹ Among the *Poesie di Fra Girolamo Savonarola*, published by Cesare Guasti (Flor. 1862) from the autographs in the house of the Borromeo at Milan, see especially the canzonet (written about 1475) *De ruina Ecclesiae* ('Vergine casta, benchè indegno figlio—Pur son di membri dell' eterno Sposo.')

ing. The man and the city could not be attractive to each other; the one was leaning more and more towards asceticism, and the other towards immoderate pleasure. The one cared for nothing but Holy Scripture, and developed its doctrines in lofty, unvarnished speech, whose rough careless form was not softened by his Lombard accent, his hoarse voice, and vehement delivery; the other, sharing the common plight, knew little of the Bible, and was accustomed to preachers whose artistic phraseology recalled the elegant tone of the literary palæstra. In his own convent the stranger found little sympathy. A philosophising tone prevailed in conversation; and the adoption of classical learning might well raise some scruples in the mind of the Ferrarese, whose early education had also been of a philosophical kind. This double discord left decided marks in its train. At Savonarola's Lenten sermons in San Lorenzo in 1483, the number of listeners was extremely small. He himself was perfectly aware of the defects of his delivery: 'Those who knew me in those days,' he said ten years later, 'know that I had neither voice nor lungs, nor understood anything about preaching, so that I was a bore to everybody.' He needed a longer apprenticeship. For two years he preached during Lent at San Gemignano. Then he was summoned to Brescia, where in 1486 he preached the sermons on the Apocalypse which first extended his reputation, the prophecies in which of divine judgment and the exhortations to repentance recurred vividly to the souls of the people six-and-twenty years later, when the French army was committing that plunder whose horrors have rarely been equalled in Christian times. A chapter of the order held at Reggio brought Savonarola in contact with Giovanni Pico, who took such an interest in the bold and enthusiastic preacher that he got him sent back to Florence, through the intervention of Lorenzo de' Medici. In 1490 Savonarola returned to San Marco, there to begin the work which left deep and broad traces on the ecclesiastical and political history of

Italy; which led to hard fighting, not without fault on his side, but which at last led him to martyrdom, and encircled his brow with a glory that no contradiction and no change of times and views have been able to deprive of its radiance.

Savonarola found in Florence a rival who was his exact opposite in delivery and in opinions. Fra Mariano of Genazzano came from a place situated on the slope of the Aequian and Hernican mountains, and made important by the great palace of the Colonna. He belonged to the order of the Augustinian Hermits, and dwelt in the convent of *Sto. Spirito*, until Lorenzo, with whom he had managed to get into favour, built a grand convent at the gate of *San Gallo*, where there was an old church with a decayed hospital and a foundling establishment. This building was razed to the ground in 1524, when the Emperor and a Medicean Pope were sending their troops against Florence; not a trace of it is left, and its place is occupied by the rows of trees and groves of the walk called the *Parterre*, and the little church of the *Madonna della Tosse*, which looks like a shrine left standing amid the general destruction.¹ The convent must have been finished about 1488. Lorenzo provided it with a choice library, visited it frequently with intimate friends, and was fond of discussing philosophical and theological questions with Fra Mariano. Naturally, the Augustinian was wont to say that among men of such high position he had never known one so God-fearing as Lorenzo. As a preacher Fra Mariano was just the man for the people, as well as for scholars. He was little of stature, but his voice was full and melodious, and his utterance agreeable; he terrified and comforted, and made his hearers weep and laugh. Poliziano describes the impression made on him by Mariano's bearing, manner, gestures, and whole appearance, his sonorous voice, his well-chosen expressions, his majestic sentences, the artistic construction of his phrases, the har-

¹ Moreni, *Con torni di Firenze*, iii. 34 et seq. Cf. ante, p. 135.

moniousness of his cadences, the richness of his imagery, the clearness and force of his contrasts, the grace of his narrations, and his easy changes of subject, preventing all monotony. The picture Poliziano gives of the mode of life and conversation of this spiritual orator, in whom he celebrates only the qualities desirable in a temporal one, shows that Mariano was just the man to sail round the rocks which threatened to wreck Girolamo. 'I have met him repeatedly at the villa and entered into confidential talk with him. I never knew a man at once more attractive and more cautious. He neither repels by immoderate severity nor deceives and leads astray by exaggerated indulgence. Many preachers think themselves masters of men's life and death. While they abuse their power, they always look gloomy, and weary men by constantly setting up for judges of morals. But here is a man of moderation. In the pulpit he is a severe censor; but when he descends, he indulges in winning, friendly discourse. Therefore, I and my excellent friend Pico have much intercourse with him, and nothing refreshes us after our literary labours so much as his conversation. Lorenzo de' Medici, who understands men so well, shows how highly he esteems him, not only in that he has built him a splendid convent, but also in that he often visits him, preferring a conversation with him while walking to any other recreation.¹

Savonarola's biographer Fra Pacifico Burlamacchi is no doubt quite right in praising Fra Mariano's eloquence rather than his doctrine, in his account of the orator's little artifice to impress the people. But this man's mastery of his art must have been considerable, to make Girolamo Benivieni once say to the Ferrarese preacher, 'Father, no one can deny the truth, the usefulness, and needfulness of your

¹ Poliziano to Tristano Calco, Flor. April 22, 1489. (Fra Mariano was then preaching in Milan.) Poliziano had previously, as he mentions in this letter, praised the Augustinian's learning, eloquence, and morals in the introduction to his *Miscellanies*. N. Valori speaks of him, l. c. p. 76. Cf. Tiraboschi, ix. (vi. 3), 1677-1685.

teaching. But your delivery lacks attraction, especially when one is daily led to make a comparison with Fra Mariano.' To which the other answered that elegance of expression must give way to the simple preaching of sound doctrine.¹ But it was long before Savonarola made his way. His reputation, indeed, increased rapidly, but admirers still flocked round Fra Mariano; princes and commonwealth applied to Lorenzo, begging him to give the Augustinian, who seemed to be regarded as belonging to his household, leave to come and preach to them. Lodovico il Moro begged for this not merely as a personal favour, but because the city and all the people longed for the fulfilment of Lorenzo's promise; and the consuls of the Sabine town of Norcia—the home of S. Benedict—called Fra Mariano in their letter 'God's angel upon earth.'

It seems that Fra Girolamo was discouraged by his former failures in this field, and the growing success of the Augustinian, and thought at first of limiting his efforts to the philosophical and theological instruction of the novices. His short philosophic compendia are only valuable in the present day for their display of a spirit of justice and sense of the need of investigation in human knowledge, and of analytical progress from the known to the unknown, instead of belief by authority; these, as well as his smaller ascetic and moral treatises, mostly date from the first years after his return to Florence. In them may be seen the mystic enthusiasm which soon became more and more prominent in his sermons, expositions of the Bible, his poems, and other important works. Combined with this mysticism was a striving to clothe his views and prophecies of the future with the authority of Holy Scripture, with which he was perhaps better acquainted than anyone else at the time; but

¹ Baluz, *Miscellan.* ed. Mansi, i. 530. ['A sua posta (Frà Mariano) aveva le lagrime, le quali cadendogli dagli occhi per il viso, le raccoglieva tal volta e gittavale al popolo.'] Benivieni on Savonarola's teachings and prophecies, in a letter to Clement VII. (Villari, i. 70).

he interpreted it with a freedom, perfectly honest on his part, which necessarily aroused scruples, for it opened out a boundless field, where an excited fancy or secondary objects might easily lead him astray; and this danger was the greater when he turned his attention especially to the Apocalypse. In the summer of 1490 divers citizens sought admission to the lectures for the novices. The convent-rooms being too small, Savonarola continued his lectures at first in the court; then, as the number of hearers rapidly increased, he transferred them on August 1 to the church. A rosebush still marks the spot where Fra Girolamo taught in the courtyard of the convent; and in these latter days it has been resolved to raise a statue to him there, and a bust has been placed in what was once his cell. He needs no such monuments where all around recalls his memory; but they are tokens of the veneration paid to him by posterity in spite of all his weaknesses and mistakes.

The direction Savonarola had taken soon led him further than he calculated upon or perhaps intended. The effect produced by his discourses is quite intelligible when one compares their character with that of the ordinary preaching of the day, and takes the prevailing temper into consideration. In both cases one meets with strange contrasts. Artificial, wordy discourses, that people were accustomed to hear in the sermons of the followers of Bernardino of Siena; besides the simple, often impressive moral, there was a mixture of abstruse scholasticism, asceticism, and anecdotes intended for the multitude, on whom, however, part of their meaning was lost, and who laughed and cried by turns, and were confirmed in their views of devotional practices and works, in which too much stress was apt to be laid on externals. Still the supremacy gained over the people by the moral and political tendencies favoured by the Medici was by no means so complete as to leave no room for opposing views, whose inward strength was only increased by the outward resistance they encountered. The Dominican's

subject-matter, his mode of demonstration, his whole manner, were such as to make an impression upon opponents. To most preachers as well as hearers, the Bible was a sealed book. When it was opened its word became a living well springing up into a mighty fertilising stream, and disclosing that wondrous power which has never failed wherever it has been heard. Savonarola well knew that power. If he failed it was from a defect exactly contrary to those of the others. They lacked the true perception and feeling for that which alone could give their teachings a meaning true, deep, and sound for all time. He lacked moderation and the power to control his perceptions, his acquirements, and himself. This was the rock on which he was ultimately wrecked. Guicciardini, who was ten years old at Lorenzo's death, whose youth was passed in the midst of Fra Girolamo's most strenuous activity, and whose eyes were early open to all that went on around him, speaks of the natural unstudied elegance of the sermons he heard and read, and remarks that never had there been seen a man so versed in Holy Scripture, never had such abundant discourse been united with such a lasting impression.¹ In after years, when Savonarola's attacks on the corruption in the Church sought and found a personal object in that Church's unworthy head, he encountered in the enmity of other religious societies a stumbling-block which contributed not a little to his fall. But even in these earlier days he had long ago roused opposition, some of which, proceeding from purely inward grounds, was unavoidable; but a nature less rugged in its enthusiasm might have broken the force of some of it.

Fra Girolamo's great day was yet far distant. But this activity and the effects produced on moral life by his preaching, by his instructions in the convent, and by his and his pupils' influence on all classes, were already beginning to strike root that year when he gathered around him the

¹ The *Storia fiorentina*, ch. xii.-xvii. contains many remarks on Savonarola, specially valuable on account of the author's position and corresponding views.

more serious-minded men and youths in San Marco, and set himself to counteract the dominant pursuit of sensual enjoyment which threatened to paralyse the energies of the people. This activity and influence, when its chief source and originator had personally succumbed, though his work was only apparently destroyed, was described in glowing words by the great historian, though he is not quite consistent in his views of Savonarola's character. 'What he did for the amendment of morals was wonderful and holy. Never did such order and such fear of God reign in Florence as in his time; and the deterioration which set in after his death proves how entirely everything was his work and the fruit of his labours. There was no more gaming in public, people only played with trepidation and in private; the taverns, the accustomed scenes of the wild doings of degenerate youth, were closed; the worst vices were suppressed in consequence of the abhorrence excited against them. Most women laid aside their objectionable garments; the young people were rescued from their wild ways and led back to a moral life, and visited the churches in companies. Gamesters, blasphemers, and dissolute women were in danger of being pursued and stoned. At the Carnival, playing-cards, dice, indecent pictures and books were collected and burnt on the square of the Signoria; and on the day formerly given up to all kinds of excesses, a great church procession took place. The elder people took up a religious life, went diligently to mass, vespers, and sermons, received the sacraments and distinguished themselves by doing good. Many youths of the first families and some men of riper years entered the Predicant Order. In all Italy was never seen a convent like that of San Marco, where the excellent instruction given in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages and literature promised to furnish fresh ornaments to the Order.'

This activity, which produced such a change and passed sentence of condemnation on a system that had been carried out for years with equal skill and perseverance, was only

beginning in the last years of Lorenzo de' Medici's life; but its very beginnings could not fail to furnish matter for reflection to that keen thinker. Even before 1490 similar symptoms had shown themselves, whether connected with Savonarola's earliest labours is not certain, but it is highly probable. Poliziano's prologue to the *Menæchmi* of Plautus, written in May 1488, contains a vehement diatribe against the opponents of these scenic representations—those who protested against the employment of young people in reciting the too often objectionable verses of classical plays.¹ Monks are the objects of the poet's attack; monks who were not like his friend Mariano.

Sed qui nos damnant, histriones sunt maximi,
 Nam Curios simulant, vivunt bacchanalia.
 Hi sunt præcipuè, quidam clamosi, leves,
 Cucullati, lignipedes, cincti funibus,
 Superciliosum, in curvi cervicum pecus.
 Qui quòd ab aliis et habitu et cultu dissentiunt,
 Tristesque vultu vendunt sanctimonias,
 Censuram sibi quandam et tyrranidem occupant.
 Pavidamque plebem territant minaciis.

These lines, recited in Lorenzo's presence, are witnesses to the existence of the opposition which increased in strength every year, and from whose influence many, even of those who sided with the ruling party, seem not to have been free. In Lent 1491 Fra Girolamo began to preach in Sta. Maria del Fiore, the crowd having now become too great for the conventual church; the number of hearers increased daily, the impression made by his predictions of the punishment and evil to come became more vivid, till Lorenzo thought it advisable to try to stem the tide of growing excitement which threatened to endanger his work and his influence. For these prophecies of approaching judgment contained something more than indirect attacks on the present state of affairs, and the serious turn of mind encouraged by the

¹ Prose volgare inedite p. 283. Cf. *ante* p. 351.

preacher must necessarily deprive of their force many of the means which served to maintain that state of affairs.

Five chief citizens of the dominant party—men who all, with one exception, later on personally fell under the mighty influence of Savonarola—Domenico Bonsi, Guid' Antonio Vespucci, Paol' Antonio Soderini, Bernardo Rucellai, and Francesco Valori, went to San Marco to exhort the preacher to moderation. He answered that they had better exhort Lorenzo, who had sent them, to repent of his sins: God would spare no one. To the warning that he might be exiled, he replied that Lorenzo was a Florentine citizen and he a stranger; but the former would go and he would remain. He predicted the speedy death of Lorenzo, the Pope, and King Ferrante. The increasing and very intelligible discontent among the Medicean partisans, of which he could not but be aware, led him, however, to try and moderate his too frequent and exciting prophecies and confine himself more to moral and theological lectures. But his restless spirit carried him away. It would have been well for him could he have known moderation. But as his imagery, at once brilliant and irregular, is confusing and bewildering rather than elevating; as the terrors of his curse are weakened by repetition; as his precepts for Christian life rise to a pitch of asceticism, whose very exaggeration contains its own contradiction; as his teaching, so truly that of the Gospel in its principles and right application, loses its impressive force by straying to unsuitable ground; even so was it with his conduct in life. He irritated needlessly and aimlessly. The benefactions of the Medici to the convent and to the whole order had founded a relation of clientship, in which there was nothing offensive so long as both parties observed the moderation which had once been guaranteed by Cosimo's cautiousness and was continued by Lorenzo's tact and discretion. It was customary that when a new prior was appointed he should make a visit to the head of the family. Fra Girolamo, on being chosen prior in July 1491, refused

to do this. 'I hold my election from God alone,' said he; 'to Him alone I owe obedience.' It may easily be conceived that Lorenzo took this amiss, and, in his turn, spoke out freely. 'A stranger has come into my house, and does not deign to visit me.' However, he made no change in his conduct towards the convent; he sent gifts and money as before. Once some gold florins were found in the alms-box of the church. Fra Girolamo, who had previously made some personal remarks from the pulpit, caused the money to be given to the Buonomini of San Martino, saying that silver and copper was enough for the convent. When Lorenzo came to walk in the convent garden, according to his custom, the prior never showed himself. His admirers praise his conduct towards a man from whom he was separated by a deep inward gulf. If, instead of trying to work upon that man and so introduce a different state of things, he intended to cause a violent conflict, he acted rightly.

Lorenzo's own conduct towards Savonarola was always prudent. The Dominican's biographers relate that the great man, being repulsed by him, incited Fra Mariano to attack him from the pulpit; but such incitement was probably not needed. The breach between the two preachers was older than themselves; the antagonism of the two orders was but personified in these men, so radically different from each other. In a sermon preached on Ascension-Day, on the text: 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons,' the Augustinian accused the prior of San Marco of being a false prophet, an instigator of sedition among the people, a stirrer-up of strife and disorder. It is said that his vehemence and exaggerated personalities gave offence to his numerous hearers, and ruined his fame as an orator. Seven years later, when the Roman court was in the greatest excitement on account of events in Florence, when Savonarola lay under the ban of the Church, when his safety and his very life depended only on the momentary preponderance of one party or another in the excited city, already stained with the blood

of noble citizens--then this same Fra Mariano preached in Sant' Agostino at Rome in such immoderate terms, and applied to his hated rival such coarse expressions, that even to unlearned hearers his gifts of eloquence seemed to have been swallowed up by party-spirit; and the cardinals who were present turned their backs upon him. They had expected a refutation of the Dominican's teaching, and they heard nothing but raging accusations accompanied by vulgar gestures.¹ 'If you want to understand a monk, ask a monk about him,' so said the Augustinian. After his personal attack at Florence, it is said that Fra Mariano, apparently regardless of his discomfiture, invited his rival to San Gallo, where they celebrated a solemn mass together and exchanged civilities; but the story does not agree with Savonarola's character and the frankness so much praised by his biographers in his relations with Lorenzo.

¹ Lettera di un Anonimo circa alcune prediche fatte da Fra Mariano da Genazzano in Roma, in Villari, ii. clxxvi.

CHAPTER VII.

PROCLAMATION OF THE CARDINALATE OF GIOVANNI
DE' MEDICI.

It was a wise decision of Lorenzo to fix on Pisa as a residence for his son Giovanni. His efforts to raise that unfortunate city and to bridge over as much as he could the gulf between it and Florence had been unwearying. Moreover, Pisa not only offered to the youth, in the persons of its learned men, ample means of scientific cultivation, it also gave the needful quiet which, while his elevation to a great dignity was an open secret, he could not find in his father's house, constantly filled with friends and clients. Philosophy, law, and polite literature seem to have been Giovanni's chief studies; his whole after-life shows that he was not much taken up with theology. Filippo Decio and Bartolommeo Sozzini were his chief instructors in civil and ecclesiastical law. With his quick mind his studies were a pleasure; and the uncommon capacity which he always displayed in literary matters, independently of the accurate taste he inherited from his father, and his perfect mastery of the Latin tongue, suffice to show that he no more lost his time at Pisa than he had done in the villa or the house at Florence. He always attached great weight to Latin scholarship, as he proved by his choice of secretaries when he became Pope. In a brief of 1517, he speaks of the enrichment of the Latin tongue, doubtless alluding both to the increased publicity of its master-pieces, and to the efforts made, in accordance with Poliziano's views, to apply that

language to the purposes of modern science and modern life, instead of confining it to mere imitation, yet without offending against the severity of the classical. His tutor Bernardo Michelozzi has already been mentioned. Chalkondylas and Peter of Ægina are named as his instructors in Greek. His constant companion was Bernardo Dovizj, in whom he placed as much confidence as Lorenzo had given to his father, and, indeed, also gave to the son. Another of Giovanni's companions was Silvio Passerini, who belonged to the Cortona branch of a good Florentine family, and whose father was one of the staunchest adherents of the Medici. Lorenzo caused the boy to be brought up with his second son; and Silvio, who was five years older than Giovanni, followed him faithfully through prosperity and adversity. In later days he enjoyed the revived glory of the family, and was raised to the highest ecclesiastical dignities, and also to civil power in Florence; but he showed himself unequal to the situation when another storm overthrew the Medicean authority.¹ The degree of doctor of canon law had already been conferred on Giovanni. Towards the end of his stay at Pisa he had a strange fellow-student—the Cardinal vice-chancellor Rodrigo Borgia's son Cesare, who was studying jurisprudence under the future Cardinals Vera and Romolino, and attended the lectures of Filippo Decio.²

Naturally Giovanni held a prominent position, and his influence was reckoned on in favour of the city and university, as well as for private persons. His letters to his father, mostly short, are written in the tone of respect and obedience which at that time universally characterised the relation of children to their parents, and in a great degree does so still. He occasionally retired to the solitude of Camaldoli for the purpose of meditation and of indulging in the spiritual exer-

¹ L. Passerini, *Storia e Genealogia delle famiglie Passerini e Rilli* (Flor. 1874), p. 24.

² Letter of C. Borgia to Piero de' Medici, written after the accession of Alexander VI., from Spoleto, October 5, 1492, printed from *Med. Arch.* in *Arch. stor. Ital.*, s. iii. vol. xvii. p. 510.

cises usual to one in his circumstances. In the beginning of August 1491, he was residing in the abbey of Passignano with his cousin Giulio. Lorenzo had not ceased interceding for benefices for his son. When a Tuscan abbot was dying in May 1489, he wrote to the ambassador at Rome: 'Induce the Pope to give the benefice to his Messer Giovanni. I say *his*, because he is far more his servant than my son. On account of the importance of the benefice, his Holiness should confer it only on one of our people (Florentines), and if it is given to one of ours, it can come to no one who will be more thankful for it.'¹

The Pope's stipulation for delay in proclaiming Giovanni cardinal did not at all suit Lorenzo, and he took no pains to conceal the fact. Within a year from the nomination he was urgent to have it published immediately; but Innocent was not to be moved. 'I thanked his Holiness,' wrote on January 8, 1490, Piero Alamanni,² temporarily replacing Lanfredini, who had died three days before, 'for Messer Giovanni's preferment, and declared how gratifying it was to our whole people, and how grateful they are to the Holy Father; at the same time I hinted, in the most suitable words I could command, that a shortening of the appointed delay was greatly desired. In his detailed reply, the Pope remarked first that what he did was all for the best, and for the reasons and grounds which he had communicated to you through M. Pier Filippo (Pandolfini). Then he turned the conversation to M. Giovanni, and spoke of him in such a way as if he were his own son. He said he had been informed what progress he was making in his studies at Pisa, and how he had distinguished himself in several disputations; at which he showed extreme pleasure. At last he spoke as follows: "Leave me to care for Messer Giovanni's interests, for I regard him as my son, and shall of my own accord take in hand his proclamation when you are least thinking

¹ *Med. Arch.* F. 51.

² Fabroni, l. c. i. 301.

of it. I have yet other views for his honour and advantage.”’ This was all very fine, but it was the less calculated to soothe Lorenzo’s impatience, as the Pope’s state of health gave good cause for the gravest anxiety. On September 23, Innocent was seized with another apoplectic fit. All Rome was in the most intense excitement; the Pope’s death was reported; all shops were closed, and all persons working in the fields and vineyards hurried home. Franceschetto Cybò tried to get possession both of the church treasury and of Prince Dschem, in consequence of which, on the following day, while Innocent still lay unconscious, the cardinals took precautionary measures; not, however, it was said, till part of the treasure had been sent to Florence.¹ The invalid came to himself, and on May 27 Pandolfini wrote that he was getting better and hopeful of recovery. It is related that he said to Cardinal Savelli and his colleagues, who came to the palace in the moment of danger to secure the treasure, ‘he hoped yet to bury them all.’ But there was great alarm at Florence. As soon as the news of the Pope’s critical condition arrived, Guid’ Antonio Vespucci and Piero Guicciardini were commissioned to go to Rome to demand, in the name of the city, the admission of Giovanni de’ Medici to the approaching Conclave. More favourable news made the embassy needless,² but Lorenzo determined to make every effort not to let his success be spoiled. His brother-in-law, the archbishop, was then in Florence, and went to Rome at his request. Through Franceschetto’s mediation he obtained admission to the Pope, whom he found suffering from quartan fever, and in a state which did not at all inspire confidence. His mission had no success with the influential cardinals; his letter to Lorenzo³ shows how slightly he was treated. All he gained was the assurance that the family, and especially Lorenzo, should be treated with consideration and not offended. When he became more urgent on the subject of the Conclave, he was

¹ Cf. *ante*, p. 331.

² Guicciardini, l. c. ch. viii.

³ Rome, October 5, 1490, in Roscoe’s *Leo X.*, Ap. XIII.

told that matters had not got so far as that yet; the Pope was well, and should anything fatal happen to him, they would proceed with due consideration. Pandolfini, too, obtained nothing. On the part of the cardinals, he wrote,¹ there would be no serious difficulty; it lay with the Pope, who was afraid of publication in this individual case, lest it should offend others. 'Do not think that to speak of the matter at the present moment would lead to the attainment of the object. Everyone is warned to speak to him only of cheerful things, and that only in the presence of others. If one tried to obtain an interview without witnesses, one would expose oneself to the suspicion that it was for something of importance. For more than a month not a cardinal has spoken with him, save those belonging to the palace; and of the prelates, only those who cheer him up are admitted.'

The Pope's health really became stronger; and as he remained firm, Lorenzo had to wait patiently till the three years' delay was over. When the moment arrived, neither Innocent nor the young cardinal's father could hope to live much longer. On the afternoon of March 8, 1492, Giovanni, who had in the meantime left Pisa, proceeded with a small retinue to the abbey of Fiesole. That convent and church, where everything recalled the munificence of the Medici, had been chosen to witness the conferring of the highest honours upon a scion of the family. The next morning Pico della Mirandola and Jacopo Salviati arrived with the notary Simone Staza, and at the sixth hour they accompanied the youth to the church. The office of the Madonna was solemnly sung and was followed by the sacrifice of the mass, the celebrant, the Prior Matteo Bosso, giving the Host to Giovanni as he knelt on the altar-steps. He then blessed the cardinal's robes, took in his hands the Pope's bull and brief and said: 'May it be for the good of God's church, of our country, and of thy house! This day, Giovanni Medici, the three years'

¹ Rome, October 19, 1490, in Fabroni, l. c. p. 302.

delay appointed by the bull and this brief for thy dignity as cardinal is expired. Whosoever will read, let him read ; all is fulfilled. Do thou, Simone, make a public record of it.' He then presented to the kneeling youth his insignia, the pallium, biretta, hat, and ring, and the choir sang the *Veni Creator*. After proclaiming the indulgences to which he was now competent, the cardinal returned to the convent with the rest. After dinner Piero de' Medici arrived mounted on a handsome horse adorned with gilded trappings, and accompanied by some friends of the family ; and the whole party mounted on horseback to proceed to the city.

In spite of the rainy weather thousands had crowded to the Porta San Gallo to see the procession. To avoid a press a regulation had been made that no one should cross the bridge over the Mugnone ; so the whole space before the gate and the convent was filled with people. When the cardinal and his companions rode up, they found the whole of the clergy, protonotaries and prelates, the chief citizens, and the foreign ambassadors. On reaching the city the procession entered the Servite Church, where Giovanni prayed in the chapel of the Annunziata, and thence to Sta. Maria del Fiore. After this the cardinal paid a visit to the Signoria, and then, accompanied by the ambassadors, rode to his father's house, where Lorenzo received his son. The streets through which the procession passed were gaily decorated, and the windows and roofs filled with people. The whole population was astir. At night the houses and numerous towers were brilliant with illuminations ; bonfires were lighted in the squares, so that it was as bright as daylight, and shouts of rejoicing and the sound of musical instruments continued so long that sleep seemed forgotten. The next morning, Sunday, March 10, the grand ecclesiastical celebration took place in Sta. Maria del Fiore, whither the cardinal was accompanied by the ambassadors and chief citizens. The church was full ; the Signoria were present :

eight bishops sang the Mass of the Holy Ghost. It was not fourteen years since the blood of a Medici had been shed on that spot, in the presence of another youthful cardinal. After Mass, Giovanni took leave of the Signoria and returned home, where a grand banquet was prepared in his honour. Sixty covers were laid; the guests were the foreign diplomatists and the foremost men of the city. For several days preparations had been made and provisions procured 'for the solemnity of our Monsignore.'¹ Lorenzo was so ill on his son's day of triumph that he could not take part either in the service at church or at the banquet. He had himself carried into the hall to see the brilliant company at table; that was all he could do. Before the end of the banquet the Signoria presented to the new Prince of the Church a gift of honour, consisting of silver plate of the finest workmanship and more than a thousand pounds in weight; its value was estimated at 10,000 gold florins at the least. After Giovanni had withdrawn to his own apartments with the ambassadors and Signori, the various communities of the State, and the Jews of Florence, sent him presents of handsome silver plate; all of which, as also gifts from private persons, except his own relatives, he immediately returned with thanks.²

Little more than two years and a half after this day of triumph, he whom Florence now greeted with acclamations left his desolate home in the habit of a Franciscan monk; the convent of St. Mark, built by his family, closed its gates against him, and the terrified fugitive turned towards the Apennines; thus beginning an exile destined to last for eighteen years, to be followed later on by a period of yet greater, and, in its way, unequalled splendour.

¹ Ricordi di Lettere.

² Matteo Bosso to the Canon Arcangelo of Vicenza, Fiesole, March 14, 1492, in the *Recuperationes Fesulanae*, Ep. cx., and in Roscoe's *Lor. de Med.*, Ap. No. XXV. Pietro Delfino to Giovanni, the Superior of the Hermitage of Camaldoli, Flor. March 11, 1492, in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 305. M. Manfredi, Flor., March 13, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 311.

Giovanni stayed but one day more in his native city. He had to go to Rome to express his thanks to the Pope and take his place in the Sacred College. On Tuesday, March 12, he took leave of his sick father and set off on horseback, accompanied by his suite. Among the latter was the general of the Camaldulensians, Pietro Delfino, descended from a noble Venetian family; he had been formerly in the monastery of San Michele di Murano, was elected general of his Order in 1480, and was a great friend of Lorenzo and other distinguished Florentines; no one could be better fitted to direct the first steps of a youth raised to such high honours. A letter written by him from Rome to Guido, prior of the monastery of the Angeli, gives an account of the journey and reception. For two miles from the Porta Romana, as far as the Carthusian convent, the departing cardinal was escorted by a number of distinguished citizens; they then returned to Florence, and he rode on to his abbey of Passignano. The greater part of his suite went to pass the night at Poggibonzi, and on the following morning reached Siena, where the cardinal arrived in the afternoon, and was triumphantly and joyfully received by the people. March 16 the party resumed their journey, and dined at Buonconvento; they passed that night at San Quirico and the next at Acquapendente. Throughout the Sienese territory they were entertained at the public expense. Several prelates came to meet the cardinal at Acquapendente, and he was saluted on the way to Viterbo by several of the Orsini whose territories near the lake of Bolsena bordered on those of Siena.¹

At Viterbo Franceschetto Cybò received his brother-in-law, and all rode together to Bracciano, whose lord, Gentil Virginio Orsini, had gone eight miles, up to the foot of the

¹ Rome, April 7, 1492, in Fabroni, l. c. ii. 306 *et seq.*; also in Roscoe, Leo X., and Gennarelli's Burcard. On the reception at Rome and the solemnities there, see Burcard, p. 166 *et seq.* Letter from Giovanni to his father, Rome, March 25, in Roscoe, l. c. Ap. XVII.

Viterbo mountains, to meet the welcome guest. They were all housed in the gigantic pentagonal fortress, impregnable in those days, and even now startling in its gloomy grandeur as it towers above the slumbering depths of the lake below. The travellers spent a whole day with the powerful lord of Bracciano, who in a few years was ruined by the same storm that overthrew the Medici. On the following day, March 22, the Pope announced to the cardinals and envoys the approaching arrival of the new member of the Sacred College. It took place in the afternoon amid pouring rain. Giovanni dismounted at Sta. Maria del Popolo, prayed in the church and slept in the convent, and the next morning his colleagues and the ambassadors came to fetch him. Francesco Piccolomini and Raffael Riario headed the procession; Giovanni himself rode between the cardinal-deacons Giovan Battista Savelli and Giovanni Colonna. The new cardinal-deacon of Sta. Maria in Dominica was received by the Pope in the Consistory. After the ceremony they all escorted him back to his dwelling in the Campo di Fiore, and the rain was unceasing. Pietro Delfino reports that the youth's bearing and conduct made a favourable impression on all, and he was thought more mature in mind than was to be expected from his age; which may be accounted for by considering what great care his father, who himself had been early brought into public life, had bestowed upon his son's education, and what a lasting impression was left on that son by the father's example.

The letter addressed by Lorenzo to Giovanni¹ is an honourable proof not merely of political wisdom and consummate knowledge of human affairs, but also of a genuine sense of propriety and a moral feeling which seems to have been strengthened by the experience of advancing years and his own personal circumstances. 'Messer Giovanni,' thus runs the letter, 'you, and we for your sake owe sincere

¹ Fabroni, l. c. ii. 308 *et seq.*

thankfulness to our Lord God. For over and above many benefits and honours conferred on our house, He has granted to it in your person the highest dignity to which it has ever risen. The matter, already great in itself, is made yet far greater by the circumstances, namely, your youth and our position. My earnest exhortation to you, therefore, is that you endeavour yourself to be thankful to God; for it is not your deserts nor your prudence and foresight that have made you a cardinal, but the wondrous grace of God. This you must recognise, and prove your recognition of it by an honest, exemplary, virtuous life. To this you are all the more bound, as in your youth you have already given an impression of yourself which furnishes reason to expect riper fruits. It would be a shame for you and a sad disappointment for me, if you forgot your good beginnings at an age when others are wont to arrive at discretion and a regular life. You must, therefore, be careful to lighten the burden of the dignity conferred on you by a moral course of life, and perseverance in the studies befitting your vocation. Last year it was a great comfort to me to hear that, without being exhorted by others, you went frequently to confession and to the Lord's Table; and I believe that there is no better means of continuing in the grace of God than constant perseverance in this practice. It seems to me that I can give no more useful and suitable exhortation than this. As you are going to Rome, the very pit of all evil, the difficulty of doing what I recommend naturally increases; for not only does example have its influence, but you personally will have no lack of evil counsellors and tempters. As you can understand for yourself, your elevation to the cardinalate excites great envy, on account both of your youth and of the other circumstances to which I have alluded. Those who were unable to hinder that elevation will endeavour artfully to diminish its value, by trying to make your manner of life appear in an unfavourable light, and to drag you down into the pit into which they themselves are fallen. They trust

that your youth will make this easier to them. You must take the more pains to frustrate these hopes, as there is the less virtue to be found now in the College [*quanto nel Collegio hora si vede manco virtù*']. I remember seeing that College full of learned and virtuous men; be advised to follow their example; for the more your course of life differs from that of others, the more you will be sure of being loved and esteemed. But you must flee the reproach of hypocrisy as well as that of an evil reputation, like Scylla and Charybdis. You must endeavour to cultivate moderation, and both in your conduct and speech avoid everything which might offend others, and not make a display of austerity and strictness. These are things which you will understand with time, and learn to act up to my meaning better than I can explain it to you now.

‘You will have no difficulty in perceiving how much depends on the individuality and example of a Cardinal. If the Cardinals were what they should be, the world would be the better for it; for they would always choose a good Pope and thus secure the peace of Christendom. Endeavour therefore to so comport yourself, that others in resembling you will promote the general well being of all. As there is nothing in the world more difficult than to converse fittingly with people of different sorts, I can give you no minute instruction on this point. But in all cases you must take care to be respectful and unpretending in your intercourse with the Cardinals and others of high rank, and measure things with a calm judgment and not according to the passions of others; for many violate reason in aiming at that which is unlawful. Keep your own conscience at peace by giving no place in your discourse to offensive matters. This seems to me in your case the first and most important precept; for if anyone should let himself be led into enmity by passion, the return is easy with such as have no sound reason for disagreement. During this your first stay in Rome, I think you will do well to use your ears more than your tongue.

‘ This day I have given you up wholly to God and the holy Church. Therefore you must become a good priest and convince everyone that you prefer the good and honour of the Church and of the Apostolic See to all the things of this world, and all private considerations and interests. If you keep this before your eyes you will not lack opportunities of being useful to this city and our house. For the alliance with the Church is advantageous to the city; you must form the link between the two; and the house goes with the city. And although the future cannot be foreseen, yet I have a general belief that we shall not lack means on both sides if you hold firmly to this most important resolution that I urge on you of placing the Church before all else.

‘ You are the youngest member of the College; not only at the present time, but of all that have ever hitherto been created. Therefore you must be attentive and respectful when you meet the other Cardinals, and never make people wait for you at chapel, in the Consistory, or at a deputation. You will soon discover which of your colleagues are most, and which are least commendable. You will have to avoid confidential intercourse with those of irregular lives, not only on account of the thing itself, but also on account of public opinion. Let your discourse with all men turn as much as possible on indifferent subjects. When you have to appear in public or solemn occasions, it seems to me advisable rather to moderate your outward enthusiasm than to overstep it. I would prefer a well-filled stable, and well-ordered cleanly servants, to pomp and riches. Try to live regularly, and gradually to introduce fixed order, which is unattainable at present, while master and household are alike unknown to each other. Silk and jewels suit your position on certain occasions only; far more suitable are a few good antiquities and fine books, and respectable and learned, rather than numerous society. Rather invite people frequently to you than go to many entertainments; but herein also you must proceed with moderation. Have

for your own use simple food, and take a great deal of exercise, for in your present position you might easily be overcome by some illness for want of prudence. This position is no less secure than lofty; so that it often happens that those who have attained it become negligent, saying to themselves that they have reached a lofty goal, and thinking that they can keep it without much effort; thereby often bringing injury to their position as well as to their health. With respect to the latter I advise you to be as careful as possible, and to have rather too little than too much confidence in your strength.

‘One rule of life I commend to you before all others: get up early every morning. Putting aside the benefit to health, it gives time for attending to all the business of the day, and you will find it a great assistance in fulfilling your various duties, as you have to read your service, to study, to give audiences and do various other things. Another thing is very useful for one in your position: always, and particularly now at first, consider in the evening what you have to do the next day, that business may not find you unprepared. As for speaking in the Consistory, I am of opinion that in all cases which may occur it will, on account of your youth and inexperience, be most praiseworthy and befitting the circumstances that you should always follow the Holy Father and his wise judgment. Without doubt you will often be urged to speak to his Holiness about particular matters and use your influence. Be careful now at first to ask as little as possible and not trouble the Holy Father; for he is naturally inclined to grant the most to him who dms least into his ears. I think it salutary to take care not to weary him, but to lay before him pleasant things; and a request modestly preferred corresponds better with his nature and will put him in a more favourable disposition. Fare you well.’

CHAPTER VIII.

DEATH OF LORENZO.

WHEN Lorenzo wrote that letter to his son his condition might be called hopeless. From his youth up he had suffered from hereditary physical ailments. The attacks had increased with age, till they weakened his originally strong constitution. Gout made its appearance in various forms, and the waters, tried frequently and one after another, failed to give lasting relief, partly because he never gave them time to produce their full effect. He often joked about his sufferings. 'Pain in my feet,' he wrote to Lanfredini in August 1489, 'has hindered my correspondence with you. Feet and tongue are indeed far apart, yet they interfere with each other.' Towards the end of August 1491, he was so ill that he had to be carried to Spedaletto in a litter.¹ The waters of Morba had only a passing soothing effect; and at the end of the autumn a slow fever set in with grave symptoms. His whole system seemed attacked at once—bowels, limbs, and nerves. To the arthritic pains were added pains in the bones, which robbed him of rest by night and day; gout had attacked the higher organs: the physicians were at their wits' end. When the year 1492 opened, he could see no one; all grave political business had to be set aside; a Milanese ambassador waited more than a fortnight for an audience. An improvement permitted him to leave the house again, but it was not lasting. 'The illustrious

¹ M. Manfredi, Flor. August 31, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 309.

Lorenzo,' wrote the Ferrarese ambassador on February 11,¹ 'has been again for some days greatly tormented with pains which attack the whole of his body except his head. At times he suffers so acutely that it is hard to understand how he can hold out. The doctors do not indeed consider the illness mortal; but his condition is getting very bad, because he enjoys very little rest. God grant him health again; for the accounts of his state are really such as to excite sympathy.' On the 8th of the same month, King Ferrante wrote to his ambassador, Marino Tomacelli:² 'We have received many letters from you, but now we only reply concerning the long-continued sufferings of the illustrious Lorenzo, which have grieved and do grieve us to the depths of our soul. Would God we could procure him recovery, or even alleviation! Exhort his Magnificence to arm himself with patience and thus overcome the evil; more especially as we may now expect better weather, after these last days which have indeed been bad. Inform his Magnificence also that we congratulate him on the settlement of the dispute with his Holiness, which must be as pleasing to him as to ourself, he having had so great a share in it, as is known to us and all. May he, by God's help, the advice of good doctors and prudence on his own part, recover his health, so that we may both enjoy peace, and especially peace of mind.'

The king was not deceived in his estimate of how much depended on Lorenzo's life and activity. In the middle of February an improvement set in, but again it was but transitory. The weather continued bad, and at the beginning of March the pains returned; no one was admitted to the invalid with the exception of his family and a very few intimate friends. We remarked before that he was unable to take part in the solemnities attending the proclamation of his

¹ Cappelli, l. c. p. 316. Manfredi's reports give the most details, but unfortunately there is a blank in the last days of Lorenzo.

² Cod. Aragonese, l. c. p. 39. *

son's cardinalate; his most ardent wish was now fulfilled, and his life was on the wane. He seems to have been aware of his condition, when the young Cardinal set out on March 12. He spoke thus to Filippo Valori, brother of his biographer, and Andrea Carubini, the former of whom was to accompany Giovanni to Rome, and the latter was attached to his household: 'I entrust my son's youth to you; me you will never see again.' Who can tell what were his feelings as he wrote that beautiful letter!—There was again a slight improvement; but it was the last. The disease made rapid progress. On the 21st the invalid was taken to Careggi, his favourite abode, where he had planned and done so much, and where he could get more air and sunshine than in the city. Towards the end of March a physician was expected from Naples. At the beginning of April, Duke Ercole of Ferrara came to Florence¹ on his journey to Rome, whither he was going ostensibly for purposes of devotion, in reality for political objects, and to try to obtain the cardinalate for his son Ippolito. The boy was only thirteen, but he had already been Archbishop of Gran for six years; and if a Medici had won the purple at fourteen, why not an Este, a scion of one of the oldest families of Italy? If Innocent VIII. had lived longer he would have been unable to avoid giving this nomination also. The duke could not see Lorenzo, but the latter had already promised him his son's vote in the future Consistory.

The sufferer's days were numbered. He made himself ready for the worst, set his house in order, and made what arrangements he could to secure for his son the position he had himself held. But he was too clear-sighted not to perceive the dangers which the old love of freedom and impatience under the long and ever-strengthening supremacy of a single family, together with Piero's inexperience and haughty character, must bring upon him. Poliziano indeed

¹ M. Manfredi to the Duchess of Ferrara, Flor., April 5, 1492, in Cappelli, l. c. p. 312. Ercole arrived at Rome on April 13. Burcard, l. c. p. 177.

relates that Lorenzo had cherished an intention of retiring, and handing over the direction of affairs to his son. 'About two years before his death,' he says, 'I was sitting with him in his bed-chamber, and we were talking, as usual, of philosophy and literature. He then said that he intended passing the rest of his days with Ficino, Pico, and myself, in study, far from the bustle of the city. To my objection that this would be impossible, as the citizens needed his counsel and authority more and more every day, he answered smiling: "I shall provide a substitute in the person of thy pupil, and entrust the burden to his shoulders."' Then on Poliziano's expressing a doubt whether Piero's age was sufficient to render him competent, he praised his son's mind and bearing, and the good foundations which Poliziano had laid. The story may be true, notwithstanding the writer's visible tendency to over-rate his friend's actions and sayings. But doubtless Lorenzo's sole object was to hear what would be said to such an intention. He can hardly have had serious thoughts of retiring from public life, least of all at such a time.

Looking back upon his own short but eventful career, he could see more clearly than ever what unceasing care and trouble, what knowledge of characters and calculation of humours and circumstances, had been necessary to govern parties, keep down opponents without driving them to extremity, and make use of and direct adherents without letting them outgrow his control. He knew but too well that a single false step might upset everything. In the depths of his own mind he felt the discords that ran through the general tone of thought and feeling in the state. He measured the force of the hardly-concealed moral and religious currents that were threatening to break forth. When he, the experienced statesman, looked around him and surveyed the political condition of Italy, he was alarmed at the weak foundations of the edifice which it had cost him so much exertion to support by his counsels and actions. But just

now he had put an end to the long and dangerous strife between the Pope and the King; and who was to answer for the future? And when the unstable Pope and the unprincipled King were gone, who could predict the former's successor—who dared flatter himself with the hope that the latter's heir, in every respect worse than himself, would keep even his own disaffected land at peace, and not foster the seeds, sown long ago, of dissensions with other countries? Perhaps Lorenzo's death-bed was haunted even more by the consciousness of the preponderance of evil elements in the College, by the thoughts of Alfonso of Naples, of Lodovico il Moro, and of the hostility of Venice, than even by the dread of attempts at a change in Florence.

In his religious views and his mode of expressing them Lorenzo had always been a true child of the age, which combined a secular temper with a tinge of unfeigned religious feeling, and amid all its grave intellectual errors was not without moral consciousness. That Lorenzo possessed this moral consciousness is proved by many of his expressions through his latter years. He had gained from his excellent and pious mother something more than a literary acquaintance with religious matters. He had inherited from his forefathers the traditions of a close and active connection with ecclesiastical foundations and ecclesiastical interests, which he furthered in a manner that cannot be attributed solely to political motives. His sensuous temperament, his early elevation to such authority as perhaps no private man has ever enjoyed in a city so full of genuine life, led him into many moral errors. But as he was at the same time the author of the lays of the Carnival and the poet of philosophical and spiritual songs, even so, amid all his errors and notwithstanding the great influence exercised over him from his youth up by antique philosophy, he still adhered to the faith of Christianity practised and taught by his teacher Ficino and his friend Pico della Mirandola. All his life he had been attentive to the observance of religious ordinances; and he

continued so when that life was near its close. His sister Bianca de' Pazzi had accompanied him to Careggi; and it was she who told him of his imminent danger. 'Brother,' said she, 'thou hast lived as a man of lofty mind; thou must quit this life not only bravely but piously. Know that all hope is over.'¹ He seemed somewhat distressed that hope had been encouraged too long; then he asked for the aid of the Church. It was late when the priest who was summoned from San Lorenzo reached the villa. The dying man would not receive him in bed: in spite of the remonstrances of those about him, he got up and had himself dressed: then, supported by his attendants, he entered the room, where he sank on his knees before the ciborium. Seeing how weak he was, the priest insisted that he should lie down again; and he was with difficulty induced to do so. He then received the viaticum with a devoutness which made an impression on all present.²

His eldest son, his sister, and Angelo Poliziano were almost constantly near him. After the religious ceremony Piero remained alone by his bedside. Lorenzo comforted him, and gave him warnings and good advice as to his conduct in the city and the state when he himself should have departed. 'The citizens,' said he, 'will, I believe, acknowledge thee, my son, as worthy to fill the position which I have occupied; and I doubt not that thou wilt have the same authority in the commonwealth as I have enjoyed until now. But as this commonwealth is, according to the common expression, a body with many heads, and it is impossible to please them all, remember that in all the varied circumstances of life the way to be kept is that which appears most

¹ Valori, l. c. p. 181.

² The story of Lorenzo's last days may be read in the long letter written by Poliziano from the villa at Fiesole on May 18, 1492, to Jacopo Antiquario of Perugia. *Pol. Epist.* l. iv. ep. 2, in Fabroni, l. c. i. 199-212, and in Roscoe, Ap. No. LXXVII. Cf. G. B. Vermiglioli, *Memoire di Jacopo Antiquario* (Perugia, 1813). Politian's letter is a rhetorical composition full of unctuous phrases, but highly valuable as containing the testimony of an eye-witness.

honourable; and always prefer the general good to personal and party interests.' Wise counsel this; if he who gave it had but followed it more strictly, it would have saved him from much bitter and but too well-founded reproach! He charged Piero to take a father's place towards his young brother Giuliano; to the Cardinal he commended his nephew Giulio, then aged fourteen, and for whom he seems already to have had visions of an ecclesiastical career. He also spoke to his son about his funeral, ordering that it should be arranged after the pattern of his grandfather's, and that the limits usual in the interment of a private man should not be overstepped.

Meanwhile a famous Lombard doctor, Lazaro of Pavia, sent by Lodovico il Moro, had arrived at Careggi. The invalid asked the attendants what he was doing, and on being told that he was composing a draught of pulverised pearls, precious stones, and other costly substances, he exclaimed with eager voice and cheerful look to Poliziano, who was standing near the bed: 'Dost thou hear, Angelo, dost thou hear?' Then, stretching out his enfeebled arms, he seized his friend by both hands and held him fast, while the latter sought to turn away to hide the rising tears; at last Lorenzo, seeing his emotion, let him go, and he rushed to his own rooms to let his grief take its course. When he came back, Lorenzo asked why Pico did not come to see him; and being answered that probably Pico feared to trouble him, he remarked that he rather feared it was the distance from the villa to the city that troubled Pico. The latter, thus called for, came; and the invalid received him with the old cordiality. He begged him to excuse the trouble he was giving him, adding that it must be attributed to his affection, for he should die more content after having seen him once more. Then he spoke on many subjects, both general and particular, and said, looking at the two: 'I would that death had spared me till I had been able to complete your libraries.' Poliziano knelt down

beside the bed to catch the words, which were already becoming indistinct

Scarcely had Pico left Careggi when another man entered the chamber of death.¹ If Lorenzo summoned Girolamo Savonarola to him, it must have been because he was not easy in his conscience. The several versions of the interview, as related by those who were connected either with Lorenzo or the Dominican Prior, differ so widely as to the circumstances that only greater or less probability can decide between them. This is Poliziano's story: Fra Girolamo of Ferrara, a man distinguished by his learning and godliness, and an excellent preacher of the Divine Word, entered the room, and admonished the invalid to hold fast to the Faith; to which Lorenzo replied that he continued immovable therein. Hereupon he exhorted him thenceforth to lead a virtuous life; to which the reply was that he would endeavour himself so to do. Thirdly, he recommended him to meet death, if it needs must be, with firmness. 'Nothing,' replied the invalid, 'is sweeter to me, if it be God's will.' The monk was departing, when Lorenzo said to him: 'Give me thy blessing, father, before thou partest from me.' And with bowed head, and in the attitude of religious earnestness, he responded correctly, and with full consciousness to Savonarola's words and prayers, undisturbed by the no longer concealed mourning of the household.

So reports the friend of many years—he who knew the dying man better perhaps than anyone else. But another story stands in opposition to his. According to this version, Lorenzo wished to make one last confession to the Dominican. He accused himself of three things: the sack of Volterra, the squandering of the dower-moneys, and the blood shed at the time of the Pazzi conspiracy. The dying man's agitation was distressing. 'God is gracious, God is merciful,' said the monk to soothe him. Then, when he had done, Savonarola

¹ See Appendix III. p. 487.

spoke. 'You have need of three things. First, true and lively confidence in the Divine grace.' To this the invalid replied, 'I am penetrated therewith.' 'Secondly, you must restore what you have wrongfully appropriated, and make restitution a duty for your sons.' Lorenzo reflected a moment, then assented by a movement of the head. 'Lastly, you must restore to the people of Florence their freedom.' The invalid turned away his head without answering, and the monk left him unabsolved.

Lorenzo's death—to resume Poliziano's report—was peaceful. It seemed that it was not he who was about to undergo the fate of all mortals, but rather those who stood around his bed. He did not refuse what the doctors prescribed, though he expected no effect from it. Even his old cheerfulness had not altogether deserted him. When after taking some food he was asked how he relished it, he answered: 'Like a dying man.' He embraced his relatives and friends and begged them to forgive him if he had offended them or shown impatience during his long illness. When he asked to have read to him from the Gospel the history of the Passion and Death of our Lord, at first he repeated the words of Scripture, then, getting weaker, only moved his lips and at last his fingers, in token that he still followed the sense. When death drew near, a crucifix was held out to him; he opened his eyes, kissed it and departed. This was on Sunday, April 8, 1492, about the fifth hour of the night.

What a strange abundant variety of cares and pleasures, of labour and enjoyment, of thought and action, of poetry and realism, of danger and success, of evil and good, had been crowded together into that life of barely forty-three years!

The tidings of his death naturally put all Florence in commotion. Almost simultaneously with it came the news that the physician Piero Leoni had thrown himself into a well at Francesco Martelli's villa at San Gervasio by the Porta Pinti, whither he had been secretly taken because his life was threatened at Careggi, as he was suspected of an intent

to poison. It was not known whether the unhappy man really perished by his own resolve or by another's hand.¹ As usual, prodigies were believed to have presaged the event with which all minds were occupied. In Sta. Maria Novella a woman had started up in the middle of the sermon, crying out that she saw a raging bull, with burning horns, overthrowing the church. Three days before Lorenzo's death a flash of lightning had struck the lantern of the Cathedral and hurled down some heavy blocks of marble on the north-west, the side towards the Medici's dwelling; one fell in through the roof, another crushed the house of Luca Rinieri. On the night of the death a meteor was said to have been seen to shine over Careggi and then vanish.² Three hours after death the body was taken from Careggi to San Marco; there it remained in the chapel of a lay-brotherhood till the following evening, when the clergy of San Lorenzo came in solemn procession to fetch it away and carry it to the sacristy of the Basilica. The ceremony at church was simple, as he had wished it. The mourning was general. The upper ranks, almost entirely attached to the Medicean interest, felt deeply the loss of the man whose firm and practised hand had guided the helm for so long, and whose vices had been outweighed by his brilliant qualities. Who should tell them what might happen now? On April 10, wrote Bartolommeo Cerretani, the whole city went to Piero. The people lamented the loss of him who, at whatever cost, had procured them peace and comfort.³ There were indeed some who rejoiced at his death and expected good from it; there is no lack of testimony to such feelings in memoirs not intended for the eyes of strangers. 'As I know,' writes Alamanno Rinuccini, when describing the merits and demerits of the Medici, 'that many falsehoods about him

¹ See Appendix III. p. 488.

² On the prodigies see Politian's letter, also Rinuccini, l. c., and Cambi, p. 63, where are given details of the disastrous effects of the lightning. See also Burcard, p. 175.

³ Guicciardini, l. c. ch. ix.

have been spread, in eye-service and deceit, by flatterers and perverters of the truth, mostly bought and corrupted by him by means of honours and enrichment at the public expense, I intend to give a brief account of his life and manners, with both of which I was intimately acquainted: not by way of detraction, nor from hatred towards him, from whom I have received divers marks of distinction, to which I had no claim, but in compliance with truth. The multitude regarded the signs before his death as prognostics of great evils; they would have been prognostics of great good, had the citizens known how to use their opportunity.' ¹

On April 13, three days after the funeral, the assembled councils and the people, in conjunction with the Signoria, issued the following decree: ² 'Whereas the foremost man of all this city, the lately deceased Lorenzo de' Medici, did during his whole life neglect no opportunity of protecting, increasing, adorning, and raising this city, but was always ready with counsel, authority, and painstaking, in thought and deed; subordinated his personal interest to the advantage and benefit of the community; shrank from neither trouble nor dangers for the good of the State and its freedom; and devoted to that object all his thoughts and powers, securing public order by excellent laws; by his presence brought a dangerous war to a conclusion; regained the places lost in battle and took those belonging to the enemies;—whereas he furthermore, after the rare examples furnished by antiquity, for the safety of his fellow-citizens and the freedom of his country gave himself up into his enemies' power, and, filled with love for his house, averted the general danger by drawing it all upon his own head; whereas, finally, he omitted nothing which could tend to raise our reputation and enlarge our borders; it hath seemed good to the Senate and people

¹ Ricordi, p. cxlvi.

² Fabroni, l. c. ii. 398. Cerretani reports that of the whole number in the Council 483 voted Aye and 63 No. 'Herein was seen a token of harmony and secure hope for the future; but it all came from the popularity of Lorenzo, who was lamented not only by his fellow-citizens and the people, but by all Italy.'

of Florence, on the motion of the chief magistrate, to establish a public testimonial of gratitude to the memory of such a man, in order that virtue may not be unhonoured among the Florentines, and that in days to come other citizens may be incited to serve the commonwealth with might and wisdom. But whereas the memory of Lorenzo needs no outward adornments, as it has struck deep root, and blooms fresher every day, it hath been determined to transfer to Piero, the eldest son of the deceased, the heir of his father's dignity and successor to his fame, the public honour due to his father and his ancestors. So much the more, as Piero has already in his youth displayed the endowments of his father and is in some degree his image, and has already shown himself such that we may hope he will, by God's assistance, tread in his father's steps.'

On April 10, before break of day, a special messenger brought to the Cardinal the fatal tidings which had been expected for several days. Giovanni, his attendants and servants, at once put on mourning, the house was hung with black, and all the Cardinals, headed by Francesco Piccolomini, paid visits of condolence to their youthful colleague. Four days after, a Requiem was sung in Sta. Maria sopra Minerva; Franceschetto Cybò and the Count of Pitigliano were present in coarse black mantles reaching to the ground, and also Onofrio Tornabuoni, the Medicean agent at the Roman Curia, and many prelates and gentlemen. The next day Innocent proclaimed the appointment of Giovanni de' Medici to be legate in Tuscany, whither the boy wished to return in consequence of his father's death, that he might consult on the condition of affairs with his brother, to whom he had already written many letters. The young Cardinal was so much moved that he had to retire for a while during mass.¹ Nothing is known of the remarks made

¹ Burcard, p. 171-178. On the appointment as legate cf. Stefano da Castrocaro's letter to Piero, Rome, April 15, 1492; Fabroni, *Vita Leonis X.* p. 13, and note 10; Roscoe, *Leo X.* Ap. xxiv.

by the Pope (who sent an orator to Florence) on the loss of the man with whom he was so intimate, although throughout his pontificate he had never personally seen him. The case is otherwise with regard to King Ferrante. On the morning of April 11, being then in the neighbourhood of Palma, he learned from a letter of Marino Tomacelli that all hope was abandoned. He thereupon wrote to Gioviano Pontano at Rome that he should offer the Pope all the means at his command to prevent a disturbance of the peace of Italy, and place at his disposal the troops commanded by Virginio Orsini. To Virginio he wrote the same evening, after receiving news of the death ('which has grieved us to the depths of our soul'), charging him to act without further orders from him according to the disposition of the Pope, in case the latter should have need of him.¹ To those around him the King is said to have thus spoken: 'That man's life has been long enough for his own deathless fame, but too short for Italy. God grant that now he is dead, that may not be attempted which was not ventured on during his life.'²

That Innocent was entirely of one mind with Ferrante in considering the maintenance of the house of Medici in the position it had hitherto occupied as necessary for the preservation of the existing political system, may be judged from the answer addressed to the Pope, from Vigevano on April 20, by Lodovico il Moro in the name of his nephew Gian Galeazzo.³ Whatever might be the real feeling of Sforza, who had already two months ago drawn up the instructions for that embassy to Charles VIII. which was the first step towards the ruin of Italy—at all events, his letter throws a favourable light on the Pope's views of the matter: 'Your Holiness could have written me nothing more welcome than what you have lately communicated to me as to your

¹ *Cod. Aragon.*, l. c. p. 74, 75.

² Fabroni, l. c. ii. 396.

³ Fabroni, *Laur. Med. Vita*, i. 212. There is no better warrant for this speech than for that on the election of Pope Alexander VI.

desire to keep Italy in peace, and maintain the sons of Lorenzo de' Medici in their position. For I have nothing more at heart than the preservation of the peace of Italy, for which I have not shrunk from subjecting myself to intolerable burdens and struggles; and between me and the Medici family there is a bond of friendship both public and private. My memory recalls how the illustrious prince my grandfather (Francesco), aided by the pecuniary means of Cosimo de' Medici, regained the state of our forefathers, which after his father-in-law's death had been, so to say, lost. I likewise remember how since then Florence and the house of Medici have never been in a position to need our help without our placing arms and money at their disposal. I am therefore glad that amid the deep mourning occasioned by the death of the illustrious Lorenzo, your Holiness's letter calls upon me to do that to which my own inclination prompted me, and which is as interesting to me as if it concerned my own personal welfare. For not only your Holiness, to whom my attachment to the Medici family is known, but all who know anything of Italian affairs must be convinced that I shall continue to act towards the sons of Lorenzo as my predecessors acted towards his father and grandfather. No one can imagine that I shall not tread as heretofore in the footsteps of my ancestors; for this friendship with the Medici has always been cultivated and confirmed by practical proofs on both sides, up to the present hour, and has not only never experienced a disturbance, but has been constantly strengthened, to the advantage and pleasure of both parties. Perseverance in this mind is made doubly my duty, by old and new relations with the Medici, and by the circumstance that I shall thereby suit the views of your Holiness.'

Lorenzo de' Medici was buried in the sacristy of San Lorenzo, the resting-place of his father, uncle, brother, grand-parents, and other relatives. When Giovanni, who left Rome on May 11, 1492, to return home, stood here at his

father's grave, he little thought that more than twenty-three years later, on Advent Sunday, 1515, he was destined to kneel there in tears as the spiritual head of Christendom.¹ Amid all the splendour and greatness to which the Medici afterwards rose, not one of them seems to have thought of raising a monument to the most famous man of the family, though the greatest sculptor of the age helped to immortalise on their monuments two of its insignificant members. In 1559 Duke Cosimo I. caused the mortal remains of Lorenzo and his brother Giuliano to be laid in the porphyry sarcophagus which they had erected for their father and uncle.²

The following poem,³ set to music by Heinrich Isaak, was written by Angelo Poliziano on the death of the man to whom he had been through life so deeply attached:—

MONODIA IN LAURENTIUM MEDICEM.

QUIS dabit capiti meo
Aquam? quis oculis meis
Fontem lachrymarum dabit?
Ut nocte fleam,
Ut luce fleam.

¹ Diary of Paris de' Grassi, in Fabroni, *Vita Leonis X.*, p. 95.

² Moreni, *Descrizione istorico-critica delle tre Cappelle Medicee in S. Lorenzo* (Flor. 1813), p. 103. At the revolution of 1494 the party hostile to the Medici did not entirely spare even the monuments, for the inscription on the tomb of Cosimo the elder was removed on account of the '*Pater patriae*'; in 1497, during the Savonarola excitement, all the Medici coats of arms were taken away or covered, and replaced by the red cross of the people. The reappearance of the ball-escutcheon after the revolution of 1512 was referred to in an epigram by the father of Benvenuto Cellini, wherein he prophesies the attainment of the Papal dignity by one of the family:—

'Quest' arme, che sepolta è stata tanta,
Sotta la croce mansueta,
Mostra hor la faccia glorjosa e lieta,
Aspettando di Pietro il sacro ammanto.'

³ This curious monody, so unlike Politian's other Latin compositions, stands at the end of his works in the edition of 1498. [In *Del Lungo*, p. 274.] The poem in terza rima, on Lorenzo's death, printed in the edition of his Italian poems published at Florence in 1814, from a Riccardi MS. (in Carducci's ed. p. 382 *et seq.*) is unquestionably not Politian's.

Sic turtur viduus solet ;
Sic cygnus moriens solet,
Sic luscinia conqueri.
Heu miser, miser ;
O dolor, dolor !

Laurus impetu fulminis
Illa illa jacet subito ;
Laurus omnium celebris
Musarum choris,
Nympharum choris,
Sub cujus patula coma,
Et Phœbi lyra blandius
Et vox dulcius insonat.
Nunc muta omnia,
Nunc surda omnia.

Quis dabit capiti meo
Aquam ? quis oculis meis
Fontem lachrymarum dabit ?
Ut nocte fleam,
Ut luce fleam.
Sic turtur viduus solet ;
Sic cygnus moriens solet,
Sic luscinia conqueri.
Heu miser, miser ;
O dolor, dolor !

CONCLUSION.

AT the age of forty-three Lorenzo was called away. His span of life had been but a short one for such manifold activity and such lasting fame. A remarkable man, he was the most brilliant representative of a remarkable time; in no one else were its qualities and excellences united in such a harmonious whole. Energetic in action, and earnest in his endeavours to watch the phases of progress in the establishment of a new order of things; endowed with the liveliest susceptibilities and the quickest perceptions, combined with the earnestness and thoroughness of a student; with a strongly sympathetic feeling for art, yet capable of immediate application to the business of life; he united imaginative power with clear common sense, the capacity for lofty projects with that for patient calculation; he had all the qualities of poet and statesman, connoisseur and patron of learning, citizen and prince. He was indefatigable and persevering in the endless business thrown upon him by his position as the leader of a peculiarly constituted state; with a quick and unerring eye he was able to grasp the whole and yet observe its smallest detail; in his riper years he was cautious and prudent, keeping his object immovably in view without blind self-confidence or presumption, though fully alive to his own position and that of the state which he represented. He passed with wonderful ease from practical to speculative politics, from science to poetry. Few could equal him in comprehensive, manifold, creative gifts, or in the most delicate sense of beauty, and the most active interest, with the deepest in-

sight, into the character and purposes of art. In his home and family relations he was kindly, sociable, cheerful, even amid physical sufferings; not free from errors which even in earlier years and afterwards far more decidedly loosened the bond between him and his wife, yet still unaffectedly attached to all his family; to the admirable mother, many of whose qualities he had inherited, to the wife who was not of his own choosing, to the children to whom he was a wise and prudent counsellor, and a tender but not a weak father. Moreover he was a warm, attentive, and constant friend, attracting and attaching to himself the most different natures, ever ready to help in counsel and action, interposing and interceding for high and low with equal zeal amid a thousand occupations. He was gifted with a delicate sense of propriety, though he could not keep himself free from the Epicureanism of the time, which exacted a sacrifice even from him; and vividly conscious of the power of culture in the field of the Church, though a frivolous materialism threatened to weaken that power and lead him seriously astray in his views of life.

He was not without the weaknesses and vices of his time. They cramped his policy, though it still stood far higher than that of most princes and statesmen of the age, both Italian and others. He was superior too in honesty and consistency, and, at least during the last ten years of his life, in unalterable adherence to the preservation of peace and unity, and to a feeling of nationality such as answered to the ideas of the time, from which it is not fair to demand conceptions unfamiliar to it. His home policy has called forth severe blame both on account of his progressive violations of the constitution to increase his personal authority, and of the corruption he employed in order to obtain undisturbed control of the finances. With regard to the latter, it is hard to see how, had he lived longer, he could have avoided national bankruptcy, unless indeed he and the state had contrived by the preservation of peace to restore an internal equilibrium, for which in his last years he had begun to lay

some slight foundation. As to the former, many of his contemporaries expressed the opinion that he aimed at becoming a recognised prince, and was only waiting for a favourable opportunity—such as his entrance on the office of Gonfalonier, as soon as that dignity should fall to him on his reaching the legal age. And yet he, who had everything in his power, could not have lacked means and opportunities, if this had been his object. But he knew the city and the people too well to be blind to the obstacles and dangers which threatened to impede that path.

Perhaps the worst evil of Lorenzo's government lay in the increasing incongruity between the outward form and the real power, and in the displacement of authority from its legal centre, whereby both law and moderation were called in question. Personal influence decided everything in politics, in administration, in finance, even in the dispensation of justice. The more clear-sighted among Lorenzo's contemporaries did not fail to perceive this radical evil, and expressed their opinion of it in the bitterest terms. Nevertheless not merely did Florence escape such excesses as occurred in all other Italian states, almost without an exception, but Lorenzo's government was on the whole free from the violence which had characterised that of Cosimo. Doubtless the greater tranquillity of the time, the more secure position of the Medici, the fact that the people had been longer accustomed to their rule, contributed to this result; but so also did the character of the man himself. Lorenzo was ambitious to rule, but he was no tyrant. On the one hand he was too keen-sighted, and had calculated too accurately the character and traditions of the people; on the other hand his own nature was too grand, too open, too high-minded, too warm-hearted, and also too fond of enjoyment; finally, he was too much of a Florentine citizen, and that not merely in name but in his appearance, his dress and his bearing. He would have had nothing to distinguish him from the rest of the community, had there not been permitted or granted to him, ever since the Pazzi

conspiracy, a suite consisting at first of four of his own confidants, afterwards of twelve men paid by the Signoria. It is true that this was a grave offence against civil equality. This citizen-character was not kept up by Lorenzo's sons—it was said of Piero that he was not a Florentine by nature—and its outward signs vanished altogether in some others of the race. In his own family Lorenzo maintained simplicity; in public affairs, however completely he held the real direction of them, he tried to keep up fair appearances; though indeed he could not prevent a complaint that Ser Piero da Bibiena brought into his court of chancery matters which rightly belonged to the police-jurisdiction of the Eight. On important occasions he liked to consult with many persons, but with each one separately; and then he formed his own decision independently.

On his arbitrary proceedings in money matters there were very divided opinions even in his own time. If he had not used the money of the state he would have been ruined; and it was said that his ruin would have entailed that of everybody else; that all he took to save his credit and to lead a showy life was nothing in comparison of the losses to which a state would be exposed by incapable administration; that one single unskilful or ill-timed measure might cost a state dearer than Lorenzo's whole course of government; that the ultimate and highest object of the Medici, for which they calculated everything they did or left undone, was indeed their own benefit; but they were and always had been Florentine citizens, and in most cases their interest and that of the state was one and the same. So said the favourable party after Lorenzo's death and Piero's fall. To this it was answered that the ultimate object of the Medici was not supremacy like that of the Albizzi in a state becoming more and more aristocratic in form, but simply autocracy, which they had sought to attain under the form of democracy, by removing the influence of the noble families and favouring many members of the lower classes. A cunning tyranny like that of Cosimo,

or one softened by affability and generosity like that of Lorenzo, was all the worse because it spread poison among the people, preparing the way for the endurance of something harder. The truth of this view was proved at no very distant time.

For good or for evil the Medici's influence struck deep root in Florence. They made the lasting existence of the Republic impossible. 'We are suffering'—such are the words placed by Francesco Guicciardini in the mouth of a man frequently named in this history—Paol' Antonio Soderini—after their expulsion in 1494—'from two mortal wounds; the Pisan war, and the exile of the Medici. With their numerous friends in the city and country, and the greatness of their name abroad, they will give us a great deal of trouble.' He was right. The Medicean party would have given the death-blow to the Republic of 1495 as well as to that of 1527, even if external circumstances had not come to their assistance. The work was made easier for them because here, as in many other republics, the relation of the ruling commonwealth to her subject towns and districts was an unnatural and very oppressive one; these subjects, influenced by the traditions of their old freedom, obeyed only on compulsion; and endured a personal government such as was permanently established forty years after Lorenzo's death, more easily than their former position—perhaps because their old masters now had to bow their necks to the same yoke.

In the ninth chapter of his Florentine history, the great writer just mentioned sums up at the close, in a few words, his masterly picture of Lorenzo de' Medici's influence on his native city. The city, he says, was not free under him; but it could not have found a more endurable and better master. For while there proceeded from him much good, owing to his natural goodness and amiable disposition, the evils, so far as they proceeded from the nature of the tyranny itself, were slight and limited to absolute necessity, and infinitely

slighter still where his own will was concerned. Therefore, although many might rejoice at his death, yet it grieved those who had a share in the government, and even those who had some ground of complaint against him, for no one knew whither the change might lead.

This was soon discovered. Lorenzo the Magnificent had been scarcely two years and a half in his grave, and his sons had not yet found time to raise a monument to his memory, when the stately edifice of which Giovanni d'Averardo had laid the foundation-stone, which Cosimo had built up, and Piero and Lorenzo enlarged and adorned, crumbled to pieces. On November 9, 1494, Luca Corsini, one of the Priori, shut the gate of the palace of the Signoria in the face of Piero de' Medici, on his return from the French camp at Sarzana, and thus gave the signal for a great change in the destinies of the commonwealth. Lorenzo's son and successor had neither his father's sagacity and experience, nor his father's authority with the great men nor the attachment of the people, to help him. In the long-threatened division which brought down France to interfere in the dynastic troubles of Italy, he first made common cause with the house of Aragon against the Moro and the French king, and then, as soon as the latter, having crossed the Alps without obstacle, was threatening Florence, the young man lost his head and his courage, and without a shadow of right delivered up the fortresses of the state, Sarzana, Pietrasanta, Pisa, Livorno, to the foreigner. As soon as the old cry of 'People and liberty!' was raised in a burst of anger at this unheard-of proceeding, Piero mounted his horse and was glad when he found himself safe on the road to Bologna, whither he was followed by his brothers and those of his adherents who were most deeply compromised, while the mob was sacking the Medici palace and the houses of the most detested tools of their financial administration. Thus in a moment a revolution was accomplished which created a new popular state, under the eyes of a foreign sovereign. That same November 9 Charles

VIII. entered Pisa, where the rising against Florence began, and a week later he was in the palace in the Via Larga. This state lasted, amid the greatest internal and external difficulties, for nearly eighteen years, and then gave way to a new Medicean supremacy, which after another three years' interruption, brought about by similar extraneous circumstances, formed itself into an hereditary autocracy, lasting till, after the lapse of two full centuries, the altered family died out in the altered country, and was mourned even then, when but little was left of the qualities which had lent it so much splendour.

Lorenzo's friends and adherents met with various fates. Of the heads of the party, now left to their own resources, some attained influence and power in the new commonwealth; others came to a bloody end. Of the friends who stood round his death-bed, one, Angelo Poliziano, did not live to see the catastrophe that befell the once splendid house. He was taken away on September 24, 1494; and the evil reports which his life, notwithstanding all his high intellectual gifts, had in some measure called forth, did not spare him even in death. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola died on the day of the French king's entry, and the comforter of his last moments was the man whom Lorenzo, too, had summoned in the hour of death—the Predicant monk of Ferrara who was destined to stir Florence to her deepest depths, and to die amid the flames lighted by his own hand. Marsilio Ficino and Cristoforo Landino were doomed to witness the misfortunes of the family to whom they owed everything and were attached by hereditary affection, and to survive the execution of many friends, and the dispersion of the rich treasures of art and learning which adorned the house in which they had been born and grown up. Of the younger members of the circle, some spent eighteen years in exile and vicissitude, to come back at last and sun themselves in the splendour, brilliant indeed but fleeting, of the pontificate of Leo X. Then the seeds of literature and art sown in the

days of Lorenzo, sprang up in the works of Ariosto and Machiavelli, of Raphael and Michelangelo; but the political edifice, whose chief pillar he had been, and the national polity were irrecoverably destroyed; Italy had become the whole world's battle-field; Lombardy was subject to the French, Naples to the Spaniards; the crowd of dynasties in Romagna had been swept away by the flood; while of those who had once held in their control the weal and woe of the peninsula, Ferrante and Alfonso of Aragon had died in distress and remorse, and Lodovico il Moro had ended his days in a French prison.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.¹

- 1115. Death of the Countess Matilda. Increased independence of the Tuscan towns.
- 1188. Frederic Barbarossa in Florence.
- 1201. Chiarissimo de' Medici member of the council of the Florentine Commonwealth.
- 1207. Election of the first Podestà.
- 1215. Beginning of civil feuds.
- 1250. First constitution of the Florentine commonalty of citizens in opposition to the nobility. *The Capitano del Popolo.*
- 1260. Battle of Montaperti. Victory of the Ghibelline party.
- 1266. Charles of Anjou. The Ghibellines leave Florence.
- 1282. Origin of the political constitution of the guilds (*Priori delle Arti*).
- 1293. Reform of the constitution of the guilds. *Gonfalonieri di giustizia*. Penal laws against the nobility.
- 1294. Building of the Palace of the Commonwealth (*Palazzo dei Priori*), and of the new Cathedral begun.
- 1312. Siege of Florence by the Emperor Henry VII.
- 1320. Beginning of the war against Castruccio, Lord of Lucca.
- 1336. War against Martino della Scala, Lord of Verona.
- 1342-43. Tyrannical government of Gautier de Brienne, Duke of Athens. Complete downfall of the ancient nobility.
- 1346. Great losses of the Florentine banks.

¹ The object of this table is simply to facilitate a survey of the chronological sequence of the different parts of the work.

1351. Beginning of the wars against the Visconti of Milan.
1362. War with Pisa.
1371. Factions of the Albizzi and Ricci. Exclusion of many citizens from office.
1375. Beginning of enmity between the Florentines and Pope Gregory XI. (1377, return of the Pope from Avignon to Rome.)
1378. Gonfaloniership of Salvestro de' Medici. Rising and government of the lowest classes (*Tumulto dei Ciompi*).
Ambrogio Traversari born (d. 1439).
1379. Execution of Piero degli Albizzi.
Filippo Brunelleschi b. (d. 1446).
1380. Poggio Bracciolini b. (d. 1459).
- 1381? Lorenzo Ghiberti b. (d. 1455).
1382. End of the popular government. Rise of the power of the Albizzi.
1386. Donatello b. (d. 1466).
1387. Exile of Benedetto degli Alberti and his family. Fra Giovanni of Fiesole b. (d. 1455).
1388. Salvestro de' Medici d.
1389. Cosimo de' Medici b. (d. 1464).
1391. Neri Capponi, son of Gino, b. (d. 1457). ? Michelozzo Michelozzi b. (d. 1472).
1393. Tyranny of Maso degli Albizzi. Vieri de' Medici.
1394. Luigi Marsigli d.
1396. Emmanuel Chrysoloras called to Florence (d. 1415). Giannozzo Manetti b. (d. 1459).
1399. Pilgrimages of the White Penitents. Great mortality. Carlo Marsuppini b. (d. 1453).
1400. War with Gian-Galeazzo Visconti (d. 1402). Alliance with King Ruprecht of the Pfalz. Luca della Robbia b. (d. 1482).
1401. Masaccio b., at San Giovanni in Val d'Arno (d. 1428).
1403. League with Pope Boniface IX. and others against the Visconti.
L. Ghiberti receives the commission for the first door of the Baptistery.
1404. Beginning of the enterprise against Pisa.
1405. Fight for Pisa. Gino Capponi.
Matteo Palmieri b. (d. 1475). L. B. Alberti b. (d. 1472).
1406. Capture of Pisa.
Coluccio Salutati d. (b. 1330).

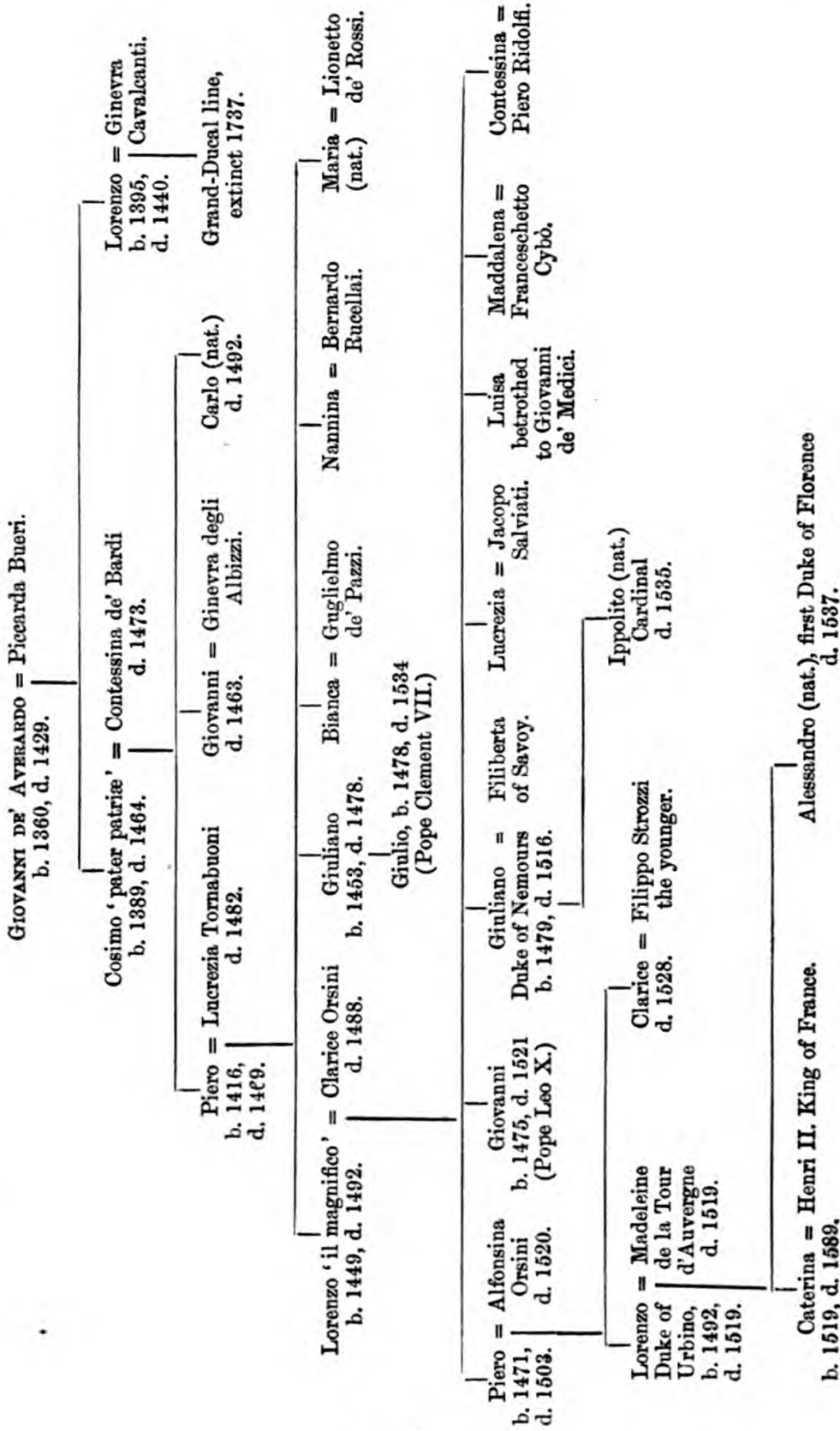
1408. Efforts to restore the unity of the Church.
1409. Council of Pisa. (P. Alexander V.)
Bernardo Rossellino b. (d. 1464).
1410. League with Pope John XXIII. [Baldassar Cossa]. Feo
Belcari b. (d. 1484).
1411. Treaty with K. Ladislas of Naples. Purchase of Cortona.
Establishment of the Council of Two Hundred.
- 1412? Fra Filippo Lippi b. (d. 1469).
1414. New treaty with K. Ladislas, and after his death, with his
sister Queen Joanna II. Cosimo de' Medici and John
XXIII. at Constance.
1415. Benedetto Accolti b. (d. 1466).
1416. Plague at Florence.
Piero de' Medici b. (d. 1469).
1417. Maso degli Albizzi d. His son Rinaldo and Niccolò da
Uzzano at the head of the Commonwealth.
1419. Pope Martin V. in Florence. Reconciliation and death of
John XXIII.
Archbishopric of Florence. Amerigo Corsini.
1420. Filippo Brunelleschi architect of the dome of the Cathedral.
Benozzo Gozzoli b. (d. 1498).
1421. Purchase of Livorno. Gino Capponi d.
1422. Flourishing state of commerce. Relations with the Levant.
1423. Beginning of the war with Filippo Maria Visconti.
1424. Defeat at Zagonara.
Cristoforo Landino b. (d. 1504).
1425. Defeat at Anghiari.
Lorenzo Ghiberti receives the commission for the second
door of the Baptistery.
1426. Disputes about taxes and war-imposts. The Albizzi and
Giovanni de' Medici.
1427. First register of lands.
Antonio Rossellino b. (d. 1478).
1428. Peace with F. M. Visconti.
Reform of the University. Palla Strozzi.
1429. Giovanni de' Medici d. Revolt of Volterra on account of
the introduction of the land-register.
Francesco Filelfo in Florence.
Antonio Pollaiuolo b. (d. 1498).
1430. War with Lucca. The Jews in Florence.
Bartolommeo Scala b. (d. 1495).
1431. Pope Eugene IV.

1431. Luigi Pulci b. (d. 1486).
Mino da Fiesole b. (d. 1484).
1432. Giuliano da Majano b. (d. 1490.)
Niccolò da Uzzano d.
K. Sigismund in Italy. (Crowned Emperor 1433).
1433. War with Lucca ended by a treaty with Milan.
Exile of Cosimo de' Medici.
Marsilio Ficino b. (d. 1499).
1434. Recall of Cosimo de' Medici. Exile of Rinaldo degli Albizzi,
Palla Strozzi and their friends. Pope Eugene IV. in
Florence. Completion of the dome of the Cathedral.
1435. Cosimo de' Medici Gonfalonier.
Andrea del Verrocchio b. (d. 1488).
1436. Consecration of the Cathedral by Pope Eugene IV. Convent
and library of San Marco. Medici palace.
1439. Florentine Council of Union. The Greeks in Florence.
1440. War of the Visconti. Battle of Anghiari. End of the
dominion of the Guidi in the Casentino.
1441. Death of Baldaccio da Anghiari.
Pietro Pollaiuolo b. (d. 1489?).
? Luca Signorelli b. (d. 1523).
1442. Benedetto da Majano b. (d. 1498?).
Rinaldo degli Albizzi d., at Ancona.
1445. Giuliano Giamberti da Sangallo b. (d. 1516).
1446. S. Antonine Archbishop (d. 1459).
1447. War in the Chiana valley with Alfonso of Aragon, King of
Naples. Pope Nicholas V.
1449. (January 1) Lorenzo de' Medici b. (d. 1492).
Bernardo Rucellai b. (d. 1514).
Domenico Ghirlandajo b. (d. 1494).
1450. Dispute with Venice. Francesco Sforza Duke of Milan.
1451. Amerigo Vespucci b. (d. 1512).
1452. Emperor Frederic III. in Florence. The Neapolitans in
the Chiana valley. Leonardo da Vinci b. (d. 1519).
1453. Giuliano de' Medici b. (d. 1478).
Girolamo Benevieni b. (d. 1542).
1454. Peace of Lodi, between Florence, Milan, Venice, and Naples.
Angelo Ambrogio Poliziano b. (d. 1494).
1455. Intrigues against Cosimo de' Medici. Luca Pitti. Pope
Calixtus III.
1456. Johannes Argyropulos called to Florence.
1457. Simone Pollaiuolo Cronaca b. (d. 1508).

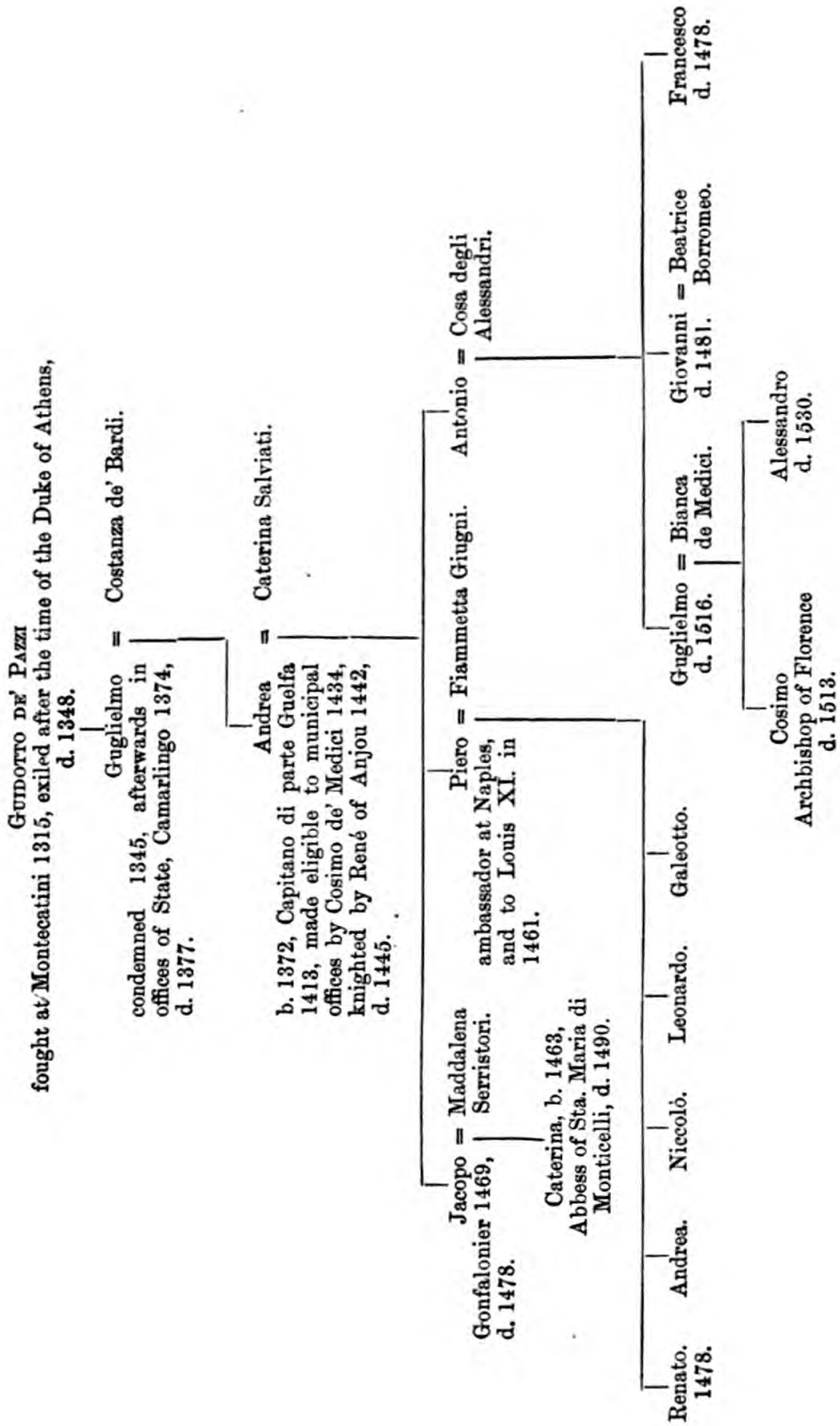
1457. Filippino Lippi b. (d. 1504).
 1458. Changes in the Constitution by Luca Pitti. Pope Pius II.
 1459. Pope Pius II. in Florence.
 Benozzo Gozzoli paints the chapel of the Medici palace.
 1461. Piero de' Medici Gonfalonier.
 1463. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola b. (d. 1494).
 1464. Cosimo de' Medici, 'Pater Patriæ,' d. Pope Paul II.
 Marcello Virgilio Adriani b. (d. 1521).
 1465. Beginning of the Pitti disturbances.
 1466. Conspiracy of Diotisalvi Neroni, Luca Pitti, and their friends
 against Piero de' Medici.
 1467. War of Colleone.
 1468. Peace with Venice. Purchase of Sarzana. Tournament
 and marriage of Lorenzo de' Medici.
 1469. Piero de' Medici d. Authority of Lorenzo. Tommaso
 Soderini.
 1470. Attempted revolt at Prato.
 Bernardo Donizj of Bibiena b. (d. 1520).
 1471. Galeazzo Maria Sforza in Florence. Lorenzo de' Medici at
 Rome with Pope Sixtus IV. Piero de' Medici b. (d. 1503).
 Bernardo Cennini, first Florentine printer.
 1472. Revolt and conquest of Volterra.
 1473. Re-opening of the University of Pisa.
 1474. King Christian of Denmark in Florence.
 1475. Giovanni de' Medici [Pope Leo X.] b. (d. 1521). Michel-
 angelo Buonarotti b. (d. 1564). Murder of Galeazzo M.
 Sforza. Regency of Bona of Savoy.
 1478. Conspiracy of the Pazzi. Death of Giuliano de' Medici.
 War with Rome and Naples. Giulio de' Medici [Pope
 Clement VII.] b.
 1479. Defeat at Poggibonzi. Lorenzo de' Medici in Naples.
 Lodovico il Moro regent of Milan.
 1480. Peace between Florence, Naples, and the Pope. Establish-
 ment of the Council of Seventy.
 1481. Cristoforo Landino's edition of Dante.
 1482. Ferrarese war. Francesco Guicciardini b. (d. 1540).
 1483. Fra Girolamo Savonarola in Florence. King Louis XI. of
 France d. Charles VIII. king.
 1484. Peace of Bagnolo. Pope Sixtus IV. d. Innocent VIII. Pope.
 1485. The Florentines in the Neapolitan barons' war against the
 Pope.
 1486. Peace between the Pope and King Ferrante.

1487. Recapture of Sarzana by the Florentines.
1488. Family alliance between the Medici and Innocent VIII.
Clarice de' Medici d. Homer's works first printed. Con-
vent of San Gallo.
Murder of Girolamo Riario and Galeotto Manfredi.
1489. Cardinalate of Giovanni de' Medici.
Fra Girolamo Savonarola again at San Marco.
Building of the Strozzi palace begun.
Benedetto da Majano.
1490. New constitutional reform. Lorenzo de' Medici mediator
between Pope Innocent and King Ferrante.
Cathedral. Choir of Sta. Maria Novella by Ghirlandajo.
Negotiations for completion of the Cathedral façade.
1491. Reconciliation between the Pope and Naples.
1492. Proclamation of the Cardinalate of Giovanni de' Medici.
Lorenzo de' Medici d., April 8.

MEDICI.



PAZZI.



SODERINI.

TOMMASO SODERINI

Capitano di parte Guelfa 1377-78, then banished, returned 1381,
Gonfalonier 1395, d. 1402.

Lorenzo = Ghilla Cambi.

Francesco = Margherita
son of Elisabetta Altoviti,
b. 1376, member of the
magistracy of Eight 1433.

(nat., legitimized), knight-
ed by K. Charles V. 1397,
d. 1405.

• Niccolo

b. 1401, Gonfalonier 1451 and 1465,
exiled in consequence of the conspiracy of
Diotalalvi Neroni, d. at Ravenna 1474.

Tommaso = Dianora Tornabuoni.

b. 1403, several times
ambassador and five times
Gonfalonier, d. 1485.

Francesco
b. 1453, Cardinal-Bishop
of Volterra, d. 1524.

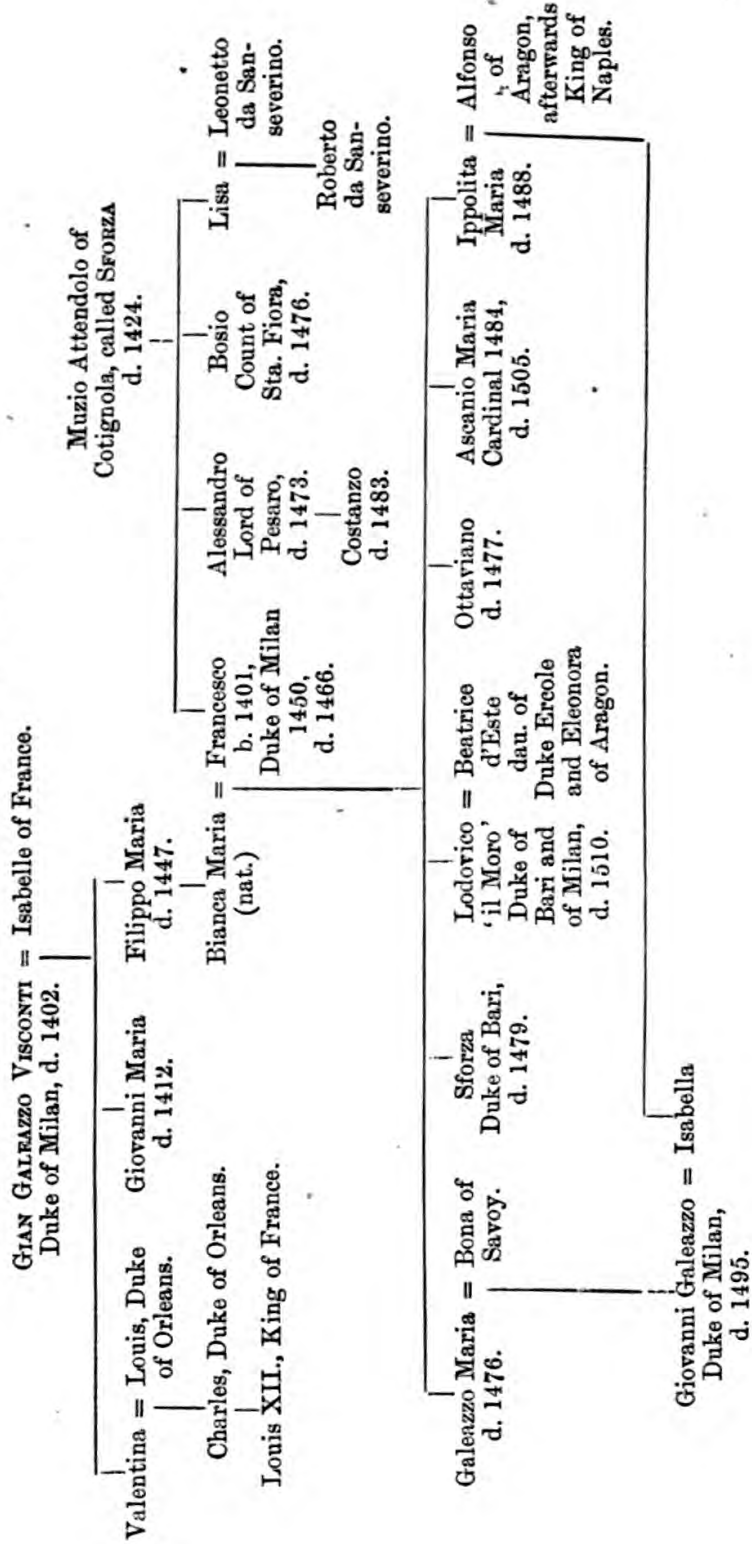
Piero
made Gonfalonier for life
in 1502, d. 1522.

Paol' Antonio
several times ambas-
sador, d. 1499.

Tommaso
knighted by
Leo X.

Gian Vittorio
Rector of
Pisa and
ambassador.

VISCONTI AND SFORZA.



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APPENDIX III.

LORENZO'S LAST HOURS.

Book VI. Chapter VIII.

THE interview of Savonarola and Lorenzo de' Medici has given rise to a controversy which has never been definitively settled. The account of the monk's biographers, Giovan Francesco Pico and Pacifico Burlamachi, cannot be reconciled with that given in Politian's letter above referred to. This last has the air of containing a mitigated version of the facts, intended to efface the bad impression made by current reports of the matter; and the third exhortation put into the monk's mouth by Politian—'that he should endure death with patience'—sounds almost like a commonplace, considering the gravity of the moment and the characters of the interlocutors. C. F. Meier, in his *History of Savonarola* (p. 52, &c.), and Villari, in '*La Storia di Girolamo Savonarola*' (i. 136), accept the version given by the Ferrarese monk's earliest biographers, and Villari tries to establish it by a long note (p. 155-158). But this version contains great improbabilities. How should the dying man, who had just received the viaticum, make another confession? And what could Savonarola have meant by his famous third demand—what practical use or effect could he expect from it, or from the possible assent of the dying man? The story looks like an invention of the after-days of excitement. The doubts as to the authenticity of the books of Burlamachi and Pico, which, it is suspected, were fabricated in the convent of San Marco and adorned with these authors' names, are of little consequence in this connection, as in any case the tradition was doubtless current among Savonarola's contemporaries.

Bartolommeo Cerretani gives, in the third book of his MS. chronicle, the following account of Lorenzo's last hours:—'April 7, about the fifth hour, Lorenzo received the Lord's Supper. As his illness was making such rapid progress, Messer Pier Leoni, otherwise an excellent physician, lost heart; other doctors were at once sent for, but it was too late. Feeling his end approaching, the sick man sent for his eldest son Piero, gave him divers exhortations, and then sent him away. About the twentieth hour he began to cry out: "I am dying and there is none to help me!" All hastened

to him. He said he wanted to get up a little, and had himself lifted out of bed, but only to be laid down immediately. The pains were so violent that he lost consciousness. Those standing round him began to weep, for they thought he was dead. A Camaldulensian who was present took off his spectacles, and holding them to his mouth perceived that he still breathed. A restorative was given him and he came to himself. Then he called for his son again and spoke to him softly, so that none of the others heard. After that his condition rapidly grew worse, so that he gave up the ghost on the 8th, about the fourth hour of the evening, in the arms of a valet.'

The doctor who, though a learned man, certainly seems to have blundered in his judgment as to Lorenzo's illness, put an end to his life next morning as has been related above (p. 461), by jumping into the well at the Martelli villa at San Gervasio before Porta Pinti.

Sannazzaro's poem in terza rima (in Roscoe, *Ap.* lxxviii.) on the death of Piero Leoni attributes it to the instigation of Piero de' Medici. The fragment beginning: 'Fu trovato essere stato gettato in un pozzo' &c., published in Fabroni (*l. c.* ii. 397) as being from some anonymous author in the Magliabecchiana, is borrowed from the Ricordi of Alamanno Rinuccini (p. cxlvi). Petrus Crinitus and Valerianus (*De literatorum infelicitate*) take it for granted that the doctor in his agitation took his own life; and Cerretani certainly indicates that Leoni, who a short time before had been in good hopes, lost his head. He states, moreover, that the Medici's grooms threatened the life of the physician, who was, therefore, taken to San Gervasio, and that the report of his death by the violence of others was immediately spread, but was unfounded. Burcard in his defective report (p. 175) alludes to Piero de' Medici's complaint by saying that the fatal termination of the illness was to be attributed to wrong medical treatment, and raises a supposition that at Rome there was believed to have been a murder.

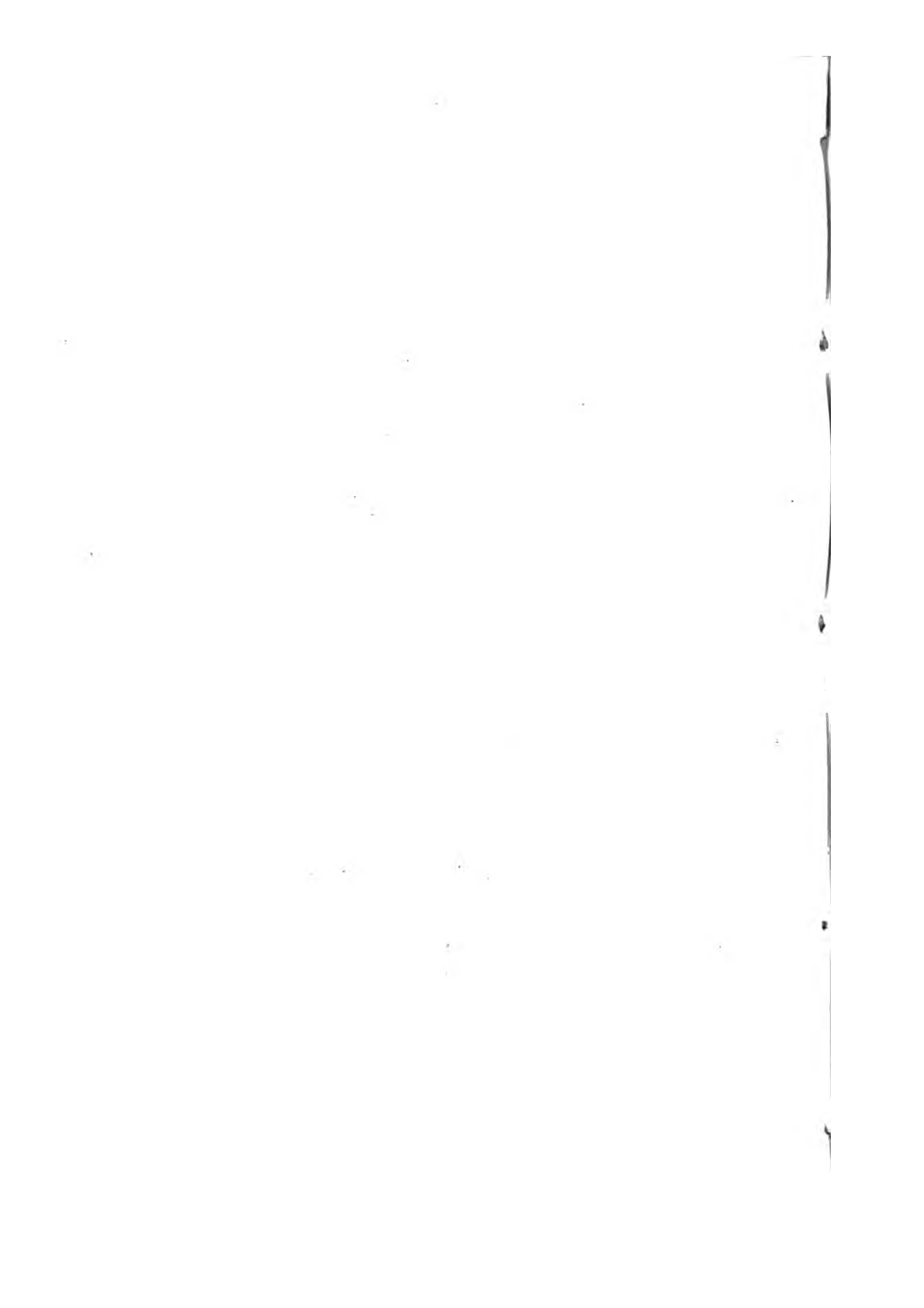
In May, Demetrius Chalcondylas wrote from Milan to Marcello Virgilio Adriani: 'Thou hast announced to me two sad events; the flash of lightning which has struck the principal church of the city, occasioned so much ruin, and presaged so great evils; and the death of Lorenzo, the most famous man of our time, who was distinguished in so many ways. His decease causes me deep sorrow, not merely on account of the loss, which touches us all in no slight degree, but also on account of what I personally lose, who have always found him a kind patron. And to all this is added the sad and fearful death of Piero Leoni, which has shocked me more than anything

for a long time past. Believe me, Marcello, this end casts a shadow over Lorenzo's death, and is a dishonour to the family and to the whole city. For although thou, like others, writest that he threw himself into the well, yet it is difficult to convince thoughtful people that such a wise and learned man, who, as thou thyself also tellest me, treated Lorenzo in his illness with so much care, could have been seized with such madness as to choose so shameful a death.' (Bandini, *Collectio*, &c., p. 22).

In Fabroni, *l. c.*, and Roscoe, '*Life of Leo X.*' (Ap. No. xxii.) will be found the letters written by Cardinal Giovanni to his brother after their father's death. The first may be given here. The original is in the curious mixture of Latin and Italian sentences which was then still in vogue.

'My beloved brother, now the only support of our house. What shall I write to thee, when only tears are left me? For when I consider that our father of blessed memory is taken from us, I am nearer weeping than speaking. What a father! None was kinder than he to his children; of this facts are witness. Therefore it is no wonder that I lament and can find no rest; and my only consolation is that I have thee, my brother, in our father's place. It is for thee to command, for me to obey, and thy commands will always give me the greatest pleasure. Try me; nothing shall find me backward. But I beg thee, my Piero, be towards all, especially towards thine own people, as I wish thee, beneficent, kind, courteous, gracious; thereby all is obtained, all is preserved. Not because I mistrust thee do I remind thee of this, but because it is my duty. I am consoled and sustained by the concourse of mourners to our house, the universal sympathy, the mourning of the whole city, and other things which help to alleviate sorrow. But what consoles me above all is that I have thee, whom I trust more than my words are able to express. As to what thou wishest arranged with his Holiness, nothing has been done, as it seemed better to take another way, on which the ambassador will report to thee, and which seems as if it must lead more easily to the object. Rome, April 12, 1492.'

THE END.



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