

# FLORENTINE HISTORY,

FROM THE EARLIEST AUTHENTIC RECORDS

TO THE ACCESSION OF

FERDINAND THE THIRD,

GRAND DUKE OF TUSCANY.



BY

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IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

LONDON:  
EDWARD MOXON, DOVER STREET.

MDCCCLVII.

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## ERRATA.

PAGE	LINE	FOR	READ
206 .	2, Note	Familiare . . . .	Familiari
224 .	12, „	Do. . . . .	Do.
237 .	1, „	Do. . . . .	Do.
267 .	6, „	Principe . . . .	Principi
269 .	1, „	Familiare . . . .	Familiari
277 .	3, „	Giero . . . . .	Piero
286 .	2, „	1501 al', MS. . . .	1501 all' 1546, MS.
295 .	2, „	Aveta . . . . .	Avete
369 .	16,	mc . . . . .	mine
384 .	7,	results constutions, .	results, constitutions
393 .	15,	repulse . . . . .	repulse.
396 .	5, from bottom	Command a forgiveness .	Command forgiveness
397 .	11 „ „	subsidising . . . . .	subsidizing
472 .	16, from top	March the light horse- men, to &c. . . . .	March, the light horse- men to &c.
475 .	6, from bottom	and now bending . . . .	and bending
505 .	15, from top	particular, . . . . .	particular
507 .	2, „	Dante, . . . . .	Dante
524 .	4. „	who . . . . .	which





# FLORENTINE HISTORY.

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## BOOK THE SECOND.

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### MISCELLANEOUS CHAPTER.

#### FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

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THE Italians of this age believed that five points were essential to an eligible site for colonies or great cities; namely a healthy air; a soil and climate sufficiently attractive to influence the settlement of strangers; a strong defensible and aggressive position; abundance of the elementary commodities of life and society, especially water; and vicinity to the sea or some navigable river that might foster commerce manufactures and national improvement, but the sea itself to be avoided on account of plague and pestilence; and all these qualities were acknowledged in the site of Florence.

Surrounded by a mountainous region difficult of access, she felt herself sufficiently firm in position almost to defy the largest armies if common talent and energy were adopted, her subject provinces conciliated, and the geographical cast of the country skilfully made use of as a natural fortification. On the sides of Lombardy and Romagna the passes were narrow difficult and nearly impervious to artillery: from Lombardy there seems to have been in the fifteenth century five roads

into Tuscany : first from Parma by Fornovo to Pontremoli and so on through Sarzana, where Charles VIII. never could have marched unassisted by Florence and Lucca : secondly through Garfagnana, a province situated principally about the upper valley of the Serchio ; and this road led from Ferrara and Modena by Montecucoli and Pelago into the states of Lucca, by which Stuart Duke of Albany with a small army had great difficulty in passing in the year 1524. The third road was that used by Raimond de Cardona in 1512 to reestablish the Medici at Florence, and he succeeded with infinite hardship though assisted by many native adherents and without any military opposition from the Florentines : this road led from Bologna by Pianoro, through the valley of the river Savena, over Monte Bene and Monte Sasso into the plain of Florence. The fourth issued also from Bologna by Scarperia, answering to the modern Bologna road, in those days the most difficult, and almost impassable for artillery. A fifth ran by San Quirico through the valley of the Bisanzia leading down on Prato, by which the Florentine exiles moved in 1537. From Romagna four other and still more difficult passes led into Tuscany : one from Faenza by the Val-di-Lamone and Marradi, extremely dangerous ; as both Corrado Lando in 1355, and Piccinino seventy years after, found to their cost ; both their armies having been destroyed by the peasantry alone, and thence the latter's exclamation, "*Val-di-Lamone perchè ti vid' io mai?*" And again in the Pisan war, when Venice wished to succour that republic by a diversion of the Florentine forces, her army could not advance beyond Marradi on this road without leaving the artillery and therefore relinquished it. The second led from Forli through the Val-di-Montone or Castro, by the present Terra-del-Sole and Castracano ; now admirable but at that time impassable for artillery. The third ran from Cesina through the Val-di-Bagno, by which Bourbon forced his way in 1527 until safely quartered at San Stefano on the

Tiber, threatening Florence in his march to Rome. The fourth<sup>ad</sup> from Rimini in La Marca was the best, running as it did<sup>y</sup> through the valley of La Marca and by San Stefano and Arezzo; but an invading army meeting many fortified cities and strongholds on this road could not easily advance without leaving numerous garrisons in its rear, as the Prince of Orange found in 1530. Within Tuscany and between Florence and Siena the communication was geographically easy, but numberless fortresses studded the frontier on every side; such as Sarzana, Sarzanella, Fivizzano, Pietra Santa and Leghorn on the sea line from Genoa and Pontremoli: Poggibonzi or Poggio Imperiale, Colle, San Gimignano, Montepulciano, and Volterra towards the Siena frontier: Cortona, Borgo San Sepolcro, Monte San Savino and San Stefano on the confines of Umbria, besides Arezzo and other strongholds in that quarter: then followed Castracaro, Marradi, Scarperia Barberino, Firenzuola and numbers more amongst the mountains of Mugello and its conterminous districts.

Florence could issue from such a position with facility to the attack and subsist her armies in more fertile countries beyond; but an enemy's impediments in penetrating were always great and might have been made insurmountable by the extreme difficulty of subsistence, because no march could then be undertaken without four or five days' previous knowledge of the Florentines: this gave full time for preparation, and the enemy would arrive in an abandoned country entirely cleared of provisions which last could be quickly and safely lodged in Prato, Pistoia, Florence and other places impervious to a sudden attack. Cardona experienced this in 1512, and Bourbon would have been equally perplexed in 1527 if instead of Rome he had turned on Florence. Nor was this strong geographical position her only bulwark; the capital itself in those unskilful days of obsidional tactics was deemed impregnable except through famine. Strong walls, high towers, a broad though

into <sup>Tu</sup> a rapid or impassable river; an extended plain on one side, and hills partly inclosed within the ramparts and partly defended as outworks on the other, were its principal bulwarks.

Two large and independent armies, one on each bank of the Arno, were requisite to blockade the town: six thousand men and the citizens were sufficient for its defence: to the south supplies for a beleaguering force depended almost entirely on Siena; to the north on the whole surrounding country, which being previously cleared would render only gleanings, and other sources of nourishment were of necessity remote. It was a common saying that Florence would never be taken by a small army, and a large one could not subsist before it. But another notion also prevailed in Italy: that notwithstanding the natural and artificial strength of the town it was weak from the weakness of its citizens who were believed to be worth little as soldiers: the siege of 1530 proved this notion erroneous; nor does it appear in history that where regularly trained there ever was a want of spirit or genius in her sons even to the age of Napoleon. Still amongst the Italians of that period they were esteemed timid from their varied and commercial habits and often mean nature of their employments: mean however, not intrinsically, but only because adopted by men in humble life as a means of honest subsistence; a reason rather for praise than disparagement. The greatest dignitaries of the commonwealth as was truly said, disdained not to labour even at the lowest mechanic arts in their shops and warehouses, and exercise every sort of trade from the highest commercial enterprise to the lowest manufactures of the country\*.

Another and stronger reason for their supposed timidity was the everlasting discord, the clash of faction, and the utter recklessness of honour patriotism and political honesty when put in competition with party spirit ambition and personal hatred.

\* Marco Foscarini, *Disc. Del. Erud. Tos.*, tom. xxiii.—Guicciardini, *Lib. xv.*, cap. iv.—Robertson, *Charles V.*, vol. ii., p. 291.

Mammon and luxury, at least in gardens and architecture, had also their full share in augmenting if not causing the timidity of the Florentine citizens in face of an invading foe; for their villas and country palaces were so numerous, so rich, and so magnificent, that they alone became virtual pledges for pacific and timid councils. Many citizens had invested the half and even a larger share of their fortunes in these fabrics and were much more ready to buy off an invader with the public purse than risk their destruction. Timidity naturally increased with opulence, and though an army could not long subsist itself in the plain of Florence, yet property worth more than a million of gold might have been destroyed in a few days amongst palaces alone; hence it was a common saying even with the Florentines themselves, that their palaces were so many hostages in the hands of an enemy; this however the siege also proved to be false, when all were cheerfully demolished even by their owners' hands\*. For these reasons, although Florence was strong in its defences, site, and territory, she was deemed weak from the want of a warlike spirit in her citizens.

These rural palaces were probably much like those that now stud the plain of Florence; many of them indeed are the same; some as old and older than the time of Boccaccio and their gardens and terraces still preserve the ancient republican stamp and character, though more dilapidated than in those energetic days of taste and commercial affluence. Then as now there was probably but little shade immediately around them except from cypress groves and fruit-bearing trees which seem to have been more cultivated than the merely ornamental plants. Buonaccorsi Pitti amongst the minutiae of his interesting chronicle tells us that on the twenty-fourth of April 1419 he counted all the fruit-trees in his garden and vineyard, and that exclusive of hazel-nuts they amounted to five hundred

\* Lettere di Carlo Capello, Venetian vol. i<sup>o</sup>., Serie ii<sup>a</sup>. Relazioni Venete, ambassador at Florence, 1529-30, Lettera lvii.

and sixty-one. By his list, which may be worth recording, it appears that there were one hundred and sixty-four fig-trees; one hundred and six peach-trees; eighty plum-trees; fifty-eight cherry-trees; twenty-four almond trees; twenty-five apple-trees; sixteen pear-trees; six orange-trees; seven pomegranates; two quince-trees; four walnut-trees; nine "*amarini*" (a peculiar sort of cherry) and sixty olive trees; besides a great number of others that had not yet borne fruit but which he says would do so in time if not hurt by drought\*.

Thus occupied by villas and vineyards the contado of Florence produced little grain, not more than four months' consumption for the city; Montepulciano, Arezzo, the upper Val d'Arno and above all Pisa, were the ordinary granaries; the ecclesiastical states, Siena, Romagna and Sicily the extraordinary ones; but commerce and manufactures were always unduly encouraged by the Florentines at the expense of agriculture although the latter occupied the pens of able men both in prose and verse. This partiality would not have been so injurious had it been universal, because the prosperity of one would have benefited the other; but it was perniciously confined to the capital, not spread amongst subject cities or diffused through the country.

Commerce, manufactures, and political power were so intimately connected in Florence that the corporations acquired vast riches and influence, their rents amounting towards the end of the fifteenth century to about 200,000 florins or nearly two-thirds of the ordinary revenue of the commonwealth. Besides this they had the administration of churches, hospitals, and charities of every kind, affording both profit and patronage; so that in their corporate character none were more contented than the trades of Florence. Their business, even in the midst of all the misfortunes that followed Lorenzo de' Medici's death, seems to have been still active and lucrative:

\* Buonaccorso Pitti, *Cronica*, p. 112.

the usual number of pieces of that sort of cloth called "*Garbo*," composed of Spanish wool, which were manufactured by that trade amounted to fourteen thousand, and sold at 21 florins the piece in Rome, Naples, Constantinople, and other places. Besides these there were from four to five thousand pieces of broad cloth made of English wool, a more costly fabric, fetching the price of 60 florins each: this kind of cloth was denominated "*San Martino*" and its export, which along with the other often rose to twenty-three thousand pieces, amounted to nearly 600,000 ducats\*.

The silk trade manufactured four hundred bales of raw silk besides brocades, cloth of gold and silver, and similar fabrics to the amount of a million of gold annually, so that from these two principal branches of industry the activity and prosperity of all remaining trades may be conceived.

Of the population that furnished this labour it is difficult to speak, for while some authors make it amount to a hundred and twenty-two thousand, from other sources it would seem to have been much less; yet as there were about forty hospitals in the city with a rental of 60,000 florins; and between Florence and its suburbs no less than one hundred large and rich male and female convents, there must have been an extensive population to require and support them. The present population of Florence is about a hundred thousand contained within the ancient precincts: additions have no doubt been made to the city; but in those days the house that contained four good families scarcely serves at this moment for one, so changed are habits! And we are told by Pagnini that the same amount of labour which then maintained twelve people in their manner of living would not in his day subsist a single individual†!

\* Marco Foscarelli, *Discorsi*, tom. xxiii., *Del. Er. Tos.*—Varchi, *Lib. ix.*, p. 116.

† He of course must mean to include luxuries, because the human stomach

is no larger than of yore and therefore the *quantity* of food eaten, independent of *quality*, must average about the same.



Hence he infers that the population of Florence in the fifteenth century was about what it has been commonly supposed and that the estimate of cotemporary authors is not far wrong. There seem to be two errors into which modern writers have run in discussing this subject and which have made them disbelieve the statements of cotemporaries; first a want of distinction between the taxed and the untaxed inhabitants, that is between citizens and mere subjects and populace: secondly, and the most important one; is the counting of the civic population *within* the walls alone independent of the suburbs which were large, densely inhabited, and seem evidently to have been included in all the cotemporary statements. Varchi at the commencement of the siege makes the population amount to one hundred thousand: Goro Dati says that one hundred “*Moggia*” of wheat were necessary each day for the Florentine population: this would make three thousand *Moggia* a month or seventy two thousand *Staia* or native bushels, which at the Florentine calculation of one *Staia* per head a month would give as many inhabitants, and this added to the suburban population brings up the whole mass of people to a great amount, for the suburbs by some writers were reckoned nearly equal to the city itself. The number of “*Sopportanti*” or tax payers, that is to say nominal and real citizens, in 1427 was thirty-seven thousand two hundred and twenty-five as enumerated for the imposition of the *Catasto*; and forty thousand two hundred and thirty-eight for the same tax in 1470. These were the real Florentine republic; the rest were slaves, *plebs*, subjects under legal protection but with no political rights, and therefore always attached to Medician supremacy by which they were courted protected and amused\*.

The ordinary revenue of Florence at the close of the fifteenth century and beginning of the sixteenth was 345,540 florins and the ordinary expense 226,000, but their standing army was

\* Pagnini, della Decima.

trifling; they had no artillery until the siege in 1530, except a few wall-pieces called "*Moschetti*" which were also carried by mules in the field, and their garrisons were merely skeletons. The above revenue seems to have been taken independent of the *Decima* which was uncertain and very unequal; for though when first established it strictly answered to its name, state necessity often caused its repetition more than once within the year, so that it sometimes amounted after the revolution of 1494 to forty per cent. per annum and even more, an enormous taxation which only a democratic government could have ventured to impose! Its general range in ordinary times was from about 41,000 to 50,000 florins annually, the florin of course though intrinsically the same, varying in value of exchange for silver and copper coinage\*.

The smallest metallic currency of Florence during this century was that called "*Piccioli*" or "*Danari*" and sometimes "*Danarini*." Four of these were equal to a "*Quattrin-Nero*," or Black Quattrino, first coined in 1332; and five to a "*Quattrin-Bianco*" or White Quattrino. Five Quattrini Neri or four Bianchi were equal to a "*Crazia*." Four "*Crazie*" and one Quattrino Nero made a "*Grosso*" or "*Grossone*" which was equal to seven "*Soldi*" a mere nominal coin equivalent to three Quattrini. Besides these there was the "*Barile*" or "*Gabellotto*;" called so because it was the amount of the Gabella for one barrel of wine on entering the gates of Florence. This coin was also denominated "*Battezzone*" from its having the impression of Saint John baptising Jesus, whereas all the rest of the Florentine coinage had only the Baptist's figure on one side and the lily on the reverse. A Barile, originally worth thirty-seven Quattrini and two Denari became finally equal to forty Quattrini or one "*Giulio*." A Lira (at first an imaginary coin) contained twenty *Soldi* or twelve *Crazie*, equal to sixty Quattrini, or two hundred and forty Danari.

\* Pagnini, Parte prima.—Varchi, Lib. ix.

The golden florin, which after the downfall of the republic was also named a ducat, and subsequently "*Scudo*" or crown, varied during this century from about three lire and a half to seven. All kinds of foreign money passed current in the Florentine market, both gold and silver, but the French crown was most esteemed: it exchanged for six lire and sixteen soldi at the end of the century and therefore nearly equalled the florin. The distinction between what was called "*Moneta Bianca*" and "*Moneta Nera*" or "*Erosa*" began about 1316 or 1321; the former was silver money, the latter copper or other base metal mixed with a small portion of silver and sometimes as it would seem washed over with it\*. Of these there were the "*Fiorino da Sei*," equal to six Danari one part in eleven being silver; and the "*Fiorino Nero*" of the same fineness but only one-sixth of the value and probably identical with the "*Piccioli*." The "*Soldini*" were in equal parts of copper and silver and fetched twelve Danari. In 1472 the Quattrini were intrinsically of less value, being almost one-seventh instead of one-fifth of silver, yet still passed for four Danari. The Piccioli also were diminished more than two-thirds in their silver value the same year, but seem to have remained unaltered in exchange. In 1490, or according to Borghini in 1480, the Quattrini Bianchi were coined of the same value as the original Quattrini, three of them being made equal to four of the Neri. Other Quattrini were coined the same year and in 1509, with one-twelfth part of silver only; and thus was there a frequent variation of the Moneta Nera or copper coinage of the Florentine republic †. The silver florin appears to have been in circulation previous to 1252 when the golden florin was first coined, of which it formed a twentieth part: some time after the gold coin appeared these silver florins took the name of "*Grossi*" or "*Soldi Grossi*," and afterwards "*Guelfi*," "*Guelfi Grossi*," "*Grossi Guelfi*," "*Popo-*

\* Borghini, Discorso della Moneta Fiorentina, p. 189, vol. ii°.—Pagnini, della Decima.  
 † Pagnini, Tavola cxi., Parte ii°.—Borghini, Discorsi, vol. ii°, p. 191.

*lini*," "*Grossoni*," "*Cotali*," "*Carlini*," "*Barili*" and "*Quinto di Ducato*," with some little depreciation of their intrinsic value but, excepting the last, the same currency. There were about eleven ounces and three quarters of silver to nine, and subsequently twelve pennyweights of copper, but considerable variation obtained in the number coined from a pound of metal.

These mutations altered the relative value of the two florins so that instead of twenty, no less than thirty, and even forty and fifty silver florins were subsequently given in exchange for one of gold. This discrepancy; increased as it appears to have been by a fraudulent diminution of the weight; caused so much difficulty that a new and imaginary fraction of the golden florin was introduced into use; this was the "*Lira*:" not a new coin in Italy, or even in Florence where it was superseded by the florin, and which city in 1109 purchased Monte Murlo from the Counts Guidi for five thousand "*Lire*" or "*Libbre di Fiorentini Piccioli*"\*; but was first used as a fraction of the golden florin in the fourteenth century, yet always imaginary until Cosimo the First made it tangible†.

The Lira now spoken of was divided into twenty Soldi and these again into twelve Danari, which introduced a new method of counting in addition to the old, for thenceforward there were two species of Soldi and Danari; the one being fractional parts of a golden Florin; the other of a Lira, itself the twentieth part of a Florin: the one abstract, the other real; and hence, as the silver coinage became deteriorated, arose great confusion‡.

The golden florin was a fixed amount of metal bearing a relative proportion to silver when first coined in 1252, of seventy-two grains to seven hundred and seventy; or about ten and seven-tenths to one§. The Lira being imaginary, and com-

\* "*Fiorini Piccioli*" was the proper name, in those early days, of the Florentine money, (Vide *Borghini della Moneta Fiorentina*, vol. ii., p. 156).

† *Borghini*, *Discorsi*, vol. ii<sup>o</sup>., pp. 232, 235.—*Pagnini*, *della Decima*, Parte ii<sup>a</sup>.

‡ *Ibid*, p. 136.

§ The reader is requested to excuse some almost necessary and perhaps not inconvenient repetitions about the coinage, from the miscellaneous chapter of the thirteenth century in vol. i.

posed of Soldi and Danari, altered in value according to the fineness, weight, or other variation in those coins, while the florin maintained its station. The consequence of this depreciation of the Soldi and Danari, and thence of the Lira, was that the number of Lire contained in a florin kept continually increasing and rendered the currency more intricate; it in fact formed at one and the same time a gold and a silver standard; which would appear to be something like measuring cloth by the barometer.

One metal alone can maintain an invariable value as regards itself, because an ounce of it will always measure an ounce, but gold and silver like the mercurial range are for ever varying in relative value the same as other commodities, and will no more agree than the barometrical and thermometrical movements. For though the general relative value of these two metals throughout the civilised world probably suffers but little variation except after long periods, their value in the several markets will be continually fluctuating; but that of gold most, in consequence of its greater convenience and facility of transit.

The golden florin and its fractional parts was the standard used in all the financial business of government, and of this coin there were many denominations, all of the same carat and but little variation in weight; ranging from sixty-eight to seventy-two grains each at different epochs of the republic. They appeared at various times under divers names: the "*Fiorini di Suggello*" were so called from their being inclosed in sealed bags containing a certain number, and thus circulated unopened in commerce: of these there were florins of the first, second, third and fourth Suggello; also a fifth, sixth, and seventh; some having been apparently struck to coincide with the Venetian ducat. Then came the "*Fiorino nuovissima or Largo, di Galea*" coined in 1422 for the Levant and Egyptian trade: the "*Fiorino largo*"\*; the "*Fiorino stretto*;" "*Fiorino nuovo*;"

\* Or Broad Piece, from its larger circumference; having been thus enlarged

“*Fiorino novastro* ;” “*Fiorino stretto di Camera* ;” “*Ducato* ;” “*Gigliato* ;” and “*Fiorino d' Oro Largo, in Oro\**. This last was a mere form of expression to secure payment in golden florins not in smaller coinage of equivalent amount ; and the “*Fiorino di Camera*” was so called only from being of the same value as those of the Apostolic Chamber, or papal florin, at Rome †.

The flow of specie into Florence must have been constant, from her great commerce, her numerous manufactures, and wide-spread banking trade ; wherefore the price of all commodities, except those of food and labour which were forced downwards, probably stood above the average of Italy, with the exception of Venice perhaps, and possibly Genoa. The mean price of wheat during the three first quarters of this century was in relation to the mean value of the Lira equal to one Lira two Soldi eight Danari the Staio : barley eight Soldi : rye twelve Soldi : Indian corn five Soldi and four Danari : kidney-beans six Soldi : walnuts the same : dried figs a Lira : wine per barrel twenty-seven Soldi and eight Danari : oil six Lire and ten Soldi the barrel : veal two Soldi two Danari and three-quarters a pound troy : mutton about the same : pork four Soldi : a pair of capons one Lira : a pair of fowls eleven Soldi : pullets eight Soldi : young geese thirteen Soldi six Danari : sugar was sold at thirty-two Soldi and eight Danari the pound troy : manufactured wax at seven Soldi : saffron at ten Lire sixteen Soldi : English, French, and Spanish wool about twenty-two Lire the hundred pound troy. The wages of a mason were one Lira a day, and

in conformity with the usage of other cities, (Vide *Domenico Boninsegni, Storia di Firenze*, p. 18.) And in consequence of this the old Florins were called “*Stretti*” for distinction. (Vide *Orsini, Storia della Moneta della Repubblica Fiorentina*, vol. i<sup>o</sup>., *Introduction*). But the intrinsic value of all the above-mentioned varieties

was nearly equal.

\* Borghini, *Discorso della Moneta Fiorentina*.—Orsini, *Stor. della Moneta della Repubblica Fiorentina*.—Pagnini, *della Decima, Parte ii<sup>a</sup>*.—*Fiorino d' Oro Illustrato*, da Pietro Vettori Vettori, cap. iii. to xvii.

† Orsini, *Stor. Monete Fior<sup>l</sup>*, vol. i<sup>o</sup>., *Introduction*.

half that for his labourer; those of a carpenter the same, and an agricultural labourer ten Soldi or about the ninth part of a golden florin, so that a mason or carpenter could earn nearly a *Stajo* of corn a day\*.

No means were omitted by the Florentines to encourage commerce and manufactures, and to discourage luxury and promote marriage: for the last purpose "*Il Monte delle Dote*" or marriage portion fund was created in 1425, both male and female. A hundred florins vested in either of these stocks entitled the young man or woman at their marriage if at the end of fifteen years to 500 florins or more, according to the length of the time beyond that period; but if they died or entered a convent before, then the money remained to the "*Mount.*"

Great care was taken to keep the provision market low, an interference that often had a contrary effect and proved always mischievous; but agriculture was lightly thought of while large profits were made by commerce and public loans: few

\* Pagnini, della Decima, Parte ii. This is the rough average of three quarters of a century during which the value of the gold florin rose almost regularly from three Lira thirteen Soldi four Danari, to five Lira eight Danari. Now, reckoning the intrinsic value of the florin to be equivalent to about 12s. 9d. of our money, (*i. e.* 72 grains of pure gold in the florin and 113 in the sovereign *nearly*) an agricultural labourer's wages, reckoned as one-ninth of the mean value of a florin, would be about 1s. 5d. a day, weight for weight of our money, which seems almost incredible. The mean value of the golden florin was four Lira nine Soldi and nine Danari or nearly so. Now the present Tuscan *Stajo* is stated to be about seven-tenths of a Winchester wheat-bushel of 64lbs. troy, and although the *Stajo* varied a little in early times, there is probably no great difference between its then and present capacity. Wherefore assuming that it was about

45lbs. troy, and cost two hundred and seventy-two Danari, its average price according to the above calculation must weight for weight have been about 3s. 3d. sterling of our day, and at the present value of wheat in England would cost about 4s. 4½d. therefore a Florentine labourer could at this price buy about 15lbs. of wheat with his day's wages at that period in Florence market, but the same money would only purchase 14½lbs. at this moment in England with wheat at 50s. a quarter, or 6s. 3d. a bushel. Wherefore, assuming my data and calculations to be correct, the value of money compared with what it now is in England was only as 15 to 16½ at a bread price. And this is one amongst other indications that leads me to think Florence must have been dearer than the rest of Italy, in consequence of wars, taxation, debt, trade, wide-spread poverty, and partial opulence.

citizens in fact possessed much land and still fewer cared for it; all the force of government was directed to keeping the market abundantly supplied with food, and preventing its export by every possible means, in order that the manufacturing population should live cheap and the merchants in consequence be able to undersell all other nations in the foreign market and yet make large profits. Hence all the rigid laws and minute regulations of the offices of "*La Grascia*" and "*L'Abondanza*," of which more will be said hereafter, showing how they rather tended to create scarcity than repel it, by their pernicious interference with private trade and individual enterprise.

Other public enactments contributed also to the encouragement of trade; and sumptuary laws, promulgated from the most remote times of the republic, seem to show the foresight of its rulers in thus early trying to check the inevitable influence of riches on the citizen, by inducing him to supply luxuries but use none, and thus increase his ability to serve the public. Nor were they entirely without effect, the Florentines being in those times noted throughout Europe for their domestic frugality, while their magnificence in every public work, and their enormous expense in wars, was the theme of universal admiration. Varchi; on the authority of Cristofano Landini the commentator of Dante; gives a curious estimate of the vast treasure expended by Florence in war; with an ordinary revenue, as he asserts, of less than 25,000 florins a month. "From the year 1377" says Landini "until 1406 there were spent in war alone, 11,500,000 golden florins;" equal in purchase-value probably to about 12,000,000 sterling of the present day. And, he continues, "as every 100 florins weigh one pound, 40,000 florins are equal to a mule-load of four hundred pounds, and therefore the whole quantity would load two hundred and eighty-seven mules, and half a load over. And because 200,000 florins make a cart-load of two thousand



pounds there would be fifty cart-loads and a half of gold expended in twenty-nine years on four wars alone ”\*!

Now as forty-four guineas and a half weigh one pound troy the above amount of gold is equal, weight for weight without any allowance for the higher carat of the florin, to 5,373,375 pounds sterling. Landini also asserts that seventy-seven Florentine houses alone (but probably with more than one family in each) paid in extraordinary contributions between the years 1430 and 1453 no less than 4,875,000 florins, or twenty cart-loads of gold; and during the three years of popular government from 1527 until 1530, including the siege, no less than 1,419,500 florins in extraordinary contributions passed through the hands of the government †.

Every pains was taken to encourage parsimony in domestic habits; in food, in raiment, and every branch of private and personal expenditure; and thence arose that strong spirit of frugality and love of gain that distinguished the Florentines. Many “*pragmatic laws*” as they were called, exist in the “*Florentine Statute*” against excess in personal indulgence of expense: the ornaments permitted and forbidden are described, the quality of woollen cloth and silk stuffs of which the use was prohibited is indicated; the fashion of dress for both the sexes directed, the expense of nuptials regulated, and the number and quality of the viands allowed on such occasions laid down even to the minutest particulars, in order to avoid the slightest appearance of luxury and extravagance in a people depending on their own industry alone for their national greatness and prosperity; nay they went so far as to forbid retail dealings in some of the more costly species of cloth and silk in order to prevent their wear by the citizens ‡.

This frugal simplicity of domestic life, though gradually corroded by time and increasing opulence, long regulated the

\* Varchi, Lib. ix., p. 115.

† Ibid., p. 116.

‡ Pagnini, della Decima, Parte iii<sup>a</sup>, tom. ii<sup>o</sup>.

domestic manners of the Florentines ; amongst whom the most wealthy even at the end of this century, never overstepped the modesty of civil life as practised by their poorer neighbours : there was in fact as we are told by Borghini, an ancient social maxim studiously nourished, and from its antiquity firmly rooted in their mind, that modesty in the opulent was honourable and becoming a generous disposition ; an ostentatious display of wealth in their private houses ungraceful and wounding to the feelings of the less fortunate : it was then, says Borghini “ held as shameful, that any person should be able to say ‘*such a one has plate,*’ as it is now considered glorious to possess it in abundance \* . Excepting a service of forks and spoons, a silver cup for holding confectionery at marriage feasts, one or two other cups, and a silver saltcellar (and these often given by the community for some public service) none would risk the blame of public opinion for having more plate, even though his coffers were overflowing with gold and silver.” The common custom was to have all the furniture of the buffet, the candlesticks, the washing basons and ewers everything of brass ; but a circlet of silver in the centre of the basin and on the cover of the ewer which was generally engraved or enamelled with the arms of the master alone, or quartered with those of his wife. This plate was frequently borrowed by neighbours, so that when any public occasion called for a succession of great suppers the same articles went the round of all † . Such equality was as it were the railroad of social intercourse in Florence and the car of life rolled smoothly over it ; each citizen could invite his neighbour however wealthy to as good a feast as he had himself partaken of, and none were humbled by another’s opulence, nor shrunk under the splendour of lordly magnificence, for wit and reason overcame sensuality and formed the soul and spirit of each

\* Borghini flourished in the middle of the sixteenth century and his “*Discorsi*” were first published by his executors in 1584, and again by Viviani of

Florence in 1755.

† Borghini, *Discorso della Moneta Fiorentina*, vol. ii, pp. 163-4.

entertainment. Marriage portions were then moderate ; dress and personal ornaments of the same modest character, the household furniture in good taste and clean, not pompous or crowded : all vanity in short was checked and lowered while substantial wealth remained firm upon its unpretending pedestal\*.

But with all this domestic simplicity none on great occasions could be more magnificent than the Florentines both individually and collectively, as citizens and as a community. In their own homes and in public places they seemed to be different beings and in the latter with a splendour scarcely credible : their palaces themselves and their magnificent villas, to say nothing of public buildings, show a higher and more refined taste than that of modern entertainments which absorb fortunes without leaving a trace of real splendour or utility behind, even in the heart or memory of the guests ; but when these were necessary to the Florentines *they* also could blaze forth with dazzling magnificence.

For public banquets, games, and tournaments was reserved this display : at one of the latter in 1467, Benedetto Coluccio, nephew or grandson of the Florentine secretary, put a hundred and seventy pounds of pure silver on the trappings and armour of two horses, that of the head and crest having been entirely composed of this metal ; not plain, but highly wrought in relief, with heads, and stories, and images, intermingled with rich enamelling by the hand of Antonio del Pollaiuolo one of the first artists of the day ; so that the workmanship was even more costly than the material : nay for the embroidery of his own and his horse's dress he used thirty pounds of fine pearls, and these two things alone without reckoning brocades, silks, and various other jewels cost him 5000 florins, or about fifty-two pounds of pure gold. His horse which was called " Scor-

\* It must be understood that this fifteenth century, as time rolled on refers to the earlier portion of the manners insensibly changed.

zone" cost 266 florins; but these fine animals sometimes sold in those days for 600 florins; equal to more than as many pounds of our present money\*.

We have another instance of the difference of public and private life amongst the Florentines in the person of Lorenzo de' Medici when he married his daughter Maddalena to Franceschetto Cibo son of Pope Innocent VIII. A suite of the first rank of Roman nobility accompanied the bridegroom to Florence and were magnificently lodged by Lorenzo in a palace expressly fitted up for their reception, while Cibo himself as now forming a part of the Medici was received in the family mansion. After a few days of festivity and ceremony the bridegroom on coming to supper with his father-in-law found instead of the previous magnificence everything reduced to the usual parsimonious simplicity of Florentine domestic life. Although a little startled at this he made no remark, but seeing the same frugality continued he became uneasy and mortified, not on his own account, but lest his company of distinguished followers should be similarly treated and himself disgraced, accustomed as they were to the luxurious refinement of Roman manners, and having been invited to a marriage little short of regal which was expected to be celebrated with corresponding magnificence; he therefore feared they might return disgusted, to his own and Lorenzo's shame, and contemplated with some uneasiness the effects of future ridicule at the court of Rome. Cibo at first avoided any inquiry but seeing them always joyous he one day ventured to ask as if by chance, how they fared, and excusing his own absence from their society in consequence of business: the answer was encouraging and after further questions finding that they were treated more like princes than private gentlemen he began to appreciate Lorenzo's simple grandeur and in his newly-awakened admiration frankly acknowledged his first sus-

\* Luca Pulci, Giostra di Lorenzo de' Medici.—Borghini, Discorso della Moneta Fior., tom. ii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 165-6, &c<sup>a</sup>.

picious and annoyance, with his subsequent satisfaction and surprise. To this the Medici quietly replied that having received him as his son he treated him as such; had he done otherwise it would have been putting him on the footing of a stranger; but the illustrious foreigners who had honoured his nuptials with their presence were served with all the distinction due to distinguished rank and the dignity of Franceschetto and the Medici. Yet Lorenzo at this time governed Florence despotically and all Italy through his political influence, besides being considered as a sovereign prince by every European potentate\*!

These frugal habits were graced by what Varchi denominates an "incredible and marvellous cleanliness and neatness" throughout every rank; in fact the lowest manufacturers and daily labourers fared he says better than the citizens in general; that is more comfortably; for the latter were in the habit of living much away from home, frequenting taverns, drinking, and taking little thought except to make themselves merry, while the former remained steady at their domestic business creating luxuries without indulging in the use of them, but passing their days in sober and careful frugality. This tavern life increased to a most pernicious degree towards the beginning of the sixteenth century and was practised principally by the middling and higher ranks of citizens though there were many of the latter who maintained their ancient establishments with a degree of splendour suited to the changing manners of the time. The "*Thou*" was commonly in use amongst equals in age and rank; but apparently, in addressing much older or more distinguished persons the second person plural, and not the third person singular as at present, was in common usage; except to knights, doctors of law, and canons, who were addressed as "*Messere*." Physicians received the title of "*Master*" and monks were always most reverently denominated "*Padre*;" but when those courts which may be called vice-

\* Borghini, *Discorso delle Moneta*, &c., tom. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 67.

regal or vice-papal, began to be regularly established at Florence under the Cardinals Giulio de' Medici and Cortona, manners became more refined and ceremonious if not more corrupt.

After eighteen years of age the dress of a Florentine citizen was a loose sur-coat of black serge or "*Rascia*" (a rough sort of woollen cloth) that reached nearly to the heels and lined with taffeta, "*Ermisino*"\*, or tabby, when worn by doctors of laws and other grave individuals of that class, and almost always black. It was slit down in front with side openings for the arms and plaited from the top, where it was fastened with a hook and eye round the throat within, or with ribands or laces without. Such was the Florentines' "*Lucco*" which may be seen represented in most of their old portraits, but especially in that of Dante. This light and convenient as well as majestic attire was lined during the winter with fine furs, velvet, and occasionally for the more wealthy with rich and thick damask; under it some wore the "*Saio*" or "*Saione*," a sort of close vest or doublet; some the "*Gabbanella*" and "*Cassacca*," which were much of the same character only with longer skirts to the latter: but in summer this addition was omitted and the Lucco thrown over a light jacket or doublet alone, and generally of plain silk. On their head the Florentine citizens wore a cap, rather perhaps a sort of hat, made of plain black cloth or Rascia thinly lined, which being fastened behind could be thrown back on the neck and shoulders. This was called "*La Berretta alla Civile*," or the civic bonnet. Those who wore their hair and beard long were avoided as ungentlemanlike and even classed with robbers and assassins until after 1495, or about that period, when old manners began to change as foreign intercourse increased, the beard was allowed to grow, and those who adhered to ancient usage began to be derided. Instead of the Lucco a long cloak

\* The "*Ermisino*" was a light silk fabric, first imported into Europe from Ormus whence it received its name.

was often thrown over the inner garments, generally of black silk, but the rich and noble, and especially the physicians, wore it of a rose or violet hue, over a warmly-lined cloth or velvet doublet. The "*Cappuccio*" was another portion of the Florentine dress, and was in three parts: first the "*Mazzocchio*:" which was a padded circlet covered with cloth bound round and over the head so as to cover it completely: secondly the "*Foggia*" which hanging over the shoulder defended the left cheek: thirdly the "*Becchetto*" or a double strip of the same cloth falling down to the ground but being again turned up was fixed to the right shoulder or else folded round the neck and head for additional comfort. This habit was particularly suited to the climate of Florence as an excellent and effectual protection from the cold winds and sharp winter air in that city but was brought originally from Flanders by the early Florentine traders.

Any inhabitant whether a citizen or not was privileged to wear either of these two habits, but no citizen could attend the public councils in another dress. At night in the open air they wore the "*Tocco*" or flat bonnet and a short Spanish hooded cloak, but except a soldier, any person wearing this by day would have been considered disreputable. In the house during winter a cap and a sort of loose great-coat were worn; in summer a smaller cap and dressing-gown of Lille serge or fustian: on horseback common cloaks or the "*Gabbano*," a sort of loose surtout of cloth or Rascio were worn, and on a journey, of felt, according to the season. By this mode of providing against every change of weather it may well be imagined that large sums were spent in dress. The pantaloons were slashed at the knees and thighs and lined with taffeta, or trimmed with velvet or lace: the shirt was plated at the breast and wrists, and with the rest of their garments even to the gloves and purse, was changed every Sunday, a habit somewhat at variance at least, according to present notions, with the

“*Maravigliosa e incredibile mondzia e pulitezza,*” of Varchi. The cappuccio was never taken off to salute any one but the gonfalonier of justice, a bishop or a cardinal: to all other dignitaries, such as magistrates, knights, doctors of law, and canons, the head was slightly bowed and the cappuccio raised up a little in front with two fingers. The Florentines were certainly endowed with a most acute intellect and wonderful taste and genius; nothing came amiss to them; war, commerce, arts, science, literature and politics, whatever they set their mind to they mastered, and produced men who made themselves famous in all, and this seems more extraordinary if their habits and education are considered: accustomed from earliest infancy and for the most trifling wages to carry bundles of wool and baskets of silk like common porters; to be all day and a great portion of the night fixed at the loom and other machinery; to be employed in shops and warehouses; at the desk and scales, and then to come forth as statesmen, leaders of armies, ambassadors, masters of all the higher branches of civilisation, and to shine everywhere, shows a power and pliancy of intellect and a natural force of character that few people can boast of. This sense of independence and self-confident energy of mind made them turbulent and refractory, surly, discontented, and ambitious, with virtues and vices, equally conspicuous, and extreme in all\*.

So keen a spirit imparted peculiar sharpness and subtilty to their trade which was dissected and analysed in its minutest ramifications, more perhaps than it was studied on broad and general principles. At a very early period the Florentines sought to establish a maritime commerce with as much ardour as others opposed it more especially the Pisans; nor did the Genoese and Venetians fail to join in impeding a project which promised mischief to all three: and had not their own disputes weakened these states Florence would have found great and perhaps insurmount-

\* Varchi, Lib. ix., p. 118.



able difficulty in overcoming their efforts against her. The first acquisition was from the Pisans themselves who a little daunted by the success of Florence and her conquest of Volterra in 1254, granted free egress and regress without payment of duty for all Florentine merchandise to and from Pisa both by land and sea, with other advantages. This treaty was many times renewed and its conditions observed until 1321 when the Pisans began to levy new duties : disputes continued between the two states for eight years, but in 1329 the Florentines were placed on the footing of Pisan subjects and their merchandise released from all impediments. In 1343 this exemption was limited to the amount of 200,000 florins, all above that paying a duty of ten per cent. on the value of commodities. In 1281 treaties were begun with Genoa ; in 1315 with the Duke of Burgundy ; in 1324 with the King of Cyprus ; and finally in 1356 with Siena for the port of Talamone, in consequence of Pisa's having broken her treaty by levying duties on Florentine merchandise. To protect this trade against the Genoese and Pisans ten galleys were hired from Provence and four from Naples : after thirteen years, matters were accommodated, and the Florentine trade in 1370 resumed its former channel through the port of Pisa on the same conditions as before. In 1380 a new treaty was concluded with Naples, for commercial relations had already existed with that kingdom from 1309. The Duke of Milan's occupation of Pisa interrupted trade and in 1401 obliged Florence to call the Emperor against him by a subsidy of 200,000 florins, besides inducing her to undertake the conquest of Pisa in 1404. That city being subdued, in 1406 a mercantile colony of Catalonians and other Aragonese subjects was permitted to settle there under a consul, by a convention with their king. Commercial galleys were soon built and Andrea Gargioli a Florentine citizen, was made general of them and the "*Fuste*" (a lighter species of war galley) as well as superintendent of commerce at Pisa for two

years: this was the first naval officer and first marine force of Florence. Part of it was immediately employed to protect the trade of Porto Pisano from the aggressions of the Genoese at Leghorn after a vain attempt to acquire that port from them by purchase in 1411, but an advantageous convention was nevertheless concluded in 1413 which secured the Florentine trade from molestation in that quarter. Leghorn was finally purchased in 1421 from Genoa who was then distressed for funds to make war against the Duke of Milan, and amongst other conditions the Florentines were bound to freight Genoese vessels alone with all merchandise going from Flanders and England to any part of that republic's dominions.

This acquisition was very popular as the Florentines now hoped to create both a war and commercial marine, the objects of their hopes wishes and most costly exertions for a whole century: their internal trade was already on the most favourable footing and now the ports of Pisa and Leghorn opened a fresh and ample field for the exercise of Florentine industry and commercial enterprise. The creation of a Board called "*I sei Consoli del Mare*" was the primary step towards a regular administration of naval affairs: they first resided at Florence, but in 1426 three were sent permanently to Pisa where their principal duty was the encouragement and extension of commerce: for this purpose both sections of the magistracy were bound to investigate the condition of all Florentine trades and manufactures and suggest modes of improvement, both by the introduction of new employments and sources of industry and the prohibition of foreign wares, or the interdiction of certain exports. They were bound to establish a sufficient naval force to protect the ports and coast of Florentine Tuscany; to make commercial agreements with foreign states; to settle the quantity and quality of the merchandise that was to be embarked in the two great public galleys destined to begin a new and direct trade

to the Levant, as well as the amount of specie for the same purpose; to keep accurate accounts of the profit and loss of each voyage and become responsible for its management. Several kinds of foreign goods and manufactures were loaded with high duties and others altogether prohibited by these magistrates, for the encouragement of native industry in those spots *where local circumstances and the natural bent of the people promised successful competition*. Several kinds of woollen cloth were thus prohibited and silks of all kinds, except ladies' veils: arms and iron too were forbidden to be exported in the great Levant galleys; "*to the end that God might be propitious and prosper their voyage:*" and for the same reason slaves were not to be received on board these two vessels *as articles of commerce*, though in common domestic use at Florence; still this was a public acknowledgment of the crime by supreme national authority. The Florentine branch of this Consulate was particularly intrusted with a general superintendence of commerce, the appointment of consuls in foreign states, and the letting of the two galleys to private merchants which was always effected by public auction: the Pisan branch was charged with official details of trade, the exclusive jurisdiction in maritime causes, the care of woods, buildings, chases, and fisheries in the district of "*Cerbaje*" between Valdarno and Valdinievole, besides many other duties totally unconnected with commerce which were thrown on them by the suppression of some Pisan magistracies. Amongst these was the care of agriculture which though mainly contributing to commerce was not directly connected with maritime affairs: they however received authority; and it was a great step in those days of mercantile restriction; to allow a free export of grain from the contado and maremma of Pisa on payment of five Soldi a bushel or about one third of its value, a duty afterwards reduced to two Soldi: it was sold at the Lisbon market in competition with Sicilian

wheat but at a lower price on account of its inferior hardness.

These consuls were also charged with rural drainage and they brought the lands about Stagno from a state of marsh and unwholesomeness to high and fruitful cultivation; a fact that tells against the alleged wilful neglect of Florence in preserving the Pisan drainage. Nor was she less attentive to encourage population by bestowing on every foreign settler a florin a month for the space of two years with a dwelling free of expense for ten; nor to favour shipwrights and caulkers by exempting all such colonists for twenty years from every impost; by granting the privilege of acquiring real property and leaving the buyer unmolested for the same period on account of debt contracted with any person but Florentines. Those who came both to settle and trade were especially supported and Pisa allowed to be used as a free depôt for their merchandise during a whole year, no duties being exacted unless goods remained permanently in the town. The Porto Pisano was put into a state of defence, all robberies of merchandise there or in any other seaport, or on the sea above the value of fifty Lire were punished with death; a squadron was kept constantly cruising off the Arno's mouth, and up to the year 1458 measures were continually in progress for the promotion of maritime prosperity.

The public navy finally increased to eleven large galleys, principally for merchandise, and fifteen "*Fuste*." Materials for their construction came from the forests of *Cerbaje* \* which in 1427 were declared to be public property, their

\* "*Cerbaja*" or "*Cerbaje*" in Val-die-Nievole but not peculiar to that district: they were called also "*Cervaja*," "*Cerbajola*," and "*Cerbajolo*," and signify places that did or do still exist in various parts of Tuscany, all wooded, and formerly inhabited by deer, goats, and other wild animals. The woods of

the first-named *Cerbaja* still exist, and its boundaries are the lake of Bientina, the marsh of Fucecchio, the "*Sibolla*" stream, the crests of Poggio-Adorno, Monte-Falcone and Pozzo; and as far as Monte-Colomba near the Pistoia road. (Vide *Repetti, Diction. Topog.*)

rents appropriated to the naval service, and saw-mills and founderies erected in them, the latter under the name of "*Magone*." These galleys were despatched by the Consuls of the Sea to the east and west, that is to all places beyond Rome on one side and Genoa on the other; they traded eastward with Constantinople, Caffa, Trebisonde, Alexandria, Tunis, Tripoli and Sicily; and westward with Minorca, Majorca, Bona and all the more western coast of Barbary, as well as with Catalonia, England, and Flanders.

The different voyages were timed and regulated so as not to interfere with each other, and all the galleys were bound to discharge their cargoes at Porto Pisano. If by chance there were no private bidders for the hire of these vessels when put up at public auction, which rarely happened, the voyage was undertaken on account of government and the galley let out to hire for that purpose. In order to protect the highest bidders for the galleys from any forestalling of the cargoes which they expected to find ready in the various places where they called, all Florentine merchants were forbidden to take in cargoes from such ports, a proof either of the paucity of merchandise or the impolicy and narrow monopolising character of these voyages. Wool brought to Pisa in any other bottoms was subject to an additional duty of eight per cent. beyond what it paid in the public galleys, and all merchandise embarked on board the latter was guaranteed against every loss even by seizure and reprisals of war. In order to prevent extortion from being exercised on the merchants by the hirers or sailing-masters of these vessels in the freights demanded, a tariff was established and rigidly observed, but it was higher than the general rate on account of their superior force and equipment. This tariff was augmented in 1457, when the freightage of every piece of cloth amounted to a ducat; the value of some being twenty-one and others sixty ducats! The sea consuls settled the number of the crew and armament of each galley and with the

interference of the Consuls of the Arts of Florence (except those of the judges and notaries) nominated the captain, the supercargo, and all other officers, none of whom were to be related or in any way connected with the consuls or to own any part of the cargo; nor were the latter ever permitted to share in this trade except when the vessel was freighted on account of government. In 1459 an admiral of the galleys was created, expected to be a practised seaman, and paid twelve florins a month by the government; but all the other officers, the crews, and every remaining expense were discharged by the conductor. The galleys bound westward sailed in September, those for the Levant in February: fifteen days before their departure public notice was given of it, during which time all the adventurers with their merchandise were allowed to reside at Pisa safe from molestation; and the same for ten days after their return.

On the day of sailing, the various ports at which the galleys were to touch, the period of their stay at each, their ultimate destination, the price of freights, the names of the officers, and the number of the crews were duly published, except for the voyages to Catalonia and Sicily which were kept secret for fear of pirates by whom those coasts were particularly infested. A loan of 7500 florins was advanced to the conductor for his expenses but on good security, and the hire of a galley for the Levant in 1458 amounted to 1458 florins all charges being paid by the conductor: a hundred and thirty men formed the crew and combatants of one galley, and the conductors of those in the Levant trade were bound to present a carpet worth not less than 15 florins to the Seignory on their return, also to carry public ambassadors and those young men who were sent abroad to learn the art of trading.

Sometimes when no bidders appeared the vessels were lent under certain regulations to private merchants or trades; thus in 1429 one galley was consigned to Domenico Dolfini for five

years on condition that he made two voyages annually, freighted his ship with gold, silver, and wax, and a thousand pieces of cloth, two-thirds of which were to be remanufactured in Florence and his cargoes discharged only at Porto Pisano. In 1439 the consuls of the wool trade borrowed one for a voyage to England because bidders having failed for those parts a scarcity of wool was apprehended. The Turkish conquests in 1464 interrupted the Constantinople and Romania trade and drove it over to the coast of Syria, thus involving the loss of commerce in the Black Sea.

But the Florentines became gradually sensible of the injury inflicted by this monopoly which according to a decree of the year 1465 had raised all kinds of merchandise full ten per cent. and only five or six traders kept any large stock on hand; many favourable occasions for beneficial enterprise were consequently lost and both trade and manufactures began to fail in the contado which was deprived of that favour invariably bestowed on the capital. This caused the whole trade to be again thrown open and commerce resumed its former course after more than forty years' interruption, without however any discontinuance of the national galleys until 1480, when they were finally abandoned and the public made free to build, and freight, and sail as they pleased: the naval funds were afterwards transferred from the sea consuls to the public stocks and thus ended this foolish attempt to force a commerce by bounties and monopoly and government's interference\*.

These officers had the power of sending commercial ambassadors to make treaties with foreign states, and in 1421 two were despatched to Alexandria, then the centre of both eastern and western commerce, to whom the sultan of Egypt granted amongst other mercantile privileges that of having a consul, a church, a warehouse, baths, and porters of their own in Alexandria, and that the golden florin should pass current for the

\* Pagnini, della Decima, Parte iii\*.

same value as the Venetian ducat: that same year Zanobi Capponi took the first galley into those parts, on board of which twelve young men were sent to learn the mode of Egyptian commerce. The success of Florence in this trade augmented Venetian jealousy and was one of the reasons for that republic's obstinate defence of Pisa as well as her general enmity to the Florentines both in Italy and the East\*. In revenge, after the capture of Pera and Constantinople the Florentines assisted Mahomet to continue his conquests from Venice, and their traders were treated by him with peculiar favour and respect: they were allowed to carry arms, had a church and factory assigned them with the most liberal, public, and free exercise of religion, and perfect liberty of changing place without passport or inquiry †.

As early as 1385 commercial relations with England seem to have been firmly established; in that year Sir John Hawkwood, John Bacon, and Nicholas Dagworth were sent by Richard II. to enter into a mercantile treaty with the republic; and in 1490 and 1491 other conventions were concluded principally regarding the wool trade.

Consuls were very early established in foreign countries by Florence: as far back as 1339 there is notice of them as a wide extended and long-established institution, and they were invested with considerable powers. To hold this office no other qualification became necessary than the citizenship of Florence, and one of the principal stations was Romania; but the consul, under the titles of "*Emino*" and "*Baliò*," resided first at Constantinople and afterwards at Pera. The office lasted three years, and its duty was to see that treaties were strictly observed, to administer justice, maintain order and reputable conduct amongst the merchants; and, with several other things, to prevent swearing and gambling. Every eastern consul was allowed a secretary at four florins a

\* Guicciardini, Libro iiº.

† Benedetto, Dei, Cronaca, apud Pagnini.



month, two attendants, three horses, and a dragoman with an annual salary of 4000 aspers. He was forbidden to engage in trade, to act as consul for other nations, or advocate the cause of strangers under a heavy fine and was paid by fees on merchandise: he had a prison attached to the church with full power of imprisoning Florentine delinquents and could build three houses as a factory for the habitation of his countrymen where no creditor dared to molest them, and where they were safe from the consequences of any crime except treason against the life of the emperor. Commerce was free after payment of two per cent. duty on merchandise, and in case of the consul's death the traders could elect a successor until the will of the Seignory were known. With the Turks it was found necessary to be extremely punctilious about preserving an independent jurisdiction, but formal presents were annually made to the sultan and his vizier by the government. There were also, after the year 1422, consuls at Alexandria, Damascus, and other mercantile towns of the Egyptian soldan, and all with free exercise of their religion, independent government, baths, and every usual privilege. Nor does it appear that this exclusive jurisdiction was denied in any Christian country but on the contrary always granted and rigidly maintained: in Venice, in Rome, in London, the right was acknowledged; in the last city fines were even imposed on all persons seeking justice at another tribunal, and Florentine subjects were moreover forbidden to deal with any Englishman or foreigner who refused the jurisdiction of their consul\*.

The emoluments of the Florentine consul in London were one-twelfth of a penny for every pound sterling of exchange; a penny-halfpenny on every pound sterling value of merchandise bought and sold; a penny and half-a-farthing on every pound sterling of securities; and ten pounds on every

\* The necessity for imposing such English courts than in that of the fines is a presumptive proof that justice was better administered in the Florentine consul.

cargo of the Florentine galleys that arrived in England; on board of which the merchants were compelled to embark their goods, or were subject to the freight if they did not do so. At Lyon and in Flanders they enjoyed similar privileges, particularly at Bruges where the Florentine establishments were very numerous and wealthy, and had existed since the beginning of the thirteenth century\*. With all her anxiety to become a naval power Florence had never more than eleven large merchant galleys or galliases and the fifteen small war galleys already mentioned; and yet the names of Vespucci Verrazzano and others show that there was no want of genius or enterprise; while that of Paulo Toscanelli, whose letters are said to have first opened the mind of Columbus to the probability of his subsequent discoveries, proves that science was not wanting for the greatest undertakings of the age†. Nevertheless Florentine merchants and bankers were found in every country with permanent establishments: there were no less than fifty-one in the Turkish states, twenty-four houses settled in France principally at Lyon; thirty-seven at Naples; nine banks and more, at Rome; Spain Portugal, Flanders, Venice and England were full of them; the whole of the French money-trade and most of her commerce was transacted by them; many of the European mints including that of Edward I. were directed by them, and the Medici alone had at one time no fewer than sixteen banking establishments in different parts of Europe: such was the extent, wealth, and consequent credit of the Florentines, and such the source of their strength and energy and powerful influence over the affairs of Italy and of Europe.

Their commerce flourished and declined with the republic;

\* Pagnini, Decima, Parte iii<sup>a</sup>.

† There is some reason to believe that Columbus received his first impressions of the western world's exist-

ence during his residence in Iceland, where he traded when young and became acquainted with the voyages and discoveries of the Northmen.

the causes of decay were the resolution of the western nations to encourage their native industry and become their own carriers and merchants; the discoveries of the Portuguese and consequent deviation of Indian trade from its ancient course; the neglect of agriculture as a source of national wealth and commerce as well as sustenance; and the destructive consequences of war, which had been long in action, but which only arrived at their climax in the last days of republican liberty. In addition to these was the impolitic habit of benefiting Florence itself at the expense of all the rest of the dominion without considering that the republic was one united body, connected, and reciprocally dependent in all its parts. But instead, both crafts and manufactures were exclusively established in the capital; not by encouragement but the interdiction of their exercise elsewhere, and all the necessaries of life were in like manner forced into Florence by a direct prohibition to export them. This is said to have made labour comparatively cheap, and the merchants (who were the legislators) gained accordingly: such management might have been wise when all the republican territory was comprised within the contado, but ceased to be so when expanded to the dimensions of a powerful state comprising several cities little inferior in size and equal to Florence in skill industry and natural talent. Comparative poverty prevented a great demand on their part even of the metropolitan productions, but the provincial population was attracted by the superior advantages of the capital. Industry thus became concentrated not diffused, and Florence resembled a vast manufactory swallowing up all the business of a district rather than the heart and mainspring of a dependant country.

The wealth there accumulated coupled with the frugal habits of the citizens, generated what has been called "national luxury:" individual luxury is a relative term, but national luxury may be designated as an expenditure of public resources in superfluities or objects unnecessary and even hurt-

ful to the state. In this way the riches of Florence facilitated loans and tempted the rulers into expensive wars and confederations beyond the national strength; and this temptation was more powerful because the richest citizens who directed public affairs took care to throw the principal burden of expense from their own shoulders on those of their adversaries and poorer neighbours. At length excessive and frequent taxation impinged on commercial capital, trade and manufactures declined, new debts were contracted to pay the old, and national bankruptcy was the ultimate consequence. Many in despite of all risk were thus tempted to withdraw from the walks of industry to live idly, or at least less actively on the interest of their capital, and that interest was finally raised to an excessive height by the frequency and increasing difficulty of borrowing; debt followed debt, the ball augmented, and thence innumerable obstacles were opposed to arts agriculture and commerce\*.

Under the dukes and grand-dukes luxury rapidly increased, trading became unfashionable nay even the name of merchant despicable, and it merged with sickly affectation into that of "*Negozianti*" or negotiators as more general and embracing a wider and indefinite range of business including political transactions †. Personal wants then increased with private luxury but they were principally supplied by strangers; by the very nations which had formerly depended on Florence for their comforts and extra enjoyments; money went abroad for employment, its home circulation languished; and although agriculture began to raise its head the exertion was difficult and never counterbalanced the decay of commercial superiority. Yet if one alone is to be chosen agriculture although with slower and less abundant gain is surely the more solid foundation; it is the house built on a rock, the other is on the sand: a purely commercial state like its own ships is replete

\* Pagnini, Decima, Parte iii<sup>a</sup>.

† Ferd. Migliore, Firen. Illustrata, Parte iii<sup>a</sup>, Lib. Primo, p. 557.

with life, skill, vigour, and riches but like them too, tempest-tossed, unstable, and encompassed by danger.

The vessels built during this century for commercial purposes were large in size but it would be difficult to ascertain their exact capacity, and by the description of one belonging to the Genoese family of Doria, which anchored at Porto Pisano in 1452 this was quite unequal to their outward dimensions. Her burden was said to be three hundred "*Botti*" or about two hundred and seventy English tons\* ; her length on the upper deck one hundred and seventy-nine feet ; the mast *thirty-eight feet in circumference* at the lowest and thickest part, and one hundred and eighty-four feet high ; the height of her poop from the keel, seventy-seven feet nearly, without the after-castle ; that of her bow nearly sixty-one, independent of the fore-castle ; her sail ; and she seems to have carried but one ; was more than a hundred and fifty-three feet broad and ninety-six high ; she was heavily rigged and with so many shrouds, says Cambi, that they alone were worth a treasure : her anchors were numerous, and weighed about twenty-five hundred-weight each : she had seventy cabins : her cables were twenty-three inches round and eighty fathoms long : she was fitted with ovens, cisterns, and stalls for horses ; her long boat carried nearly seventy-two tons, and six hundred souls were embarked in her. This was the largest vessel that had been seen in a Florentine port for a long time, and no ordinary seamanship must have been necessary to manage so unwieldy a sail as she seems to have carried.

Galleys, Galleons, and Galleases, are names both of vessels of war and merchantmen, or at least vessels carrying merchandise in the fifteenth century : the Galleon, a sort of enlarged war galley, was the first vessel built with portholes ; for the artillery of the latter was mounted so as to fire over all. The

\* This is probably a mistake in copying the MS. or a typographical error and is more likely to be three thousand *Botti* (to judge from her great dimen-

sions) unless the "*Botte*" signified more in ship measurement than in the markets.

“*Galleon*” was generally stationed by the Venetians in front of the line of galleys; and at the battle of Lepanto in 1571 the war “*Galleas*,” which sometimes carried fifty guns, was first added to the line of battle: the latter also used oars but did not continue long as a ship of war beyond the precincts of the Mediterranean and even there ceased after a while. The bow and stern were armed like the galleys with guns of great calibre to fire over all, but more numerous, and between the oars of which there were sometimes three tiers, a formidable battery appeared that the galley had not. They seem to have been three-masted with a single yard on each, but had no bowsprit, and in other respects, though higher, much resembled the galley itself\*.

The galleon was more lofty and bulky with a flat stern three masts and a bowsprit. The large Venetian galleas was about a hundred and sixty-two feet long above, and twenty-nine feet shorter by the keel with thirty-two feet of beam and twenty-three feet length of stern-post. Their oars were arranged in thirty-two banks, each of two oars, and pulled by twelve or fourteen slaves to each bank: two thirty-six pound guns, two twenty-four pounders, and two smaller cannon carrying only a shot of two pounds weight were placed in the bow; three eighteen pounders on each quarter; and between sailors and soldiers their complement of men is said to have sometimes been a thousand, and even twelve hundred; but probably for short coasting expeditions or cruises in which an enemy was soon to be encountered.

There were also half and quarter galleys with two masts, and often but one, which might be struck or not when expedient: their length was from about one hundred and twenty to a hundred and thirty feet, eighteen feet beam and nine or ten feet deep; with lateen sails, twenty-five banks of oars, and five guns over the bow and stern: the quarter galleys were fur-

\* Charnock, History of Marine Architecture.

nished with from twelve to sixteen banks of oars and generally kept in shore for defence, or else were used as despatch-boats : these two last descriptions of vessels seem also to have been called "*Fuste*." There were likewise some newly invented vessels of war called Albatrosses with sixty oars and upwards and each carrying two or more bombards throwing stone balls of from a hundred and fifty to two hundred and fifty pounds each and principally used for sinking great ships. They would appear to have been first built by the Florentines in the time of Lorenzo de' Medici. The names of numerous other non-descript vessels occur in early Italian history ; such as "*Gatti*," "*Dromoni*," "*Garbi*," "*Barche*," "*Currabii*," "*Lintri*," and "*Saggene* : " some of which carried towers and battering engines\*. Besides these there was the "*Palandra*" (whence probably our "*Bilander*") which seems to have been used, at least by the Turks, as a horse transport with stalls for fifty horses ; also as a bomb when shells were used afloat.

The powerful armies which that conquering people moved over the Mediterranean in their wars with the Christians, especially against the Venetians, rendered large fleets necessary ; sometimes amounting to four hundred and fifty sail ; and both in their naval and military establishments a strict and then unusual discipline seems to have been preserved : that of their army at least, excited the admiration of Piero Strozzi and his companions who were sent on an embassy from King Francis I. to the sultan, then encamped on the coast opposite Corfu, which his fleet under the celebrated Admiral Barbarossa was besieging†. The number of this army is probably much exaggerated, but Nardi tells us, from the account of eye-witnesses, that it amounted to two hundred thousand cavalry alone. "It was," he says, "marvellous and delightful to behold this numerous army and all its beautiful horses richly and

\* Roncioni, p. 164.—Portovenere, p. 284.

† Nardi, Lib. x., p. 363.

tastefully adorned; and likewise the splendid and gorgeous dresses of the soldiers:" but what impressed the Italians with most admiration and wonder was the perfect silence and order in every movement of this vast multitude, so different from the confusion and general disorder they had been accustomed to in the French and Italian camps. "Nor was it," continues Nardi, "less pleasing to behold the numberless tents and pavilions, and the multitude of camels quartered all around the neighbouring country; and the abundance of every kind of food, together with the extreme neatness and cleanliness of the whole camp, to an extent that is scarcely credible. The Italian and French embassy was conducted to the pasha's tent, a pavilion richly and superbly decorated, where they were met by Fanusber the sultan's chief interpreter: Orestan the head pasha accompanied by four others soon appeared and all seated themselves on small low seats of red velvet very rich." Then followed the discussion of their business\*.

Most writers allude to the want of discipline and general licentiousness of the Italian troops of this century: Bruto accuses them of idleness and cowardice, of thinking only of their pay and sensuality, and insensible to praise glory and all the finer sentiments of a soldier. Ancient discipline he says was forgotten, all was ribaldry and effeminateness; the captains were corrupted by avarice the soldiers by licence; the former inert in command; the latter disdainful to obey, and both cowardly. They were so loaded with armour as to be safe almost from the arquebus, but so shackled by it that they could not rush with vigour against an enemy: the result was slowness and indolence in attack and an inability to use their strength half of which was spent under the mere weight of armour.

In the early part of this century footmen were still scarce, horsemen yet forming the main nerve of an army; but the former were equipped more lightly and could easily escape

\* Nardi, Lib. x., p. 361.



from the heavy-armed soldiers who were scarcely able to move, even from where they first came to blows with the enemy. All this is probably a little exaggerated but still it shows the low esteem and even hatred in which these mercenary troops were held by the people. The Swiss, Spaniards, and Germans, however began soon to prove the force and value of a good infantry, and by the end of the century they formed the strength of every army\*.

Under the name of "*Espingardes*" Bartolommeo Coleone used light field-artillery at the battle of Molinella in 1467 and thence had the credit of first introducing it; but according to two ancient chroniclers cited by Sismondi, both armies employed it there, and with very little advantage to either†. Towards the last quarter of this century Camillo Vitelli of Città di Castello first introduced the use of carbines or arquebuses for cavalry, which subsequently became common with the German light horse, but whether original or copied from the Italian does not clearly appear: they carried four or five of these pieces attached to the saddle, and seemed at that time when fire-arms were rare and dreaded, to have been of great service and much esteemed in war‡.

This Camillo was the brother of Paulo whom the Florentines executed for his bad conduct before Pisa and whose natural son Alessandro Vitelli became afterwards so conspicuous under the two first Dukes of Florence.

We have a curious description of men arms and accoutrements by Paulo Giovio, probably an eye-witness of the entry of Charles VIII. of France into Rome on the last day of the year 1494. "Charles having armed and arranged his cavalry and infantry, entered by the Porto del Popolo into Rome. A long array of Swiss and Germans marched onward with measured pace and a certain degree of military dignity,

\* Bruto, Lib. iv., p. 357.—Macchiavelli, *il Principe*, cap. xii.—Giannotti, Lib. iv., cap. iv. † Sismondi, vol. vii., p. 367. ‡ Bruto, *Storia*, Lib. v., p. 127-129.

in admirable order under their various banners. Their dress was of a variety of colours and short, so as to show the disposition and movement of all the members; and the most valiant soldiers made a beautiful exhibition with the plumes that they wore in their hats. Their arms were a short sword and an ashen pike about ten feet long with a small iron head. Nearly one-fourth of them were armed with large pole-axes having a square steel spike at top, and these were used with both hands, striking and thrusting, and in their language were called halberds. For every thousand footmen there were a hundred arquebusiers who discharged leaden balls from their arquebuses against the enemy. The soldiers, universally joining battle in close battalions, so despised the shield helmet and cuirass, that the captains only, and those that formed the front rank in combat wore casques and breastplates of iron. After these came five thousand Gascons, almost all cross-bowmen, who used their steel crossbows with infinite skill, charging and discharging them in an instant; but this sort of men compared with the Swiss made but a poor figure and were badly equipped the former far outdoing them in head ornaments and relucant arms as well as in stature. After the infantry came the cavalry, entirely composed of French nobility with silken mantles, plumes, and golden collars, in a long array of bands and companies. The men-at-arms were two thousand five hundred, and five thousand light horse. They carried as we now do a thick fluted lance with a strong point, and an iron mace. Their horses were large and powerful, with the manes and ears cropped, the French thinking that they did better so; they looked very terrible, but were less beautiful to behold because as is our custom they wanted the greater part of the covering of prepared leather. Each man-at-arms had three horses, a youth who carried their arms, and two attendants called "*Bagaglioni*" and "*Saccomani*." The light cavalry according to the usage of the Bretons carried a long

wooden bow and large arrows, but wore only the cuirass and helmet: some of them carried long javelins or pikes with which they were wont to despatch those that the men-at-arms had overthrown in battle. All these had surcoats worked with the needle and embroidered with silver on which were beautifully represented the true images of each captain's arms in order that the valour or the cowardice of the soldiers might be noted in battle. The king rode in the midst of four hundred mounted crossbow-men amongst whom were a hundred valiant and faithful Scots. But in front of these, two hundred French men-at-arms selected for their high birth and valour and carrying on the shoulder iron maces like great axes, surrounded the king in perfect order when he went on foot; and when mounted they preceded him as men-at-arms on fine horses and richly attired in silk and gold. After him in the first rank followed Ascanio and Giuliano; then the cardinals Colonna and Savello; Prospero, Fabricio, and other Italian chiefs mingled with the crowd of French barons. The palace adjoining Saint Mark's Church which Paul II. built with the stones of the amphitheatre was prepared for the king, and the citizens' houses in the vicinity of Piazza di Traiano were opened for his barons where they arrived at dark night with lighted torches. There were so many squadrons of horse and foot completely equipped, not pompously for display and ornament but in perfect fighting order with all their arms as if they were expecting a combat in Rome itself, that the fears of all were awakened by such a spectacle. What added to the people's wonder and apprehension was that the men, the horses, the arms and the banners, by the glare of so many torches, which cast over all an unequal splendour and uncertain light, seemed much more numerous than they were. But that which excited most general marvel and alarm in the citizens were six-and-thirty pieces of mounted artillery drawn by horses over rough and smooth ground with inconceivable swiftness: the largest of these was eight feet

long and contained six thousand pounds of brass. They were called "*Cannon*," and carried an iron ball as large as a man's head. After the cannon came the "*Culverins*" which were half as long again but of smaller bore and lighter shot: then followed the "*Falcons*" of different sizes, the smallest carrying a ball as large as an orange. All these pieces were inserted between two thick beams connected together at the top, on which they rested by their trunnions, and between these beams they were adjusted for firing. The small guns had two wheels underneath, the great ones four; the hinder wheels could be taken off and put on to stop or hasten their movement; and their commanders and drivers made them run so rapidly that the horses urged by whip and voice on smooth ground appeared to be racing wildly and voluntarily" \*.

This formidable artillery conquered Naples and astonished Italy; it imparted a more bloody and decisive spirit to native warfare and shook the ramparts of Italian independence. The distinction between civil and military life seems to have been carried to a degree of excessive and pernicious affectation contrary alike to taste necessity and good policy. Macchiavelli complains that on resolving to become a soldier a man not only changed his dress but his habits, customs, voice; everything in short connected with civil life: "A man," he says, "that believes he must be ready and active for every violence will not clothe himself like other citizens nor will he continue those peaceable habits which he deems effeminate and unadapted to his trade; nor maintain that mien and language so unsuitable to those that with beard and blasphemies try to strike terror into other men as they now do" †. The soldiers of that day indeed seem to have acquired universal odium, wherefore the subsequent proposal by Macchiavelli of a national militia, organised disciplined and exercised as regular troops was warmly received,

\* Paulo Giovio, *Istorie*, Parte i<sup>a</sup>, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 53.

† Proemio all' *Arte della Guerra*.

and adopted with such success that an energetic ruler would with their aid alone have baffled Raimond de Cardona in 1512, and preserved the country's liberty.

The Italian infantry at this period were generally armed with an iron breastplate, few of them wearing armour on the back or arms; a pike more than seventeen feet long, and a sword rather rounded at the point than sharp: none wore head armour, and the few that were more heavily equipped carried a partisan with the staff about six feet long instead of a pike\*. The arquebuse also formed an important and very unpopular addition to the offensive arms of foot-soldiers, but the arquebusiers were always in separate companies and very rare until the beginning of the sixteenth century. It was condemned as a cowardly dishonest weapon that gave a brave man no chance, as rendering his personal valour, his skill and prowess useless, and was feared accordingly; one of the many eulogiums on Bayard was that he did not fear even the enemy's fire-arms: but as late as 1521 and afterwards Monluc tells us there were no arquebusiers in the French army †. This alone must have given a great advantage to the Spaniards (who had long used them) in those ambitious struggles between Charles and Francis which we are told by the same author cost the lives of two hundred thousand persons and the ruin and dispersion of one million of families "without," adds Monluc, "either of them gaining anything but remorse for having occasioned so wide-spread misery; whereas if it had pleased God to have united them the whole earth would have trembled under their feet" ‡.

This manner of arming foot-soldiers was imitated from the Swiss and Germans, but especially the former, who having no

\* Macchiavelli, *Arte della Guerra*, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 193.

† This assertion of Monluc contradicts Giovio's description as above given, but he probably means native Frenchmen, and it may be that they only

belonged to the royal guard, or that Giovio was mistaken, for Monluc was too old and good a soldier not to know well what he wrote about.

‡ *Comment. de Monluc*, Lib. i., pp. 9 and 13.

cavalry, when that arm formed the great nerve of warfare, were compelled by necessity to oppose the horse by compact and well-ordered battalions of infantry whose formation as is said they copied from the ancients: the utility of such troops first became apparent under Charles VIII. in 1494, after which every nation began to appreciate more justly this most important arm of war, and the Spanish infantry which Gonzalvo de Cordova had begun early to organise was brought to perfection by the celebrated Pedro de Navarra and proved its value on the bloody field of Ravenna in 1512. But long ere this Carmagnuola had been painfully convinced of the power of well-disciplined infantry when with six thousand horse and some footmen he attacked a very superior force of Swiss and was repulsed with great loss; nor was it until he assembled another body of cavalry who dismounting and being better protected by defensive armour attacked on foot, that he defeated his antagonists\*.

But changes in the art of war were frequent during this century: the besieging instruments previous to the advent of Charles VIII. were difficult both to transport and manage and towns were easily defended, yet more by a want of skill in the besiegers than the possession of it in the besieged, for no place however weak and insignificant but could hold out for many days against the most powerful armies so that it was not easy to get complete possession of an enemy's country. The battles it is true were frequent but indecisive and generally bloodless, but when the French monarch arrived, the terror of a strange people, the force and organisation of the infantry, but more than all the fury of his artillery, says Guicciardini, filled Italy with such terror that those who could not resist in the field had no hope of salvation; towns surrendered at the mere approach of the enemy, and if any were bold enough to stand a siege a very few days sufficed

\* Macchiavelli, *Arte della Guerra*.

to reduce them. Milan, Naples, and Venice felt this overwhelming superiority and all the Papal dominions shook at every step of the invaders. But after the first alarm genius began to work, and very soon a new mode of defence was opposed to this terrible artillery: banks and ditches and bastions and outworks, and a multitude of guns ultimately restored the broken balance, and fortified towns again became places of security. Modern fortification began very early in Italy, and its first notions are said to have been received from the Turks when Otranto was recaptured by Alphonso Duke of Calabria in 1481, but they remained long dormant nor awakened until the thunder of Gallic artillery roused them into action\*.

In those days the power of military men seems to have been great; their punishments prompt, arbitrary, and sometimes cruel; yet there was little discipline withal, and none when pay ran short or plunder allured their soldiers. Even in civil life the justice of that age in Florence partook of the same ferocious character; for if in the one we have the fact of a notorious traitor having been shot to death with arrows by the mere command of his master and general who was moreover the first to shoot; we have also that of an innocent and distinguished citizen of the Vespucci family; and it is only one of many instances; having been tortured by the Captain of the People on a false accusation proceeding from private vengeance, while his alleged accomplices were left entirely unmolested; and this capriciously, apparently without a shadow of testimony, and only as a preliminary step to investigate the charge previous to condemnation, but which proceedings sometimes ended by the accused expiring under his tormenter's hands†.

Nor did females even of the most distinguished families fare any better as we learn from the fate of Madonna Bartolommea wife of Francesco Gianfiglazzi, one of the first citizens of Flo-

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xv., cap. iii., p. 177. Delizie Erud. Toscani.—Cavalcanti, Lib. x., p. 599, and vol. ii<sup>o</sup>, Ap., p.

† Giov. Cambi, p. 303, tom. xx. 524.

rence, but then in exile. She was quietly residing at Siena when hearing that her son lay dangerously ill at Bologna without aid or comfort, she disguised herself as a pilgrim and passing safely through Florence nursed him until out of danger: then anxious to rejoin his wife who had remained at Siena, she in the same disguise reëntered Florence where being recognised by a spy and arrested she was placed in the hands of the Podestà or Captain of the People, examined with the most rigorous torture, “as if,” says Cavalcanti, “she were a notorious villain instead of a woman;” and although nothing but the simple truth could be forced from her, namely “that with a mother’s anxiety she had made her way to Bologna and was then in Florence on her return, without any sinister motive, but hoping only to rest safely that night at her daughter’s house and resume her journey in the morning.” In the face of all this she was supported in a state of exhaustion by two common sbirri, conducted from the torturers’ hands to the common prisons of the *Stinche* and there shut up along with the lowest women of the town, in whose company Cavalcanti himself beheld her! Such was the foreign Rector’s arbitrary power of which many examples occur; and such conduct was suffered, sanctioned, nay approved by the people, and then called liberty\*! There is also an instance of the Podestà’s absolutely granting a reprieve on the scaffold without even consulting the Seignory.

But accusations affecting the state whether secret or open were encouraged because a faction always ruled it; the “*Tamburo*,” hereafter to be noticed, like the lion’s mouth at Venice left no man safe: a verbal or written examination in chief was often taken in the first instance, then came torture as a cross-examination; but as it was deemed illegal to condemn a prisoner who did not confess his guilt, this species of questioning continued until pain extorted all that was desired from physical weakness. In almost every case this punishment fell on both

\* Ricordi di Morelli, p. 136.—Cavalcanti, Stor.



guilty and innocent; on the former as a prelude to death or exile; on the latter only because they had been accused, and though any prisoner might have pleaded guilty without it, he was yet almost sure to be tormented for more information and the discovery of his supposed accomplices.

The displacement of heads was a matter of very common occurrence at Florence and but little heeded except by the friends of the sufferers, unless executed on a large scale by an unpopular government. A very few hours from the first accusation to the nocturnal butchery (for it commonly took place at night in the court of the Bargello) generally sufficed for every intermediate step unless the culprit's family had power enough to inspire a wholesome fear; for we have already observed that the government although theoretically just and free was practically that of a faction and not national, wherefore the most resolute and unscrupulous instruments of executive justice were most welcome to the ruling power. Yet constant efforts were made to check corruption, secure equal justice, and encourage morality; and the existence of hospitals without number; the rental of one alone being estimated at 15,000 or 16,000 florins; shows that there was no absence of kindly feeling in the community. The "Ten Conservators of the Laws" too, were invested with much censorial power copied from a similar office at Venice; their duty was to watch over all other magistracies and public functionaries, prevent illegal acts of authority, secure justice, correct official errors, punish blasphemy, gaming, unnatural crime, and every other immoral act; to stop factious divisions and party spirit in the grand council, and to see that no noble was admitted to the magistracy. They had much criminal jurisdiction besides, and yet all these evils except what affected the nobles or "*Famiglie*,"\* swept

\* The "*Famiglie*," of which, at the end of the century there still existed from sixty to seventy, were the ancient feudal lords and the only real nobility of Florence: the second order of nobles was composed of what were called "*Nobili popolari*," all sprung from trade, opposed to the "*Famiglie*,"

onward in full stream as if no such censorship existed. The "Six Officers of Mercanzia" seem however to have preserved a character for wisdom and justice that gave them considerable influence and even European reputation; and the nature of their functions being purely mercantile and therefore so far removed from the vortex of faction and political bias, probably kept them untainted. What the character of their administrative justice was between the rich and poor, between the obscure and distinguished members of their own society in the common disputes of trade does not exactly appear, but their decisions in the more important causes especially as a court of admiralty, are said to have been much respected. To form this magistracy each art both minor and major nominated a certain number of citizens whose names were embursed in the usual way, and six of them drawn out every four months: these with a foreign Doctor of Laws as judge, whose office lasted a year, formed the court; but it was subject to the addition of eleven more if any unreasonable delay or difficulty occurred to impede the despatch of business, in which case it became a court of appeal and was called "*Il Ricorso*." The "*Monte di Pietà*" which was perhaps invented, but certainly established in Florence by Savonarola, is another testimony of Florentine charity; and also of that singular man's attention to everything which administered relief and comfort to the poor. The interest of money was ever high in Florence, but that demanded by the Jews from the distressed at the close of the fifteenth century for small sums is said to have been enormous. Their profits may be easily conceived when a single Hebrew money-lender was able to offer government no less than 20,000 golden florins to

and comprised in the corporations of superior arts: the next order was especially denominated "*Il Popolo*," or the People (although this name also applied generally to the whole community of citizens), and were comprised in the minor arts. Then followed the

"*Plebe*" or Plebeians, who had paid taxes for thirty years, and were eligible but did not enjoy office; and after them the populace or "*Ciampi*," all labouring men or "*Operatives*." — (*Vide Foscarini*.)

quash so dangerous an institution as that which lent money without interest to poverty and misfortune\*. Savonarola was blamed for interfering with state affairs and making the pulpit his principal instrument of political reform; but this; if it indeed were a just cause of reprehension in a small community like Florence was no innovation on ancient custom, for Giovanni Morelli tells us of a popular preacher in 1435 who from the pulpit of the cathedral laid down the qualities necessary for a good ambassador as follows.

The first thing, he said, was wisdom and that was seated in the heart, and the mouth uttered that which the heart prompted in this way: if there were virtue, virtuous things; if vice, vicious ones. The wise man moreover refrained from anger whatever injury might be said or done to him, but waited opportunity: and on the contrary allowed no honours, caresses, or other flattery to make him discover the secrets of those who sent him. He should be eloquent in developing his thoughts and the objects of his mission, without adding or subtracting anything; and for such purposes an ambassador should be well versed in all sorts of knowledge; in the arts, trades, manufactures, building, arms, commerce, and in naval affairs. He should be faithful to his employers so that both by word and action he might do them honour: his habits should be reputable; he should be honest and good; conscientious, temperate, and modest in all his actions. He should be prompt and energetic, never procrastinating or neglecting the public business for his own or that of others, nor make innovations, nor enter into trade or commercial speculations either for himself or his friends; nor ask favours, benefits, presents; or look to self-interest, or any convenience attending to personal profit or the accommodation of himself his friends and kinsmen: and if he receive anything immediate notice of it should be given to his government: but better not to take any gift or benefit †.

\* Vita di Savonarola, p. 124.

† Ricordi di Giovan. Morelli, p. 126.

This sort of moral excellence and a great deal more were poetically understood by the Florentines but woefully failed in practice: "Let not princes," says Macchiavelli, "complain of their people's wickedness; for such evil must proceed from their own negligence or from their being guilty of the same crimes: and whoever will consider the people that in our own times have been full of robbery and similar vices, will perceive that they proceed entirely from the fact that those who govern them are of a similar character." Under this rule the Florentine government had much to answer for; at least if the following sketch of national manners, which however agrees with many others, be not exaggerated by men who having grown old in frugality could regard any departure from such ancient habits only as a crime: or more probably it arose from accumulated wealth and consequent ease and idleness, which the peaceful government of Lorenzo de' Medici was so calculated to encourage. Indeed Macchiavelli himself tells us that "those evils were generated in the city which peace is wont to propagate, because the youth indulge more than usual in dress, dinners, and other sensual pleasures and become beyond measure extravagant; and being idle, consume their time and substance on women and gaming, studying only how to dress splendidly and converse astutely and cunningly; and he who is most biting in discourse is esteemed as the cleverest."

Donato Giannotti a grave able and reputable author who had good opportunities both publicly and privately of knowing his countrymen asserts that the Florentine youth delighted in nothing so much as in giving pain to others: "If one citizen," he says, "happen to hold a marriage feast the greatest pleasure of those that go to see it is to commit some violent act that may disturb the meeting:" the same thing frequently happened at public festivals merely for the pleasure of creating a tumult, and during Carnival there was a full flow of violence and extravagantly offensive conduct. The children almost as

soon as they could stand found their greatest delight in those sports that produced most mischief to others; amongst these was boxing and dangerous combats with stones, the evil of which was felt but no government succeeded in abating this nuisance until Savonarola's influence not only arrested the practice by mere persuasion, but turned it to a useful and charitable end. Those who did most mischief were most lauded and with such beginnings "no wonder," adds Giannotti, "that thus licensed they have in after life no reverence for age and little fear of the magistrates." Jacopo Fornaciajo, a distinguished citizen, gave a splendid entertainment at his villa outside of Porta San Friano at which all the principal citizens of Florence were present including the highest members of government; and to render it more agreeable one of Macchiavelli's comedies was represented with which to finish the evening. Amongst the guests were some young nobles who on entering the theatre immediately occupied every seat, the door-way, and all the house; allowing only those to enter who pleased them: they then interrupted the play with every kind of noise insolence and tumult, so that, to use Giannotti's words, "the hall more resembled the hell of the damned than a place of social entertainment." And although the most honoured and venerable citizens were present nothing restrained this insolence. It so happened that one of the aged citizens not being able to keep the place assigned him, got upon the stage in order to place himself on some benches occupied by the young men, thinking that one of them would offer him a seat: he was disappointed and remained standing until a servant brought him a chair\*.

Such scenes although sufficiently disgusting, may be considered as the ebullition of exuberant and vulgar spirits; practical jokes without wit, and misplaced insolence devoid of humour; but still not sufficiently grave to damn the character of a whole nation. Not so the report of Bruto as received from other cotemporary writers on the same subject.

\* Giannotti della RePub. Fior., Lib. iii., cap. xviii., p. 224.

Idleness and indolence he tells us had come to such a height as no man remembered and with excessive and intolerable licence opened a door to the most base and detestable vices ; and so great was this infamy that the writers of those times deemed it worthy of particular record for the information of posterity. From ancient parsimony and temperance the city had fallen into luxury, effeminacy, lasciviousness and general corruption ; into every wicked and disgusting habit, and to these vices softness and ambition gave heat and nourishment. Those whose fathers by hard exertion, abstinence, honesty and the reverence of simplicity in domestic habits had made the country prosperous ; were now said to be divested of every shade of modesty ; to be immersed in the most beastly pleasures, the slaves of wine, of gambling and impurity ; addicted to the most degrading practices, and stained by shameful sins and unbounded sensuality. Law and justice were contemned by them with impunity ; temerity and audacity were called resolution ; weakness of mind and excessive indulgence, benignity ; mordacity and scandal as suitable and gentleman-like language ; and along with the most contemptible cowardice there was a general character of languor debauchery and effeminacy. Infinite care and study was spent on personal decoration ; oils and unguents, acquired with great price and difficulty, served to perfume and polish the young men preparatory to their mixing in the society of Florentine ladies with suitable splendour. There was no anxiety for mental cultivation, no education or discipline worthy of freemen, but on the contrary every duty was neglected, all faith broken, and the whole tenor of existence debasing. Thus obscenity and turpitude pervaded every action, accompanied by a love of display and unbounded but mercenary ambition : the taverns, the brothels, and the gambling-houses overflowing, the palace and the exchange deserted : to entertain knaves, bravos, cheats, and panders, unlimited expenditure : to relieve the unfortunate, or

promote art and honourable exertions, an incredible and sordid covetousness; and as if to encourage and crown all, about this time Galeazzo Sforza and the Duchess of Milan paid a visit to Florence in such pomp and magnificence as few monarchs have equalled and the Florentines until that moment never saw\*.

Cavalcanti in several places sings much in the same strain and especially in a real or composed speech which he gives us of Puccio Pucci who declares in speaking of the Florentines, that “amongst the multitude there is always to be found an abundance of wicked men who for money will swear falsely, deny their duties, murder the innocent, tear the infant from a mother’s breast, despise all law, spurn their own parents, and for a small medal renounce even their Creator.” All these pictures are doubtless highly coloured, and leave much for time and reflection unbiassed by local excitement to mellow and subdue; but still they leave a painful impression on the mind and in some measure substantiate Macchiavelli’s assertion that the people’s crimes are generally attributable to those of their rulers. This licentiousness so general in the aristocratic youth of Florence; which be it remembered formed a vast portion as well as the most powerful of the community; is in curious contrast with the measured and sober tread of the wealthy but more aged and humble citizen; and which, as given by Macchiavelli himself in one of his admirable comedies, is probably a good specimen of the ancient habits of the country. “Those who knew Nicomaco a year since and still visit him, must be astonished at the great change that has taken place. He used to be a grave determined shy man who made an honourable use of his time. He rose early in the morning, heard mass, provided victuals for the day; and afterwards if he had any business on change, in the market, or with the magistrates, he did it; if not, he either conversed along with some citizen in honourable discussion or retired to his study

\* Bruto, Lib. iv., p. 61.

“ where he regulated his affairs and made up his accounts.  
“ Afterwards he dined cheerfully with his family and then  
“ reasoned with his son ; admonished him, instructed him in  
“ the knowledge of men ; and with ancient and modern exam-  
“ ples taught him how to live : then he went out, spent all the  
“ day either in business or grave and honest recreation : when  
“ evening came the ‘ Ave Maria ’ always found him at home :  
“ he remained a short time at the fire with us if it were  
“ winter and then retired to the office to finish his business :  
“ at eight we supped merrily. This course of life was an ex-  
“ ample to the house and all were ashamed of not following  
“ it, and thus everything proceeded with cheerfulness and  
“ order. But since this fancy has possessed him, his business  
“ has been neglected, his farms injured, his traffic ruined :  
“ he is always scolding, and never knows for what ; he comes  
“ in and goes out of the house a thousand times a day without  
“ knowing what he is about ; never returns in time for dinner  
“ or supper ; if spoken to he does not answer, or answers away  
“ from the purpose. The servants seeing this, laugh at him ;  
“ his son no longer respects him ; everybody does as they  
“ please and no one hesitates to follow his example in such a  
“ way that unless Heaven sends some remedy I fear that this  
“ poor house will be ruined : I will now go to mass and recom-  
“ mend myself as far as I am able to God’s protection”\*.

Of this sober class there must have been considerable numbers in Florence who acted as a counterpoise to the violence of political faction and fashionable licentiousness ; but unhappily they have generally shared the destiny of their humbler neighbours and wanting brilliancy have hitherto been deemed too inconsiderable, too insignificant for history. The Florentine manners whether good or bad were deeply tinged with superstition, far beyond what the character of their religion might be imagined to impart or justify : there was no meteor-

\* *Clizia*, *Commedia di Niccolò Macchiavelli*.



logical change or phenomenon of any consequence that did not affect them : comets, storms, lightnings, sudden gusts of wind, meteors, any variation from the usual course, if accompanied by injury or accident, alarmed their fears for coming evil ; and as the times were full of incident there was always room for its application. Astrologers were regularly consulted, and the command of armies never given without their sanction and indication of the fortunate moment to deliver the general's truncheon which was performed with great pomp and ceremony. One of these atmospheric changes that occurred in the year 1456, and terrified the Florentines with some reason, as it brought its own evils, was a tempest which is vividly described by Macchiavelli and far more minutely though not so poetically by Cambi\*.

“ On the twenty-fourth of August 1456,” says Macchiavelli, “ one hour before day a whirlwind swept across Italy from the Anconian shore to the Pisan sea : it flew in the form of a dark cloud of such magnitude as to occupy an area of two miles in every direction. Pushed by natural or supernatural force it became divided and at war within itself, and the broken masses now ascended to the heavens, now sunk towards the earth and bounding against each other with fearful shocks whirled rapidly round in circles flying with inconceivable velocity and driving a strong impetuous blast before them while thick flames and brilliant lightnings flashed out at every concussion. From these shivered and confused fragments, from these furious winds and incessant flashes, issued a sound louder than the loudest peals of thunder or the noise of the direst and most terrible earthquake, which struck such terror through the land that those who heard it imagined the last day was come and that heaven and earth, land and sea, were again falling into their ancient and dreadful confusion.” Wherever it swept the ravages were frightful especially about San Casciano eight

\* Cambi, p. 333, tom. xx., Del. Erud. Tosc.

miles from the capital; there the roofs of two churches were carried more than a mile away, and a carter and his team of mules swept altogether off the face of the earth, and then dashed to pieces\*.

“The clouds,” says Cambi, “were intensely black and fell to within thirty or forty feet of the earth, and fought with each other as if in battle making a great noise; and terrible, and fearful, and horrible was their force: there was much vapour, and flashes of lightning so rapid that scarcely an interval was left between; little thunder and low, with a fall of very large gravel.”

The number of extraordinary circumstances connected with this storm resemble witchcraft rather than natural phenomena, but they are probably true because two of the principal Florentines Giovanni Rucellai and Bartolommeo Ridolfi both men of science and learning, minutely investigated the facts on the spot, which were carefully recorded in a book written on the subject by the former; whence Cambi took them.†

The Florentines never wanted clever men as “*Cancellieri*” or chief secretaries of the republic: Coluccio Salutate, his pupil Leonardo Bruni surnamed Aretino, Carlo Maruspini who succeeded him, and Benedetto Accolti both also from Arezzo; Bartolommeo Scali, Poggio Bracciolini, Donato Giannotti, and Niccolo Macchiavelli were all talented men and distinguished writers, the last so celebrated as to dispense with any notice were it not for the apparently undeserved odium which ignorance and prejudice, or perhaps misconception, has for centuries cast upon him, and which still clings to his name

\* Macchiavelli, Storia, Lib. viº.

† Or rather Matteo Rinaldi, whoever he might have been. For when speaking of the gravel, the history says, “E puossi agiustare fede, perche l'Arcivescovo Antonio con molti ciptadini andorono dipoi a vedere; infra quali Giovanni di Pagholo Rucellai e Bar-

tolº. di Jachopo Ridolfi e io Matteo Rinaldi, Scrittore in gran parte ne viddi, e udi dire a' detti dua Ciptadini.” This must therefore have been the narrative of some friend which Cambi with his accustomed slovenliness has omitted to mention.

after having reduced it to the signification of deep political villany in every European language. If this celebrated author were fairly read, and Macchiavelli compared with Macchiavelli, as some of his advocates most justly advise; many prejudiced detractors might perhaps learn that such a character was not altogether merited and should never have been bestowed. In the knowledge of men and things Macchiavelli has been rarely equalled, never surpassed; and Varchi who besides a slight turn for slander was, from whatever cause, his decided adversary; after considerable abuse almost in the very words of his friend Busini, another of Macchiavelli's calumniators, is forced to acknowledge that he was kind-hearted to all his friends and the "*friend of virtuous men*," worthy he sarcastically adds either of less genius, or more discretion in its management\*.

What Varchi most disliked was his sharp and biting wit, which seems to have been exercised indiscreetly, and his morals, in some sort not exceeding the standard of the day. But the fate of Macchiavelli is one of those instances, and perhaps the most salient, where a bad name has been lightly given and as lightly received by the world; originally chiming in with some party object or prevailing prejudice it becomes by the blind force of repetition an apostolical truth in the opinion of all but those who *without prejudice* examine into its original justice. In 1527 just fourteen years after the "*Prince*" was written, Macchiavelli was anxious, his enemy Busini tells us, to resume his former post as secretary, but failed notwithstanding the exertions of Luigi Alamanni and Zanobi Buondelmonti, and this was in consequence of his general disfavour on account of the "*Prince*," which Varchi avers he tried to suppress even before it was printed, as soon as he discovered its unpopularity. To the rich; if Busini and Varchi may be credited on this point; it seemed a document intended to teach Lorenzo Duke of Urbino to whom it was dedicated, how to despoil them; to the

\* Busini, Lettera ii., p. 75.—Varchi, Lib. iv., p. 210.

poor as showing him how to destroy their liberty: to the "Piagnoni" it seemed heretical; to the good dishonest; to the wicked more wicked than themselves\*.

But if it be true as authors assert, that Cardinal Pole was the first denouncer of the "*Prince*" which was only seen by him in 1534 when Thomas Cromwell first directed his attention towards it; this dislike could scarcely have been general in 1527! Afterwards in passing through Florence Pole's invectives were loud against it, and the answer was, that Macchiavelli's intention was not to form and instruct a prince but delineate a tyrant †. Macchiavelli was in principle a thorough republican though not unwilling, *from positive distress*, to accept office from the Medici: his discourse on Florentine reform written by command of Leo X. shows his real feelings, all tending even in so delicate a position, to the reëstablishment of liberty, and the whole tenor of his life and writings proves it, not even excepting his "*Prince*;" in which (considering the sovereign's interest as the especial object) pains are taken throughout to identify it with the love of his people. He is accused of disparaging Christianity, of depreciating morality, of impiety, and even of atheism, while almost all his writings tell us the reverse. What Macchiavelli's secret religious opinions were no man can tell nor has any one a right to assert but he was convinced of the value of religion both morally and politically; he conformed to the rules of his church during life, and devoutly received her consolations at his death. In those deep-thoughted and admirable discourses on the Decades of Livy, his first proposition is the paramount necessity of religion; and he moreover asserts that the most distinct indication of a nation's downfall is the contempt of it ‡.

Cardinal Pole was followed by a host of detractors especially Jesuits, one of whom; no doubt to prove his accuracy; is said

\* Varchi, Lib. iv., p. 210.—Busini, Lettera, p. 75.

† Preface to "*Opere di Macchiavelli*," Italia, 1819.

‡ Discorsi, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, cap. xii.

to have emphatically quoted the *third* book of the "Prince," a work only containing *one*. Macchiavelli everywhere makes law, justice, and religion, the basis of his arguments on the *duty*, and the affection of their subjects the greatest *security* of princes: even in soldiers, whose morality was not much considered in those days either by themselves or others, he holds the fear of God to be the first quality that should be implanted in their minds, as being daily exposed to numberless perils and consequently most needing his protection\*. Fraud he deprecates as detestable in every action, and lauds the prince who maintains his faith and lives with integrity instead of cunning, though sometimes compelled from necessity to use it as the only means of producing good; "but it cannot," he says, "be called virtue in a ruler to murder his citizens and betray his friends, to be devoid of faith, of pity and religion: such things may achieve empire but not glory"†.

These are not the sentiments of a "*Macchiavellian*" in its modern sense! "To outrage the people," he adds in another place, "is most cruel and opposed to all modes, not only of Christian but of human life; every ruler should shun it and choose rather to live as a private citizen than reign with such ruin to his subjects ‡.

In the same chapter and that which follows may be perceived his real sentiments reflected in the condensed image of his "Prince." These are not either to advise or justify the unscrupulous acts which he elsewhere declares are *under given conditions* necessary to success, but to show that a newly-achieved dominion such as was then common in Italy; (for the times must be considered) could not be secure without them: and thus the evil of tyranny is lighted up as a beacon to free communities where some prepotent citizen may aspire to supremacy; and this by the simple exposition of practical truth, but not as

\* Proemio all' Arte della Guerra.

† Discorsi, Lib. iii., cap. xl.—Il Principe, cap. xviii.—Ibid., cap. viii.

‡ Discorsi, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, cap. xxvi., xxvii.

instructions for tyrannical rule. Macchiavelli everywhere holds up the examples of virtuous princes as objects of imitation, and of vicious ones as detestable; yet this is not the way to form a tyrant! And his first Decennale shows how he thought of Cæsar and Alexander Borgia\*. Of Borgia he says,

“ E per pigliare i suoi nemici al vischio,  
Fischio soavamente, e per ridurli  
Nella sua tana, questo *Basalischio*.”

And of Alexander VI.

“ Malò Valenza, e per aver riposo  
Portato fù fra l'anime beate  
Lo spirito di Alessandro glorioso ;  
“ Dal qual seguirno le sante pedate  
Tre sue familiare e care ancelle,  
Lussuria, Simonia e crudeltade” †.

In the fifteenth chapter of the “*Prince*,” Macchiavelli declares his purpose to write “*useful things to those who understand them*,” and consequently resolved to discuss practical truths from existing and historical facts, not theoretical imaginative speculations. The living princes of Italy were therefore generally cited as examples, and especially what they had done to establish their authority: reasoning on the consequences he asserted that their objects could only be secured by certain means which he indicated; not hypothetically, but from long and close observation of existing facts. “*The seeing with what deceit, with what cunning tyrant princes, govern in order to*

\* Historic, *passim*.

† “ And for to tempt his foes within the snare,  
And so reduce them to his own desire,  
He whistled sweetly, this same *Basilisk*.”

“ Valenza sicken'd, and to have repose  
Amongst the blessed souls was carried off  
The spirit of a glorious Alexander,  
Whose holy steps were quickly followed by  
Three of his most familiar maidens dear,  
Simony, Cruelty, and Lust.”

*maintain a reputation they never merited, is not less useful than the knowledge of virtuous actions ; for if these incite liberal minds to follow them, those will excite the same minds to avoid or stop them.*" Such are Macchiavelli's words and such the pith and marrow of his "Prince." "The tyrant princes so rife in our time," he adds, "only live for themselves ; and to give effect to their malignant thoughts simulate religion and humanity ; they break the laws of the state and govern it tyrannically." But when Macchiavelli lays down the necessity of princes using certain means to gain their ends it does not follow that he approves of either ; even Cæsar Borgia is only justified by him as well as by every rational mind, for reducing a horrible entanglement of crime suffering and tyranny to a just and orderly government, for which purpose the means, though terrible, were as necessary as the knife and caustic when emollients fail. They satisfied the people too, as was proved by their subsequent fidelity to Borgia in adversity. Macchiavelli when citing him as an example to others in similar circumstances, and when lauding his bold and able measures for self-security, for justice, and for aggrandisement, still blames their treachery and the ambition that made them necessary, as may be indirectly seen in numerous passages of his works, where such conduct is either expressly deprecated or indignantly condemned. He wrote as it were for the prince as sole proprietor of the state ; yet the prince's interest is everywhere identified with that of the people ; with law, justice, legitimate authority, and unshrinking but necessary severity ; but as a means to final humanity\*. The head and front of Macchiavelli's offence seems to be a searching inquiry and bold exposition of disagreeable truths, a diving into motives and actions, a dissection and unmodified display of what great men are least willing to acknowledge, and lastly the fearless assertion, that apparent cruelty is often real mercy.

\* Il Principe, cap. xviii.

The favour with which we are told that his work was originally received shows that Florence at first appreciated it, although after events apparently led to different sentiments; and because the Medici, then but lately restored, and to whom he had addressed it with a final appeal to free Italy from transalpine bondage; because they established their tyranny the odium was exclusively thrown on Macchiavelli's "Prince," which after all, if it showed new rulers how to maintain themselves, at least gave a corresponding warning to their people. But the Medici wanted no such teaching.

An essay on Macchiavelli's writings and character would be here misplaced; but perhaps a few sound maxims selected from various parts of his works under the title of "*La Mente di un Uomo di Stato*" may serve better to illustrate his character and sentiments than many pages of justificative discussion. On religion; amongst numerous similar opinions; he says, "If in all the governments of Christendom the Christian religion were maintained according to the instructions of its Author, Christian states and republics would be more united and happy than they are. Where religion is we may suppose every good; where it is not every evil. The honour of God and good of the people should be parts of every public enterprise. The neglect of religion and the laws are vices so much the more detestable when found in those that rule. A good and wise prince should love peace and shun war. Let princes remember that war begins when others please, but that it does not end when others please. Even in war that fraud is never glorious which breaks pledged faith and compacts. No state can be secure except under laws that comprehend the welfare of all its people. Where a thing works well by itself there is no need of legislation; but good laws make good men and good education; and good education good examples: and as good habits require good laws to preserve them, so laws to maintain themselves have need of good habits: retrospective laws are the most injurious of all."



Of taxes he says; "In their imposition regard should be had above all things to the poverty and misfortunes of the people, in order to keep them in the country." He might also have added, "for the sake of humanity;" but Macchiavelli always argues his point dryly and on general principles as political economists do theirs, leaving others to supply humanity and morality in their modified application; and this is right: the task of scientific men is only to announce a bald truth, and of statesmen to modify and apply it. Macchiavelli's "*Prince*" throughout is a simple problem, and he neither enters into religion, humanity, nor morality except as they effect its solution, while he indirectly proves the beauty and necessity of all. Such and such things are given to accomplish a required end: Query, How can it be most effectually done? He neither proposes nor defends the means as legitimate, only as truth; that is to say, with certain objects and in certain circumstances, such means and such principles of action will alone be effectual. Macchiavelli was not the author of what is now called "*Macchiavellism*," only the expositor: the burning-glass might as justly be called the author of the rays it concentrates; but as he says himself in speaking of the truth,

"Io non so se a narrarlo si disdice

Quel che seguì da poi; perocchè 'l vero

*Suole spesso far guerra a chi lo dice.*"

(*Asino d'Oro*, cap. iv°.)

That the truth often makes war against him who tells it is indeed too melancholy a fact! "We give thanks," says Lord Bacon, "to Macchiavelli, and such writers as him, who openly and without dissimulation show what men are wont to do, not what they ought to do." "An economical prince," he somewhere says with great truth, "becomes liberal to those from whom he takes nothing, and they are many; and niggardly to those who receive nothing from him; and they are few. It is good," he urges, "to have pity on the poor and miserable,

wherefore in levying taxes commiseration should be shown to them, for it is a hard thing to take from those who cannot spare." "In judging of others a dishonest work should never be justified by an honest intention; nor a laudable action, although done with a contrary motive, be hidden." "Pardon," he says "comes from a generous mind; and in every action fraud is detestable." "It is the duty of a virtuous man to teach others how to do that good which his own evil fortune would not allow him to accomplish, in order that being once made capable some one favoured by Heaven may succeed." These are not the sentiments of a man whose name has become a by-word for everything that is execrable! Of princes he says: "Their great virtues are what will make them be feared and loved by their subjects and marvellously esteemed by other potentates, and thence leave a strong foundation for their posterity: nothing makes them more esteemed than bright examples of their character in word and deed tending to the public good, of which they show themselves disinterestedly careful, liberal, or just, so as to become a proverb amongst their subjects: of these they should seek love and obedience; the one by justice and virtue, the other by affability piety and humanity: it is much more easy for a wise and good prince to make himself beloved by the virtuous than the wicked, and to obey the laws than wish to command them; for men when they are well governed neither seek nor wish for other liberty. Princes should avoid flatterers as the plague, and to do so select wise counsellors to whom alone leave should be given to speak the truth to them. Good counsel whencesoever it may come, should spring from the prince's wisdom and not the prince's wisdom from good counsel, wherefore in conceding place and dignity he should seek out virtue wherever it can be found, without respect to rank: he ought to honour and reward virtue; not despise poverty; maintain military discipline, compel the citizens to be kind to each other and to live without faction;

think less of private than of public matters and other similar things; amongst them, public faith promised to his subjects should be inviolable. The office of a good prince is to prevent crime and reduce delinquents to the right way: he should put a fair price on provisions, and *above all take care that the poor have their due and are not defrauded.* "The maxim of tyrant princes and one that cannot be too much execrated;" he says, "is that men should be either caressed or despatched: with many and continual executions they consume and impoverish the city, the hands of all are tied and the mouth shut, and those who blame their government are cruelly punished; their rule is unrelentingly avaricious; they want servitude not the goodwill of men and are therefore more desirous of inspiring fear than love: in government they renew everything, leave nothing untouched, and remove men like herds from province to province: such ways, as they are most cruel and enemies not only of all Christian but human life, ought to be shunned by every man; they render even the prince himself unhappy and insecure for his government becomes weak in proportion to his cruelty. By such means the dominions of a tyrant prince are made an example of the most wicked and infamous life because on every slight occasion rapine and homicide are frequent; and this springs from the wickedness of rulers, not from the bad nature of the ruled; wherefore all the crimes of the people under a tyrant's sway necessarily arise from his being stained with similar vices. Those who become tyrants are not aware that they fly from fame, from glory, from honour, security, quiet and mental satisfaction, and plunge into infamy, shame, vituperation, danger, and uneasiness. Whoever is born of man ought to tremble at every imitation of those times of evil government, and become excited with a strong desire of following the good." These maxims, and hundreds more that might be quoted from his "Prince," "Discourses," and other works, seem enough to satisfy all unprejudiced minds

that Macchiavelli is not the author of modern "*Macchiavellism*\*.

He died on the twenty-second of June 1527, just as Florence had recovered the liberty he loved and suffered for: his remains lay hidden for two centuries and a half until Pietro Leopoldo placed them in the church of Santa Croce at Florence where the inscription tells us that "*No eulogium is equal to so great a name*" †.

We will conclude these observations with the extract of a very interesting letter from Macchiavelli to Francesco Vettori the Florentine ambassador at the court of Leo X. ‡, which after giving a curious account of his way of life in a sort of exile at the villa of San Casciano he says, "With these low pursuits I keep my brain from rusting and soften the malignity of Fate, content that she should thus trample upon me just to see whether she will finally grow ashamed of it §. In the evening I return home and after having thrown off my peasant's frock full of mud and dirt, and put on my royal and curial robes and dressed myself decently; I proceed to my study and enter the ancient courts of the ancient men; there being amicably received by them, I nourish myself with that food which *solum* is mine and which I was born for, and where I am not ashamed to converse with them and ask the reason of their actions, and they benevolently reply; and I have no annoyance for four hours; I forget every grievance, fear no poverty, am not alarmed at death: I transfuse myself entirely into them. And because Dante says '*Che non fu scienza senza retener lo inteso*', I have noted that which from their conversation I have made my own and composed a little work *De Principatibus* where I

\* *Mente di un Uomo di Stato.*

† "*Tanto nomini nullum par eulogium.*"

‡ First published in the Italian or rather *Pisan* edition of 1819.

§ In the original, "*E s'jogo la malig-*

*nità di questa mia sorte.*" But we want a corresponding word for the expressive "*Sjogare.*"

|| There never was science without retaining what is understood.

go as deeply as I can into the cogitations of this subject, discussing the nature of princely government, its various forms, how it is acquired, how maintained, and why lost; and if ever any of my works pleased you this should not displease you; and to a prince, and especially a new prince, it ought to be acceptable; wherefore I dedicate it to the magnificence of Giuliano \*. Filippo Casavecchia has seen it; he will be able to tell you of the thing in itself and of the discussions I have had with him; nevertheless I am constantly augmenting and repolishing it.

. . . . I have talked over this little work with Filippo, whether it were better to give it or not give it; and if it be good to give it, will it be well that I carry it myself or that I send it. The not giving it made me doubt whether it would ever be read (to say nothing of others) even by Julian himself and that this same Ardinghelli might take the honour of my last labour. Necessity which is driving me on, compels me to give it, for my means are wasting away and I cannot long remain thus without becoming despised for my poverty. My next wish is that these Medician lords would employ me, even if they were to begin by making me roll a stone, because if I do not afterwards gain them I have only myself to blame: and as to this thing, when it is read they will see that during the fifteen years which I have been learning statesmanship I neither have slept nor played, and people should be glad to employ one who is full of experience at the cost of others. Of my fidelity they ought not to doubt because having always kept my faith I cannot now learn to break it; he who has been faithful and good for forty-three years (which is my age) ought not to be able to change his nature, and of my fidelity and honesty present poverty is my witness. I wish you would write me your opinion of this matter and so I commend myself to you. *Si felix.*  
*Die 10 Decembris 1513. N. M."*

\* Son of Lorenzo and brother of Leo dressed it) at that time governed X., who, with the younger Lorenzo, Florence.  
 son of Piero (to whom he finally ad-

And for one who had been near fifteen years secretary to the Florentine republic where peculation was rife and constant this although his own is no slight testimony. We now take leave of Macchiavelli with the painful feeling that his malignant fate continued not only unrelaxing in her persecutions while he lived but still pursues his name and memory with unmerited infamy\*. That he felt it deeply is plain by the above letter, and this mortification breaks forth from many of his writings especially the verses on Ingratitude, where he says,

“Giovanni Folchi, il viver mal contento  
 Pel dente d'invidia, che mi morde,  
 Mi darebbe più doglia, e più tormento  
 Se non fusse che ancor le dolci corde  
 D'una mia cetra, che soave suona,  
 Fanno le Muse al mio canto non sorde” †.

The great constellation of Florentine genius which blazed in the fifteenth century still shines with pleasing lustre on the world, and the merits of those intellects that composed it have been so often and so recently discussed that although to notice them is the duty of history the task may well be omitted where fresh matter and the requisite ability are both wanting to augment or improve what has been already so fully and ably given to the public ‡. In architecture, painting, sculpture, poetry, history, medicine, military arts and science, mathematics and navigation, to say nothing of vast commercial enterprise and states-

\* Fortune should have favoured Macchiavelli if it were only for the beautiful verses he composed about her. (Vide *Capitolo di Fortuna, addressed to Giov. Batista Soderini.*)

† Giovanni Folchi, to live malcontent,  
 Bit as I am by envy's rankling tooth,  
 Would give me greater torment, greater pain,  
 Were it not for the softly sounding chords  
 Of my loved lyre, which sweetly pour their strain  
 And make the Muses hearken to my song.

‡ Vide Roscoe and others.

manship Florence shone preëminent not only above her compatriot cities, but in proportion to her size, above most nations either ancient or modern, in the number and rapidity of her intellectual productions. In painting, the Florentine school has been divided into five epochs the first of which extends to about the last quarter of this century when it had already taken a new and more truthful character under Masaccio, and was nearly brought to perfection by the all-powerful grasp of Leonardo's genius. Masaccio however showed the way, and left a study in the Carmine church that occupied the pencils and directed the labours of such men as Pietro Perugino, Leonardo da Vinci, Buonarroti, Fra Bartolommeo, Andrea del Sarto, and even the all-excelling Raphael himself, besides others of inferior note. The Beato Angelico da Fiesole, Filippo Lippi, Andrea del Castagno (who first practised oil-painting in Florence) Andrea Verrocchio, Leonardo's master; Baldovinetto, who taught Ghirlandaio, the instructor of Michelangelo Buonarroti; Cosimo Rosselli to whom the Fra Bartolommeo and Albertinelli were indebted for their first lessons; Pier di Cosimo, under whom Andrea del Sarto studied; besides numbers more, were all celebrated painters of this prolific age. Leonardo da Vinci, who was born towards the middle of the century and died in 1519, at Cloux near Amboise in France, was one of those bright spirits that appear at distant intervals as it were to rouse human intellect and at one great stride overstep a century of common men. To a mind curious, subtle, and insatiable in the investigation of truth he added a hand as cunning bold and dextrous in the execution of all he attempted, and is said to have delighted his cotemporaries almost as much by the grace of his movements as he astonished them by the force of his reasoning, his music, and his painting. Nothing was too great or too little for his elephantine grasp, from the deep mathematical and hydraulic labours of supplying Milan with the limpid waters of the Adda, to the pastime of

moulding light waxen images and sending them flying on the winds during the long hours of a tedious journey, all was alike. His mental activity was incessant; he was a painter, a sculptor, a mathematician, an architect, an engineer, and excelled in all : he was besides, a poet, a musician, a swordsman, an inimitable dancer, a complete horseman, and overcame every competitor at the court of Milan in all these accomplishments. He constructed a silver lyre formed like a horse's head, and beat all the musicians assembled to hear the extemporaneous verses which he sung to it: he then engaged in deep discussions and was equally successful against the most learned of Milan, whom his powerful reasoning and eloquence confounded: as a mechanician he had scarcely a rival, and amongst the various instruments of his invention was one by which he offered to raise the whole fabric of the church of San Giovanni at Florence so as to place steps under it without disturbing a stone of the edifice ! Of the possibility of this he frequently convinced some of the first men in the city who when away from the enchantment of his reasoning felt it to be impossible, and yet were again convinced by his eloquence whenever he resumed the subject ; but the attempt was never made. Leonardo was fond of animals especially horses, and used to purchase birds from the market people only to set them free ; his manners were fascinating, his mode of living generous and hospitable, his strength such as to twist horse-shoes, nay even the great iron rings that are attached to Italian houses ! And so excellent was he in anatomy as to have been quoted by the celebrated Doctor Hunter for his accurate expression of the minutest human muscles and his perfect knowledge of their play.

Of Leonardo's poetry little remains or at least has been published : the following sonnet has however come down to us which if not smooth is powerful and philosophical.

“ Chi non può quel che vuol, quel che può voglia ;  
Che quel non si può folle è volere.



Adunque saggio l'uomo è da tenere,  
 Che da quel che non può suo voler toglià.  
 Però che ogni diletto nostro è doglia  
 Stà in sì e no saper, voler, potere,  
 Adunque quel sol può che col dovere  
 Nè trae la ragion fuor di sua soglià.  
 Nè sempre è da voler quel che l' uom pote.  
 Spesso par dolce quel che torna amaro.  
 Piansi già quel ch' io volsi poi ch' io l'ebbe.\*  
 Adunque tu lettor di queste note,  
 S' a te vuoi esser buono e agli altri caro,  
 Vogli sempre poter quel che tu debbe."

Ghiberti, Donatello, Michelozzo, Brunelleschi, Luca della Robbia, Bernardo and Antonio Rossellini, Leon Batista Alberti, Andrea Verocchio, Giuliano, Giovanni, and Benedetto da Majano, Mino da Fiesole, Giuliano Giamberti better known as San Gallo, Simone del Pollajuolo surnamed Cronaca, Antonio da San Gallo, Baccio Bandinelli, and the great Michelangelo Buonarroti, are some of the principal sculptors and architects of this century. Their names are known, their story told, their works still extant to honour their native country; which lauds and admires, but cannot even copy their excellence.

Besides the historians quoted in this work there are many of the less celebrated literary men who were nevertheless much esteemed in their day and some whose writings remain still unpublished; amongst these is a history of Tuscany by Piero di Marco Parenti M.S. in the Magliabechiana library where in relating the death of Edward the Fourth's brother Clarence we are told that "*his veins were opened in a bath of red wine by the king's order.*" A much more likely story than the tale of the Malmsey Butt. We have also Lorenzo Ghiberti who

\* This seems to have been a common Luca Pulci's "*Ciriffo Calvaneo.*"—  
 proverb of the day: we find it in (*Stanza 93, p. 11.*)

"Pianse alcū quel, che volle, poi che l'ebbe  
 Proverbio accomodato a pensier folli  
 Vedi ch' io piāgo ancor quel ch' io pur volli."—Ed. 1572.

wrote a treatise on painting and sculpture, still in manuscript in the above library, where he treats of ancient and modern art, on light, the eye, and proportions; also one on architecture, both having been given by him to his friend Cosimo Bartoli, and of the former, Vasari is said to have made considerable use in his work on painting. Cennino di Andrea Cennini also wrote a treatise on painting about the year 1437, in which the modes of colouring adopted by the older painters are given: he learned this from Agnolo di Taddeo who had it from his father the pupil and godson of Giotto\*. Besides these we have Matteo Palmieri, author of "*La Vita Civile*" and other works; amongst them a long poem in imitation of Dante called "*La Citta di Vita*" which is yet unpublished in the Laurenzian Library. Giusto de' Conti who flourished in 1472, was the author of "*La Bella Mano*" a poem which, as it was republished in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries at Paris and Florence with notes by such a man as M. Salvini, has probably some merit.

Cristoforo Landino of Prato Vecchio in the province of Casentino is well known as the annotator of Dante and the translator of Pliny's Natural History, of which an edition was published at Venice in black-letter in 1481. Bernardo, Luca, and Luigi Pulci; the last known as the author of "*Il Morgante Maggiore*;" the first composed some pastoral poetry, and Luca a metrical romance called "*Il Ciriffo Calvaneo*", some poetical epistles, and "*La Giostra di Lorenzo de' Medici*" of whose society they were distinguished members.† Domenico Burchiello the barber and burlesque poet flourished also in the first half of the century. Bernardo and Giovanni Rucellai added some grace to this period of Florentine literature; the first by several small historical works, the last by his poem of the Bees, ("*Le Api*,") and a tragedy called "*Rosmunda*." As

\* Alfred Reumont. *Tavole Cronologiche e Sincrone della Storia Fiorentina*.

† "*Il Ciriffo Calvaneo*" has seven

cantos in which the nominal hero is scarcely named, and it finishes abruptly: the "*Giostra*" shows more poetry.

a scientific man and a great navigator Amerigo Vespucci must not be forgotten, though except in name he will scarcely retain the credit of anticipating Columbus in the discovery of an America. He was born in 1451. The profound mathematician Paulo Toscanelli who died in 1490 we are told and with greater reason, first kindled the flame of discovery in that navigator's mind who as already noticed, is with much probability said to have learned more from the Icelandic chronicles of the Northmen when he traded to that island than from any scientific cosmographical theories.

Raffaello Maffei commonly called "*Il Volterrano*," Marcello Virgilio Adriani (not the historian) and Piero Aretino, the latter by his satires letters and comedies, all contributed to the literary fame of this epoch. Angelo Firenzuola translated the "*Golden Ass*" of Apuleius and published some burlesque poetry. Luigi Alamanni is better known by his *poem*, and Giovanbatista Tedaldi for his *treatise*, on agriculture; the latter also by his Discourse on the Life of Giovanni de' Medici of the black bands. Nor must Girolamo Benveni the poet and devoted follower of Savonarola be omitted: he was the friend of Marsilio Ficino, who died in 1499, and of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, and wrote lyric poetry which he often adapted to the religious dances of that singular enthusiast.

The year 1495 was remarkable for an act of justice to the memory of Dante by restoring his descendants to all the privileges of citizenship and emancipating them from every consequence of former sentences the same as if their great ancestor had never been banished, declared rebel, or had any public judgment recorded against him. In 1430, the Seignory entreated Ostasio da Polenta lord of Rimini to restore his ashes; this was a compliment to the dead but while living he remained in exile, and an application of the Florentine Academy to Leo X. in 1519 still left the remains of Dante in repose\*.

\* Reumont. *Tavole*, &c<sup>a</sup>. A work of great research, written in pure Italian by a German.

The "*Studio Fiorentino*" or college, which had been closed during the previous political disturbances was re-opened in 1386 and again shut in 1404: eight years after it was again thrown open or rather formally refounded and in 1429 Pope Martin permitted certain taxes on ecclesiastical property to be raised for its support. In 1473 the "*Studio Pisano*" was first re-opened after the conquest, and many of the Florentine professorships were transferred to it, theology being still taught in the capital until 1497 when the loss of Pisa brought back the university to Florence where in 1516 its privileges were confirmed by Leo X.

But the encouragement of learning was not confined to government: Niccolo da Uzzàno, always a zealous patron of letters, bequeathed money for the institution and erection of what was called a "*Sapienza*" or supplementary college to the Florentine "*Studio*," which was to contain fifty students, one half Florentines the rest foreigners; his intentions were not fulfilled, the edifice remained unfinished and the funds were otherwise appropriated. In 1496 the consuls of the Mercanzia, who were trustees, gave away the building to the friars of Saint Mark: Clement VII. bestowed it on the nuns of San Giovannino who held possession until 1550 when Cosimo I. turned it into a cage for the public lions which were still maintained with great reverence; for in consequence of alterations made about the public palace it became necessary to remove their dwelling along with that of the "Executor of the Ordinances of Justice" and the Captain of the People\*. The site is still called "*Via dei Leoni*" and that of the "*Sapienza*" has become a royal stable! Such are the vicissitudes of life, and so are human imaginations finally disposed of! Uzzàno's intentions were the tranquil studies and improvement of rational man, and they have ended in the rearing and management of beasts! His rival Cosimo de' Medici was more fortunate: during the Council of Florence

\* Reumont. *Tavole*, &c<sup>a</sup>.

for the union of the two churches in 1439 that city was crowded with Greeks and amongst them Giorgio Gemisto surnamed "*Platone*," a philosopher who is said to have first given Cosimo the notion of forming his Platonic academy. It was not however until some time after that Marsilio Ficino another Greek, was chosen to direct and carry out this idea, which took full effect, and the academy being composed of the brightest spirits of that day burst into great splendour under the care of Lorenzo, when Pico della Mirandola, Poliziano, Landino, Bernardo Rucellai, Alberti, and many other great names combined to render it famous. Rucellai after Lorenzo's death became the patron and resigning his beautiful gardens for its use still continued to attract the mass of Florentine intellect to their shades and porticos; but the conspiracy against Cardinal Giulio de' Medici in 1522 and finally the exile of Palla Rucellai in 1527 broke up this celebrated academy\*. With all this taste for literature it is curious that eloquence should have been extremely rare in Florence: according to Giannotti very few people had the courage to speak in public; and in the two last popular governments one of the hardest tasks of the secretaries was to make the members of the great council speak loud enough to be heard; the moment they had to depart from the tone of familiar conversation they lost their voice, and this he attributes to the want of forensic elocution, a defect which Peter Leopold subsequently endeavoured to remove†. Yet if we may judge from the speeches reported by Varchi, especially Niccolo Capponi's defence, eloquence was far from wanting; it was however considered to be deficient not only in Florence but throughout Italy, except in the pulpit, where sanctity and authority combined with impunity gave more confidence to the speakers.

Priestly influence was always considerable amongst so devout and superstitious a people as the Florentines; yet sceptics occasionally arose, and if sincere and bold enough to avow

\* Reumont. *Tavole*, &c<sup>a</sup>.

† Giannotti, Lib. iii., p. 206.

their sentiments were severely dealt with: thus in 1450 we have an instance of terrible persecution when Giovanni da Montecatino a physician of profound science and great reputation, after vain attempts by the archbishop to make him recant, was delivered over to secular justice and hung for denying the soul's immortality, a doctrine far too dangerous for church revenues to allow any holder of it to escape with impunity. This religious zeal was frequently discharged like an electric shock on the unfortunate Jews, not in opposing their exactions as Savonarola, who was no persecutor, did by the creation of a *Monte di Pietà*; but by attacking them fiercely from the pulpit whence the passions and prejudices of the vulgar could be most easily excited.

Thus in 1458 a Milanese Franciscan preacher of the Visconti race held that Jews could be legitimately despoiled of their property as not lawfully belonging to them but acquired from others by usury. The archbishop, more rational but perhaps not more sincere than in the former business, endeavoured in vain to stop such doctrine as public excitement had become alarming, but the Seignory cut the matter short by promptly expelling this firebrand from the town and within three days, under peril of their displeasure, from the Florentine dominion. The prelate, notwithstanding Montecatino's fate, was no doubt a good man and afterwards sainted: his charity was so extensive that at his decease in 1459 a single silver spoon was all the property found belonging to him; but his virtues are still remembered in the Romish calendar under the name of Saint Antonino\*.

We find the traces of slavery running amongst the Florentines through all this century and far into the next: this stain indeed seems never to have been wiped out by any legal enactments of the Italians, but rather to have been gradually relinquished from the united influence of liberal institutions, increasing civilisation, and private interest: free labour was found more profitable,

\* Ammirato, Lib. xxiii., pp. 88-9.

and all field slavery fell early into disuse ; but amongst the Florentines domestic slaves though perhaps not universal were by no means uncommon. Soldiers disposed of their prisoners, and Popes condemned whole cities and districts to bondage only for the pleasure of revenge and the malice was generally though not always more felt than the mischief : but from such sources, and by supplies of infidel captives the system appears to have been nourished, so that amongst the wealthy Florentines slaves were generally a part of the domestic establishment and even counted as a portion of the family in those deductions made from both the Catasto and Decima for its subsistence.

In considering the Florentine institutions we are especially struck with the absence of civil, or what Sismondi calls “*passive liberty* :” political liberty they had ; at least as far as a free exercise of will in the nomination of their rulers gives it ; but there it stopped, while the power of the chosen masters was unbounded. The most arbitrary acts might and were often committed by government, the most unjust and cruel sentences passed in the tribunals ; the judges were continually intimidated, prisoners condemned or released by party influence or individual power, and even in the honest execution of their duty the magistrates, if few, were fearful of the consequences from private and family vengeance. The process was secret, the accused had no counsel, no advocate ; imprisoned tormented and terror-stricken he was abandoned if powerless to all the dangers of fear weakness and incapacity or on the contrary, if powerful, allowed to overawe the magistrates. Trial, *began* by torture, a torture unbounded except by the will of the judge, and in those dark days Pity rarely seated herself on the judgment-seat. There was ever too much of personal enmity in all state trials and most of the criminal prosecutions, to leave any room for mercy or justice when they could be conveniently dispensed with, and the foreign Rectors, who sat and judged alone, never deigned or were even asked

to assign reasons for their decisions. Life, personal honour, and property, were virtually unprotected by the state even in tranquil periods and still less amidst the turbulence of political faction, dashed as it ever was with family feuds of the most vindictive and deadly character. Sovereign authority emanating directly from the people had no real limits, and thoughts, opinions, and intentions, were keenly and unscrupulously searched as proofs of delinquency; the habit of aural confession may have made this more sufferable, but it was not liberty.

Secret accusations weakened social confidence and we accordingly see friends betraying friends for selfish objects, yet still undiscarded when their services were likely to become useful to the injured. Rigorous legislation did not check crime; blasphemy, so frequent amongst superstitious Catholics, was never curbed; more disgusting practices were unmoved by severity; abuse of government did not cease under the action of cruel and arbitrary punishment; and the secret censorship of domiciliary visits to insure morality, which obtained under the Piagnoni, did *not* insure it; but on the contrary encouraged hypocrisy and sometimes exposed crimes that became more pernicious from publicity.

Dress, food, play, entertainments, marriage feasts, all the domestic movements of the citizens passed under the supervision of government, and rational men were watched with the same anxiety as infants. But it was a universal act and emanated from those family men and graver citizens who in the continual changes of administration passed successively to power.

Liberty of the press did not exist\*; attacks, and even squibs on the ruling powers were sent over the frontier to be printed:

\* The spread of printing was so rapid after its invention in 1454, that, as we are told by Sismondi who quotes Sanuto's "*Vite de' Duché di Venetia*," p. 1139, an exclusive right was granted by the council of "*Pregadi*," at

Venice, to John of Spires, to print the Epistles of Pliny and Cicero for five years from 1469, only fifteen years after its invention, so quick was the competition.—(*Sismondi*, vol. vi., p. 377.)



thus a lampoon on the gonfalonier Niccolo Capponi in 1527 at the most free and even licentious period of Florentine government was sent with great secrecy to the Siena press. Historians spoke out boldly both as moral men and free citizens, and they probably represented a wide mass of public opinion which was working quietly beneath the surface, but they did not print, and scarcely published, therefore ran small risk, and wrote almost entirely for posterity.

Discussion even in the public councils was not free, though votes were because given in secret, and questions were put over and over again to the vote by ministers to force them through the house by dint of repetition not unmixed with fear. Two-thirds of the suffrages were required in almost all public questions; there were exceptions but this was the rule, wherefore the minority by secret voting had the power of curbing and even defeating the majority with impunity; a procedure contrary to all our modern notions and which generally excited anger and often violence on questions of great public interest.

These defects, if ever strongly felt, were compensated by the participation of political power as well as by the privilege of conferring it; for all authority sprang from the people, was bestowed on the people, and returned to the people. This as far as it went was genuine liberty, and it was this that intoxicated the Florentines with that love and admiration for their country which shines so remarkably throughout their annals.

The rapid succession of magistrates and their ever-varying responsibility; the *Divieto* which prevented a speedy return to power; the *Specchio*, a measure of Benedetto Alberti to enforce punctual payment of taxation by the rich\*; and the *Sindicato* which subjected the conduct of all those magistrates who had to do with money or the administration of justice to rigid scrutiny and responsibility: all these were checks as long as they remained uncorrupted and formed a

\* *Cavalcanti*, Appen. xcix., p. 512, vol. ii°.

mass of apparent ministerial responsibility but more in theory than in practice and the *Specchio* became an instrument of tyranny injustice and corruption in the hands of powerful citizens ; but still the rulers were at least nominally answerable to the public for their official conduct.

From all this it appears that the great object of Florentine as well as all Italian free institutions was rather to establish the sovereignty than provide for the security and passive liberty of the people ; and it was carried to a pernicious extent : there was no pause, everything whirled rapidly, but the lowest spoke of the wheel came in its turn to be uppermost and therefore bore the momentary pressure with cheerfulness. The Seignory during their ephemeral reign could exercise the most rigorous acts of authority ; but then their successors might be the friends and kinsmen of their victims and succeed to the opportunity of revenge : this acted as a curb on tyranny, and a constant political and commercial excitement kept the Florentines in a state of mental activity that developed every faculty and probably involved a large share of enjoyment, certainly of intellectual interest, national pride, and local attachment. The life of a Florentine was exclusively public both politically and commercially ; they were compelled to make themselves known or relinquish the hope of honours : in the general periodical scrutiny every man's character talents and usual habits were minutely sifted and his success or failure made to depend, though often unjustly, upon the result.

Such was Florentine freedom, which with all its defects still contained a spirit of vitality whose inward workings roused the human mind to astonishing efforts and bold activity both for good and evil ; and perhaps in no nation did it ever produce so remarkable consequences. Their buoyancy was however chiefly in commercial enterprise, and perhaps this chapter cannot be better terminated than in transcribing from Francesco Balducci

Pegolotti's "*Pratica della Mercatura*" written about the year 1340, the qualities indispensable to a "true and honest merchant," which are given much in the style of old Tusser,

"Quello, che dee avere in se il vero e diritto mercatante."

“Dirittura sempre usando gli conviene,  
 Lunga providenza gli stà bene,  
 E ciò che promette non venga mancante :  
 E sia se può di bella e onesta contenza,  
 Secondo che mestieri, o ragione intenda,  
 E scarso comperare, e largo venda,  
 Fuori di rampogna, con bella accoglienza.  
 La Chiesa usare, e per Dio donare.  
 Cresce in pregio, e vendere a uno motto.  
 Usura, e giuoco di Zara vietare,  
 E torre via al tutto,  
 Scrivere bene la ragione, e non errare. Amen.” \*

That is to say, "He must ever act with integrity; long forecast will be useful to him; he should never fail in his promise; and, as far as he can, let his deportment be sober and graceful in all that is needful and consistent with reason: he should be cautious in buying but sell largely, avoiding disputes, and keep a cheerful countenance: he should attend church and be liberal of alms for Christ's sake. He should increase in the world's estimation, and make no second prices; avoid usury and gambling and get rid of them altogether, and keep his accounts accurately without errors."

Thus we see that truth and honesty were as fairly estimated in the middle ages as now; and just as unscrupulously trampled upon.

\* *Pratica della Mercatura* apud Pagnini. *Della Decima*, tomo iii., p. 24.

## CHAPTER VIII.

FROM A.D. 1500 TO A.D. 1509.



At the beginning of the sixteenth century a great part of Italy but especially Romagna was still divided into a number of small principalities and insignificant republics remarkable for every crime of which man unchecked by honour, humanity or conscience and prompted by his wildest passions, can be imagined capable. Yet most of them were at the same time the zealous patrons of arts and literature, as if to dazzle the eyes of posterity by the delusive embellishments of their superlative wickedness. Ancona, Assisi, Spoleto and Terni still preserved a sort of free republican form of administration, but lacerated by intestine strife they enjoyed anything but social peace or domestic happiness: no less than sixteen of these factious or tyrannical governments poisoned the land and were infinitely worse than any powerful and privileged aristocracy; no law controlled them; no opinion checked them; life and death hung lightly on the tyrant's word, and he added the baneful employment of condottiere to all his various powers of mischief\*. An illusive glittering of taste and splendour was sparkled over the country and imparted to every capital the appearance of an exclusive but

\* Besides those above named, it may be convenient to repeat, that La Marea was nearly shared by the *Varani* of Camerino and the *Fogliani* of Fermo: the *Roveri* ruled Senegaglia: the *Montefiltri* at Urbino: the *Baglioni* at Perugia: the *Vitelli* at Città di Cas-

tello: the *Sjorseschi* at Pesaro: the *Malatesti* at Rimini: the *Ricrij* at Forli and Imola: the *Manfredi* at Faenza: the *Bentivogli* at Bologna: the *Esti* at Ferrara: and the Venetians had made themselves masters of Ravenna and Cervia.

superficial character of intellectual refinement when it was more truly the dwelling of slavery licentiousness and death. The dignity of the human mind and the best feelings of the human heart were equally prostituted and degraded, genius and learning lent their aid to celebrate virtues inexistent except in the imagination of poets, who borrowed their patron's title as a golden hook on which to hang their own more brilliant conceptions.

But unchecked power being as much the parent of costly vices as disgusting crimes, these lords' revenues were never equal to their wants: living to fancy which is unbounded, and to passion which is insatiable, such cravings could not be satisfied with the ordinary resources of their territory; thence ruinous taxation, unmitigated oppression; laws not for obedience but enacted on purpose to be broken for the sake of heavy penalties from those who infringed them, and which were often systematically suspended until a certain number of victims unwittingly became obnoxious to punishment. By these and every abominable contrivance that a subtile and wicked ingenuity could suggest the people were impoverished but not corrected: the sufferers endeavoured to solace themselves by tyrannizing over others; injustice filtered through each successive rank, and thus the evil was widely and universally absorbed\*. Such was Romagna!

These princes were also poor; but aiming at royal magnificence necessarily became rapacious; princely example polluted every class; the nobility reflected the vice, the cruelty, the licentiousness of their chief, and villany rode everywhere triumphant†. "There are crimes," observes Sismondi, "which seem to be the peculiar property of those families, who sepa-

\* Macchiavelli, *Dis.*, Lib. iii., cap. xxix.

† Lorenzo de' Medici says,

"E quel che fa il Signor fanno poi molti,  
Che nel Signor son tutti gli occhi volti."

That which doeth the Seignor many ape,  
For at the Seignor ev'ry eye doth gape.

rated from their neighbours and disengaged from all social ties, have never learned to feel as the common race of men ; and do not even believe themselves under the same moral engagements or restraints as the rest of mankind\*.”

Of this the petty sovereigns of Romagna before their destruction by Borgia were a hateful example ; but the moral extends more or less to the whole race of hereditary monarchs and hangs darkly over every rich and privileged aristocracy, not however from any innate vice in the individuals, but from defective moral education and the inherited corporate spirit of the class. The dagger, the bowl, or some more open means of vengeance with every form of treachery, were common amongst the nearest kinsmen in Romagna and other states ; and the deadly certainty of a cruel revenge was deemed by the nobility, especially of that province, as an indication of exalted independent spirit. Even the most distant villages felt this pernicious influence and everywhere the small and smaller chiefs of faction asserted their hereditary hatred by the most atrocious and revolting barbarity : thus the whole country was poisoned to its roots, numerous bands of murderers were in continual employment, and no age, sex, or condition escaped from their bloody and too faithfully-executed engagements.

Sismondi in quoting Ripamonti's History of Milan, tells us that when its archbishop Arcimboldo was made cardinal legate of Perugia and Umbria he found in that province a gentleman who had dashed out the brains of his enemy's children, cut their still pregnant mother's throat, and then discovering another infant of the same father nailed it against the gate of his residence as sportsmen do hawks and kites, a trophy of deadly vengeance ! Yet this horrid act was not considered culpable or even extraordinary by his savage and ferine countrymen †.

Such excesses required a retributer of the same stamp and fierceness, and Caesar Borgia believed with reason that if he could

\* Sismondi, vol. ix., cap. c., p. 261.

† Sismondi, vol. ix., p. 262.

eradicate all these tyrants and substitute a steady general government, a strict administration of law, and above all things peace; the great mass of the people would not trouble themselves about the means he might adopt to destroy their oppressors\*.

As the present desolation of the Roman campagna still remains a forsaken monument of the enmity between the Colonna and Orsini, so may we see, says the author of the "Italian Republics," the effects of these mischievous governments in the present character of the inhabitants of Romagna: Dante called them cruel and perfidious in the year 1300, and their neighbours still continue the epithet†. It may also be added that the national character of all the Italian people is more or less identified with that of their ancestors, subdued it is true, in spirit as in vice, shorn of its glories and outrageous crimes, but still preserving much of the evil qualities generated by the government, the antipathies, the wrongs, the sufferings and the passions of those days; in lower relief, but as yet unerased by better institutions and no longer springing out with so imposing a boldness as in those fearful periods of unscrupulous ambition and revenge.

Alexander VI. after the manner of his predecessors was bent on forming a principality for Cæsar Borgia, or the "*Duca Valentino*" as he was generally designated by the Italians: to accomplish this was one of his secret engagements with Louis XII. who immediately after the conquest of Milan detached a portion of the French army under Borgia to fulfil his engagement, and Forli was the first town to surrender after an obstinate resistance by Caterina Sforza. His conquests were subsequently arrested by the affairs of Milan where Louis tarried but a brief space although long enough to disgust the inhabitants, a feeling much strengthened by the bad conduct of his governor Trivulzio who in persecuting the Ghibelines and

\* Macchiavelli, *Il Principe*, cap. vii., p. 37, (12<sup>o</sup> Edition, Italia, 1819).

† Sismondi, vol. ix., p. 262.—*Inferno* cap. xxvii., 33.

oppressing the whole population raised such a tempest that the French were suddenly driven into the citadel for shelter and then beyond the Tesino; Lodovico Sforza was recalled by public acclamation, and on the ninth of February 1500 the Cardinal Ascanio was joyfully hailed as their prince's harbinger by a people that once vainly sought for gentler government under a transalpine despot. No persecutions ensued; Lodovico soon appeared as a liberator amongst the same population who only five months before had expelled him with execrations as a tyrant, and now would fain believe that princes might sometimes learn a wholesome lesson in adversity. But the double tides of fortune and misfortune appeared to meet and toss about Lodovico at their will; for after regaining all his territory as if by magic, so strong was the reaction of public feeling, and advancing to meet the enemy with a large army composed principally of Swiss, he was by these bribed and insolent gladiators not only deserted and betrayed at Novara, but after granting him concealment amongst their sordid ranks most foully allowed him to be taken, nay almost delivered him, disguised in one of their own disgraceful habits, to his most implacable and deadly enemy\*.

Louis dragged him in equally barbarous triumph through the city of Lyon, refused him an audience, and ultimately imprisoned him at the castle of Loches in Berri, where in a dark chamber deprived of pen ink and books, he had full leisure to repent the hour when a foreign potentate was invoked to defend his ill-gotten principality. There he lingered for ten long years of a most unhappy existence. Yet he was, says Guicciardini, "a prince of most excellent genius and eloquence, with many intellectual and natural ornaments and worthy of the designation of mild and clement if such commendation had not been stained with the infamy of being his nephew's murderer" †.

By a letter written from prison before his final incarceration

\* Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iii., p. cvii.; Lib. xxvii., p. 259.

Lib. iv., p. cix.—Guicciardini, Stor., † Guicciardini, cap. v., Lib. iv., p. 245.

Lib. iv., cap. v., p. 241.—Ammirato, —Muratori, Annali.



at Loches we perceive the restless singularity of his character, and his ambition even in the gloom of a dungeon, to govern Italy and the world, and his full confidence that Louis XII. would be guided by his superior knowledge and sagacity\*.

This disaster sealed the fate of Milan and the Sforzeschi; the rest of that family were either closely imprisoned or otherwise rendered incapable of disturbing the ambitious march of the conqueror. These events for a while arrested the career of Valentino but in 1501 the fall of Faenza and murder of young Astorre Manfredi completed the conquest of Romagna, which province by the sale of some cardinals' hats to secure a majority of votes in the sacred college, was by apostolic authority erected into a duchy for the pontiff's eldest born. As severity alone could reduce the barbarous condition of Romagna to any sort of order Valentino appointed an inexorable judge to preside with unlimited authority, a man who struck terror through the whole country but finally reduced it to order: Borgia's means were fear and cruelty, but they were not intended to last; therefore when everything was thoroughly reformed and such rigours no longer needed the enchanter broke his wand and dismissed the evil spirit. Early one morning the citizens of Cesina beheld without any wonder a bloody scaffold in the public square, but when they recognised the still bleeding body of Ramiro d' Orco Borgia's sanguinary minister, he before whom all Romagna shrunk and trembled, great was the amazement! It was severed in two pieces, and the block, the axe, and the mangled corpse remained for some time emphatically exposed to the public gaze without any further explanation! Yet the lesson came home to public feeling when in his stead a central court of justice was established with a judge or president of unexceptionable character and deputies from every city in Romagna. Thus previous rigour paved the way for milder government †.

\* This letter is published in the Florence, (vol. i., p. 37).  
 † *Documenti di Storia Italiana* by Macchiavelli, Il Principe, cap. vii.  
 the indefatigable Giuseppe Molini of

During the period occupied by these transactions in Romagna Florence was languidly maintaining war against the unconquered Pisans who still struck with tired arms but heroic spirit, for their fading liberty. It would be hard to say whether any more generous feelings were mingled with those of fear and hatred to Florence, when Siena Genoa and Lucca offered Louis XII. 100,000 florins to guarantee that freedom for which Pisa had been so long and nobly struggling, and secure the independence of Pietra Santa and Montepulciano; an additional subsidy of 50,000 florins a year was to follow if he would only compel Florence to surrender Leghorn and all the contado of Pisa to her brave inhabitants. It does not appear that either the conscience or justice of Louis XII. would have interfered with his avarice in agreeing to so infamous a measure, had he not referred its decision (as was his custom in all affairs of importance) to the Cardinal de Rouen who governed Milan, and though not over scrupulous was more tender of royal honour and honesty than either Louis or his courtiers. Amongst these Trivulzio eager for the proffered lordship of Pisa was most clamorous, and after the example of Gianluigi dal Fiesco, another aspirant for the Pisan sovereignty, offered large sums to Louis for his support\*: but the cardinal from whatever motives, was inexorable, Florence had honestly fulfilled her engagements to aid Louis in the recovery of Milan by turning her contingent into money, and as the invasion of Naples had been postponed and the troops remained idle, a treaty with Piero di Tommaso Soderini was signed, by which six hundred lances in the royal pay and five thousand Swiss with a body of Gascons and a park of artillery, were immediately to proceed against Pisa under Hugues de Beaumont one of Rouen's kinsmen who had before conciliated the Florentines by his prompt and honest surrender of Leghorn in the time of Charles VIII. Ives d'Allegre a general of superior rank and

\* Guicciardini, Lib. v., cap. iº, p. v., vol. iiiº.

talents who had been employed with Borgia in Romagna, had been named by Louis for this command but was superseded by Beaumont at the particular and ill-judged request of the Florentines, perhaps with a view of more effectually conciliating the cardinal\*. This treaty and expedition were, like all the rest between France and Florence since the invasion of Charles VIII. costly, treacherous, rapacious, and unsuccessful: after two months' delay, seven instead of five thousand Switzers appeared, whom Florence was compelled to pay at a ruinous cost though occupied in levying contributions on some of the Lombard princes, and which nothing but the intense desire of recovering Pisa ever induced her to do. Pietra Santa soon fell; but instead of being handed over to Florence according to treaty, the cardinal by a previous and well-paid treachery promised Lucca to retain it for the king's decision as to who might be the rightful owner, and in no case to put Florence in possession until she had achieved the conquest of Pisa †. After continual vexation, delay, and want of provisions in consequence of military outrages, Pisa was finally invested: on the night of the twenty-ninth of June a breach eighty or a hundred feet wide was effected; the troops crowded without order or discipline to the assault but were checked by an inner wall and retrenchment which the spirit and experience of the Pisans had enabled them to create as if by magic ‡. This attack failed, for the French had no real wish to carry the place: the misfortunes of Pisa, the heroic resolution of the men; the charms, the self-devotion, the tears, the blandishments of the women, combined with a common and universal hatred of Florence had cast such a spell of enchantment round their walls as bewitched every foreign

\* *Impresa di Pisa di Biagio Buonaccorsi*, MS.—*Buonaccorsi, Diario*, p. 30.—*Guicciardini, Lib. v., cap. i<sup>o</sup>*, p. 6.—*Ammirato, Lib. xxvii., p. 259.*

† *Impresa di Pisa da Biagio Buonac-*

*corsi, MS.*—*Buonaccorsi, Diario*, p. 32.—*Guicciardini, Lib. v., cap. i<sup>o</sup>*, p. 7.—*Ammirato, Lib. xxvii., p. 260.*

‡ *Jacopo Pitti, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>*, p. 68.—*Impresa di Pisa da Buonaccorsi, MS.*

army that approached them: Pisa feared no Frenchman: the most amicable intelligence existed between the two people: night and day were the gates left invitingly open to the besiegers: they were welcomed everywhere and even shown the retrenchments and batteries that the most dangerous positions might thus be avoided. The French, especially Ligny, Allègre, Francesco Trivulzio and Galeazzo Palavicino, some from jealousy of Beaumont and others by orders of Gian Giacomo, allowed supplies of troops and provisions to enter and even plundered their own convoys in order to establish complaints against the detested Florentines\*. The Pisans offered without hesitation to submit on condition of not being abandoned to the vengeance of that people but were urged by Ligny to stand firm and fear nothing for it was the king's secret wish to keep the Florentines dependent: Rouen most treacherously countenanced all this, and Beaumont with a few others, though more honest, had neither rank nor sufficient military reputation to repress the disorder: the troops burst far away from all discipline and Luca degli Albizzi, who remained sole commissary by the indignant retirement of Giovanbatista Ridolfi, was informed by Beaumont that the siege could no longer be continued†. The Gascons had mutinied and retired towards Lucca: the Swiss soon followed their example and even arrested Albizzi with menaces of death because he refused to satisfy their false unjust and exorbitant demands for money; nor was he released until his government paid them‡. The siege was raised after twelve days' continuance in despite of all Albizzi's remonstrances, and Beaumont's army retired with dishonour into

\* Macchiavelli, *Legazione alla Corte di Francia*, *Istorie*.—*Impresa di Pisa*, da B. Buonaccorsi, MS.—Gucciardini, *Lib. v.*, cap. 1<sup>o</sup>, p. 9.—Nardi, *Lib. iv.*, p. 111.—Ammirato, *Lib. xxvii.*, p. 260.—Buonaccorsi, *Diario*, p. 33.—Jacopo Pitti, *Lib. i<sup>o</sup>*, p. 63.—Memoriale di Giov. Portovenieri, dal Anno 1494, Sino 1502, pp 351-3, vol. vi., Parte ii.,

*Ar. Stor. Ital.*

† Jacopo Pitti, p. 69.—*Impresa di Pisa*, MS.

‡ Lettere di Luca Albizzi e Niccolò Macchiavelli alla Signoria di Firenze Commissione contra Pisa, p. 43, vol. viii., *Opere di Macchiavelli*.—*Impresa di Pisa*, da B. Buonaccorsi, MS.

Lombardy. The Pisans seizing this occasion attacked and took Librafratta while Francesco della Casa and Niccolò Macchiavelli were sent to remonstrate with the king who was at first reasonable, but afterwards, being deceived by his envoy Corcou, laid all the blame on Florence\*. Genoa, Lucca, and Siena rejoiced and were open in their assistance to the Pisans, and Louis finally compelled the Florentines after a long resistance to pay a fine of 10,000 florins to Milan for the infamous behaviour of his own troops and officers †.

The ill success of this enterprise vexatious as it was, soon took a character of inferior consequence under the universal terror caused by the successful progress and growing ambition of Cæsar Borgia which threatened not only the loss of territory but even the very independence of Florence. Closely allied to France and backed by his father's power and dexterity, he had already nearly conquered Romagna and was then besieging Faenza followed by the Orsini, Baglioni, and Vitelli, all enemies of the Florentines. Borgia was evidently seeking frivolous causes of dispute with them, and at the same time either to lull suspicion or extract money, expressed a wish to be their general. While by constant negotiation they sought to keep terms with this prince the Venetians endeavoured to persuade both him and Alexander that the surest way of preserving Romagna was to secure the friendship of Florence by the restoration of Piero de' Medici ‡. The Florentine territory was at the same time harassed on the side of Castrocaro

A.D. 1501. with Borgia's consent by the energy of Pisa and her adherents: Giuliano de' Medici had followed the pope's advice and set off for France if possible to excite Louis against the Florentines; Valentino had already sent a reënforcement of troops to the Pisans; old and long-extinguished

\* Lettera del Re alli Signori Fiorentini, Op. di Macchiavelli.

† Jacopo Pitti, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 70.—Macchiavelli, Legazione alla Corte di

Francia.—Biagio Buonaccorsi, Diario, p. 34.

‡ Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iv., p. 116.

feuds broke out afresh between the Cancellieri and Panciatichi at Pistoia with all their ancient cruelty; and so weakened was Florence that she had neither men nor money to maintain even this city in order, although she afterwards with some difficulty accomplished it\*.

Her prospects indeed were sufficiently gloomy, and the unstable nature of her changeful administration, never at any time desirable, now in the altered nature of political relations deprived her of both strength and confidence because no foreign government would intrust its secrets to so fluctuating a body. Her finances were exhausted by war and the insatiable demands of France: her democratic constitution uncontrolled as it was and undirected by any single head, though favourable to liberty was destruction to any vigorous execution or conception of able warlike operations even had the citizens been united: but faction then ran high, and many great families were suspected of favouring the Medici while many more desired a less democratic constitution, so that unanimity was banished and confusion took the place of wisdom, order, and discretion †. Besides this the exiled family was supported by Venice; Lodovico's throne was filled by a powerful rapacious and unscrupulous stranger, a master less just than selfish, who having annihilated one half of the political balance was preparing to destroy the other and make Italian baseness the scaffold of Italian liberty. The pope, as he was her nearest neighbour so was he perhaps the most unscrupulous enemy of Florence and broke every tie both human and divine for the aggrandisement of his infamous brood. His son swollen with ambition, at the head of a powerful army, and flushed by the conquest of Romagna, was ready to overwhelm her: Piero de' Medici was on the Bolognese frontier and soon after at Siena; the cardinal at Città di Castello;

\* Diario di Biagio, Buonaccorsi, p. 36-38.—Ammirato, Lib. xxvii., p. 261.—Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iv., pp. 17, 18, 19.—Gio. Cambi, p. 152.—Michael

Angelo Salvi, Hist. di Pistoia, tom. iii., Lib. xviii., p. 9.

† Guicciardini, Lib. v., cap. 10, p. 21.

Giuliano had already been welcomed by Louis who was exasperated about pecuniary disputes with the Florentines; and finally two citizens of distinction, Raffaello de' Pazzi, and Marco Salviati, were both in the hostile army exerting themselves to restore the hated family though headed by a more intolerable tyrant than their fathers had died to destroy: intelligence was rife between them and the Medician faction in Florence, a conspiracy was organised, and fearful suspicion mingled with new hopes and expectations pervaded the whole community\*. Faenza capitulated in April, and Borgia observed all the conditions except those relating to young Astorre Manfredi, a beautiful boy of near eighteen years of age who was to have had his liberty: instead of this he was kept for some time in honourable confinement about the court, then sent to Rome where as is said, after having been dishonoured by the depraved passions of Valentino he and his illegitimate brother were shamefully murdered†. After this Valentino advanced on Bologna intending to occupy that city and use its resources for the subjugation of Florence, but was forbidden by Louis who had taken the tyrant Giovanni Bentivoglio under his protection: he however exacted profitable conditions and with an accession of men money and territory marched triumphantly through the Bolognese dominion under the lofty and far from empty title of Duke of Romagna which had just been conferred on him by the Roman Consistory‡. Borgia had hitherto been supported by a French force which now left him to join Aubigny who was expected with a large army in Romagna, but accompanied by a body of Bolognese auxiliaries he directed his own march on the Florentine territory. Giving fair words to Florence until he had cleared the Apennines, and promising a decided exposition of his

\* Guicciardini, Lib. v., cap. iº, p. 21. and Jac. Pitti, Lib. iº, p. 70.

† Guicciardini, cap. ii., Lib. v., p. 20.— Jacopo Nardi, Lib. i., p. 118. Guicciardini speaks hesitatingly of this in-

famy; Nardi decidedly; and there is nothing in it at variance with the character of Borgia or the immorality of the age and country.

‡ Guicciardini, Lib. v., cap. iº, p. 22.

intentions at Barberino he there changed his tone and haughtily demanded their alliance with immediate support in men and money and a complete change of government\*. Valentino had no real intention of reinstating Piero de' Medici whom he privately hated for a slight when studying at the Pisan University, but to please Vitelli and the Orsini he pretended to wish it, especially as the consequent terror and distrust in Florence were likely to second his own objects. The Florentines assembled as many men as they could collect from the Mugello, Casentinò, and other places and garrisoned Fiesole and Bello Squardo; but the city itself was defended by armed citizens and a few regular troops under the command of their new general the Prefect of Sinigaglia brother of Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere. Meanwhile Valentino advanced to Campi within six miles of the capital where all his demands were agreed to except the change of government; not so much from fear of his troops which in better times would not have been cared for, but because a strong belief prevailed that he was not only favoured but invited by a large body of citizens who were far more feared than the enemy: Valentino had neither time nor forces for so important a conquest as Florence and here as at Bologna he was warned off by the French monarch; so enlisting himself as condottiere of the Florentines by which he acquired a three years' salary of thirty-six thousand florins for the pay of three hundred men-at-arms besides other conditions, he continued a measured, slow, and destructive march by Signa, Empoli, and Poggibonzi, sacking, burning, and devastating everything Florentine until he passed into the state of Piombino which he intended as his first establishment in Tuscany. Aided by Pisan artillery the siege began and Giacopo IV. d'Appiano made every possible effort for defence against this wanton attack, but soon saw Suvereto, Scarlino, Elba, Pianosa, and everything but

\* Ibid., pp. 24-5.—Buonaccorsi, Diario, p. 42.



Piombino, which last he defended in person, fall into the hands of his enemy. Borgia however was compelled to leave this conquest incomplete and join the French army then on its march to Naples, yet left a sufficient force under Vitellozzo Vitelli and Giovan Paulo Baglioni to continue the siege, but while Appiano was seeking protection at Genoa the garrison capitulated and thus Borgia made good his first step in Tuscany about the beginning of September 1501\*.

This bold and dangerous insolence coupled with the craven or treacherous conduct of the Seignory roused the indignation of every honest patriot: Borgia's force of ten thousand men was despicable compared to the numbers of militia and armed peasantry that might have been everywhere let loose and were eager to annihilate him; but were restrained under the severest penalties, and commanded to exhibit the most friendly treatment of these plunderers. The public fury was intense and almost universal, from the Senate and Council to the meanest of the populace, and a want of confidence in the Seignory became so prevalent that each individual citizen fortified his dwelling, assembled his clients, and prepared for the defence of private and public liberty. Both colleges were with the people, the companies armed themselves all equally ready to oppose external violence and domestic treachery, of which the Seignory were strongly and justly suspected: the debates became stormy, but more from indignation than dissent; Borgia's proposals were not only condemned but deemed too disgraceful for publication, and so unworthy even of discussion that Gregorio Ubertini a citizen of respectability but no note though one of the gonfaloniers of companies, left the council abruptly saying to those assembled outside the palace that he had quitted this important discussion because he would not stay

\* Jacopo Nardi, *Lib. iv.*, pp. 115-24. *Lib. i<sup>o</sup>*, pp. 70-2.—Memoriale di Giov. Diario, Buonaccorsi, pp. 41-5.—Gio. di Portovenere, p. 257, vol. vi., *Ar. Cambi*, pp. 160-6.—Guicciardini, *Lib. Stor. Ital.* v., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, pp. 24-7.—Jacopo Pitti,

to witness the sale of his country. This spread amongst the citizens and increased public indignation until the perfidious Seignory felt the check, and of all Borgia's demands that of being nominated condottiere of Florence was alone attended to by the now intimidated government.

They were moreover suspected of intending to call a parliament, an act no longer legal and always dangerous to public liberty; whereupon the whole city flared up; the colleges repaired in a body before the priors and sternly announced their intention of visiting them with the severest penalties of law if they presumed to violate it by an attempt either to renew this abolished instrument of tyranny or make any other changes in the constitution. As these penalties included the burning of their houses along with severe personal punishment apprehension overcame desire, the city was saved from revolution, and the commonwealth from tyranny and foreign subjugation.

This Seignory's conduct was the more execrated because while they compelled the nation to receive Borgia and his army of miscreants as friends and allies, he carried off everything, even the very cattle that were lent to him for the purpose of dragging his artillery; he plundered all the country within reach of his line of march and far beyond it; sent Vitellozzo to stir up Pisa and attempted with her assistance to carry Pomerancia but his general was repulsed with the loss of some guns after seven hours' fighting: he burned the town of Barbiallo, where after a show of resistance he had been received as a friend, and then murdered seven hundred of the inhabitants; he turned the churches round Poggibonzi into stabling for his horses and cleared the whole country to such an extent that his army was actually overburdened with prey: a pair of oxen was sold for a florin each, and even children that could not be carried away were disposed of at two florins a head to whoever was pleased to purchase them!

In the exercise of such barbarities Valentino designedly

wasted the months of May and June hoping by some internal revolution to gain possession of a city which the French monarch had peremptorily forbidden him more openly to molest; nor would he even then have moved if Stuart of Aubigny who commanded the French army on its march to Naples had not threateningly ordered him to depart\*.

The French and Spanish monarchs had in the meantime agreed by a secret treaty concluded at Grenada six months before, to divide the kingdom of Naples between them; this was now published at Rome where Alexander was prevailed on to dethrone Frederic by a formal decree, while Gonsalvo de Cordova, even after the treaty became public, knowingly deceived that prince by the most shameless protestations of his disbelief in it and assurances of assistance on behalf of himself and his Spanish master, the arch-hypocrite of that age. This was a cruel blow to Frederic who trusting implicitly to the cobweb promises and kinsmanship of kings had put the treacherous Gonsalvo in possession of his principal places. The French army of about two-and-twenty thousand fighting men under Aubigny and the Duke of Nemours marched in two divisions; one by Pontremoli, Pisa, and the Val d' Elsa; the other, proceeding through Bologna, Imola, Faenza, and Castrocaro entered Tuscany by the Mugello and passing through the Upper Val d' Arno both divisions united at Siena and continued their advance on Naples †. Capua was taken by Aubigny with the most barbarous cruelty; from two to eight thousand of the people according to different authors were massacred and the most infamous excesses committed; even churches and convents were plundered, nuns violated, and numbers of women threw themselves into well and river to escape from harder destiny; many went captives to Rome and were sold to the highest bidder; others who had taken

\* Buonaccorsi, *Diar.*, p. 44.—Jacopo Nardi, *Lib. iv.*, pp. 20 to 23.

† Jacopo Nardi, *Lib. iv.*, p. 124.

refuge in a tower were brought forth after the storm was over and no less than forty of the most beautiful selected by the infamous Borgia to form his seraglio at the capitol; and finally several mothers killed their own children to save them from French concupiscence; all this too under the command of a Stuart and a Scotchman!

Such cruelty struck terror into every town; little or no resistance was offered, Naples soon capitulated; the unfortunate but virtuous Frederic retired by agreement for six months to Ischia where a number of illustrious refugees of his unfortunate family were already assembled to share the common misery. Besides Frederic himself there was his sister Beatrice, widow of the celebrated Matthias Corvinus King of Hungary and the unjustly and ungratefully repudiated wife of Vladislaus King of Bohemia: there was also Isabella Duchess of Milan who had lived a prisoner to the Moor, had seen her husband murdered, her father driven from his throne, and her son deprived of his inheritance. The wife of King Frederic himself and four children filled up the measure of this unhappy family, the victims of Spanish perfidy and royal hypocrisy; and to complete the tale his eldest son was simultaneously besieged in the city of Tarento without a hope of safety. Frederic justly indignant at Ferdinand's villany preferred the chances of French enmity to Spanish friendship and Louis gave him the Duchy of Anjou as a compensation for his lost kingdom; but he was still watched narrowly and regarded as a state prisoner. His family was dispersed and all gradually melted away except the posterity of his daughter Carlotta, married to the Count de Laval, who are said still to exist through her daughter Anne in the ancient house of Trémouille\*.

France and Spain pursued their conquests in the parti-

\* Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iv., p. 124.— pp. 30-35.—Muratori, Annali, Anno Gio. Gambi, p. 166.—Buonaccorsi, 1501.—Sismondi, vol. ix., p. 295. p. 46.—Guicciardini, Lib. v., cap. ii°.

tioned kingdom until they had completed their respective tasks, when each began to covet his neighbour's portion; the result was quarrels about boundaries, disputed claims, war, the expulsion of the French, and final reduction of Naples under the expanding talons of Spain\*. Besides the resident Florentine ambassadors in France, Antonio Malegonelle and Benedetto Nerli were despatched to the Cardinal of Rouen, who was lately returned to Milan, for the purpose of obtaining some new treaty of protection from Louis XII, but the Cardinal besides restoring Mutrone and Pietra Santa to Lucca, in the face of the most solemn engagements with Florence, for the sum of twenty-four thousand ducats, was now also intriguing with that city, Pisa, and Siena, for the purpose of restoring the Medici. This convinced Florence that her only hope was with Louis himself, and after much delay and difficulty he consented to a treaty in August 1502, but more to prevent her union with Maximilian than out of any regard to the Florentines, by which he promised his protection and assistance for three years in consideration of a subsidy of 120,000 florins spread over that period. The necessity of this convention became more obvious from the determined hostility of Alexander VI and Borgia who in the middle of December had sent Vitellozzo Vitelli to quarter his troops in the vicinity of Borgo san Sepolcro on the republican frontier and vexed the Florentines by every annoyance both spiritual and temporal that malice or policy could suggest. Nevertheless the most marked attentions were paid by the latter to the Pope's daughter Lucrezia Borgia on her recent marriage with the Duke of Ferrara her fourth husband who was almost forced to espouse her, but with whom she seems to have passed her latter days in comparative respectability †.

The passage of Valentino although useless at that moment

\* Diario di Buonaccorsi, p. 48.

49, 52.—Ammirato, Lib. xxvii., pp.

† Biagio Buonaccorsi, Diario, pp. 47, 265, 266.

both to himself and the Medici did much damage to Florence, not only by the ravages committed but by the political excitement which it caused amongst those un-  
A.D. 1502.  
quiet spirits who were eagerly looking for a change. After the death of Savonarola and Valori the violence of party hatred against that faction had considerably abated while Lodovico's fall lowered the pride of his adherents and inclined them to coalesce with the former when expedient. There were many even amongst the Frateschi who wished for less popular government, so that a new division of parties may be said to have taken place under the three denominations of "Palleschi," "Ottimati," and "Popolani." The first as we have remarked were for the Medici and themselves: they wanted exclusively to enjoy the power profit and honours of the state under a single chief leaving the burdens, as they expressed themselves, to the people. The "Ottomati" were in eager search for a sort of visionary government where a few of the noblest blood the most illustrious connexions and the greatest riches were to rule Florence without any regard to the Medici, and for this object they were indefatigably working. Both these factions united in blaming everything performed by the popular *party*, while they professed the greatest attachment to popular *government* in order to conceal their intentions and gain the power they coveted. But even the Ottomati themselves were subdivided into two other sects; one decidedly against any readmission of the Medici and comparatively satisfied with the large share of public employment they received from the existing constitution; the other detesting it so cordially that they were ready to give their hand to a Medici or any other tyrant by whose means they could gain the ascendancy: power and public plunder were their objects as in the good old times of Lorenzo when they were allowed to enjoy full licence while willing instruments of his greatness. The Popolani, who formed the great majority, loved civic liberty, therefore were

constantly watching the Medici and other potent and ambitious men: they were strongly attached to the great council and believed in the wisdom of many, but consented to indulge the pride and ambition of distinguished citizens by seats in the Senate and Decemvirate of Peace and Liberty which were chiefly composed of them and possessed great authority. Yet lest these extensive powers should engender any measures subversive of the great council's authority a jealous supervision of their proceedings was in constant action to maintain the political balance, and many even of the least hated Palleschi were propitiated by such honours\*.

This collision of parties spread beyond Florence and struck many subordinate towns, which like multiplying mirrors reflected on a smaller surface every greater movement of the capital, not with reference to Florentine politics, but for local and private interests on their own little theatres of ambition. Some families gained the ascendancy with its usual results and in such places the many who were oppressed by them wished for Florentine liberty as a protection to their own †. A strong party in Arezzo desired the Medici's restoration and listened to the offers of Vitellozzi; this chief under false pretences was aiming at the restitution of Piero by whose means he not only hoped to revenge his brother's death but also advance his own power and reputation in Italy. Early in May he assembled a strong force about Val-di-Chiana, and one month after Arezzo revolted in despite of all the exertions of the Florentine commissary Guglielmo de' Pazzi aided by his son the bishop who unsuccessfully defended the citadel; it fell into the hands of Vitellozzo and Baglioni, while Cæsar Borgia from the plain of Viterbo secretly watched and directed all these operations. Civitella del Monte, Castiglione, the whole Val-de-Chiana, Cortona, Anghiari, La Pieve, Caprese, Borgo san Sepolcro, and Monte Doglio, all bowed

\* Jacopo Pitti, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 72.

† Ibid., p. 74.

early in July to the assumed war-cry of "*Marzocco*" and the Medici\*. The cardinal had repaired to Arezzo; Giuliano was entreating Louis, now moving towards Milan, to lend them his countenance; Piero was active in the camp; the Pisans had taken Vico Pisano through the treachery or cowardice of its governors; a strong Medician or revolutionary party was busy in the metropolis; the government was exhausted in funds and weak from disaffection, and the whole fabric of Florentine greatness seemed tumbling to pieces when the gleam of four hundred French lances from the Apennines cast a ray of comfort on the towers of Florence. The Upper Val d' Arno was soon occupied and Arezzo threatened; but Vitellozzo being determined to signalise himself even by resisting France would have made a powerful defence had not the murder of Giulio Varano of Camerino and his two sons, by Cæsar Borgia, alarmed him for his own safety and struck terror into the Orsini and Pandolfo Petrucci who were both united with him in this enterprise. Fearing therefore a reconciliation between Louis and Valentino of which he himself might finally become the victim, Arezzo was delivered on the first of August 1502 into the hands of Imbault the French commander through whom or his successor L'Ancre the whole of her recaptured territory was restored to Florence; not by the valour of her own arms which were now unable to cope even with a petty lord of Tuscany, but by the purchased favour of a transalpine despot for his personal interests; so low was the republic fallen †!

The force opposed to her was however smaller in appearance

\* "*Marzocco*" was the name given to the Florentine Lion, a stone figure of which was set up in all subject places and the name shouted as a battle-cry by their armies. It is said to be derived from the Hebrew, "*Mare*" (*form or appearance or aspect*) and *Sciahhal*, "a great Lion."

† Jacopo Pitti, *Lib. iº*, pp. 74-85.—Jacopo Nardi, *Lib. iv.*, pp. 129-137.—Gio. Cambi, pp. 171-180.—Guicciardini, *Lib. v.*, cap. ii., p. 48.—Biagio Buonaccorsi, pp. 50-64.—Ammirato, *Lib. xxvii.*, p. 267.—Fil. Nerli *Lib. v.*, p. 89.



than reality Vitellozzo being only the harbinger of more potent enemies: Alexander and Cæsar Borgia confiding in their own strength and Florentine disunion still hoped to establish complete authority in that republic; their power had now become formidable, for independent of the church itself the whole province of Romagna and the principality of Piombino were subdued; Pisa had offered herself to Valentino; Bologna was in a manner subject and tributary; the dukedom of Urbino was seized; the lord of Camerino murdered; the Orsini, Vitelli, Baglioni; the little republic of San Marino, and even Siena, under the iron rule of Petrucci, were all forcibly or voluntarily leagued with him. These last vainly believed that he would reinstate Piero de' Medici in Florence, which by an eight years' struggle with Pisa, the treachery and rapacity of France and her own internal disorders they saw had been rendered powerless. The younger citizens had on Louis XII.'s accession divided themselves into two parties called "*King*" and "*Duke*," the former led by Ruberto Nasi, the latter by Domenico Martelli, which leading to disorder in the city and intrigue with foreign princes were suppressed by the magistrates, but like all political associations the name and forms alone ceded to public-authority while the spirit still remained active and mingled with every political proceeding. The mode of choosing public functionaries was accordingly attacked as not sufficiently liberal; the powers of the great council were canvassed; the authority of the Decemvirate of War was jealously inspected and its conduct rebuked. The less powerful citizens bestirred themselves in their own behoof, and every operation of government was studiously thwarted more especially those of the Decemvirate, which was accused of wantonly creating war, taxation, and all their attendant evils\*. The re-creation of this office itself was resisted, unless previously sanctioned and carried by the Seignory colleges and senate, and so effectually that in 1499 it remained for a while dormant†.

\* Fil. Nerli, Lib. iv., p. 82.

† Jacopo Pitti, Lib. i., p. 77.

Experience soon proved however that the ordinary duties and frequent changes of the Seignory would not allow of their being able to execute the functions of that important and all-powerful board and this difficulty, great enough in itself, was industriously magnified by the *Ottimati* in order to force a restoration of the Ten of War. The people, though convinced of the necessity, being still jealous, agreed to their re-creation, but with powers so limited that the great citizens who usually enjoyed this dignity seeing that both patronage and speculation were cut off, haughtily refused their assent. The office consequently remained null until September 1500 when some softening of party spirit allowed of its reconstruction on condition that it had no power to engage in war, treaty, peace, or league of any kind; nor raise armies, nor take any condottiere with more than fifty followers and those infantry, into pay without the previous approbation of the Seignory and colleges: their control of money was still more rigidly confined; and thus bound, the office continued with its periodical change of members until September 1501, when with increasing popular jealousy it was again abolished. So deep and earnest was this jealousy of the great citizens that even the approach of Borgia to Campi which was believed to be entirely through their secret invitation had no effect, and the people resolved to expose themselves to every peril sooner than trust them. Even the revolt of Arezzo long remained ineffectual; and it was only the appointment of Antonio Giacomini, a known patriot of high military reputation as commissary, that finally reconciled the citizens to reëstablish the office on that occasion\*.

This measure would scarcely have passed had not the people been conciliated in June 1499 by Francesco Gherardi's introduction of a law which granted the privilege of holding any office within and without the city, from that of the Seignory

\* Jacopo Pitti, *Lib. i<sup>o</sup>*, p. 77.

downwards, to all citizens who should be declared eligible by a majority of secret votes in the great council. This by opening a wide gate to hope and ambition gave nearly universal satisfaction and interested all minor citizens in the government ; it broke up parties by attracting the less powerful from every faction to the common cause : it was moreover a broad and liberal measure, and stopped much existing partiality in official elections, wherefore Gherardi acquired universal influence, and the Pisan campaign which finished by Vitelli's decapitation was the vigorous result of such unanimity\*.

If this spirit had continued things would have prospered better, but faction was ever at work and disorder increased ; some reform was loudly demanded, for it was now too plain that the very nature of the Florentine government had in the altered character of Italian politics become a source of weakness to itself and suspicion to foreign nations. The extreme inconvenience of rapid periodical changes of government threw Florence beyond the pale of secret diplomacy : politics had taken a wider range than formerly when she herself was the moving power of Italy ; they were now almost entirely concentrated in a few great cabinets acting on transalpine principles and interests, not for Italian independence : Naples and Milan formerly as it were the northern and southern scales of Italy had now dwindled to provinces ; Venice still held her course, but overshadowed by the threatening plumes of France ; Rome had suddenly swelled under their shelter to unnatural and ephemeral greatness ; Siena, Lucca, and Genoa were nothing, and the strong hand of Florence, which once held high the balance, had sunk in lassitude beneath their withering influence.

Italian politics also began seriously to occupy the court of Spain, and the great interests of all these cabinets being involved in the secrecy of their foreign affairs they became

\* Fil. Nerli, Lib. iv., p. 83.

shy of trusting them to a government so frequently changed by its bimensal elections which necessarily spread its most hidden intercourse through a great portion of the community, which could have no steady experience, scarcely any long-continued principle of action, and whose only official knowledge of preceding views or projects was furnished by the perpetual secretary, the only permanent link between each successive government\*.

The three steady ruling powers were extinct; there was no longer a Balià, therefore no arbitrary choice of magistrates by the ascendant faction, and no chief or party in the republic which covertly but exclusively influenced the administration of government and imparted a oneness and solidity to all its foreign operations; for whatever evils such powers may have inflicted on internal freedom, there can be no doubt of their utility in all the external relations of Florence, because they gave vigour unity and a strong enduring character to her negotiations. The friends of liberty aware of this inconvenience, of the complaints of foreign powers, and of its being made use of as an argument in favour of the exiled Medici, began seriously to search for some remedy: many discussions were unsuccessfully held on the subject until at last Alamanno Salviati revived the project of Lorenzo de' Medici and boldly proposed the election of a gonfalonier for life†.

This was a startling proposition but the people felt their democratic strength, and both foreign rectors, the podestà and captain of the people, who were more frequently instruments of faction than justice, had been abolished in the preceding April. On the fifteenth of that month during the gonfaloniership of Giovanni Bernardi a decree of the great council with eleven hundred and eighty members present suppressed the above offices, and instead of the podestà created what was denominated "*La Ruota della Giustizia*" or "*Wheel of Justice*."

\* Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iv., p. 138.

† Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iv., p. 137.

This tribunal was composed of five judges who occupied the place and palace of the podestà, one of whom in turn presided over this court as podestà of Florence for six months with more pay than his colleagues, namely nine hundred golden crowns instead of five. These judges had all and more than the authority of the former podestàs because there was now no appeal from their sentence, which required four concurrent voices. Instead of an appeal to the captain of the people it could now only be made to themselves, and this institution (which still continues) secured a better administration of justice, destroyed a formidable and abused power, and rendered the exaltation of a single citizen to the supreme authority for life a comparatively safe expedient\*.

Accordingly during the gonfaloniership of Giovanbatista Giovanni, a quiet and good citizen of no great rank or numerous connexions but who wishing well to his country shared in the popular feeling, the project was urged by Salviati, Alessandro Acciaoli and Niccolo Morelli. These citizens justly imagined that such a proposal would come with a better grace and in a more winning form from a man of Giovanni's known principles than any other, and therefore lost no time in disposing men's minds both secretly and openly to the measure: nor had they much difficulty on the main point, but the ties, and buttresses, and securities for public liberty which were necessary with such power became the subject of anxious discussion. It was at length agreed in order not to lose so propitious a moment, that the law creating a gonfaloniership for life should at once be enacted and all the antagonist powers arranged before any citizen could be elected. A decree accordingly passed on the twenty-sixth of August 1502 declaring that the perpetual gonfalonier should be proposed on the twenty-first of the following September in an assembly of not less than fifteen hundred citizens all eligible to the great council, when each

\* Ammirato, *Lib. xxviii.*, p. 270.—Giov. Cambi, p. 172, vol. xxi. Del. Er. Tos.

member of that body should be free to nominate a citizen without reference to the *Divieto*, *Specchio*, or any other legal obstacle, provided that he were fifty years of age and not under conviction by any definitive sentence of a court of justice\*. The names of all these candidates were put to the vote in an assembly of two thousand citizens and those who had even a bare majority of black beans were voted for a second, and then a third time, until a gonfalonier was chosen.

This great revolution was carried into effect under the gonfaloniership of Nicholo Saccetti with some variation in form from the original intention: the benches, which seem to have held about sixteen members each, voted separately; the privilege of nomination appears to have been but partially exercised and only two hundred and twenty-six candidates were in the first instance nominated: these afterwards fell to sixty of whom ten belonged to the minor arts; and finally to three; between which the competition rested †.

These three were Antonio Malegonelle who was supported by the *Palleschi*: Giovacchino Guasconi of the *Frateschi*, and Piero Soderini; the last a man of mature age, sufficient wealth, noble family, unblemished reputation, and of great experience in public affairs: he was also without children a circumstance of no light weight in his election, because it diminished the apprehensions of many citizens for public liberty and was considered as a guarantee for his complete devotion to the commonwealth ‡.

Piero Soderini carried the prize against both competitors to the infinite mortification of the *Frateschi* and *Palleschi*: for he was of neither party, though generally favoured by the

\* Fran<sup>o</sup>. Cei, *Mem. Stor.*, MS., p. 158.—Jacopo Pitti, *Lib. i<sup>o</sup>*, p. 85.—Fil. Nerli, *Lib. v.*, p. 90.—Giov. Cambi, vol. xxi., p. 181.—Guicciardini, *Lib. v<sup>o</sup>*, cap. iii., p. 58.—Giuliano Ughi, *Mem. Istor. di Firenze*, MS., p. 6, *Parte i<sup>a</sup>*.

† Giov. Cambi, vol. xxi. p. 181, *Del. Er. Tos.*—Filip. Nerli, *Lib. v.*, p. 92.

‡ Fil<sup>o</sup>. Nerli, *Lib. v.*, p. 92.—Annunziato, *Lib. xxviii.*, p. 269.—Guicciardini, *Lib. v.*, cap. iii., p. 59.—Jacopo Pitti, *Lib. i<sup>o</sup>*, p. 86.

Bigi, but directed every effort to the general good as far as his talents and character were capable, yet he ultimately proved too mild a disposition for times and circumstances.

This new gonfalonier was lodged in the public palace with a salary of 100 florins a month besides the ordinary expenses of the place: his relations, with the single exception of brothers, were not to be touched by the Divieto; but the chief magistrate himself was amenable to the laws and could be condemned to death by a joint sentence of the Otto di Balià, the Colleges, and Conservators of the Laws of Florence. He could act as Proposto or Provost of the Seignory and sit as president in every criminal court of justice, with a vote. "God be thanked for this," exclaims Cambi, "for it is our salvation: and now justice will begin, for to this end was it ordained because in these times justice no longer existed amongst the citizens through fear of each other"\*.

Besides those already mentioned there were other circumstances which tended to facilitate this great revolution in the constitution of Florence. When Vitellozzo Vitelli evacuated the Florentine territory and the deserted Medici retired to Rome, the Palleschi seeing their first object melt away turned their eyes on and united with the Ottimati in their attempts to condense the government, because they expected either to gain their own ends in the confusion which was expected to follow, or secure as much power in a more restricted government as would enable them to restore the Medici. Hence they applauded those that attributed the disasters of Arezzo and the republic generally to the want of a vigilant head who would devote himself to the common good, and therefore strongly advocated the election of a perpetual gonfalonier, but with the secret intention through his means of establishing the Senate also for life in which council their great strength lay; and by means of these two permanent authorities gradually

\* Pitti, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 86.—Giov. Cambi, p. 181., vol. xxi.—Fil. Nerli, Lib. v., p. 92.

absorb all the popular powers of the commonwealth. The union of two such factions procured an easy passage for the bill through both Seignory and Colleges, and a still more easy course through the Senate; but it was at first thrown out in the great council, principally by the middle classes of citizens who demurred to relinquishing their chances of the gonfaloniership. However the bill was supported by all that were discontented with the existing mode of government, and more powerfully by that especial body of citizens amongst whom this high dignity but rarely fell, by the ancient families who, through the operation of the Divieto or other political reasons, were nearly excluded; and also by many from a sincere persuasion that it would be an indisputable public good. The opposition could not stand against a second debate managed as the business was by all the intriguing political arts and influence of its more selfish advocates both within and without the House as well as by the honest part of the community.

The former however wished not only to carry the question itself but that the election should fall on one of their own party; wherefore their vexation was extreme when Malegonelle and Guasconi were rejected for a citizen belonging to no faction; and still more so when all their arts and advances failed in seducing him to theirs\*.

Soderini first attempted to tranquillize the principal citizens by partially indulging their covetousness and ambition which he vainly imagined had some limits; but soon seeing his moral though perhaps not political mistake adopted a more dignified and manly course; the consequence was a systematic war in the Senate where their strength lay, against every measure not conducive to their own self-interest, and no bill likely to strengthen the existing government was allowed by them to enter the great council†. Even before Soderini actually assumed the administration strong symptoms

\* Jacopo Pitti, Lib. i<sup>a</sup>, pp. 85, 86. † Jacopo Pitti, Lib. i<sup>a</sup>, p. 86.



of opposition began to show themselves in the conduct of Bernardo Rucellai, Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco de Medici, and other citizens from the moment they discovered his determination to maintain the existing popular constitution; and so quickly did they declare themselves as not to attend his inauguration dinner although every other chief citizen of every other party assisted. This came to nothing at the moment because Lorenzo soon died and Rucellai, discontented with everything, retired from Florence\*. Death also prevented Luca degli Albizzi's jealousy and opposition from doing any mischief, to Piero, so that his commencement of office was fortunate both within and without, for Vitelli, the Orsini, Baglioni, Bentivoglio, Petrucci, and other enemies of Cæsar Borgia, perceiving that they would certainly be sacrificed by this "*enemy of the human race*" the moment he could dispense with their aid, determined to anticipate his measures.

They assembled at a place called La Magione in the Perugian states and inviting Florence to join them formed a league against Valentino which was immediately carried into activity by attacking Urbino and restoring the lately ousted duke of that province to his lost dominions. Florence had no faith in such allies wherefore Soderini not only refused his aid but sent the celebrated Niccolò Macchiavelli on a mission to Borgia at Imola on purpose to announce the determination of that republic to maintain the French alliance, of which this league was esteemed a breach, and consider all allies of Louis as her own. Macchiavelli was still resident at the court of Borgia when the latter, who being aware of their reciprocal distrust had remained perfectly tranquil during the operations of these lords in Urbino, entangled some of them in his meshes, and before the year 1503 was far advanced, most of them were murdered either by him or his father; which he said, and truly, did great service to Florence †. Nevertheless she was far

\* Fil. Nerli, Lib. v., p. 93.

Valentino nell' Amazzare Vitellozzi

† Descrizione del Modo, &c<sup>a</sup>, dal Duca

&c<sup>a</sup>.—Ammirato, Lib. xxviii., p. 270.

more alarmed at his intention of occupying Pisa, Lucca, and Siena which he soon partially made good by driving Petrucci from the last-named city. Venice although refusing to join the league against Borgia became alarmed at his projects, wherefore both she and the Florentines were strenuous in their efforts to make Louis XII. interfere, and in consequence of this Pandolfo was reinstated on condition of restoring Montepulciano to Florence which he however subsequently avoided\*.

The ninth year of Pisan liberty had now commenced and for the last two seasons Florence had carried on a war of systematic devastation even to the creation of a new Board called "*Gli Ufiziali del Guasto*" or "Officers of Devastation," whose duty was to see the territory overrun and the harvests destroyed every spring in order to effect that by time and famine which they could not accomplish by force. This had been proposed very early in the Pisan rebellion as the most advisable and economical way of carrying the war to a certain although tedious conclusion; and after much expense and national calamity it was ultimately adopted †.

Assisted therefore by a detachment of French lances under the Bailli d'Occan Florence, besides the destruction of every harvest, gained some advantages over Pisa: Vico Pisano was recovered by the treachery of its Swiss garrison which yielding to Florentine gold and French intimidation betrayed the Pisans at Vico as they had the Duke of Milan at Novara: the rock of Verrucola whence as we have said was descried every movement of the Florentines long ere they could reach their object, was attacked and taken on the eighteenth of June but more through the misconduct of its garrison than the force of war ‡.

These successes would have been rapidly improved under the influence of French activity had not the Bailli d'Occan and his

—Legazione al Duca Valentino, Macchiavelli. — Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iv., p. 141.

\* Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iv., pp. 146 to 149.

† Guicciardini, Lib. v., cap. iii., p. 44.

‡ Biagio Buonaccorsi, *Diatio*, pp. 78, 79.

lances been ordered to join Trémouille who as Captain-general of France had arrived in Italy on his march to Naples where Gonsalvo de Cordova was everywhere victorious. This gave Genoa, Lucca and Siena an opportunity of renewing their self-interested succours to the still undaunted but now enfeebled Pisans.\* The constantly successful Gonsalvo had defeated and killed the Duke of Nemours at the battle of Cirignuola after Manuel de Benavida had routed Aubigny and made him prisoner at Seminara, the identical scene of his victory over Ferdinand and Gonsalvo in other days! During the battle of Cirignuola a Spanish powder magazine blew up, on which Gonsalvo with the readiness of a superior mind, instantly exclaimed, "*We have conquered: God clearly announces our victory by giving us this sign that we shall have no more need of artillery.*" After this success the "Great Captain" pursued his march to Naples which he entered the fourteenth of May, the French garrison having retired into the Castel Nuovo and Castel dell' Uovo both of which soon ceded to the mining skill of the famous Pietro Navarra who having learned that formidable art from the Genoese made his first successful trial on this occasion †.

Louis angry at his misfortunes made surprising efforts, and while attacking Spain itself by land and sea despatched a powerful army under Trémouille to the war of Naples. Doubtful of the Pope and Valentino whose treachery had become proverbial ‡, and who as his own fortune declined had been gradually deepening their intrigues with Gonsalvo and allowing the Spanish army to recruit at Rome; he attempted to bring them to terms, and was on the point of signing a dishonourable treaty which would have placed Tuscany at the mercy of Valentino, when the sudden death of Alexander VI. altered the whole destiny of Italy §.

\* Guicciardini, Lib. vi., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 119.

† Ibid., pp. 112, 113, &c.

‡ The saying was, that "*Alexander*

*never did what he said, and that Cæsar never said what he did.*"

§ Guicciardini, Lib. vi., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 125.

The Pope, Borgia, and the Cardinal of Corneto while supping together at Belvedere a villa not far from the Vatican, were all three poisoned through a mistake of the butler in shifting the bottles by drinking a poisoned wine which Alexander had prepared for some rich cardinals whose hats and property he was then in need of. Valentino's youth and vigour combined with the immediate application of antidotes, after a long time saved him; the cardinal \*, who according to Guicciardini was one of the destined victims, had drank but little and also escaped death, but the livid corpse of the Pope was carried to Rome where the people ran in crowds to gaze on it as on a pestiferous serpent which had been poisoning all the world †.

Alexander VI. was succeeded by Pius III. He lived scarcely a month, and was followed by Giuliano della Rovere Cardinal of San Pietro-in-Vincula and Bishop of Ostia who under the name of Julius II. makes so conspicuous a figure in Italian history. His ability, munificence, and extensive influence, together with magnificent promises and intimidation, (for he was believed to possess the virtue of sincerity) gave him an all-powerful hold on the conclave where he entered on the thirty-first of October with the certainty of success and assumed the pontificate the next day; a rapidity of election never known before in ecclesiastical history ‡.

The last French invasion of Naples was less fortunate than the first: they had a powerful and skilful enemy opposed to them; his army flushed with repeated victory and enjoying all the advantages of strict discipline which the French wanted; a

\* The cardinal himself told Paulo Giovio that the moment he had drunk he felt a burning fire in his bowels, lost all perception of daylight and soon after was senseless; after a long illness his recovery was preceded by the excoriation of all his skin.—(Vide *Sismondi*, vol. x., p. 21.)

† Muratori, *Annali*. — Paulo Giovio,

Lib. viii., p. 205 — Guicciardini, Lib. vi., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, pp. 125-6. Whether Alexander died by poison or a violent fever, seems still uncertain: the doubtful circumstances may be seen in Muratori.—“*Annali d'Italia*,” Anno 1503.

‡ Guicciardini, Lib. vi., cap. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 145.

steady mass of infantry, and new instruments of war. Nominally under the command of the Marquis of Mantua (for Trémouille had fallen sick at Castel Fiorentino) the French were beaten at Mola de Gaeta by Gonsalvo on the twenty-eighth of December 1503, and there Pietro de' Medici who served with them was drowned by the oversetting of a boat too deeply laden with artillery, while crossing the river Garigliano on his flight to Gaeta\*.

Cæsar Borgia was a long-sighted politician ; he had acquired everything by his father's life, and foresaw that he might lose everything along with it ; yet he had done all which a prudent and even a virtuous ruler could have accomplished to secure his influence in those dominions which Alexander's power had given him, and his failure was the effect of misfortune alone. Having in a great measure conciliated Romagna by a comparatively just government and overcome all neighbouring opposition he could not continue so ambitious a career without the concurrence of France, and Louis as he well knew began already to repent of having exalted him ; new support was to be sought for, and the French arms becoming unsuccessful he wavered and finally courted Gonsalvo and the Spaniards. Alexander's death alone prevented this project ; but even that emergency was foreseen and considered and in progress of being provided for, when it so unexpectedly occurred. An unfriendly pope he knew would endeavour to strip him of all his states, and he accordingly had no less than four measures of self-protection either accomplished or in progress. First to despatch all who had the slightest claim on his various usurped possessions and so paralyse the intentions of any pontiff, by leaving no legitimate excuse for spoliation. Secondly by gaining all the great Roman barons, and thus holding the new pontiff in check ; thirdly by securing in his own favour as many

\* Guicciardini, Lib. vi., cap. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 161.—Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iv<sup>o</sup>, p. 159.—Giov. Cambi, p. 199.—Ammirato, Lib. xxviii., p. 273.—Biagio Buonacorsi, Diario, p. 83.

cardinals as he could; and fourthly by acquiring ere his father died so extensive a territory as to be able single-handed to resist any sudden attempt on it. Three of these and nearly the fourth were completed at Alexander's death which alone prevented him from becoming master of Tuscany: Perugia and Piombino were already in his hands; Pisa had given herself to him; and being freed from all apprehension of Louis who was already beaten from Naples by the Spaniards, he and his father must necessarily have been courted by both: Lucca and Siena could not have stood for a moment, and Florence would have been left to cope with him alone. Of all these Romagna was the only well-consolidated acquisition belonging to him when Alexander died; Borgia himself remained grievously sick, was left unprotected between two great armies and suspected by one monarch before having completed his arrangements with the other. Yet if only up and in health there seemed little doubt of his overcoming every obstacle, for so well had he ruled Romagna that for more than a month it remained anxiously awaiting his presence, while half dead as he was, he tarried securely at Rome in the face of the Baglioni, Vitelli, and Orsini, who instantly repaired there; and being aided by all the Spanish cardinals, though he could not exactly make a pope of his own he was at least able to prevent the election of an enemy. Julius II. courted him on this very account nay was even indebted principally to Borgia's support for his success, and the latter told Macchiavelli on the day of Julius's creation that he had provided for everything which he could possibly have anticipated at Alexander's decease except his own deadly illness which he never dreamed of: Valentino nevertheless made a sad mistake in permitting the election of Julius II. and had afterwards full leisure to repent of it\*.

But however securely he remained at Rome in the midst of

\* B. Buonaccorsi, p. 84.—Macchiavelli Opere, *Il Principe*, cap. vii.

his enemies, he could not from a sick and almost a deathbed, prevent the revolt of his most recently acquired and as yet unregulated territory: Baglioni with the aid of Alviani and the Venetians repossessed himself of Perugia; the Venetians themselves afterwards took Faenza and looked to the conquest of all Romagna; Todi, Viterbo and other places were revolutionised by his enemies, and the most savage acts of hatred everywhere committed; the Vitelli were reinstated in Città di Castello, Appiano at Piombino, Urbino, Camerino and Senegaglia ultimately received back their old masters; Romagna was generally quiet for its inhabitants had felt the value of a steady and just ruler under whom they lived in perfect tranquillity, and were little desirous of again falling under the dominion of their old tyrants\*. Nor was it until the Duke of Valentinois' force at Rome was attacked and finally dispersed by the Orsini and Baglioni and he himself compelled to take refuge in Saint Angelo that they gave up all expectation of his return, when determining to make a merit of necessity they slowly and reluctantly but voluntarily submitted to their ancient masters, and after lingering to the last moment, Cesina, Forlì, Imola, Pesaro, Rimini, and Faenza, all returned to their former allegiance, but even then the citadels still held faithful to Borgia †.

Venice however was too intent on conquest to let these cities quietly reassume their former state; she attempted to surprise Cesina which had returned to the church, but was repulsed, yet obtained possession of the citadel of Faenza and several strongholds in Val-di-Lamone: Fano, Forlimpopoli, Rimini and other states also fell into her hands, nor did all the remonstrances of Julius II. succeed in arresting these conquests. The citizens of Faenza in despite of the citadel made an obstinate resistance and were aided by Florence but ultimately compelled to surrender: Imola and Forlì would have

\* Buonaccorsi, pp. 81-2.—Il Principe, † Guicciardini, Lib. vi., cap. i., pp. cap. vii.—Guicciardini, Lib. vi., cap. 138-142. i., p. 130.

followed had they not feared to irritate the pope too sensibly, but no less than twelve places \* were already reduced by the Venetian arms in Romagna alone, the citadels of Cesina, Forlì, Forlimpopoli, and Bertinora still holding out for Borgia. Julius II. with his secondary rank also threw off his sincerity: and Borgia who had never been true to any one except where it suited his own interest, now trusted implicitly to the promises of his bitterest foe. Julius eager to get rid of him yet wishing to use his influence against Venice, after allowing him to reach Ostia on his road suddenly yielded to Borgia's enemies and his own alarm at the unexpected surrender of Faenza and demanded possession of those very fortresses which the latter was then about to occupy. Valentino refused and was made prisoner, but the Florentines dispersed a detachment of his troops on their frontier in full march to Romagna and he finally yielded: with some difficulty he was at last liberated from prison at Ostia in April 1504 and repaired to Gonsalvo de Cordova who had given him written assurances of safety and received him with apparent distinction but a refined hypocrisy worthy even of his master Ferdinand. A parting embrace on the most affectionate terms with a superabundance of friendly promises was the preconcerted signal for Borgia's arrest; he was hurried on board a galley attended only by one page, arrived a helpless captive in Spain and was instantly consigned to the fortress of Medina del Campo which the execrable Ferdinand, whom he had never injured, intended for his tomb: he ultimately escaped to France, but died in the field of battle after a life of strange vicissitude and not unmitigated crime †. After the victory at Mola Gonsalvo was justly suspected by the

\* Namely, Rimini, Faenza, Montefiore, Santo Arcangelo, Verucchio, Gattera, Savignano, Meldola, Porta Casenatico; and Tosignano, Solaruolo, and Montebattaglia in the state of Imola.—Guicciardini, Lib. vi., cap. ii., p. 147.

† Guicciardini, cap. iii., pp. 176-179. — Buonaccorsi, pp. 84 and 134.— Guicciardini, Lib. vii., cap. i., p. 240. — Sismondi, vol. x., p. 111.— Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iv., p. 200.



Florentines of a design on Pisa who was ever ready to throw herself into the arms of any power but theirs : ambassadors were therefore despatched to France for assistance but without effect, as negotiations for a three years' truce between the two transalpine monarchs were then in progress and concluded about the middle of February 1504\*. By this an uncertain feverish repose once more fell upon distracted Italy : her fate was now in the hands of two unscrupulous and ambitious kings who filled her plains with war and slaughter, or vouchsafed her a fearful tranquillity at their own caprice without deigning even to inform her on the subject. This truce however did not touch the contest with Pisa which still burned like a slow consuming fire while great preparations were making to quicken up the flame: Ercole Bentivoglio was appointed to command the Florentine army with the title of Governor-General, and under him were Giovanpagolo Baglioni, Marcantonio Colonna, Lodovico della Mirandola, Jacopo and Luca Savelli, Malatesta Malatesti and others. They attempted to turn the course of the Arno by directing its waters into the marsh between Pisa and Leghorn, and procured the most celebrated engineers of Lombardy for that purpose, but failed after expending enormous sums; their object was afterwards more easily gained by maintaining a small squadron to blockade that river's mouth and prevent supplies: devastation was steadily continued and assisted by the waste waters of the river which after carrying away all the dikes overflowed a large tract of country and increased the general misery. Pisa was much reduced but her spirit ever seemed to rise with her misfortunes and the ready succours of Genoa Lucca and Siena were openly or secretly in constant activity ;

\* As a proof of the increasing political connexion of distant nations, it may be here noticed that this truce included as allies of France, the Pope, Emperor, England, Scotland, Navarre, Hungary, Austria, Moldavia, Venice, Savoy, Florence, Ferrara, Mantua, Monfer-

rato, Saluzzo, Bologna, the Orsini, Siena, Lucca and Perugia. Those of Spain were, the Pope, Emperor, England, Portugal, Navarre, Austria, Venice, the House of Colonna, Savelli, Vitelli, Orsini, &c.—(Vide *Biagio Buonaccorsi, Diario*, p. 87.)

Genoa because she feared the loss of Sarzana and Sarzanella, Lucca that of Pietra Santa, and Siena of Montepulciano, all of them unjustly detained from the Florentines \*.

During this time Bartolommeo d'Alviano was hovering on the southern frontier and food became so scarce that corn was imported even from England and Belgium, all the southern harvests having failed †. In March 1505 Luca Savelli with a convoy for Librafatta was defeated by an inferior force of Pisans under Tarlatino at Capellese and thus Florence for a while lost all command of the open country; this occasioned a concentration of her heavy-armed troops which were spread over the state, and Baglione of Perugia amongst others had orders to join the army of Pisa; he excused himself on various pretences and was in fact secretly leagued with the Orsini who never abandoned their hope of the Medici's restoration. Baglione was also linked with Pandolfo Petrucci who being disappointed at not retaining Montepulciano, for which he even offered to assist Florence, became very uneasy at having so democratic a government for a close neighbour and bad example to his own turbulent citizens ‡. Baglione was moreover connected with Lucca the ally of Pisa; and being himself the prince, tyrant, or usurper of Perugia; for these names were then synonymous; had no sort of affection for republics; he was moreover secretly encouraged by Gonsalvo with whom Florence was a most formidable obstacle to the expulsion of Frenchmen and the establishment of Spaniards and Spanish influence in Italy §. This general in concert with Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, who had been released from a French prison to vote for the election of Cardinal d'Amboise of Rouen to the papacy, was intent on reëstablishing the house of Sforza at Milan; but in concert with the Orsini, the Pope, and the Paleschi he wished if possible to begin by revolutionizing

\* Buonaccorsi, pp. 87-88—Ammirato,

Buonaccorsi, p. 104.

Lib. xxviii., p. 275.

‡ Nardi, Lib. iv., p. 175.

† Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iv., p. 173.—

§ Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iv., p. 172.

Florence in favour of the Medici. The recovery of Louis XII. on the report of whose death this plan had been formed, and the subsequent decease of Ascanio at Rome clouded all these prospects and for the moment compelled Gonsalvo to give up his ambitious scheme. Alviano having really or ostensibly quarrelled with him and failing, in despite of all the exertions of the Paleschi, to become captain of the Florentines, entered Tuscany nominally on his own account but openly avowing his intention of restoring the Medici, he trusted to find Florence embarrassed, for Gonsalvo had thrown a garrison into Piombino and the Marquis of Mantua had already deceived her with the promise of commanding the army. Gonsalvo however, incensed as is said at Alviano for quitting his service, offered the assistance of that garrison to Florence who also engaged Alviano's hereditary enemies the Colonna to take vengeance for a cruel war which he and the Orsini had just been inflicting on that family in the states of Rome\*.

Trusting to Ciappino Vitelli and Baglioni for assistance Alviano advanced to the vicinity of Campiglia where he received orders from Gonsalvo to desist; these were unheeded and the forces of Perugia and Siena hung cautiously back at Grosseto until they could judge better of the event. This gave Florence leisure to assemble a force under Ercole Bentivoglio and her own commissary Antonio Giacomini Tebalducci a citizen of great reputation and somewhat skilled in war: meanwhile after joining Vitelli, Alviano resumed his march but was defeated at Torre di san Vincenzio under the town of Castagneto, and escaped with only ten companions to Siena while Vitelli with about as many more made good his retreat to Pisa: the rest were either killed or taken prisoners by the Florentines†. The latter had promised Gonsalvo not to molest Pisa this year, but the excitement of so decisive a victory carried everything before

\* Jacopo Pitti, *Lib. iº*, pp. 87-89.—Jacopo Nardi, *Lib. iv.*, p. 167.

† Ammirato, *Lib. xxviii.*, p. 279.

it and on the twenty-first of August, a few days after the action, the siege of that city was determined. Batteries were opened in September and a breach of near seventy feet wide was made in the wall; but the Pisans defended themselves in their accustomed style with so determined an aspect that the besiegers had no resolution for the storm: again the batteries began to play and another opening no less wide than the former invited them: it was all in vain: an enchanter's spell seemed to play round the battlements; no exertions of their officers; nor blows, nor wounds, nor even death itself could animate the soldiers to the storm; but at the breach itself were seen the Pisan men and women and even the children working in emulation as of old and all determined to die on the spot sooner than surrender one inch of ground to the Florentines. Three hundred Spaniards from Piombino had reënforced the garrison, more were expected; a detachment was on its way from Lucca; the malcontents of Florence chagrined at Alviano's defeat are said to have promoted this disaffection or cowardice, and finally the general found himself compelled to raise the siege on the eighteenth of September and retire to Cascina. This disgraceful affair ended the Pisan campaign for the year 1505, the eleventh of that brave people's hard-earned independence\*.

The year 1506 passed away without any notable occurrence in Florentine history: the war with Pisa languished from exhaustion and continued famine; Ferdinand of Spain becoming doubtful of Gonsalvo's fidelity arrived with a large fleet at Leghorn on his way to Naples; that general was soon deprived of his command and carried back with the king in apparent honour to his native country but afterwards died in obscurity: Florence lent Julius II. her aid in reducing Perugia and Bologna; an oligarchy of forty citizens was established in the latter city after the expulsion of Bentivoglio, and both places were immediately re-annexed to the church †.

\* Jacopo Pitti, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 89.—Buonaccorsi, p. 116.—Ammirato, Lib. xxviii., p. 281.—Nerli, Lib. v., p. 94.

† Biagio Buonaccorsi, p. 122.

The failure of the attack on Pisa was a severe blow to Soderini's credit while it strengthened and exalted his adversaries ; it deprived Ercole Bentivoglio of the command and sent Antonio Giacomini Tebalducci in despite of all his services into obscurity neglect and poverty\*. The opposition to Soderini increased so much as to clog all the wheels of government, and was fostered by the assistance of Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici and his influence with Pius III. during the short period of his pontificate : hence he was visited at Rome and praised at Florence by all the gonfalonier's enemies, especially after Piero's death who was really detested by every party while Giovanni and Giuliano made many personal friends. Jacopo and Alemanno Salviati, the Pazzi, Bernardo Rucellai, all the Palleschi and many even of their adversaries, discontented at being entirely excluded from the gonfaloniership by the new constitution of government, composed this opposition of which the Salviati were leaders, and had in consequence reconciled many adverse sects even amongst the Frateschi and Palleschi †. Salviati and the aristocratic faction were incensed against Soderini for leaving them and adhering too much to the democracy, but they were premature in their attack, for he was still strongest in the great council and Seignory and the victory of San Vincenzo would have entirely humbled them if the failure at Pisa had not brought fresh nourishment to their faction. Rucellai soon returned from his voluntary exile and in his agreeable and celebrated gardens ‡ was accustomed to assemble all the discontented politicians of the day

\* F. Nerli, Lib. v., p. 97.—Macchiavelli (*Decennale* ii<sup>o</sup>.) says of him,

“Ed or negletto, e vilipeso giace  
Nelle sue case, pover, vecchio, e cieco ;  
Tanto a' tiranni la virtù dispiace.”

“And now neglected and despised he lies  
In his own mansion, old, and poor, and blind ;  
So hateful virtue is to tyrants' eyes !”

† F. Nerli, Lib. v., p. 97.—Jacopo Pitti, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 87.

‡ Now the Stiozzi in Via della Scala.

who canvassed with extreme boldness every measure of government. Little caution was used in their abuse, and as Soderini had also friends there he was well informed of everything: but Rucellai was an open foe, he would take no office and concealed nothing whereas many of his party thwarted the gonfalonier secretly in all the councils and magistracies. Soderini however from mildness, magnanimity, or a hope that his patience and forbearance might disarm this opposition, tolerated everything; nevertheless it daily augmented both officially and privately until no condottiere could be engaged, not a commissary appointed, not an ambassador named in the Senate nor a single measure, however trifling, be carried by the executive government unless the parties of Salviati and the gonfalonier were in concord. The whole city was divided between them and to such a depth did this factious spirit descend that no marriage even could be contracted, no favour be accorded by a magistrate, no benefit however trifling conferred, without the passions and interests of these parties becoming prominent: nay a common tipstaff could not be appointed or removed or the slightest political measure effected except by a violent political struggle. The principal cause of this intense opposition was the bold conduct of the young men who frequented the Rucellai gardens: trusting to the power of the Salviati faction for shielding them against every tribunal, their audacity increased, and by masks, satires, public spectacles and other means of annoyance, they contrived to harass and torment the gonfalonier without appearing to take any active or public part against him\*. In this disordered state of political parties passed the year 1506; but it did not prevent a measure of great and universal utility being adopted at Macchiavelli's suggestion: this was a reorganization or rather a new establishment of militia throughout the Florentine dominions, in which all males from sixteen to fifty were

\* F. Nerli, Lib. v., p. 98.

compelled to serve under the various captains and banners of their districts. They were used with great effect in devastating the Pisan territory and were governed by a particular magistracy called "*I novi Uffiziali della Ordinanza e Milizia Fiorentina*" quite independent of any other tribunal, and which afterwards became extremely powerful. These magistrates ranked after the Decemvirate of War and like that board were paid by official fees alone without any regular salary: their power over those serving in the national militia extended to goods and person, and even to deprivation of life by a secret vote of six members; and they were bound to maintain at least ten thousand well armed and disciplined infantry within the contado and district of Florence. The militia were principally furnished with breast-pieces of iron, arquebuses, and lances and their banner was a lion with the number of each regiment, inscribed according to the date of its formation: they received pay while on service and their punishments were very severe; but this force was found so useful that a body of five hundred light cavalry were added to it in 1511\*.

The appearance in Florence about this time of Alphonsina degli Orsini widow of Piero de' Medici, gave new occasion to the opposition for showing rather their hatred to Soderini than any real attachment to that family: she came to claim her dower which had been sequestered along with her husband's property, and was enthusiastically received and assisted by the Salviati with all their faction. Nor did she herself lose the occasion of benefiting her family by strengthening its party, more especially in settling her daughter Clarice's marriage with Filippo Strozzi one of the noblest, richest, and most accomplished young men in Florence †. This was not published until 1508, after her return to Rome, and produced great excitement; young Strozzi was summoned before the magistrates, fined, and

\* F. Nerli, Lib. v., p. 98.—Provisione di Macchiavelli per la Milizia Nazionale Ammirato, Lib. xxviii., p. 284. † The marriage portion was 7000 florins, then considered enormous.

banished for three years because he espoused the daughter of a declared rebel, and Lorenzo the brother of Clarice was now proclaimed an outlaw with the rest of his family, he having hitherto escaped this sentence as a mere infant at the time of Piero's expulsion in 1494. Strozzi however would hardly have escaped so well had he not only been powerfully supported by his uncle Bernardo Rucellai who made the match, but also by all the strength of the opposition which intimidated the criminal court by their menaces, a common occurrence in Florence\*.

Louis XII. and Ferdinand of Aragon met at Savona on the return of the latter from Naples where his own sus-  
A.D. 1507.  
 picions of Gonsalvo's ambition had been quietly ex-  
 tinguished by the removal of that general from his tempting  
 and dangerous command. Their conferences as regarded  
 Florence ended in an attempt to sacrifice both that republic  
 and Pisa to their own sordid views: Pisa was in fact nearly at  
 its last gasp; Genoa had revolted, had driven a thousand of  
 her nobility from the city, and had attacked and overcome the  
 French governor because he espoused the aristocratic cause;  
 but Louis approached with a great army and she was no longer  
 independent †. Genoa therefore could give the Pisans no  
 more aid: little help now came either from Lucca or Siena  
 and that little cautiously and secretly in consequence of a three  
 years' truce with Pandolfo ‡: the peasantry who were Pisa's  
 principal defenders and now formed the mass of her popula-  
 tion, languished for their fields and rural labours which for two  
 years had been left unmolested by Florence, and Pisa herself,  
 the brave, the noble, the undaunted Pisa, after thirteen years of  
 long and glorious conflict was about to sink from the mere effects  
 of exhaustion; so that if the two base monarchs into whose  
 hands Italian destinies now unfortunately fell, had not turned  
 her noble cause into a foul and mercenary bargain for themselves,

\* Gio. Cambi, p. 221.— Fil. Nerli, † Guicciardini, Lib. vii<sup>o</sup>, cap. ii<sup>o</sup>.  
 Lib. v., p. 99. — Ammirato, Lib. ‡ Buonaccorsi, Diario, p. 120.  
 xxviii., p. 285.



the year 1507 would have been the last of her liberty. Fifty thousand florins for each king was demanded from Florence as the price of their treachery to that city whom both had been so long encouraging to hold out; but now she was to receive two garrisons and two governors for protection, and in eight months be unfeelingly delivered up to her old tyrants on their payment of the money for which she had been infamously betrayed: but the proposition was instantly rejected and Florence and Pisa were once more left to their mutual enmity and resources\*.

The Florentines were in fact willing to pay this price, but they knew that the Pisan spirit would never consent to it, and had too often assayed the value of royal promises to trust any longer to a substance so false and flimsy. Besides a general belief obtained that these monarchs wanted only to bridle both Florence and Pisa, and prevent the emperor whose presence in Italy was now generally expected, from gaining possession of a place so conveniently situated for them between the French provinces of Genoa and Milan, and the Spanish tributary kingdom of Naples †.

Maximilian resolving to assume the imperial crown and if  
 A.D. 1508. possible recover some of its ancient rights in Italy, especially over Milan, attempted to secure the alliance and support of Venice, who however rebuffed him and took the part of France; on this he marched to Trent, ravaged their frontier, and was beaten after a feeble absurd and disgraceful campaign which ended in a three years' truce. At this Louis, who while professing unbounded friendship plotted no less than the conquest of Venice, was greatly chagrined, for he had already by the treaty of Blois agreed to divide her territories with Maximilian, and his intentions subsequently became more manifest by that of Cambray.

The Pisan war now recommenced with fresh vigour; two

\* Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iv., p. 198.— † Ammirato, Lib. xxviii., p. 283.—  
 Biagio Buonaccorsi, p. 132.—Ammi- Biagio Buonaccorsi, p. 133.  
 rato, Lib. xxviii., p. 283.

thousand new militia were employed along with the regular troops to devastate that territory up to the very walls of Pisa while the Arno was closely blockaded and thus was she reduced to extremity\*. This elicited a remonstrance from the King of France with a reproach to the Florentines for an alleged supply of money to the emperor which he said they well knew would be used against France. The accusation was false and easily repelled and the king's designs as easily penetrated: he was perfectly aware of the exhausted condition of Pisa; the rural party in that unhappy town had become more numerous, more anxious to return to their dwellings and inclined to capitulate; the gallant citizens and nobles who had shown so high and bold a spirit were thinned out by war; succours failed, and it became impossible for human nature to resist much longer: Pisa was evidently falling and the perfidious Louis endeavoured to pick a quarrel with the Florentines in order to sell her in the most profitable manner for the gratification of his monstrous rapacity †. Although the charge against them was false it was sufficient to colour the royal demand of a certain sum of money in exchange for Pisan liberty, but the same carrion was scented from afar; a Spanish envoy flew straightway to Tuscany, lighted on Pisa, and encouraging her resistance shifted to Florence where in concert with the French envoy Rizzo he spun out the negotiations to a great length and ultimately removed them to Paris where a new scene of royal turpitude was exhibited ‡. The offers of Florence, so often doomed to buy her own property, were refused and Chaumont Governor of Milan giving notice to Louis that unless a remedy were applied Pisa would immediately surrender, Gian-Giacomo Trivulzio was ordered to assist her with three hundred lances! This open, shameless support of their revolted subjects shocked and astounded the Florentines: such disregard of the most solemn treaties;

\* Jacopo Nardi, *Lib. iv.*, p. 200.

† Guicciardini, *Lib. vii.*, cap. iv., pp. 316, 317, and cap. iii., p. 277.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 318.

assistance so openly given to a people whom he had always acknowledged to be rebels, and who had just been supporting the turbulent Genoese against his own authority, so plainly showed the base dishonourable and sordid nature of Louis, that the Florentines at once resolved to treat with him as a mere huckster and make the best bargain they could with so confirmed and powerful a knave. Fifty thousand florins were accordingly offered to each monarch for permission to reduce the revolted city, but Louis with his usual covetousness insisted on 100,000 for himself alone, and this was granted by a secret article of the treaty in March 1509, but under false pretences lest the cheat should be detected and complained of by Ferdinand. Twenty-five thousand florins more were distributed according to the Cardinal of Rouen's instructions, in bribes amongst the French and Spanish ministers, and a reciprocal obligation was incurred by France and Florence of defending each other's Italian states for three years after the subjugation of Pisa\*.

The expense of this transaction although excessive, bore no comparison to the infamy it cast upon both monarchs, A.D. 1509. for both had proved themselves false, faithless, and mercenary, the deceivers equally of Pisans and Florentines: "so much more power," exclaims Guicciardini, "hath gold than honesty!" But the clouds of infamy soon melt in the blaze of royalty and the villany of legitimate princes is ever hallowed or concealed! Those of Europe at this moment cared little for public opinion, they soared far above all honesty, were too intent on higher quarry to trouble themselves with moral scruples about two defenceless states and sacrificed both without hesitation!

Early in January Florence determined to make Lucca feel the consequences of her continued assistance to Pisa under the Ægis of French protection, and ravaged a great portion of her territory: this made the latter sensible of her

\* *Giov. Cambi*, p. 223.—*Buonaccorsi*, *Nardi*, *Lib. iv.*, pp. 202-3.—*Guicciardini*, *Lib. viii.*, cap. i., pp. 15-18. p. 137.—*Ammirato*, *Lib. xxviii.*, p. 206.—*Nerli*, *Lib. v.*, p. 103.—*Jacopo*,

own weakness and produced a three years' truce by which the Pisans were abandoned, as they had previously been by Siena\*. Thus cut off from every help they found themselves invested both by land and sea, and Niccolo di Piero Capponi the Florentine commissary at Cascina being joined by his two colleagues Alamanno Salviati and Antonio di Filicaia, in four months by means of a rigid blockade reduced the unfortunate Pisans to extremity. They fed on the most loathsome food, and grain which at Florence sold for one-fifth of a lira fetched no less than seventeen lire within the famished town. Several Florentines of the highest rank took advantage of this to send them corn through Lucca but from faction and love of gain not pity; and Genoa made one more effort to succour the unfortunate inhabitants. Assembling a small squadròn loaded with grain at Lerici in the Gulf of Spezia an attempt was made to force the Arno's mouth, but the Florentines had taken such precautions by forming three distinct camps, one under each commissary †, that they were everywhere baffled; whereupon they retired, to Lerici with some loss and relinquished all hope of assisting their brave but derelict ally ‡.

The famished cries of the people, especially the rural defenders of Pisa, were now becoming loud and general and they demanded terms; the magistrates to pacify them had in March requested the mediation of the lord of Piombino who invited Florence to a conference and Macchiavelli being then on a mission to the army was despatched to Piombino for the purpose. He very soon discovered that there was no real intention of treating; that a gain of time was only looked to; that the demands were

\* Ricordi di Ser Perizolo.

† This campaign seems to have been managed entirely by the Florentine commissaries, and made principally by the militia which Macchiavelli declares (in his fifth despatch from the camp), to be as good infantry as any then in

Italy. There were but few condottieri and those were of inferior rank; wherefore both zeal and discipline abounded, and success followed.

‡ Jacopo Nardi, Lib. iv., p. 201.— Ricordi di Ser Perizolo, vol. vi., Parte ii., p. 396, Ar. Stor. Ital.

inadmissible; being nothing less than independent self-government; and he at once abandoned the negotiation\*.

The blockade was sustained with redoubled zeal; not a grain of sustenance entered the place; the people were barefoot, half naked, almost wholly famished, and every thing failed in Pisa except the spirit of her citizens! But her hour was come, and she sunk after fourteen years and seven months of incessant war, the victim of hard necessity! Courage resignation and constancy marked her steps, she battled to the end, and none ever surpassed her in devotion to the cause of liberty! We have no Pisan history of this eventful period†; there was no leisure for her records; they were written in the blood of her citizens, of her women, and her children; she *made* history, but left it to be chronicled by her tyrants, and even in their forced, meagre, and ungenerous praise may be detected the stern spirit of independence overbearing every obstacle that superior might, and want, and misery, opposed to its success!

We barely know even the names of some native leaders; nothing of Pisa's internal struggles during this glorious period, struggles, not of her sons with each other, but with destiny! We know little or nothing of the examples of fortitude patriotism and virtue, of female resolution and devotion, that were modestly exhibited within her shattered walls; but judging of actions by results they must have merited eternal praise, for a heroism beyond example, a grandeur in adversity, an indomitable resolution, all flash brightly forth even from the jealous records of an enemy while telling of her two memorable struggles for independence!

On the twentieth of May Tarlatino their chief condottiere who still gallantly stood by them, informed the commissaries that a deputation of Pisan citizens was ready to negotiate:

\* Guicciardini, Lib. vii., cap. iii., p. 277. — Macchiavelli, Commissione al Campo contra Pisa.

La Guerra del 1500, by an unknown though Pisan author, are but meagre records, not histories.

† For the Ricordi di Ser Perizolo, and

accordingly Francesco del Torto, Matteo di Gaddo, Antonio del Oste and Carlo Bandello repaired to the Florentine camp and gave notice that twelve citizens had already been selected to treat at Florence and demanded a safe-conduct: as there seemed now no doubt of their sincerity they were listened to, and some days after a deputation of five country gentlemen and four citizens under the conduct of Alamanno Salviati, were at San Miniato on their way to Florence where the negotiations began.

Meanwhile the confusion increased at Pisa: it was said that not above twenty-five citizens were against a capitulation yet with sufficient influence to retard it: on the first of June the whole community assembled, each party to discuss its own interests; the "*Contadini*," a term then confined to country gentlemen and landed proprietors, insisted on capitulation; for they had not so much either to lose or fear and were tired of suffering; wherefore shutting the citizens up in the palace they insisted on their coming to some resolution about the terms just made known by their ambassadors from Florence. Meanwhile the Florentine camp was thronged with famished citizens to whom the commanders had not the heart to deny bread and other sustenance, because no doubt now existed of a final capitulation, and Tarlatino in this belief had retired to Lucca on his way to Lombardy. On the sixth of June a meeting took place at Mezzana to settle the mode of taking possession, and Pisa was finally occupied on the eighth of June 1509 after more than fourteen years and a half of hard-earned independence\*.

The articles of capitulation were liberal and faithfully executed by Florence, not only because she had learned to respect her revolted subjects but through fear of Maximilian who in imitation of his brother sovereigns intended to make money by the sale of Pisa, therefore named her as an ally in the recent

\* Macchiavelli, Commissione al Campo contro Pisa.—Guicciardini, Lib. viii., cap. iii., pp. 59-61.—Giuliano Ughi, Mem. Stor. di Firenze, Parte i<sup>a</sup>, pp. 5 to 10, MS.

treaty of Cambray, an article which Louis with some sense of decency declared to be inadmissible\*.

All offences, public and private, were pardoned : all property was surrendered to its owners : all debts contracted with Florentine citizens were cancelled ; and no restitution was demanded for merchandise or other goods plundered and confiscated by the Pisans at their first revolting in 1494 : on the contrary the whole of this was now made a debt of the Florentine republic, deducting only the charges of management, and everything was conducted in so lenient and amicable a spirit that the historian Jacopo Nardi; himself one of the magistrates for the execution of this duty ; tells us all proceeded with such liberality that strangers would have believed the Florentines to be receivers instead of givers of the law. The soldiers were even forbidden to use the war-cry of "*Marzoeco*" as they marched into the town ; the ancient privileges and independent magistracies of Pisa were confirmed ; freedom of commerce and manufactures, except the fabries of silk and gold-beating, was restored ; the same tribunals became the courts of appeal for both nations, and more as invariably happens was now granted to fear and policy than had been formerly refused to justice and humanity †. The burden of subjection was thus lightened by a long and generous resistance but the spirit of this gallant race could ill brook dependence even in a milder form (if it were indeed so mild for the dead lion's story is not written) and all who could possibly gain a livelihood in foreign lands disdained the yoke of Florentine subjection. The Torti and Alliati retired to Palermo along with many more ; the Buzzacarini a branch of the ancient Sismondi, took up their abode at Lucca in company with several other families : some went to Sardinia ; numbers

\* Guicciardini, Lib. viii., cap. iii., p. 60. Diplomi Pisani, p. 406. — Memorie  
 † Giov. Cambi, pp. 231-2. — Nardi Storie di Francesco Giuliano Ughi,  
 delle Hist. Fior., Lib. iv., p. 208.— p. 10, MS.  
 Flaminio dal Borgo, Raccolta di Scelti

joined the French army in Lombardy, where a hundred and fifty of their fellow-citizens were already engaged and even had attempted to relieve their native city under the leading of Piero Gambacorti and Rinieri della Sassetta: that camp now became the home of multitudes who, after the expulsion of the French armies, settled in the south of France never more to revisit their native country\*.

It is a remarkable fact, as Sismondi, observes, and the truth of which may be seen in dal Borgo's "*Diplomi Pisani*," that the horror of Florentine bondage was so deep and extended and the consequent emigration so great, that in a register ordered by Cosimo I. in 1566, to ascertain the names of all those who could prove that their ancestors had enjoyed the privileges of citizenship previous to 1494, only seven hundred and twenty-seven are to be found out of the great mass of Pisan citizens of every order and profession, even including the clergy who could exercise no civil office. And to this the once great and flourishing Pisa was reduced by Florentine power, Florentine misrule, and Florentine selfishness †!

Thus ended for ever the independence of Pisa after a war and almost a siege of near fifteen years, sustained by the united will of a whole people with a fortitude almost unexampled in history. We want her story, as we do that of Carthage, from a native pen; we have it only from her conquerors: the Pisans were too busy in the field for the quiet labours of the cabinet, but they performed actions worthy of eternal record.

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COTEMPORARY MONARCHS.—England: Henry VII. until 1509; then Henry VIII.—Scotland: James IV.—France: Louis XII.—Spain: Ferdinand of Aragon.—Naples and Sicily: ditto.—Popes: Alexander VI. until 1503; then Pius III.; then Julius II., from 1503 until 1513.—Emperor: Maximilian.—Sultan: Bajazet II.—Portugal: Emanuel.

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\* Sismondi, vol. x., p. 135.—Macchiavelli, Lettera xv. Campo Contro Pisa.

† Dal Borgo, *Diplom.*, p. 433.—Sismondi, vol. x., p. 136, *note*.



## CHAPTER IX.

FROM A.D. 1509 TO A.D. 1513.

MONARCHY although beneficial and perhaps requisite to suppress disorder and calm unsettled states ere civil liberty be planted, yet in all its aspects naturally tends to evil; for A.D. 1509. self-gratification is the mainspring of human actions, and sovereigns with greater temptation, possess from a defective education far weaker habits of self-control than other men. A good king deserves well of his people, even beyond the common measure of social praise and affection; a bad one must ever be uneasy at the sight of freedom and intelligence, whether at home or abroad, as dangerous by the propagation of inconvenient opinions, or as offering a seducing and contagious example. It was something of this jealousy as regarded Venice, and an apprehension of her growing dominion over Italy, together with an unquenchable thirst of dominion, that led Pope Julius II. Maximilian, Louis XII. and Ferdinand of Aragon to project her ruin.

While Florence was busy about the recovery of Pisa these great European powers were discussing one of the first and most unscrupulous acts of royal aggression that have stained the records of modern history. International law at that period although as yet undigested or defined in written and acknowledged characters, was nearly what now it really is; the right of the strong and the mockery of the weak; a law without an efficient superintending force, and a text-book of pliant justification for every great act of plunder and ambition. The power, the

riches, the commerce, and the flourishing state of Venice; the total absence of civil discord; the opulence of her Lombard states, and the comparative enjoyment of those under her sway; all consequences of a fair and regular administration of law, punctual payments, and common freedom of action; formed such a contrast to the troubled condition of neighbouring nations that she became generally envied and hated. With a population of scarcely three millions she felt equal to the most powerful states and beheld the gathering storm with perfect equanimity\*. As early as 1504 by the suggestion of Pope Julius II. the partition of Venice had been projected at Blois, but its execution was delayed by various causes of quarrel amongst the royal and saintly plunderers until after the bloody defeat of Maximilian's army by the Venetians under Alviano at Barth in the valley of Cadoro, on the twenty-third of February 1508. Maximilian enraged at this defeat and the consequent failure of his expedition to Italy, especially by the alliance of France and Venice, and still more stung perhaps with the satirical ballads chaunted against him by every gondolier in the lagoons, resolved to be reconciled with Louis who was also angry at that state for making a separate peace with him; wherefore there was one strong bond of union which facilitated negotiations.

The truce between Maximilian and Venice did not include the Duke of Guelders with whom he was then at war and who was protected by France; therefore on pretence of concluding this second peace a conference was appointed to be held at Cambray in December 1508 between the Cardinal d'Amboise of Rouen, who had the complete confidence of Louis, and Margaret of Austria Duchess of Savoy and daughter of Maximilian, a woman of masculine talent and more than feminine dexterity. Two treaties were soon concluded; one of them, a mere veil, which pacified Guelders; the other of sterner stuff, between

\* Muratori, An. 1509.

the kings of France Spain and the Pope with some lesser Italian princes ; such as the Dukes of Savoy and Ferrara and the Marquis of Mantua ; which was the real " League of Cambray," and its design the spoliation of Venice.

Its ostensible object was proclaimed to be war against the Turks at the solicitation of Pope Julius II., but first professing to stop the loss, injury, rapine, and mischief of every sort, occasioned by Venice to the church, the empire, the house of Austria, the Duke of Milan and the King of Naples ! Whereupon it was decided by these most virtuous monarchs that a just vengeance would be not only salutary, useful, and honourable, but even positively necessary to extinguish, as if it were a conflagration, the insatiable covetousness and thirst for power of the Venetian republic : in fact to partition it. The Pope's share was to be Ravenna Cervia Faenza Rimini Cesina and Imola ; the two last of which he already possessed : the Emperor's, Padua Vicenza and Verona which he claimed as imperial fiefs ; and for the house of Austria, Roveredo Treviso and the Friuli. Louis XII. as Duke of Milan was to have Brescia, Bergamo, Crema, Cremona, La Ghiara-d'Adda, and all the ancient dependencies of that duchy. To Ferdinand as King of Naples were to fall the recent conquests of Venice in that kingdom such as Frani Brindisi Otranto Gallipoli Mola and Polignano, with all the towns they had received in pledge from Ferdinand II. To the King of Hungary if he joined the League, those cities of Dalmatia and Slavonia formerly belonging to that crown were to be ceded ; to the Duke of Savoy the kingdom of Cyprus ; and to the houses of Gonzaga and Este every possession which the republic had conquered from their ancestors.

The French monarch was to attack the Venetians in person while the Pope excommunicated them and simultaneously called on the emperor to assist him with temporal arms as protector of the church. This loosened Maximilian from the recent truce and left both hand and conscience at liberty for unrestricted plunder ;

but all the rest were to get possession of their shares the best way they could without being bound to assist each other : secrecy became necessary for a surer stroke, therefore when Venetian suspicions occasioned a demand for explanation, Louis XII. had no scruple in affirming not only that nothing injurious to Venice had been transacted at Cambray but that he never would listen to any proposition against his old allies ! Both Ferdinand and Julius II. although parties, and previously active in promoting the principles of this League, finally hesitated to join it : neither were willing to see powerful foreigners in Italy ; they both dreaded the aggrandisement of France in that country, and Julius disliked the additional prospect of renewed imperial power and consequent danger to the church. He therefore made fair and earnest proposals to Venice for the restoration of Rimini and Faenza as the price of his secession, but after long discussion that proud republic was induced by the arguments of Domenico Trevisano to adhere to her inveterate principle of never voluntarily relinquishing a conquered province ; and though unsuccessful in an attempt to detach the Emperor, peremptorily refused the Pope, who with the King of Spain then became a party to the League\*.

Louis crossed the Adda in May 1509, and the bloody battle of Vaila or Aignadel in the Ghiara-d'-Adda, where the Venetians under Alviano were defeated, acquired for him almost all the territory to which he was entitled by the treaty of Cambray. He then pursued the war with great and greater cruelty while Mantua Ferrara and the Pope were only waiting for this signal to break loose, and even the sluggard Maximilian ultimately joined in the chase. Nevertheless Venice finally stood her ground, and although her flotilla on the Po was destroyed by Alphonso Duke of Ferrara's artillery at Polisella, the League gradually began to slacken and the end of 1509 brought with it a glimmering of brighter prospects ; Louis having gained

\* Guicciardini, *Lib. viii.*, cap. i., pp. 1-15.

his own object cared little about Maximilian, and Julius detesting both began to fear lest the power of Venice should be too suddenly and dangerously reduced\*.

This pontiff and the Venetians who had long been negotiating, came to a definitive treaty in February 1510 by which

A.D. 1510. with much loss and many humiliating articles the

latter made their peace and were publicly absolved from ecclesiastical censure while Julius, fearing both Louis and Maximilian, endeavoured to excite Henry VIII. of England against the former without as yet venturing upon an open rupture in his own name. The Venetians during their recent difficulties had ceded the Neapolitan cities then in their possession to Ferdinand of Aragon who without much cost or trouble cunningly profited by the exertions of his allies; in addition he now received the investiture of Naples from Julius II. as the price of his alliance and with the further hope of fomenting a quarrel between France and Spain †. Ferdinand secretly joined in exciting England against Louis of whose aggrandisement in Lombardy he had become extremely jealous, and Julius was covertly working in concert with Venice to attack Genoa by land and sea, while twelve thousand Swiss poured tumultuously down on the Milanese to make a diversion in favour of Venice and enable her to recover those provinces occupied by Maximilian. The pontiff was simultaneously to invade Ferrara, a staunch adherent of Louis, and finally give his hand to the Switzers whose inroad it was expected would force that king to withdraw his troops from the protection of both Alphonso and Maximilian for the defence of Milan itself, and thus not only enable Venice to recover her own, but also to join him in an attack on that state ‡. Louis, always superstitiously unwilling to make war against a pope, endeavoured by an offer of virtually abandoning Alphonso and leaving

\* Guicciardini, Lib. viii., cap. iii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 51-2, and cap. v<sup>o</sup>, pp. 108-116.

† Ibid., Lib. ix., cap. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 152, *et seq.*

‡ Ibid., Lib. ix., cap. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 154.

Genoa free, to maintain the alliance of Julius ; but the pontiff's anger was implacable, and he even put the Duke of Savoy's ambassador to the torture as a spy for only speaking of a reconciliation. The consequence was a closer alliance, with great promises, between France and Maximilian, and the threat of a general council, then the only hold that temporal princes had over renitent and overbearing pontiffs\*.

In Florence there was tranquillity, but with growing trouble ; Soderini strongly adhered to France and although refusing to aid Ferrara against Julius incurred that pontiff's anger for not abandoning Louis altogether : this indignation was increased at Soderini's having allowed five cardinals to remain under public protection in Florence who were on their road to join him at Bologna, but were scared by the sudden death of a French cardinal at Ancona whom, as was asserted, Julius himself had caused to be poisoned †. The obnoxious prelates were dismissed but the Pope's anger remained ; and as the truce with Siena had now nearly expired Louis urged the Florentines with promises of strong support to resume hostilities, recover Montepulciano, and conquer Siena itself. The people however as well as those of Siena and Lucca sought for tranquillity ; this indeed had long been the policy of the two last until Charles VIII. roused them into action ; but quiet was new to Florence : she had hitherto been the focus of political activity in the Peninsula, but was no longer the bold energetic and wealthy state that once swayed the destinies of Italy. Greater powers than she were now in the field and all lesser states had sunk with her into comparative insignificance, the mere tools of foreigners and hand-maidens of the great transalpine nations. The popular government of Soderini and its close alliance with his most hated foe were distasteful to Julius ; not from any dislike of liberal institutions for his natural bias was

\* Guicciardini, Lib. ix., cap. iii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 173-175.

† Ibid., p. 202.—Ammirato, Lib. xxviii., p. 290.—Giov. Cambi, p. 242.

in their favour, but from the difficulty of managing them as he wished. His mind was set; and it was a laudable and patriotic spirit that moved him; but his mind was set on "*driving the barbarians out of Italy*:" for this object the co-operation of Florence became almost indispensable yet extremely difficult to accomplish without restoring the Medici\*. The life of any individual in those days when balanced against personal ambition or political expediency was of light weight, and although Julius became indignant at the supposition that he could have been guilty of poisoning a French cardinal he seems to have had no hesitation in consenting to the murder of a Florentine gonfalonier. Prinzivalle di Luigi della Stufa, a young man of about twenty-four years old who frequented the papal court and was attached to the Medici, seeing the pontiff's indignation against Soderini and being himself an enemy to democratic government, either offered or was incited by Julius to attempt the gonfalonier's life for which the papal general Marcantonio Colonna supplied him with ten resolute followers. Proceeding to Florence and desirous of associating some of the young nobility in the plot he addressed himself to Filippo Strozzi the husband of Piero's daughter Clarice de' Medici; but he at once repelled the proposal, revealed it and denounced him: Prinzivalle escaped to Siena but his father Luigi was arrested and examined; yet so unpopular was Soderini's government that he could not command sufficient votes in the senate to sanction torture: nevertheless Luigi without any conviction or proof of being accessory to his son's design, was banished for five years to the town and district of Certaldo †. Soderini made a plaintive and touching address to the citizens on the subject of this plot, in which he called near four hundred of his countrymen who had successively been his coadjutors in the Seignory during eight years of public govern-

\* Giuliano Ughi, Mem. Istor. di Italian ambassadors.

Firenze, p. 14, MS. Where may be † Annirato, Lib. xxviii., p. 291.—  
seen Giulio's animated Address to the Gio. Cambi, p. 243.

ment to witness for his sincerity, justice, and impartiality. He had but a few days before given a public account of his financial administration by which it appeared that since his accession to office only 908,300 golden florins had been expended in the public service: yet this sum had reduced the state to extreme exhaustion and it shows how sadly Florence had fallen from that proud confident strength which had wrestled with Mastino della Scala and the still more formidable Visconti\*. Soderini asserted, and the Grand Council justly considered, this attempt on his life to be an attack on public liberty and popular government; wherefore a law was immediately enacted, or rather reënforced and amended by the councils on the twentieth of January 1511, which declared that in the event of a conspiracy succeeding in its design of A.D. 1511. killing the gonfalonier, ousting the priors and their colleagues, or destroying the election purses so as to suspend the popular authorities; instead of assembling a parliament which was a mere tool of faction, the Grand Council itself or any part of it that could promptly meet, should have power to reorganise the government †. The efficiency of such a law must of course have entirely depended on the success and power of the conspirators, and its uselessness in preventing the assembly of a parliament will soon be seen. But the time had now arrived when either a renewal of the Senese truce and the restitution of Montepulciano, or another war with Siena was to take place: Louis urged Florence to war; Julius on the contrary wished for peace; not from disliking hostilities, but merely as a means of keeping the French army out of Tuscany. Soderini had in the beginning of December sent Macchiavelli to declare his intentions before the Senese government respecting Montepulciano and at the same time ordered a body of troops to advance towards that state from the Pisan frontier; but while Soderini

\* Gio. Cambi, p. 243.

† Annirato, Lib. xxviii., p. 293.—Gio. Cambi, p. 248.



thus based his operations on French power Pandolfo had been flattering the family pride of Julius, whose descent was humble, by giving him the town of Suvèra in the contado of Siena as an ancient possession of the Ghianderoni family from which he affected to deduce his origin: this led to Siena being included as one of the Pope's confederates in the League of Cambray; also to the cardinalate of Petrucci's son Alfonso; to the subsequent protection of Siena and the constant goodwill of Julius\*.

A breach with Florence for Montepulciano was however against his policy as by this he would have had to oppose a French army in Tuscany; wherefore a treaty of alliance between the two republics for twenty-five years with the cession of Montepulciano, was through his mediation concluded in September and the ascendancy of Petrucci guaranteed along with all Senese possessions during that period †. In the following October Julius also concluded a more important alliance with Venice and Spain, leaving places for England and the King of the Romans if they pleased to join: the ostensible object of this was to recover Bologna which had revolted in favour of the Bentivoglj, and reduce the duchy of Ferrara to ecclesiastical obedience, but the real one was to drive King Louis entirely out of Italy. Meanwhile Florence had conceded Pisa as the seat of a general council which the French monarch was endeavouring to assemble; but the impetuous Julius excommunicated every town in which it should presume to sit, and Florence in particular for having allowed Pisa to be named as the place of assembly; he then called another council to meet in the Lateran; once more roused up the Switzers to invade Milan and made every effort to oppose the youthful Gaston de Foix who at two-and-twenty years of age was by his uncle made

\* Jacopo Nardi, Lib. vº, p. 227. — † Jacopo Nardi, Lib. vº, p. 227. —  
Orl. Malavolti, Parte iiiª, Lib. vii., Guicciardini, Lib. x., cap. i., pp. 7-9.  
fol. 115. — Sismondi, vol. x., p. 265. — Ammirato, Lib. xxviii., p. 294.

commander-in-chief of the French armies in Italy\*. The council of Pisa was but thinly and reluctantly attended; it was distasteful to all classes except Louis XII. the King of the Romans and the five discontented cardinals; amongst whom the Cardinal of Santa Croce was accused of aiming at the pontificate. The Florentines' dislike began from the moment they saw it would fail; the Pisans were to a man layman and priest against it and openly showed their dissatisfaction; even the French clergy were sullen and only moved at the positive command of their sovereign. Florence would allow but a hundred and fifty French archers to accompany the prelates and excluded all other troops besides exerting themselves to prevent the council assembling at Pisa, and public discontent showed itself everywhere until an indecent broil occasioned by their licentious followers was seized on by the uneasy prelates as a fair excuse for adjourning to Milan. This gave great satisfaction to all parties especially Pope Julius whose anger against Florence was somewhat subdued by her steady refusal to admit French soldiers into Pisa and her having sent Macchiavelli expressly to persuade the council to leave that city †.

One of the worst effects of this pontiff's indignation was the appointment of Cardinal Giovanni of Medicis as legate of Romagna and his resolution to attack the Florentine territory simultaneously on every side either with his own troops or the Spanish auxiliaries. Every preparation was made against this danger, which the dispersion of the council and the coming events in Romagna combined to dissipate, but the malignant influence of so formidable a Medici upon the troubled spirit of Florence could not be avoided. The Ottomati and Palleschi were still in strong opposition to Soderini whose life had twice been threatened by their machinations, and many cared little

\* Buonaccorsi, Diario, pp. 163, 166.— Jacopo Nardi, Lib. v., p. 288.— Guicciardini, Lib. ix., cap. v., p. 250.— Muratori, Annali di Italia, An. 1511.

† Giov. Cambi, pp. 271-280.— Ammirato, Lib. xxviii., pp. 295-301.— Macchiavelli, Opere, Commissione a Pisa.

what misfortunes they brought on their country with or without the Medici, so that the gonfalonier and all his family were exterminated. To these were added numbers of young Florentine spendthrifts who foresaw in the licentiousness of that dynasty the prospect of restoring their shattered fortunes or at least the free indulgence of their inordinate desires\*. Giovanni de' Medici himself had acted with great sagacity: concealing his wishes for a restoration of the family greatness in Florence he affected a liberal gentle and forgiving deportment and after Piero's death seemed to have drowned every vindictive feeling in the waters of the Garigliano. He studied by his amiable and even beneficent conduct to Florentines of every faction at Rome to efface all traces of former enmity, more especially in those whose fathers or themselves had displayed their animosity against his brother Piero, as if to show in the most emphatic manner that all unfriendly sentiments had perished with him. By these means both he and Giuliano had acquired considerable popularity, and on this Pope Julius most counted for effecting a revolution in Florence when he appointed Cardinal Giovanni to the legation of Romagna. Nor was he deceived, for political agitation rapidly and fearfully augmented, and divisions and jealousies and party spirit still distracted the republic †.

Meanwhile the storm began to gather over Lombardy, and the French position at Milan under Gaston de Foix and Trivulzio became extremely unpromising: Julius had again roused up the Swiss who were already advancing on the French rear under the famous banner which in a former century had waved triumphantly over all the powers of Burgundy at Nancy, and bore the proud inscription of "DOMATORES PRINCIPUM. AMATORES JUSTITIÆ. DEFENSORES SANCTÆ ROMANÆ ECCLESIÆ" ‡. The whole force and now reviving spirit of Venice threatened them

\* Jacopo Pitti, Lib. iiº, pp. 96-7.—Jacopo Nardi, Lib. v., p. 230.

† Jacopo Nardi, Lib. v., p. 231.

‡ Muratori Annali.

in flank; twelve hundred Spanish lances, a thousand light horse, and ten thousand veteran infantry under Raimondo de Cardona had joined the papal army in Romagna; and Genoa with a sort of feverish excitement menaced their left.

Gaston was comparatively defenceless, but with a few men-at-arms and a small body of infantry he by Trivulzio's council took post at Saronno to oppose the Swiss who had now arrived at Galerate, and after a succession of combats with various fortune he not only protected the capital but either through the natural treachery of the nation with whom gold was everything, or by that of their leaders alone, they offered to retire if Gaston would only give them a single month's pay. The young French prince had however received a reënforcement of four thousand Italian infantry and is said by some to have contemptuously refused thus to reward their treachery; by others to have bribed their captain Alt-Sax and some of his officers, who by raising a tumult dissolved the expedition and thus shamefully deserted Pope Julius a second time, at a moment too when their zealous coöperation would have insured his success and liberated Italy\*.

Louis meanwhile hastened to concentrate all his disposable troops in Lombardy and urged the Florentines to join him, not only with the small force which by treaty they were obliged but to become a party in the war and assist with the whole power of the commonwealth. Soderini from his dislike to a neutral policy for any small state in the conflict of greater powers was disposed to embrace this course; but the fear of Julius and Ferdinand, the influence of the Medici, and the factious but powerful opposition to all his measures paralysed the gonfalonier's authority and prevented more than the exact succours to which Florence was bound by treaty, nay so fearful were the Florentines even of this meagre concession that the

\* Guicciardini, Lib. x., cap. iii., pp. 56-59.—Muratori, Annali, Anno 1511.

historian Francesco Guicciardini was expressly despatched to excuse their conduct to Ferdinand\*.

But amidst these surrounding storms it became necessary to keep the republic under shelter, and Soderini being unwilling to impose new taxes in the excited state of public feeling, attempted to throw this burden on the ecclesiastics alone because the necessity entirely proceeded from priestly ambition: he therefore demanded from the clergy 120,000 golden florins payable in four contributions; but so unpopular was he and so strong the superstitious feeling in favour of church privilege that the motion was made no less than six times in two days ere the gonfalonier succeeded in carrying it; nor would it ever have passed had there not been a sharp feeling of anger against the pope for so unjustly laying the city under an interdict. Even as it was the measure only passed in a restricted form, and with difficulty eight citizens could be found to carry it into effect although subjected to a fine of 200 florins each on their refusal. Some from personal hatred or jealousy opposed every act of Soderini; others were alarmed on the score of religion; but numbers were entirely influenced by their own private interests for almost all the great families had a well-beneficed and opulent priest in their establishment who was far from being idle in the contest. The clergy seeing how unpopular this measure proved were assiduous in getting the interdict prolonged in hoping to defeat it altogether, but overshot their mark, for the citizens became angry and completed the number of commissioners necessary for carrying the act into immediate operation †. This audacious proceeding so inflamed the ire of Julius II. that he was on the point of instantly turning the whole allied force against Florence, and would have done so had not a calmer and wiser policy directed his arms on the more formidable power of Louis, his great and principal opponent whom he was determined to destroy.

\* Guicciardini, Lib. x., cap. iii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 60-64.

† Giov. Cambi, pp. 268-71.—Ammirato, Lib. xxviii., p. 297.

The year 1512 began in bitterness and terminated in sorrow not only for Florence but almost every part of Italy : A.D. 1512. war in all its horrors ravaged Lombardy and Romagna; cities were sacked; women dishonoured; blood streamed through house and field; states were won and lost with incredible rapidity; and wo and misery came alike to the victors and the vanquished. In this eventful year the French even in the midst of victory were driven from the Peninsula; the church resumed its ancient temporalities and permanently fixed them; the Spanish power was firmly planted on Italian soil; Venice recovered from her recent disasters, the house of Sforza was again exalted, though as a mere phantom, to the throne of Milan; Pandolfo Petrucci finished his bloody and ambitious course at Siena, the gonfalonier Piero Soderini was expelled from Florence and with him the popular government of Savonarola; and the Medici were finally restored by foreign arms to rule the destinies of that once glorious but now degraded commonwealth.

The interdict still continued and was so skilfully handled as to scare the citizens from levying that obnoxious tax imposed by government upon the priesthood; they wavered, gonfalonier and all, in anxious uncertainty according to the varying nature of events at the seat of war until the interdict was finally removed through the exertions of Giovanni Gozzalini one of the pope's chaplains, and then this hateful impost was suspended by a sort of compromise. The pope was in fact far from wishing to push Florence to extremity and again force her into the arms of France just at the moment when their alliance had nearly terminated; for she was a dangerous enemy on his frontier but would be a powerful friend either with men or money against French invasion if once brought heartily into the cause\*.

Towards the end of 1511 the combined armies under Raimondo de Cardona Viceroy of Naples were concentrated in Ro-

\* Ammirato, Lib. xxviii., p. 301.

magna, his head-quarters having been established at Imola to collect the remaining troops and artillery while Pietro Navarra, captain-general of the Spanish infantry and the most famous engineer of the age, was despatched to attack the Duke of Ferrara's possessions in Romagna. Navarra soon reduced everything south of the Po, but any attack on Ferrara itself in the heart of winter with deep and broken roads was thought too difficult and the investment of Bologna resolved on, during which the fortress of Fossa-zaniola, a post necessary to the future siege of Ferrara, was to be reduced. After a short but vigorous resistance by Vestidello Pagano this stronghold was taken by assault and Pagano fell a victim to the barbarity of the Musulman troops then serving as Spanish infantry under Pietro Navarra; it was however almost immediately recaptured by Alphonso Duke of Ferrara who fell wounded in the attack; which incident is noted in Ariosto's Orlando\*. The Papal army at Imola was commanded by Marcantonio Colonna under the orders of Giovanni de' Medici legate of Romagna, and in conjunction with Cardona pressed the siege of Bologna; but while Gaston hastened to relieve this city Brescia was suddenly taken by Andrea Gritti who commanded for Venice, and soon after a general revolt in Venetian Lombardy where the French were detested, forced the former to return in haste to the defence of that province after scaring the confederates †.

It was during this siege that an event occurred which had it come from any other author than Guicciardini would scarcely be credible: Pietro Navarra had sunk a mine near the Porta di Strada Castiglione, at that part of the wall where on the inside was built a small chapel called "*Baracane*," in order that when the assault were given the besieged, being separated by the ruins of this building, should have more difficulty in resist-

\* Guicciardini, Lib. x., cap. iii., p. 64. lili, Canto xlii., Stanza v.  
 —Muratori, Annali d'Italia, Anno † Biagio Buonaccorsi, Diario, pp. 166-7.  
 1512.—Orlan. Fur., Canto iii., Stanza

ing the assailants than they would if united in the defence of a single breach. This may be doubted ; but “ when everything was ready,” says Guicciardini, “ and the troops were standing armed and waiting for an immediate assault, Navarra ordered the mine to be sprung which with a thundering sound and enormous force lifted the chapel in such a manner that through the space which remained between the ground and the blown up wall the city and soldiers drawn up for its defence were all seen within : and then the fragment suddenly descending, *returned unbroken into the identical spot whence it had been expelled by the violence of the explosion, and refitted itself as if it had never been removed !* The Bolognese believed this to be a miracle ; conceiving it impossible, without divine aid, that the wall could so accurately replace itself in its original position : wherefore the chapel was enlarged and frequented with no small devotion by the people” \*.

Meanwhile Gaston attacked and beat Paulo Baglione the Venetian general at Isola della Scala, and instantly assaulted Brescia in hopes of saving the citadel, which still held out ; the former was taken with a slaughter and barbarity disgraceful to human nature and sickening to relate, but Gaston de Foix is said to have been deeply imbued with all the sternness of his age and country, and eight thousand souls fell under his still uplifted hand during seven days of cruel unmitigated and remorseless massacre †. Gaston was generally and justly praised as a commander for this short and decisive campaign : he had in fifteen days with an inferior force compelled the combined armies to raise the siege of Bologna, routed the Venetian captain and his army in open battle, and recovered the second city in Lombardy after a short but bloody encounter ! Such boldness, skill, and rapidity of execution were almost unprecedented in Italy, and

\* Guicciardini, Lib. x., cap. iii., pp. 73-75. says that fourteen thousand fell ! — Guicciardini, Lib. x., cap. iv., p. 83.

† Buonaccorsi, from the account of the Florentine ambassador on the spot, — Biagio Buonaccorsi, Diario, pp. 167-169.



and had his life been prolonged it is more than probable that this youthful hero would have equalled some of the greatest captains of the ancient or modern world.

The situation of Louis now became alarming: England had engaged to attack him in Brittany and Normandy as well as in Guienne; Spain to conquer Navarre; the Swiss to make irruptions into Italy and Burgundy, while the strong combination between Rome Spain and Venice, and the defection of Maximilian who had made an eight months' truce with the last state, pressed hardly on him in Italy. Even Florence began to waver as the term of her alliance drew towards its conclusion and Louis saw plainly that he could no longer depend on her assistance. The Duke of Ferrara and Bentivoglio of Bologna were still faithful but their weakness was rather a charge than a support; few troops remained in France, and the army of Lombardy under any general but Nemours would have barely sufficed to hold that favourite country\*. But besides all these difficulties a secret order had been received by Jacob Empser who commanded the German auxiliaries in Gaston's army forbidding him to combat against the Pope or Spain, so that in the midst of so many enemies the hopes of Louis rested wholly on the result of a battle. Nemours received his commands to act on the offensive and if successful march direct to Rome without any respect for the pope; but to invest this act with a more legitimate character it was to be done in the name of the council of Pisa whose legate accompanied the army. In pursuance of these orders Gaston moved towards Ravenna and on the eleventh of April 1512 gained his celebrated victory by the banks of the Ronco with vast loss on his own part and a tremendous slaughter of the allies†. This victory was more

\* Buonaccorsi, Diario, p. 177.—Guicciardini, Lib. x., cap. iv., pp. 85 to 94.

† Gio. Cambi says that the killed and wounded on both sides amounted to twenty thousand seven hundred men, of whom six thousand were French.

Buonaccorsi says twelve thousand Spaniards and four thousand French. Guicciardini, who is probably more correct, says ten thousand, of which one-third were French.

than compensated by the death of Nemours himself, for his loss so disheartened the army that two thousand fresh infantry and two hundred men-at-arms, say the *Memoires* of Bayard, would have defeated them. The Spanish infantry which had been armed and trained by Pietro Navarra, after committing fearful ravages amongst the French ranks marched sullenly off the field undaunted and unbroken; and it was while charging them in their retreat that Gaston de Foix was unhorsed and stabbed by a common soldier notwithstanding all the entreaties of Lautrec, who fell pierced with twenty wounds at his side\*.

The immediate effects of this victory were the surrender of Ravenna, Imola, Forli, Cesina, Rimini, with all their dependencies, and every fortress or citadel in Romagna except those of Forli and Imola; all of which were received by the legate San Severino in the name of the council of Pisa, while the pope's legate Giovanni de' Medici was carried a prisoner to Milan. Had Gaston de Foix survived there is no doubt that Rome and Naples must have successively fallen and the Spaniards would have been driven from Italy; but his loss demoralised the army. The news of this disaster reached Rome in eight-and-forty hours and threw the impetuous Julius into alternate fits of rage and terror: the cardinals urged him to instant peace, the Spanish and Venetian ambassadors to persist in war; and in this wavering condition did he remain until the unexpected arrival of Giulio de' Medici knight of Rhodes and afterwards Clement VII. informed him of the immense loss, depression, and confusion of the French army; the contention between La Palisse and Cardinal San Severino for the chief command; the necessary dispersion of the troops in garrisons; the captains' uncertainty of the king's intentions; their not being on good terms with each other; the reports of a new Swiss invasion; and the utter impossibility of the French

\* Guicciardini, *Lib. x.*, cap. iv., pp. 90-112.

army being able to resume active operations under a long period. Giulio had escaped from the field of Ravenna; had been permitted by Cardinal San Severino to attend on his cousin Giovanni and was now despatched by the latter to give Julius this correct and cheering intelligence of the enemy's condition\*.

The victory of Ravenna relieved Florence from great anxiety, inasmuch as the success of her ally promised safety and repose; but the subsequent exhaustion of the French army and the evident confusion of their affairs both at home and in Italy; the muster of Swiss troops, and the rallying of the confederates, soon filled her with new apprehensions, for Julius was not a man to let either real or fancied injuries remain long unpunished. Previous to that battle Louis being alarmed at his own danger, had made advantageous offers of peace with the restoration of Bologna and other good conditions, and these though at first slighted were now eagerly seized on as a prompt means of arresting the French movements in the first instance, but to be subsequently handled according to circumstances. Julius expressed a wish for peace, naming the Florentines as mediators; and Louis, who was really desirous of it, sent an envoy to Florence while he ordered La Palisse to advance again into Romagna, whence he had been recalled to defend Milan against the Swiss, in order to procure more favourable conditions.

The pope however being already assured by Cardinal Wolsey of England's vigorous coöperation and also of Ferdinand's intention to send Gonsalvo de Cordova to his aid with a strong reënfocement; determined by the urgent and previously arranged counsel of Wolsey and the Spanish ambassador to reject all terms, and in full consistory, against the opinion of the sacred College, immediately commanded Louis to release the Cardinal of Medici on peril of certain pains and penalties pronounced by canon law. At the entreaty of the cardinals, who all offered to write in a friendly manner to effect the object, this monitory was

\* Biagio Buonaccorsi, *Diario*, pp. 176-8. —Giov. Cambi, pp. 287-90.—Ammi-  
rato, *Lib. xxviii.*, p. 302.—Guicciar-  
dini, *Lib. x.*, cap. v., pp. 115-16.

suspended, and in the meanwhile Giovanni de' Medici as pope's legate exercised, even as a prisoner under the very beards of the council at Milan, the most absolute influence amongst both French and Italian soldiers. Louis was simultaneously compelled to withdraw many of his troops for the defence of France, but fresh from the victory of Ravenna not only forced the Florentines to supply their contingent according to treaty but induced them to renew the latter for five years with an engagement to furnish four hundred men-at-arms for the defence of Milan\*.

The whole Swiss nation indignant at Louis for his refusal to continue the accustomed pensions and subsidies or to listen any longer to their insolent and exacting demands, and still more angry at his contemptuous taunts, had made a national cause of their quarrel and flocked in thousands to the papal flag. This saved Naples and the confederates; for mustering in strength at Coire they marched on Trent and down the Adige towards Verona to meet the Venetians; thence on to Villafranca† where Baglione joined them with all the force of Venice, and the united army advanced on Valeggio, whence La Palisse retired. Afterwards passing the Mincio they occupied the Mantuan territory by its sovereign's permission and compelled the French to quit the field: the latter were bent on preserving the most important places in the hope of dissolving the Swiss confederates by gaining time; for they knew Julius to be more eager for war than punctual in his payments and Mammon was the great Helvetian deity. At Pontevico every German in consequence of an imperial order withdrew from the French camp and La Palisse thus weakened retreated in disorder to Pizzichitone leaving the whole Cremonese open to invasion. Cremona was occupied in the name of the "*Holy League*" as it was called, and of Maximilian son of Lodovico

\* Guicciardini, Lib. x., cap. v., pp. 116-125.

† Macchiavelli, Lettere Familiari, Let. xvii., a Fran<sup>o</sup>. Vettori.

Sforza for whom the Pope and Swiss professed to reconquer the duchy of Milan. Bergamo subsequently revolted and La Palisse after a vain attempt to prevent the allies from passing the Adda retreated to Pavia. Meanwhile Trivulzio, with many more distinguished officers of France including the revolted cardinals, who impotently declared the pope's authority suspended; and all the French establishment, had fled from Milan in a state of hurry and confusion that favoured the escape of Giovanni de' Medici at the passage of the Po near Basignano. La Palisse attempted to make a stand in Pavia but was driven from it in confusion by the allies: Milan, Pavia, and almost all the other cities except Brescia and Crema, made their submission and were sharply taxed as a substitute for plunder. The greater part of the duchy declared for the Emperor and the Holy League, but all the contributions were given to the Swiss, which soon raised such a greedy commotion amongst their gold-bought countrymen that they flocked in multitudes to the papal standard.

Parma and Placentia voluntarily surrendered to the pope who claimed them as part of the ancient Exarchate of Ravenna: the Swiss and Grisons occupied Chiavenna, Lucarno, and other places most convenient for their inroads; and Janus Tregoso a condottiere of Venice drove the French governor from Genoa, raised a rebellion in that city and was created doge, a dignity formerly enjoyed by his father. All the cities and strongholds of Romagna rapidly submitted to the pope, and on the Duke of Urbino's appearance with the papal army the Bentivogli fled from Bologna. So great was the pontiff's indignation against that rebellious city and its tyrant lords, that after interdicting any place that should presume to receive the Bentivogli, and visiting the town with his present vengeance, death alone is said to have prevented its total destruction and the removal of the inhabitants to Cento\*.

\* Guicciardini, Lib. x., cap. v., pp. 124-135.

Nothing now remained to France but Brescia, Crema and Lignago; the Castelletto and Lanterna of Genoa; the citadels of Milan and Cremona, and a few other strongholds of that state: Italy for the moment felt secure from her arms, and ample leisure was afforded for the victors to quarrel about their booty: Venice wanted Brescia and Crema, and Julius supported her demand against Ferdinand and Maximilian; the latter trying in addition, to rob her of all that had been ceded to him by the treaty of Cambray. These two monarchs had also secretly agreed that the whole duchy of Milan should ultimately become the property of their common descendants: on the other side both pope and Switzers openly insisted on the restoration of Maximilian Sforza who after his father's ruin had resided entirely in Germany: the pope because he wished to check both German and Spanish dominion in Italy; the Swiss because a weak prince on the Lombard throne could scarcely maintain himself without their assistance. The occupation of Parma and Placentia was another cause of quarrel, besides the pope's intense wish to acquire Ferrara which Ferdinand resolved he should not obtain. Julius however gave up this object for the moment and Maximilian sent Mathew Lang bishop of Gurek to watch over the imperial interests.

Yet amidst all their clashing opinions there was still one point of agreement; that of dictating terms to Florence, who had gained nothing and dissatisfied all by her neutrality; she now began to see that justice itself without strength and prudence was of no avail, and that she had not even made her neutrality respectable by such measures of vigorous defence as might have caused her enemies to pause ere they ventured to molest her. Florence had done nothing to offend the League, nor had she lent France any assistance beyond her engagements for the defence of Milan both with Louis and Ferdinand: she had rendered every aid to the Spanish fugitives from Ravenna and protected them from plunder throughout her territory, a service gratefully acknow-

ledged by the King of Spain : she had fulfilled all his demands ; for after the breaking up of the Pisan council he and his ministers had offered to defend the republic against every enemy, provided that it rendered no assistance to Bologna nor attacked the church nor favoured the Pisan council. Florence had observed these conditions, but perplexed by faction she acted indecisively, neither supporting Louis nor the League, but on the contrary like Dante's "*Cattivo Coro*" offended both sides\*.

The pope incensed against Soderini and wishing like his predecessors to establish papal authority in that republic, was eager for the replacement of the Medici in all their former greatness. To this though less ardently Ferdinand also looked in order to prevent Florence from ever throwing herself into the arms of France ; but all these things were to be finally referred to a general meeting of the confederates at Mantua.

In the interim Lorenzo Pucci, a Florentine, and one of the pope's almoners was despatched to Florence along with a Spanish envoy, nominally to require the adherence of that state to the league against France but really to sound the inclination of the citizens. They offered to pay money but demurred to joining the confederacy, both because they doubted the pope's views and by the Bishop of Gurck's advice who offered in his master's name to protect their liberties for the sum of 40,000 ducats ; he also warned them against the pontiff's enmity and advised them not to join the league until they saw the emperor do so †.

Biagio Buonaccorsi and Nardi both say that the bishop demanded 100,000 florins but despairing of gaining any money from Florence at once gave ear to the more liberal promises of Giuliano de' Medici who represented his own family at the Congress of Mantua. This demand was refused because Florence had no faith either in the emperor's promises, or his power to perform them, and had already bought his flimsy protection

\* Inferno, Canto iii.      † Guicciardini, Lib. xi., cap. iº, pp. 143-147.

for 40,000 florins, immediately after the recovery of Pisa\*. The troops of Raimondo de Cardona were just then clamorous for some arrears of pay which the viceroy had not the means of discharging; and as Maximilian was anxious for their presence in Lombardy to curb the Swiss and awe the Venetians, another offer was made to Giovanvittorio Soderini the gonfalonier's brother and Florentine ambassador at Mantua, that if the sum demanded were paid to Maximilian and something more to Cardona whose soldiers refused to move from Bologna until they were satisfied, Florence should not be molested, and as money was the only argument that told on the confederate chiefs they would have much more willingly closed with solid Florentine gold than the airy promises of Giuliano. But the ambassador had no powers; no exertions were used either by him or others to counteract the Medician intrigues; and the republic obstinately refusing to spend a given sum in the most critical moment of her existence, lost both national and political liberty and was compelled once more to receive her ancient tyrants †.

This obstinacy decided the confederates; they first resolved to restore Maximilian Sforza to his inheritance, and that a general union of the Italian states against France must be established for the safety of Italy: and secondly at the instance of Giuliano de' Medici on behalf of himself and brother, that Florence should be attacked and her constitution changed, which he declared could easily be accomplished in consequence of internal discord: many he said wished for the Medici who had secret intelligence with some of the most noble and powerful citizens: the Florentine troops were scattered; part of their men-at-arms were then in Lombardy, part shut up with the French garrison of Brescia, and no force existed that could oppose a sudden attack on the country. He

\* Buonaccorsi, p. 180.—Jacopo Nardi, *Lib. v.*, pp. 246-7.

† Guicciardini, *Lib. xi.*, cap. i., pp. 149-50.



endeavoured to demonstrate the advantage of wresting Florence from the grasp of a man blindly devoted to France and bestowing it on a family which having been offended and injured by that monarchy placed all its hopes and dependence in the League. Bernardo da Bibbiena the pope's envoy and a devoted friend of the Medici supported this view; the cause of Florence was abandoned by all, and it was finally resolved that the Spanish army accompanied by Giuliano and Cardinal Giovanni, who was appointed Legate of Tuscany for the occasion, should march at once towards that city\*.

The viceroy therefore rejoined his army at Bologna and with some slight reënforcement of papal troops advanced on Florence who until the last moment ignorant of all these things was totally unprepared for resistance. No sooner had he entered the Florentine territory than an embassy met him and endeavoured to vindicate their conduct during the war particularly as it affected Ferdinand whom they had never injured, and demonstrated the benefits to be derived by their alliance: they also entreated that the viceroy would frankly declare what was required of them, promising to grant everything in their power sooner than incur Ferdinand's displeasure. They were told that this invasion was not an act of Spain alone but a joint resolution of the League for Italian security against France, an utterly unattainable object while a man so devoted to that monarch as Piero Soderini governed the commonwealth; wherefore the confederates demanded that he should be deposed and a more satisfactory government substituted, which could only be accomplished by the restoration of Giovanni and Giuliano de' Medici to their country. Many embassies were despatched for the purpose of mitigating these demands but without success, for according to Buonaccorsi, Cardona superadded the requisition of 100,000 florins. This was indignantly rejected although the Florentines, expecting a simultaneous

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xi., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 150.

attack from the papal frontier, were in great consternation ; a consternation rendered more intense by their own dissensions and the known wishes of so many citizens for a change\*.

They had few men-at-arms and were almost devoid of infantry, except some battalions hastily collected and the newly established militia which though excellent had for the most part seen no service : not a commander of sufficient military reputation and authority was in their pay, and amongst all their condottieri there was scarcely an officer from whose character or abilities they had any expectation. Nevertheless all that could be done at the moment was effected and a considerable force concentrated in and about Florence, Prato, and the neighbouring country.

Attempts at reconciliation were not spared either in the enemy's camp or at the court of Rome, but all unsuccessfully ; and when Cardona arrived at Barberino about eighteen miles from the capital, he despatched a messenger to assure the citizens that he was not come to alter their dominion or liberty provided they would for Italian security remove Soderini and admit the Medici ; not as chiefs of the republic but simple citizens. When this demand became public the various passions interests fears and opinions of the people broke loudly forth : it was by many thought unjust and impolitic that for one citizen's sake the whole community should be endangered, more especially as his deposition would neither involve the destruction of public liberty nor the great popular council both of which might be easily protected from Medician ambition ; besides they would never be able to resist the whole power of the League and the hatred of Italy abandoned as they were by France, and even advised by Louis to make the best terms they could for their own preservation.

Others refused to believe that whole armies were thus put in motion merely through hatred to one man and regard for two

\* Buonaccorsi, Diario, p. 181.—Guicciardini, Lib. xi., cap. ii., pp. 151-2.

others; on the contrary, they saw nothing in the confederates but a determination to reduce Florence to their devotion and extract large sums from the citizens by replacing the Medici in absolute power, while they veiled their real purpose under milder terms in order to deceive the community. What else, it was asked, could mean this threatening command, given amidst the clang of arms, to depose the gonfalonier and leave the commonwealth without a head? What else was intended by this tumultuous entry of the Medici but to unfold a banner for those to rally under whose only thoughts were how they could best extinguish the name, the memory, nay every vestige of the national council, the palladium of Florentine liberty? How, it was sternly demanded, could the Medici be prevented; supported as they were by a Spanish army without and seconded by seditious citizens within; how could they be prevented from trampling on public liberty the very moment they entered Florence? The people were conjured to awaken, and oppose these incipient attempts; to fear no dangers but loss of freedom and public safety; to remember the noble stand they had made against Charles VIII. and all his chivalry; and then think how much more easy it would be to resist this petty invasion! soldiers without money, without provisions, almost without artillery; having no means if baffled in their first assault, to sustain the war or remain a single moment in Tuscany, and who, from the lies of exiles expecting to carry everything before them, would with a vigorous resistance be inclined to make reasonable conditions.

Such in substance was the language used in private society, in the markets and public places; but Soderini after having arrested about twenty gentlemen whom he believed most attached to the Medici, resolved to take the sense of the citizens at large on the answer to be returned. Assembling the great council therefore he addressed them in the following speech which unlike most historical orations is probably genuine, for

we are assured by Filippo Nerli who was present in the council, that Guicciardini has correctly and elegantly reported it\*.

“ If I believed that the viceroy’s demand concerned only my  
“ own interest I would of myself have come to such a conclu-  
“ sion as suited my inclinations, which holding me prepared at  
“ any moment to sacrifice even my life for your benefit, would  
“ have made it an easy task to renounce the magistracy ; because  
“ in the number of years that I have held this office both mind  
“ and body are wearied out by anxious and continued labour.  
“ But as in this demand there may be something more in-  
“ tended than my downfall, it appears to these my honourable  
“ colleagues and to me, that what includes the interests of all  
“ should not be discussed but by common consent, and that a  
“ subject so grave and so general ought not to be alone con-  
“ sidered by the ordinary number of citizens accustomed to  
“ debate on other subjects, but by this council the Prince of  
“ the City, to which only belongs so grave a deliberation. I  
“ will make no attempt to influence you ; yours be the counsel :  
“ yours the judgment ; what you decide on shall be accepted  
“ and praised by me : I offer you not only the magistracy,  
“ which is your own, but my person and my life ; and I should  
“ deem myself singularly fortunate if I could believe this to be  
“ the means of your safety. Examine well what consequences  
“ the viceroy’s demand may produce on your liberty, and may  
“ God’s grace then enlighten and direct your minds to the  
“ wisest course of action. If the Medici were really disposed  
“ to live in Florence as private citizens amenable to her laws  
“ and magistrates, their restoration would be praiseworthy  
“ for it would reëstablish our common country in one united  
“ body : if their design be otherwise, bethink ye of your danger.  
“ and shun neither expense nor difficulty for the preserva-  
“ tion of your liberty, the value of which will be better, but  
“ too late appreciated, alas that I should say so ! when you

\* Nerli, Com., Lib. v., p. 108.

“ have entirely lost it! Let no man imagine that the Medician  
“ rule will be what it was ere they were expelled, for the form  
“ and foundation of everything is changed: then, educated  
“ amongst ourselves almost as private citizens, opulent even  
“ for their station, and offended by none, they stood on the  
“ goodwill of the people; they consulted with distinguished  
“ citizens on all public affairs and endeavoured to cover their  
“ greatness with the mantle of private equality rather than  
“ ostentatiously display it. But now after living for so many  
“ years away from Florence, accustomed to foreign manners,  
“ and therefore little conversant with our social institutions;  
“ remembering only the bitterness of exile and persecution;  
“ poor in fortune and offended by so many of our families;  
“ conscious that the greater part, nay all the city abhors  
“ tyranny, they could never again place confidence in any  
“ man, but impelled by suspicion and poverty would appropri-  
“ ate everything to themselves! They would put no faith  
“ in public love or benevolence but trust their safety only to  
“ coercion and to arms; so that Florence ere long would be  
“ similar to Bologna under the Bentivogli, to Siena and Pe-  
“ rugia. I wished to say thus much for those who make a  
“ boast of the times and government of Lorenzo de’ Medici  
“ which although accompanied by the hard conditions of a  
“ tyranny (yet milder than many others) compared with this  
“ would be considered as an age of gold. It now becomes *you*  
“ to deliberate prudently; and *me*, either to renounce the magis-  
“ tracy with a cheerful and constant mind; or, if you decide  
“ otherwise, boldly attend to the defence of our country’s  
“ liberty”\*.

The people’s attachment to popular government was far too strong and too general for any hesitation about its maintenance, but with a somewhat contradictory policy they resolved to support the gonfalonier in his office and yet permit the Medici to return

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xi., cap. ii., pp. 155-7.

as private citizens with a foreign army, the cardinal's influence, and all the papal authority at their back! And if this were not accepted a vigorous defence of their common country and its liberties was the alternative.

Preparations for the latter were continued, money was raised, Prato, a city on the enemy's line of march by the Val di Marina, was immediately garrisoned and every means that time and circumstances allowed were put in defensive action. Meanwhile after having with some difficulty collected the army and artillery, at Barberino, Cardona again moved forward and in August began battering the walls of Prato with his falconets, which however made no impression even on the Mercatale gate the particular object of attack. Luca Savello was in garrison with a few men-at-arms and according to different accounts, from two to four thousand militia besides other infantry; but with a scanty artillery, little experience, less discipline, and a total absence of everything necessary to defence except the single article of victuals\*. The viceroy's army was small, brave, and experienced: two hundred men-at-arms, two heavy guns and only five thousand Spanish infantry; but the same undaunted soldiers who had fought and made such havoc at Ravenna, who had killed De Foix, and retired in stern unbroken order from the field more like victors than vanquished. Such soldiers despised their inexperienced enemy, but as they marched without provisions beyond the day and found the country almost cleared of them, scarcity soon commenced in the camp and Cardona alarmed for the consequences began again to negotiate.

This was the crisis in which a superior mind intent on public good would have shown itself, but Florence had neither troops nor officers competent to stand in the field against the Spanish vete-

\* Macchiavelli, who was best informed, says that the garrison was three thousand men.—(Vide *Lettere Familiari*, *Lettera* viii., “*a una Signora*” sup- posed (but from the contents erroneously) to be written to Alfonsina de' Medici.)

rans, and her only safety was in famine ; yet while there are provisions in badly-garrisoned and badly-defended towns an experienced army will scarcely starve : nevertheless for 30,000 ducats and the reception of the Medici as private citizens Cardona would not have marched off and left the republic free with the gonfalonier still in office and the popular council untouched : but, says Guicciardini, nothing is more evanescent than opportunity ; nothing more dangerous than judgment from others' professions ; nothing more injurious than immoderate suspicion. It was an old custom of Florence to defend the public liberty with gold at a less expense both of blood and treasure than with the dangerous swords of mercenaries : there were times even when it became the most politic and almost only means of safety, and on the present occasion all the leading citizens in compliance with ancient custom (now justified by circumstances) were eager for a convention. The viceroy had promised a safe-conduct to their ambassadors and also to abstain from any further attacks on Prato while negotiations were pending if his troops were only furnished with provisions by that city. These preliminaries were agreed to, but Soderini with an unusual and for him unnatural boldness, either from a conviction that Prato would hold out, that Cardona fearful of starvation and despairing of success would be compelled to retreat, or from terror at the restoration of the Medici under any circumstances, purposely delayed the ambassadors and gave no provisions although Cardona purposed leaving this last point to the decision of Ferdinand. The gonfalonier was nevertheless supported by many citizens who trusted to an army of sixteen thousand men which he either expected or had actually assembled in and about Florence : whereupon the viceroy pressed by hunger and uncertainty took up a fresh position opposite La Porta del Serraglio and after making an insignificant and easily defended breach boldly stormed it on the twenty-ninth of August, 1512, and to his own and his army's astonishment at once carried the

town, owing as is said to the cowardly behaviour of its garrison but more probably to treachery in the podestà. One corps alone, and they were Pisans, made a gallant but unsuccessful stand in the market-place, after which there was no resistance; but screams, blood, violation and plunder filled the place. Guicciardini asserts that the Cardinal of Medicis placed a guard on the church where all the women had sought refuge and thus saved them; but Nardi, Cambi, Macchiavelli, Buonaccorsi, Giovio, and Giuliano Ughi, in his manuscript Memoires; all cotemporaries and the first at that very time employed in the war department of Florence, agree in one dismal tale of indiscriminate murder, rape, torture, sacrilege and general desolation; and even in the time of Scipione Ammirato, more than half a century afterwards, Prato still trembled from the horrors of this bloody day. Neither sacred virgins nor cradled infants, nor wives, nor youths, nor maidens, nor children from seven years old and upwards, were spared from the most odious violation or from death: the wells were filled with mangled bodies; a fat priest was actually cut to pieces and boiled; and thunder and lightning and pelting rain poured down in torrents during the first night of these terrific acts as if heaven itself had made its indignation manifest! the sacred Host was scattered and trampled on; houses and churches were plundered and their inmates cruelly tortured to discover imaginary treasures, or work on the pity of friends and relatives for payment of a heavier ransom. The number thus slaughtered without provocation, without resistance, and excepting by the small body of Pisans, without an attempt at defence, is by most authors estimated at five thousand souls; by Guicciardini at two thousand, but Cambi and others assert that no less than five thousand four hundred bodies, and according to Ughi a cotemporary even six thousand were actually buried in Prato. These horrors continued more or less for one-and-twenty days, and there is no cruelty that has ever been related or that can even be conceived of man; no lust, violence



or wanton barbarity, nothing that can enter into the most diabolical imagination, which was not here committed by the Spaniards; never even in that fierce and fiery age were seen such hellish doings: the bloody exploits of the French at Brescia and Ravenna looked pale in comparison to the Spanish cruelty butchery and violations at Prato! and during all this time, says Cambi, *the Cardinal de' Medici the future Pope Leo X., looked on without an attempt to arrest the hand of murder or stop the hellish scene\**.

The story of this lamentable exhibition of human wickedness is rendered still more melancholy by two private but remarkable instances of the deep feeling, the virtue, and the fidelity of woman: one the preservation of her threatened honour; the other to revenge her violated chastity; both being examples of that great and glorious spirit which disdains to suffer degradation.

We are told by Nardi of an aged lady of Prato who having escaped the massacre was retained as a servant in her own dwelling to attend on the barbarians that occupied it: during the first moments of danger she had hidden her young niece in one of those secret chambers which in those days it was not uncommon to construct expressly for such purposes in private houses, and there hoped to have preserved her until all danger had passed away. She was deceived; the lynx eyes of a licentious soldiery were too keen and penetrating; their suspicions were awakened and the unhappy girl was soon led forth trembling and pale with horror, but caressed and comforted by the satyrs

\* Ricordi di Andrea Bocchineri di Prato, Ar. Stor. Ital., App. No. 1, p. 329.—Macchiavelli, Lettere Familiari. "*Lettera a una signora*," viii.—Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii., pp. 101-2.—Fil. Nerli, Lib. v., pp. 108-9.—Guicciardini, Lib. xi., cap. ii., pp. 157-160.—Buonaccorsi, Diario, p. 182.—Giov. Cambi, pp. 304, 308, 323.—Jacopo Nardi, Lib. v., pp. 247, 251.—Fra Giuliano Ughi,

Memorie Storiche delle cose di Firenze, p. 17, MS.—Giovio, Vita di Leone X. —Ammirato, Lib. xxviii., pp. 306-7. —Jacopo Modesti, "*Sacco di Prato*." —Simone di Goro Brami, "*Sacco di Prato*." —Stefano Guizzalotti, "*Il Miserando Sacco di Prato*." In terza Rima. These last three narrations are to be found in vol. i<sup>o</sup>, Ar. Stor. Ital.

who were about to ruin her. She in vain implored for that mercy which she knew was hopeless, so concealing her bitter feelings as best she could she gradually drew towards the balcony and thence with a sudden spring dashed herself on the pavement, but died unsullied !

Another whose husband remained a captive to the Spaniards was carried off by a man-at-arms and in the habit of a page retained as his concubine through seven miserable years of captivity. Finding herself at last quartered at Parma and therefore adjacent to the confines of Tuscany, this unhappy woman resolved to cast away the slough of her dishonour and with one bold act wipe off whole years of shame. Wherefore, having previously arranged her plan, she rose in the night, killed her ravisher, collected his gold and jewels of which she had the charge, then mounting his fleetest steed spurred fearfully across the mountains and once more breathed freely on the plains of Tuscany. She was soon at her own door, anxious and hesitating, but finally assuming courage and calling on her husband she calmly said "Dost thou know me?" He ran towards her with open arms, but at once stopping him she solemnly added, "My husband; either "shun me altogether, or resolve and promise to receive and "treat me from this time forth as thy faithful and affection-  
"ate wife with this my portion of 500 golden florins, which  
"I bring to thee as some compensation for our misfortunes." She was joyfully welcomed and ever after honoured and respected by the women of every rank at Prato, for having so nobly and heroically revenged not only her own individual wrong but as it were the universal injury of her country-women\*.

The news of Prato's fall was brought by the ambassadors sent to treat with Don Raimond, who heard it when half way to that city, and consternation spread throughout Florence :

\* Jacopo Nardi, Lib. v., pp. 261-2.

Soderini was astounded terrified and struck down ; he might have saved, but he brought ruin on the country : his reputation, his authority, his resolution all forsook him, and more ruled than ruler, swayed entirely by others, incapable of meeting the difficulty, he could neither provide for his own nor the public safety. All who desired a revolution became bolder and raised their voices most loudly and audaciously against the existing government, so that the Seignory was compelled to release those prisoners confined by Soderini ; but most of the citizens, unused to arms and scared by the fate of Prato, although attached to popular government were ready through mere apprehension to obey the first daring citizen that might present himself.

Such men were not wanting. That same set which had been accustomed to meet in the Rucellai gardens and rendered them famous in Florentine literature, contained a number of ardent spirits, young, bold, and energetic, who only looked for such a crisis to bring their secret wishes into action. Bartolomeo Valori, Antonio degli Albizzi who was only twenty-three years old ; Francesco and Domenico Rucellai, Gino di Neri Capponi, Giovanni Vespucci, the sons and nephews of Piero Tornabuoni and others of that family, besides friends and adherents ; in all about thirty young ambitious nobles, many deep in debt and most of them related to Soderini ; but all eager for change and deep in a conspiracy to restore the Medici, were chief actors in this revolution\*. These citizens, who had already secretly arranged their plans with Giulio de' Medici at a distant villa, resolved to drag Soderini by force from the public palace despoil him of his dignity and remand him to a private station in the community.

While this plot was in agitation the viceroy flushed with

\* Besides the above, there were several of the Pitti, Tomasino Corbinelli ; several of the Bartoli, a son of Filippo Buondelmonte, probably several of the Ridolfi and Francesco Nori, whose father was killed by Bernardo Bandini in defending Lorenzo de' Medici.

success, rich in plunder to the amount of 200,000 florins, his camp abounding in provisions not only from the stores of Prato, but by a purchased convention with Pistoia, entirely changed his tone, and instigated by the Palleschi demanded the Medici's restoration, but as private citizens without any preëminence in the commonwealth. Ferdinand in fact cared little for the Medici and from the first had ordered Cardona to arrange this matter as best suited the Spanish interests: nay, he had latterly been even adverse to their return and in favour of preserving the popular government from a growing jealousy of Pope Julius in consequence of his threat of driving the barbarians from Italy, coupled with a treacherous attempt to arrest the Duke of Ferrara for whose safety Ferdinand had been guarantee. These feelings made him anxious to support a Florentine magistrate adverse to Julius instead of a family which was likely to depend more on that pope than on him; and he not only expressed his intentions in the most open manner to Guicciardini, then ambassador in Spain, but actually sent orders to Cardona not to molest the government; but they did not arrive until a day after Florence was in the hands of the Medici. Whatever might have been Don Raimond's feeling about that race he determined to make good use of his present position in the exaction of contributions; wherefore 50,000 florins were demanded for the payment of his army; as much more for the King of the Romans; 20,000 florins for himself; 10,000 florins' worth of goods between silks and presents to others; the whole amount of contribution equalling nearly 150,000 florins, its appropriation being variously stated.

The peril was now imminent: a fierce and victorious army within a few miles; the citizens apprehensive of being plundered; part of them corrupted, part terror-struck; no union, no confidence and no leader equal to the crisis: in this pitiable state the viceroy's demands were necessarily complied with

but on condition that the existing government and public liberty should be guaranteed and respected.

While these negotiations were in progress the conspirators entered the palace unresisted on the thirty-first of August and after some strong parley with the Seignory, and loud shouts of "*No gonfalonier*," Soderini was about to give himself quietly up to them but restrained by the priors and other citizens until the tumult became too violent to resist they dragged him at the peril of his life from the palace. He was lodged at his own desire in the house of Paulo Vettori on the "Lung' Arno," and all Florence being by this time in tumult enemies rushed out on every side and encouraged the conspirators to assemble every legal council and demand Soderini's instant deposition. Francesco Vettori was selected as deputy for this purpose and the question having been put, only nine out of more than seventy votes were against the gonfalonier: upon this Vettori returned to the Seignory and crossing his hands over his breast with apparent compassion and humility, and as he asserts in a letter to Macchiavelli, a real desire to save him; declared that if sentence of deposition were not immediately passed he trembled for the life of that innocent man from the violence of some youthful conspirators\*.

Thus menaced there was no alternative; the gonfalonier was legally deposed by the court constitutionally nominated for that purpose, but not without strong expressions of compassion and even tears from his judges †. To prevent any chance of disorder Soderini departed on the following evening for Siena accompanied by a guard of cross-bow men besides many of his own relations; his destination was at first for Rome where Cardinal Soderini had induced Pope Julius to guarantee his safety, but an old follower of the family called Antonio di Segna was secretly despatched to warn him from that city and

\* Macchiavelli, *Opere*, Lettera xvi.

† This court was composed of the eight Priors, sixteen Gonfaloniers,

twelve Buonomini, ten of War, eight of Balìa, ten Conservators of Laws, and the Captains of Party Guelph.

of the pontiff's treachery; whereupon he struck off quietly towards Loreto on pretence of a vow, and embarking from the neighbouring coast in a brigantine which the faithful Antonio had provided, arrived safely at Ragusa. He was welcomed with great hospitality by that people to whose merchants he had shown especial favour during his prosperity; but fearful of being demanded from them by Julius he retired to the neighbouring city of Castelnuovo then a Turkish dependancy. Meanwhile Julius angry at his escape and having none else to vent his rage upon, awaited the return of Antonio di Segna, threw him into prison, tortured and sent him back to his own house where he died within a few days a victim to his affection and fidelity\*.

Thus ended after nine years and ten months' duration the government of Piero di Tommaso Soderini: he was evidently a man of mildness probity and virtue, joined to much sense prudence and knowledge of official business; a sincere friend to liberty but morally timid, and formed for more tranquil and more scrupulous times than those he lived in. He worked hard himself, trusted to few, and therefore had no efficient support in the hour of trial: his maxim was to remedy everything by time and mildness, forgetting the rapid succession of outward events as well as the turbulent impatience and furious passions of the moment. The malignity of that powerful faction which had proposed the office, shackled all his measures when they saw him lean exclusively to popular government, whereas if he had condescended to humour and conciliate them (an important duty of rulers) he probably would have benefited his country more, strengthened it by union and ultimately preserved that cherished liberty which like a sensitive plant again

\* Macchiavelli, *Lettere Familiari*, Lettera viii., *a una Signora*.—Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii., p. 102.—Fil. Nerli, Lib. v., pp. 109-10.—Jacopo Nardi, Lib. v., pp. 252-6.—Gio. Cambi, pp. 306-10. —Guicciardini, Lib. xi., cap. ii°, pp. 161, 169.—Buonaccorsi, pp. 181-4.—Ammirato, pp. 307-8.—Goro Brami, "*Sacco di Prato*." † *Ibid.*, p. 306.

withered at the touch of a Medici. The order, moderation, and economy of his administration; his gentleness and steadiness of government, for all of which he would have been universally honoured and loved in a more tranquil and less corrupted age, were some of the causes of his fall during one of misfortune turbulence and crime; for they were neither sustained by commanding vigour nor enforced by the mysteriuous powers of genius.

No sooner was Soderini departed than negotiations were renewed with Don Raimond by a fresh embassy consisting of Cosimo de' Pazzi Archbishop of Florence, Baldassare Carducci, Ormannozzo Deti, Niccolò del Nero, Niccolò Valori, Jacopo Salviati, and Paulo Vettori. The first and two last of these ambassadors were added at the desire of Giovanni de' Medici; the archbishop being his cousin, Salviati his brother-in-law, and Vettori especially acceptable for his activity in expelling the gonfalonier. The terms were soon settled, the Medici and their followers were suffered to return as private citizens with permission to repurchase all their confiscated property at a fair value, on compensating the existing owners for every improvement. Florence was instantly to join the league against France, pay to Cardona half the contribution agreed upon after which he engaged to withdraw, and the other moiety within two months. She was to conclude a new alliance with Ferdinand involving reciprocal defensive obligations, and moreover to maintain two hundred Spanish men-at-arms, intended for the Marquis of Palude to whom Cardona had given hopes of being made Captain-general of the Florentine army\*.

Giuliano de' Medici and his young cousin Lorenzo the son of Piero and Alfonsina, had already made their appearance in the city, and were welcomed to the house of Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi against the wishes of his family: Giuliano was of a mild conciliating nature and politic withal; he instantly shaved his

\* Ammirato, Lib. xxix., p. 309.—Guicciardini, Lib. xi., cap. iii., pp. 163-4.

heard, cast away his foreign garments, and at once resumed the "*Lucco*" or national costume of Florence in order to manifest his intention of living as a private citizen according to the ancient custom of his race. He therefore entered that city unattended by any strangers and walked the streets accompanied by two of his kinsmen without fear or pretension \* : in conjunction with the Seignory he laboured at a modification of the government, believing it prudent in the first instance not to oppose that almost unanimous desire of preserving public liberty and the great popular council. It was nevertheless resolved that a perpetual gonfalonier had become inexpedient, that the duration of that office was henceforward to be for one year only, and that to the senate, which was renewed half-yearly, a certain number of the most distinguished citizens should be added as permanent members, the qualification for which consisted in having discharged some of the first public duties of the commonwealth ; those for instance of ambassador, or commissary abroad, and gonfalonier of justice or the office of peace and liberty at home. Four hundred crowns of salary were granted to the gonfaloniership and the remainder of Soderini's pay was divided amongst the Priors, Buonomini, and Gonfaloniers of companies †.

In pursuance of these arrangements Giovambatista Ridolfi was elected gonfalonier from the eighth of September 1512. This choice was considered judicious and well calculated for the emergency, because Ridolfi belonged to the noblest rank of citizens, was wise, prudent, energetic, and attached to liberty : he had great influence in Florence particularly amongst the nobles, yet was careful of the people, and well adapted by personal qualities alone to steady the vacillating commonwealth if avarice and ambition had been less prominent in his

\* Giov. Cambi, p. 311.—Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii., p. 103.—Ammirato, Lib. xxix., p. 310.

† Giov. Cambi, pp. 311, 314.—Ammirato, Lib. xxix., pp. 311-12.



character\*. The Palleschi whose wish was a restoration of the old Medician ascendancy, were mortified at this liberal spirit and at seeing themselves opposed by those whom they now found had only coalesced from their personal hatred to Soderini, but still remained staunch to the cause of popular government; nor were they much comforted by the vigorous proceedings of Ridolfi who cleared the palace of all armed factionaries, introduced order, and restored the machine of government to its regular movement. The more liberal party also began to speak out and boast that after the departure of the Spaniards they would reduce everything to its former condition. Things had however proceeded too far; liberty was beset on every side; an army eager for any violence at the gates; a strong and determined faction of audacious youth ready to trample upon her within; her greatest enemies reëstablished although as private citizens, (which excited the smiles of many) in the very place where their family had ruled despotically for sixty years; and the well-understood although disguised objects of the cardinal, who deemed such a restoration poor recompense for years of exile; all these combined to sound the knell of liberty. The Palleschi perceived this, but alarmed at the reform and more alarmed at the gonfalonier's firmness, sought about for a remedy and sent a deputation to the Cardinal de' Medici at Campi to impress him with the necessity of a change. They insisted that the easy disposition of Giuliano had suffered such things to pass as endangered his friends and family, and that he was more fitted for individual and private enjoyment than the rougher cares of government: that he had allowed himself to be circumvented by their enemies whose ablest leader was made chief of the commonwealth, and whose common language was that of a second expulsion of the Medici at a favourable time and opportunity. The Cardinal a willing listener to such arguments, immediately removed his quarters

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xi., cap. ii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 163-4.—Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii., p. 103.

from Campi to Sant' Antonio del Vescovo close to the Porta a Faenza \* where he could receive the visits and sound the inclinations of the citizens; amongst these Jacopo Salviati and Lanfredino Lanfredini urged him on no account to alter the great council to which for eighteen years so great and universal an attachment was shown by all ranks of citizens. The Palleschi they declared were exhausted in numbers and wealth and weak in every way; they were ambitious and necessitous, and not superabundant in prudence, wherefore if he intended to build his future greatness and security upon their support alone, he would become the minister of their violence and avarice; but in maintaining the present reform his family would again become exalted and agreeable to all parties; to the Ottimati for the recent reform; and to the people for the preservation of their great popular council.

This sound and patriotic advice was given not only by the two above-mentioned citizens but by many others who being satisfied with the expulsion of Soderini and the alteration in the senate or council of the Ottimati, began to fear Medician ambition and the natural desire of that family after years of exile to redeem their fortunes at the public cost. This apprehension became more serious because not only the Palleschi but Antonio de Cardona Marquis della Palude, who as already mentioned had been promised the captain-generalship of Florence with 30,000 florins a year salary, was continually exciting the Medici to such measures as a means of his own aggrandisement. The advice offered by Salviati and his party was not from any particular attachment to the popular council but to establish themselves as arbitrators between this democratic body and Medician authority; a balance, says Jacopo Pitti, difficult to adjust and when adjusted impossible for any length of time to preserve. When this counsel became known to the Palleschi they insisted

\* The gate of Faenza now opens into between the gates of San Gallo and the lower citadel or fortress of Florence Prato.

on the necessity of a parliament, especially as they were weak; and with that power once in hand they would soon be joined by the infirm of purpose, the waverers, and all who were watching the exit of affairs to side with the ascendant faction either from fear or interest. Nor, added the Palleschi with great truth, have we any apprehension of the discretion of men like our opponents who lost the form of government to which they were so attached by allowing their own passions to be played upon by a few silly designing citizens.

Their advice was too much in unison with Giovanni de' Medici's wishes not to be adopted; for although he dreaded the new gonfalonier's vigour and ability they soon afterwards convinced him that even he was not invulnerable to temptation: they in fact succeeded in persuading Ridolfi that his interest and expectations were more likely to be satisfied by promptly embracing the Medician cause for which his brother's life had been sacrificed, than remaining true to the party that had sacrificed it: by the latter he gained nothing; by the former his reward must be instant; because he would immediately become the principal adviser, as he was already the near relation of the Medici and first citizen of Florence. Seduced by such reasoning Ridolfi only stipulated that the revolution should be so managed as to cast the appearance of compulsion on his actions, a promise cheerfully given, not so much to satisfy him as to secure the support of many who although apparently Palleschi were strongly suspected by the Medici\*. Such was Ridolfi the once zealous advocate for liberty and great supporter of Savonarola, a man so generally esteemed and confided in that eleven hundred and three voices out of fifteen hundred and seven in the Grand Council elected him as gonfalonier, to the universal satisfaction of the Florentines †! All these things decided the Cardinal de' Medici to enter at once

\* Jacopo Nardi, Lib. vi., p. 260.— Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii., pp. 103-6.

Filippo Nerli, Lib. vi., p. 115.—Guicciardini, Lib. xi., cap. ii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 164-5.— Nerli, Lib. vi., p. 114.

on the scene; but this could scarcely be effectual without Don Raimond de Cardona's acquiescence and aid; and he, whether from having already been apprised of King Ferdinand's change of sentiment or fearful of delaying the payment of his own contributions, was disinclined to make any further alterations in Florence. It was however represented to him that after suffering such injuries the very name of Spaniard must necessarily become hateful to the Florentines; that if left free they would naturally cling to the enemies of Ferdinand, and probably recal Soderini as soon as their country were once rid of the Spanish armies; and that the re-establishment of the Medici would be the only security for their faithful adherence to the confederacy. The viceroy acceded to this reasoning, and on the fourteenth of September 1512, after nearly eighteen years of exile Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici returned to Florence; not as legate of Tuscany in the garb of peace and welcomed as Popes' legates were wont by long processions of the citizens: this he refused: but entered like a conqueror, accompanied by the viceroy, surrounded by men-at-arms, and above all by that detested infantry which under his own eyes had been carrying death and desolation throughout his native country\*. Riding proudly through the streets Giovanni dismounted at the Medician palace and there passed the night without deigning to take any notice of the Seignory. The Orsini, Vitelli, Rivieri della Sassetta, Ramazzotto, and other condottieri attached to his party filled the city with their followers, while the mass of the Spanish army returned to or remained at Prato ready for any emergency: Ridolfi had dismissed the old palace guard and whether by design or accident had not yet formed another, so that the Seignory were unprotected and exposed to any violence of the Medician followers †. That such violence might be expected was clear to all when

\* Ammirato, Lib. xxix., p. 312.—Giov. Cambi, p. 323.

† Filippo Nerli, Lib. vi., pp. 115-16.

they saw the bloody garments of their murdered countrymen sent in cart-loads to the Florentine market and sold, or offered for sale at a small price in the Piazza di San Giovanni; when they saw multitudes of Spanish soldiers, officers, and condottieri, whose hands still reeked with the life-blood that wetted those very garments, when they saw these men enter Florence in the guise of friends; amuse themselves by riding round the walls, examining the defences, and speculating on the most promising mode of reacting the tragedy of Prato whenever a fair occasion presented itself; and at last, when to the indignant complaints of the citizens the gonfalonier's only reply was an angry sarcasm and a more angry reviling of their ignorance, his reputation rapidly diminished and the public began to tremble\*. Yet this was the patriot Ridolfi!

On the evening of the fifteenth of September the senate and a numerous "*Pratica*" or assembly of citizens, met at the palace to receive the visit of Giovanni de' Medici who through Biagio Buonaccorsi returned an excuse which at least calmed their apprehensions of any present violence, and on the following day they again collected for the same purpose. During this interval the Medici had completed their plans and mustered their forces both foreigners and townsmen: Rinieri della Sasseetta and Ramazzotto were first seen cautiously moving their bands of infantry piecemeal into the great square and occupying all that space in front of the palace gate; then followed Vitelli and many more, as it were carelessly sauntering about; next came Giuliano de' Medici accompanied by all the citizen-conspirators six of whom were members of the Seignory, with arms cautiously concealed under their mantles; and in this way they insinuated themselves into every part of the unprotected palace even to the battlements of the tower, ere they ventured on the conclusion of their enterprise. Giuliano seeing all things complete entered the council-cham-

\* Jacopo Nardi, Lib. vi., p. 260.—Jacopo Modesti, Sacco di Prato, p. 245.

ber and at a preconcerted sign one of the Seignory began to speak; upon this swords were drawn, shouts of "*To arms*" resounded through the palace-halls, and from its ancient windows the cry of "*Palle, Palle*" rang to the courts below: Ramazzotto and Rinieri instantly secured the gate and Vitelli the public square; the palace itself was as suddenly filled with soldiers shouting and plundering; the astonished citizens who were assembled there slunk gradually away and abandoned all to the conspirators; fear and confusion spread on every side until the reappearance of Giuliano in complete armour restored some confidence to the council. He immediately arrested the tumult within, sent armed patrols round the town and suburbs with bread and halters to soothe and punish, raised a cry that the Spaniards were on their way from Prato to take advantage of the tumult and plunder Florence, and by such means and the terror of greater evils reduced everything to comparative tranquillity. Thus overcome, the Seignory sent a deputation of four citizens to receive the cardinal's commands; he asked only the security of his family and a parliament, the latter a formidable demand, but it was granted and that perilous mockery soon took place: a Balia at the will of the cardinal was appointed amidst the spears of foreign soldiers and armed bands of young and reckless Florentines who were now declaring in numbers for the Medici\*. This Balia was elected for one year with the power of annually prolonging its duration and which in fact continued until the last expulsion of the Medici in 1527. It was composed of the Seignory and forty-eight citizens taken as usual from the four quarters, besides eleven "*Arruoti*" or supplementary members who were subsequently added: all laws enacted since 1494

\* Biagio Buonaccorsi, pp. 183-4.— Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 103-7.— Jacopo Nardi, Lib. vi., pp. 259-61.— Filip. Nerli, Lib. vi., pp. 115-16.— Giovan. Cambi, pp. 323-25.— Ammi- rato, Lib. xxix., pp. 312-13.—Here finishes the Diary of Biagio Buonaccorsi, coadjutor of the "*Ten of Peace and Liberty*," and an actor in these scenes.

were at once annulled by it, and a clear space for new legislation opened to suit the times and interests of the inevitable Medici, that bold and fortunate race, which now resumed all its ancient authority over a people predestined to pine and wither under its brilliant but baneful influence!

This dictatorship had also the power of delegating authority to a certain number of "*Accoppiatori*" chosen from its own body for the purpose of electing the Seignory; Ridolfi either voluntarily or by invitation prematurely resigned his office at the end of two months; the ancient mode as to duration resumed its course; the Colleges of Gonfaloniers and Buonomini were now the first time elected "*a mano*;" for even the despotic Lorenzo had never disturbed their choice; the "Ten of Peace and Liberty" were abolished and their secretaries dismissed; amongst them Biagio Buonaccorsi to whose diary the historian Jacopo Nardi acknowledges himself indebted for much of his information. Instead of this board the "*Otto della Pratica*" was reëstablished, and as a despotic government forced on the nation by foreign arms was naturally fearful of a national militia formed under and attached to free institutions, Macchiavelli's famous and useful "*Ordinanza de' Battaglioni della Milizia Fiorentina*" which had been increased to twenty thousand men of all arms, was entirely abolished as dangerous, and the whole Florentine population disarmed. A strong guard of foreigners occupied the public palace and its neighbourhood, at first under the command of Paulo Vettori as commissary, then of Giulio de' Medici Prior of Capua who had accompanied Cardinal Giovanni to Florence and was a principal agent in the whole previous conspiracy connected with this revolution.

The chief members of this family now assembled together in Florence were Cardinal Giovanni and Giuliano, the above-mentioned Giulio afterwards Pope Clement VII. and son of that Giuliano who fell in the Pazzi conspiracy: Lorenzo, son

of Piero and Alfonsina degli Orsini, who afterwards became Duke of Urbino; Alexander, then an infant, natural son of this second Lorenzo; and Ippolito, also a child, bearing the same illegitimate affinity to Giuliano.

There was one remarkable feature in this revolution which gives a character of benevolence and grace to the conduct of the restored family: it was unattended with bloodshed, confiscation of property, or even with exile, excepting that of Piero Soderini and his brother Giovan-Vettorino besides three sons and nephews; and all these were soon after included in the amnesty granted at the accession of Leo X.

A forced loan was however exacted in order to complete the Spanish contribution, after which Don Raimond withdrew his merciless followers into Lombardy and left Florence in a weak and feverish repose. The sacred picture of "*Nostra Donna dell' Impruneta*" was then brought in solemn state to the city, accompanied by a long and gorgeous procession of priests and people while public thanksgivings were freely offered for the happy restoration of the Medici\*.

Thus after eighteen years of trial and adversity; after having been declared outlaws and rebels and a price set upon their head, was this family suddenly restored in the teeth of an adverse people, not only to all their former greatness but with an authority even more imperious and more absolute than before! We naturally wonder how any community with so devoted a love of liberty and their country that, as, according to Vettori a prominent actor in these very scenes, "to have their greatest pleasure in contemplating the national welfare," and who himself "loved all her people, her laws, her customs, her walls, her houses, her streets, her churches, nay the very country round about her and could

\* Jacopo Nardi, Lib. vi., pp. 261 and 265. 166-7.—Fil. Nerli, Lib. vi., pp. 116—*Jacopo Modesti, "Sacco di Prato,"* 19.—Giov. Cambi, pp. 323-330.—p. 247.—*Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii,* p. 107. *Ammirato, Lib. xxix.,* pp. 310-11.—*Guicciardini, Lib. xi., cap. ii.,* pp.



“feel no sharper grief than the contemplation of any troubles “that might apparently ruin them”\*. Yet Francesco Vettori was a staunch adherent of the Medici! How could men who felt thus, once more and so easily submit after eighteen years of real self-government and ten of order and economy, to receive that family as their masters which had so selfishly, so recklessly trampled on all the imagined liberty they had previously enjoyed?

Many causes foreign and domestic combined to produce this change: the former were, attachment to France, to the Council of Pisa, and the general state of Italian politics, but still unsteadied by any bold decided course of action: the latter were various; but one, the old and crying sin of Florence; *Disunion*, the most dangerous evil of any free community, was by far the greatest. This disunion principally arose from ambition and jealousy, but more especially from that venal selfish character which according to their own writers particularly distinguished the Florentines. “For whoever,” says Nardi, “considers well the nature of our citizens will perhaps find that their ambition is always more subservient to their avarice than their avarice to ambition;” and it was both these passions which tempted many to compass that restoration of the Medici which Pope Julius II. for his own ends and passions enabled them thus to accomplish. But still a wide-spread jealousy of the gonfalonier assisted in the work; Soderini was a man with no peculiar merit in the eyes of the patricians, save harmlessness; he was raised from a state of equality to superior and permanent dignity, and though exalted by themselves with far other objects, used his great authority to repress their high-reaching pretensions and weakened his own power by giving universal umbrage. Another cause of disunion was the extremely democratic character of the new constitution: it galled many of the old Popolani, wounded their tastes, their pride, their dignity, and

\* Francesco Vettori, Letter to Macchiavelli, Let.

rendered civic liberty an uneasy good ; for the delicacy of aristocratic taste is more shocked by mere vulgar pretensions, by the discrepancy of habits, manners, and education ; than molested by the shouldering of simple poverty and the untaught familiarity of humble life. Many of these also joined in seeking the return of the Medici though not in pristine greatness, for under the shadow of this race they had enjoyed and again expected a wider field for their own ambition a freer range for their venality, all at the expense of the commonwealth.

There were many others who looked only to the simple downfall of Soderini by whatever means accomplished yet were still true to liberty ; this blinded them not only to the crime of assassination but to the dangers brought upon their country, and even all this would have failed against the strong and general feeling of Soderini's integrity and the economy, order, and security of his mild and gentle government, had the gonfalonier's own conduct in extremity been that of a bold and able statesman who knew when to yield and when to brave misfortune.

A general scrutiny was now ordered as in the old Medician day for the embursing of citizens' names who were eligible to public employment ; but as this required time, a provisional arrangement took place on the twenty-first of September by which the gonfalonier was ordered to select twelve, the priors ten, and each of the members of the Balìa eight citizens of his quarter to form a body of five hundred and forty-eight, which by secret scrutiny were reduced to two hundred members or fifty for each quarter. This body in conjunction with the Seignory, Colleges, Otto di Balìa, and Captains of Party, was substituted for the Great Council, considered as the national representative council, and charged with the official elections and most of the duties of that great popular

body until March 1513, when the scrutiny would be completed\*. In all these arrangements especial care was taken to exclude every former partisan of Savonarola, a party dreaded and detested by the Medici because their principles were a reform in Church and State based on civil liberty, and none of these suited the Cardinal of Medicis or any of his family. The election of a new gonfalonier in November 1512 showed the existing spirit of the government which the cardinal afterwards modified, for Filippo Buondelmonte, whose name recalls our first ideas of the woes and crimes of Florence, was selected to that dignity: not that there was any individual harm in this nobleman except his age and fretful spirit; but none of this family had hitherto filled that office because they had ever proudly and sternly retained the manners and opinions of the pure and ancient aristocracy and held the citizens in extreme contempt; so that even amongst the Seignory he was sometimes made to feel how small a portion of public love or confidence he enjoyed, and it is not a little strange that even in those degenerate days of Florence when numbers of illustrious families who had in better times been the champions of liberty and were now competitors in the race of subjection, the ancient anti-aristocratic spirit should still throw out these occasional sparks of a wasted, obsolete, and almost forgotten enmity †!

One of the last acts of this year was a formal embassy to Pope Julius II. sent expressly to thank him in the name of the Florentine republic for all the benefits he had conferred on them by the change of government and restoration of the Medici! but the ambassadors' surprise may be conceived when this fiery pontiff burst into one of his most violent moods against the cardinal for entering his native city as a tyrant, surrounded by foreign guards, and holding it by force of arms! It

\* Giov. Cambi, pp. 331-2.

† Giov. Cambi, p. 340.

never was his intention he declared to set up new tyrannies but on the contrary to ruin and extinguish them as he had lately done in Bologna. The ambassadors ultimately pacified him with extreme difficulty, yet almost in the same breath he gave orders to the Cardinal de' Medici as his legate to destroy the independence of Ferrara with the papal forces and two hundred Florentine men-at-arms ! So moved by impulse was he and so bent on this unjust and disgraceful conquest\*.

His next and last public act of consequence was, in concert with the league against French aggression, the establishment of Maximilian Sforza on the throne of Milan to the infinite joy of the citizens who tired of foreign rule again desired their princes. Representatives from all the members of the league besides a vast concourse of illustrious visitors assisted at this ceremony, but the duke a weak effeminate man, was merely a shadow or at most a puppet in the hands of the Swiss, who in consequence of their military force and hatred to Louis had now become very influential and formidable meddlers in the affairs of Italy. An ambassador from each canton was received with unusual honours in secret consistory by Julius II. who flattered them with the vain titles of "*Liberators of Italy*," "*Defenders of the Church*" and such cajolery ; but their mercenary grasping disposition well knew how to profit more largely and solidly by the occasion. It is true that they had rendered great service to Italy, but from no generous motive : hatred to Louis, who disgusted with their insolence and exactions had justly asserted the dignity of his crown and country by casting off all dependance on their arms, was the original cause of this ardour ; and as it arose entirely from the deprivation of their French pensions so in accordance with their national character, did the same covetousness affect all their subsequent proceedings, until the possession of Bellenzona and Lugano and the

\* Jacopo Nardi, Lib. vi., p. 265.—Ammirato, Lib. xxix., p. 312.

command of Milan appeased their disgusting rapacity and unbounded insolence, without improving their fidelity\*.

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COTEMPORARY MONARCHS.—England: Henry VIII.—Scotland: James IV.—France: Louis XII.—Spain: Ferdinand of Aragon.—Sicily: Ditto.—Naples: Ditto.—Pope: Julius II. until 1513; then Leo X.—Emperor: Maximilian.—Sultan: Bajazet II. until 1512; then Selim I. until 1520.—Portugal: Emanuel.

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\* Muratori, Annali, Anno 1512.—Nardi, Lib. viº, pp. 266 and 275.

## CHAPTER X.

FROM A.D. 1513 TO A.D. 1524.



THE recent changes in Florence although accomplished without bloodshed and in apparent tranquillity were only so to the superficial observer; for revolutions like tempests leave an uneasy roll of the waters until freshening breezes re-steady the vessel, and incipient order gives power and momentum to the government. Notwithstanding the cautious and calculated mildness of the Medici an indistinct manifestation of sullen discontent was observable throughout Florence not only in the popular mass which deplored the ruin of its democratic council, but also in numbers of leading citizens who now saw their own consequence entirely absorbed by that family.

The moment that Soderini's fall had disarmed their individual feelings of personal hatred they began to contemplate the recent changes in a different aspect: deserted levees, empty halls, and unthronged ante-chambers startled their civic pride, while they beheld the motley tide of public adulation flowing in one broad stream towards the palace of the Medici. There they saw concentrated, for good or ill, in fear or hope, the expectations of every citizen, and they turned to each other in mutual but silent accusation as people who had madly precipitated themselves from the height of a powerful and illustrious aristocracy to be the mere courtiers of a single family of more fortunate usurpers\*.

\* Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 107.

But from this time forth resistance to Medician power became gradually less stable and more feeble until the last desperate struggle of the once glorious republic; for excepting in that noble stand for independence and for a few subsequent years the domestic transactions of Florence as a nation present but little that is interesting or instructive to the general reader: thenceforward they become only records of despotism; of fearful and jealous tyranny; of cruelty and unmitigated revenge. They exhibit the efforts of faction's sternest sons to maintain with a high and relentless hand their ill-gotten power against the desperation of a remnant of less fortunate but seldom less reprehensible antagonists. They show indeed the noxious vigour of princely intellect directed to base and utterly selfish objects, and therefore nationally destructive; they also show the deadly influence of war on the march of civilisation and public happiness, along with the scarcely less mischievous consequences of priestly ambition, abject superstition, and religious enthusiasm. They demonstrate how a flourishing people may be destroyed by a curiously ramified, penetrating, and excessive taxation, and its twin brother, minute and vexatious legislation. We may see their all-corroding action on national spirit and national character, how they divide a people into mutually repelling masses of opulent parasites and squalid beggars, of timid slaves and ferocious vagabonds: all this may be studied in its action on the small but painful circle of Medician rule until remodelled in a benigner mood by the more enlightened beneficence of an Austrian.

The history of Florence therefore, like that of all Europe after the fifteenth century, when nations became more consolidated and governments more powerful, is almost exclusively centered in her foreign diplomatic relations, but rather as a subordinate Italian province than an independent people. Great and distant nations now enter into close yet dangerous contact with her government: national turbulence, and the consequent

insecurity of life and property with but little progress either in well-understood freedom or a wider basis of social institutions, had begotten a weariness of that licence then called liberty and naturally threw the sovereign power into a continually diminishing circle until it was finally concentrated in those individuals best able to maintain tranquillity.

The security of merchandise and commercial relations increased in importance as foreign intercourse thickened around Tuscany, and secrecy unity and permanency became every day more expedient for those authorities who were charged with the conduct of foreign affairs. This tended to concentrate political power, to strengthen government, and to draw a clearer line of demarcation between prince and people, for these also had now begun to assume the form and character of two separate bodies or portions of a great whole, dependent and broadly acting on each other; but no longer broken as of yore into a thousand mutually offensive and dangerous fragments in eternal collision amongst themselves and wounding the most vital parts of the commonwealth.

Cardinal Giovanni alarmed at the excited state of public feeling endeavoured by conciliation to soothe, or by favours to gain the discontented; but in so doing he roused the fears and anger of the Pallesechi who urged him to show some discretion, at least in the choosing of a gonfalonier of justice from amongst themselves, as the surest means of strengthening his still unconfirmed authority. But both the Medici were resolved to adopt a milder system, and principally at the request of Archbishop Pazzi nominated his father Guglielmo as gonfalonier for January and February 1513. This was a great change from the spirit that led to Buondelmonti's election two months before, for the Pazzi leaned to freedom and since the famous conspiracy were at best but doubtful friends of the Medici. The new gonfalonier soon showed unequivocal symptoms of independence and somewhat boldly declared that the



Medici ought to remain as private citizens according to agreement; he even displayed the famous blue banner of liberty from the palace windows; and by these frank nay audacious proceedings so encouraged every malcontent that conspiracies began to germinate throughout the community\*.

Nor were the latter entirely without foreign countenance, for Julius II., naturally impetuous and turbulent, now began to find that in driving the French from Italy he had only closed up one channel of danger, and that Italian liberty had as much to fear from Spanish power as French ambition. Ferdinand at this moment besides his two Sicilian kingdoms had the nominal protectorship of Florence Siena and Piombino and the Medici acknowledged him as their patron. This changed the pontiff's aspect towards them and induced measures for diminishing Ferdinand's influence in Tuscany, more especially as Julius designed Siena for the Duke of Urbino, and the state of politics offered a fair occasion for their downfall.

Florence was in fact exhausted by her payments to Cardona; the Medici had as yet reacquired no wealth and had therefore only uncertain influence but endeavoured, especially Giuliano, to reconcile the malcontents and all the rest of the community by popular manners attentions and favours, accompanied by marked civilities to those who had been the most decided opponents of their family. They had formed two companies of young Florentines under the denominations of "*Il Diamante*" and "*Broncone*," the "*Diamond*" and the "*Branch*;" the former led by Giuliano, the latter by Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici under the above devices of their respective fathers. These were intended to associate the Florentine youth of all parties in friendly games and exercises while they weaned the people from state affairs, and amused and calmed the public mind

\* Giov. Cambi gives a different view of Pazzi's politics; but many who assisted in overthrowing Soderini and even the Great Council, became liberals under the Medici, and according to Jacopo Pitti, a historian of great authority, Guglielmo Pazzi acted as above described.

by frequent spectacles; but they were compared to a disguised man who only amused people for the moment and the masque being finished, things soon relapsed into their former gloom\*.

Every means were nevertheless employed to restore confidence; a widely-extended amnesty embracing almost every political or official crime was promulgated and a committee formed to investigate the cases of the claimants; compensation was made to many who had suffered by the late invasion either in purse or person, and never was a Florentine revolution accomplished with so much good policy or so little vindictiveness on the part of the Medici. Their power was in fact unstable, rather tolerated than acknowledged; they had been admitted by the majority merely as private citizens and had no money to gain more solid influence; numbers were sternly opposed to them, and multitudes of the leading families were far from content to receive them as masters. Mildness was therefore necessary; but this could not last; for in despite of all conciliation the whole interval between the parliament and Balia, (their most unpopular acts) and the creation of Pope Leo X., teemed with suppressed and sullen discontent throughout almost every class of society. The Medici and their faction were feared, and they in return became timid and suspicious, but both parties endeavoured to conceal their feelings: three or four citizens could scarcely converse together without immediate interruption from some official parasite's insolent inquiry into the nature of their conversation. Pier Francesco de' Medici, son of Lorenzo Popolano, openly expressed satisfaction at the restoration of his cousins, but not, he emphatically added, to govern the republic as masters: Filippo Strozzi brother-in-law to Lorenzo di Piero, held similar language, and frankly avowed that his own influence was thereby diminished as now depending on another. The rich feared additional

\* Pitti "Apologia dei Cappucci," Pitti, Storia, Lib. ii°, p. 108.—Nardi, vol. i°, Ar. Stor. Ital., p. 280.—Jacopo Lib. vi., p. 267.

taxation ; the poor a diminution of their gains ; all knew that the Medici were scant of wealth ; all feared the drain that was to enrich them ; multitudes as usual looked only to their own coffers, and Giuliano wittily compared them to dry casks which wanted frequent filling ere they could be depended on.

While the city was in this uneasy state and during the pontiff's last illness the Senese ambassador happened to pick up a paper that had been dropped by Pietro Paulo Boscoli in which were the names of many citizens known to be adverse to Medician government. Boscoli and Agostino Capponi, who was also implicated, were instantly arrested and tortured into a confession, whether true or false, of a combination against the Medici, and there was even some indications of a design to murder the three Medici when the cardinal left Florence to attend the conclave. They named Giovanni Folchi, Niccolò Valori, Duccio Adimari, the historian Macchiavelli, who had been deprived of the office of republican secretary in the preceding November, and many others as accomplices, and after a rigid investigation by the EIGHT, and thirty coadjutors named for the occasion, Boscoli and Capponi were sentenced to death and Folchi and Valori to perpetual imprisonment at Volterra\*. Others suffered in various ways ; many were acquitted after the usual torture, and amongst them Nicholas Macchiavelli : none of the condemned would confess to any plot against the state but boldly owned their intention of preserving public liberty. The Archbishop of Florence was indirectly accused and his participation proved at his decease which occurred soon after : he had been a strenuous opposer of any great change in the government and especially of the Parliament and moreover was attached by the promise of a cardinal's hat to the interests of Julius II. Niccolò Valori was

\* Gio. Cambi, tomo xxii., p. 8, Del *Pietro Paulo Boscoli e di Agostino Erud. Toscan.*—Ammirato, Lib. xxix., *Capponi,*" vol. i°, Ar. Stor. Ital., p. 312.—Modesti, "*Sacco di Prato,*" p. 284. 249.—Lucca della Robbia, "*Caso di*

condemned, not for being concerned in the plot but misprision, and was only saved from death by the influence of his nephew Bartolommeo. Thus, observes Nardi, he that lends an ear in suspicious times runs equal risk with him who wags his tongue and the lesser guilt of a culprit is just as offensive to state rulers as the fœtid breath of a servant, who has only eaten a small piece of garlic instead of the whole clove, is to the delicate nostrils of his master\*.

Soon after this affair, on the twenty-first of February 1513, Pope Julius finished a stormy, somewhat glorious, and certainly a fortunate pontificate of more than nine years' duration. Restless, violent, ambitious, and more of a soldier than a priest he kept Italy in continual war and misery: he was zealous for the church, recovered several of her ancient possessions, was not addicted to nepotism but the contrary; was no enemy to political liberty; and considered simply as an Italian potentate (although with strange inconsistency he first devastated Italy by foreign invasion) deserved praise for his subsequent uncompromising opposition to French aggressions and foreign interference. But he was a creature of impulse, he confounded his own passions with loftier principles and success stimulated a naturally aspiring mind to higher exploits, so that he aimed at no less than ruling Italy and even all Christendom at his pleasure. A bull of excommunication had already condemned Louis XII to lose the kingly title and realm of France and invited every nation to the spoil; amongst these Henry VIII. of England was excited to war by the forfeited title of "*Most Christian King*" which Louis was then deprived of. Julius had secretly purchased the lordship of Siena from the emperor for his nephew the Duke of Urbino, and angry at the Cardinal of Medici who owned no favours from him, meditated another change of government in Florence. He also menaced Lucca, nominated

\* Fil. Nerli, *Commen.*, Lib. vi., p. 110.—Sismondi, vol. 123.—Nardi, *Lib.* vi., p. 270.—Pitti, xi., cap. cxi., p. 8.

a new Doge for Genoa, and looked seriously forward with all the fire and impetuosity of his character to the expulsion of Ferdinand from Naples. Proud ere he had half earned it of the flattering title of "*Liberator*" he ardently contemplated the complete independence of Italy, the conquest of Ferrara and recovery of ecclesiastical property when death quietly arrested his progress, thus adding another proof of man's vain and presumptuous speculations, when he knoweth not "what a day may bring forth"\*

By the influence of numerous young cardinals as well as the general expectation of his speedy dissolution, for he was very ill; Giovanni de' Medici became pope on the eleventh of March 1513 and to verify as is said his mother's dream of being delivered of a lion in the cathedral of Florence without suffering any of the pains of labour took the name of Leo X. The greatest opposition as well as subsequent support came from the Cardinal Soderini; but the former ceded to a promise of pardon, an asylum at Rome for the gonfalonier with the restoration of all his property, and a marriage between the families: this brought eight votes or one-third of the conclave to the aid of Giovanni de' Medici who thus became pastor of Christendom at the age of thirty-seven in all the vigour of intellect and the strength of Florence at his command. After his coronation, on the anniversary of the battle of Ravenna Leo the Tenth's first object was the aggrandisement of his race; for unlike Julius he plunged at once into the common vice of popes, the indulgence of unbounded nepotism. Cosimo de' Pazzi Archbishop of Florence fell ill and died just as he was preparing to conduct an embassy of congratulation to Rome, and Giulio de' Medici then a knight of Saint John of Jerusalem and prior of Capua, was instantly

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xi., cap. iv., pp. 192-194.—Muratori, *Annali*.—Nardi, Lib. vi., p. 270.—Platina, p. 497.—  
Gio. Cambi, vol. xxii., pp. 1-5, Del. Erud. Tos.

appointed to that see with the subsequent dignity of cardinal; for witnesses of his father Giuliano's marriage and his consequent legitimacy were not wanting at the command of a pope\*. Leo's brother Giuliano was made gonfalonier of the Church, the highest military rank, and offered the dukedom of Urbino from which Francesco Maria della Rovere the late pontiff's nephew was to be expelled: the generous nature of Giuliano refused to injure a man who had been his protector in adversity and while he lived that prince remained unmolested, but young Lorenzo having no such scruples Urbino ultimately fell to the Medici. Giuliano was half engaged in marriage with a daughter of the house of Massa and Carrara when his brother became pope which at once put an end to this match, and the better to suit his new dignity he subsequently married Philiberta sister of the Duke of Savoy; this connection with France caused him to be created Duke of Nemours but he died at the Badià of Fiesole in 1516.

Giuliano was a thoughtful religious man and a curious investigator of futurity; being of a mild and generous nature he is said to have revolted from the crimes which in those days were almost necessary to the success of worldly ambition, and therefore rather shrunk from than sought the distinction that his brother was willing to bestow. In conformity with this contemplative nature he is represented by Michaelangelo in a musing posture the corresponding statue of his nephew being on the contrary emblematical of active life: the latter indeed had none of Giuliano's character and when the time came he at once accepted the duchy of Urbino, carried the pontiff's wishes into immediate action, overran that territory and drove Francesco della Rovere into exile, despoiled of everything but the dukedom of Sora in the kingdom of Naples †.

An extravagant joy took possession of all Florence at the

\* Muratori, *Annali*. — Guicciardini, — Jacopo Nardi, *Lib. vi.*, pp. 271, 276. *Lib. xi.*, cap. iv., p. 196. — Platina, *Vite*, † Jacopo Nardi, *Lib. vi.*, pp. 273-279. p. 501. — Jacopo Pitti, *Lib. ii.*, p. 110.

exaltation of Giovanni de' Medici to the papacy: his friends exulted in the prospect of honours and wealth; his enemies in the expectation of tranquillity; the avidity of commerce was sharpened by new prospects of gain; merchants, bankers, artisans, tradesmen of all hues, looked to Rome as a mine of wealth about to be opened to their industry; the whole community participated in thought and in expectation of the dignity of their fellow-citizen; he was the first Florentine pope and every Florentine seemed to have ascended the throne along with him. No age, sex, or condition, but shared the prevailing madness; the prisons were opened, feasts and jollity pervaded the town; money raiment and refreshments were showered from the Medician palace; the campana sounded in its loudest key, and every church in Florence took up the melody: the shops were all shut; but each projecting roof and portico that could supply materials was torn down and burned in the very madness of delight, along with heaps of brushwood, tar-barrels, and all kinds of combustibles; every house, every steeple, even the cupola of the cathedral flamed with rejoicing fires for the exaltation of a man who regarded with complacency the horrors of Prato, and had just subjected his country at the head of a foreign army in the midst of blood plunder and female violation! The whole city was soon studded with this man's escutcheon as a precious emblem of political devotion, nay it even rivalled the very cross of Christ in public favour! "It is worthy of note," says Giovanni Cambi in covert sarcasm, "that after the creation of Leo as well from the joy of having a Florentine pope as for the return of Giuliano and Lorenzo his nephew to govern Florence as if they were sceptred princes, every shop displayed the arms of the pope: then all members of the colleges who owed their election to him and all the magistrates that were already nominated had escutcheons of painted canvas emblazoned with the papal arms attached to the fronts of their houses. This was imitated by

numbers of their relations and friends, and by many that feigned to be their friends, so that the arms of the republic were made no account of whatever, which was a marvel! Afterwards they began to execute these escutcheons in relief; then they were seen in the public palace, within the court; afterwards one of them appeared above the palace gate, then in the audience-chamber; each costing from 20 to 25 golden florins. In a short time every church in Florence had them over the door, of greater or lesser value besides all the towns of the contado and district; so that in a single year more than 30,000 golden florins were spent in armorial bearings, for they were gilded with fine gold and decorated with figures of angels; and at the end of two years no less than 40,000 golden florins were held to have been expended in this way; and no saints'-days were celebrated in any church without these arms being seen above the crucifix; so that it seemed to be a kind of semi-idolatry, which exalted them above the Cross of God"\*.

Such is the fickleness of human nature! but on seeing this universal frenzy a Genoese gentleman called David Lomellino, who happened to be in Florence, turned to some of the revellers and sarcastically said, "You Florentines who never have before seen any of your citizens made pope have a right to rejoice, but by the time you have had as many popes as the city of Genoa you will have learned what effects the power and greatness of native pontiffs have produced on free communities." And the Florentines had good reason to remember these words †.

A general amnesty graced the first days of Leo's pontificate, the late conspiracy was forgotten and all the culprits pardoned; yet so vindictive were the Paleschi faction that no less than three successive orders from the pope were necessary for compelling the Balìa to decree the restitution of the Soderini

\* Gio. Cambi, Storia, tom. xxii., Del. Tos., pp. 48-49.—Jacopo Nardi, Lib. Erud. Tos., pp. 48-49.

† Gio. Cambi, tom. xxii., Del. Erud.



family to their country\*. This was far from hurtful to the Medici towards whom the tide of public favour from a variety of causes now flowed in full stream; yet there were in the midst of all a few patriotic and reflective minds that dwelt on Lomellino's words, and undazzled by the brilliant moment perceived in sad perspective the fate of a republic that after eighteen years of exile consented to restore a family which for sixty years before had been its hardest masters. In the first reform of government after this restoration Jacopo Salviati, a man of considerable reputation and nearly connected with the Medici, in concert with Giuliano and other moderate men would have reconciled all party differences and given strength and stability to their rule by admitting qualified citizens of every faction to political power: but as Florence was ever controlled by faction and for the benefit of faction, and as the general good was never considered except when it coincided or at least interfered not with the ascendant faction, those who were more exclusively devoted to themselves and the Medici argued, that to hold securely an authority which had been violently wrenched from the people the wisest way would be to exclude those who were attached to the people, wherefore Salviati was mistaken in wishing to extend its basis. But as he was too strong both by his near relationship to the Medici, his ability and other great qualities, to be easily overcome, they had appointed him chief of an embassy to Pope Julius II. to settle the state of Florence, and it was on this occasion that the conduct of Giovanni de' Medici elicited so sharp a censure from that pontiff: the political schism was not however healed by this manœuvre but continued to form a point of discussion for ten years after†.

Meanwhile there was a strong and general feeling of dissatisfaction throughout large classes of the community which principally displayed itself in the periodical ballot for magis-

\* Cambi, Stor., tomo xxii., p. 13.

† Nerli, Comment., Lib. vi., pp. 119-121.

tracies where the friends of government continually failed: Salviati strongly suspected that these constant minorities were purposely brought about by the malignants of their own party in order to force government into still narrower bounds: it did not succeed; but in all general ballots for replenishing the election purses a majority of one instead of two-thirds was thenceforth declared to be sufficient. By this means it was hoped to secure the better fortune of government-men in distributing office, more especially as the Accoppiatori were now authorized to replace the names of unsuccessful candidates in the purse besides other regulations all tending to strengthen the ascendant faction\*.

Giuliano now gonfalonier of the church remained permanently at Rome leaving Florence to Lorenzo, and apparently not displeased to escape from so stormy a government: Lorenzo in compliance with his uncle's instructions and in imitation of his grandfather, conducted himself with a view to popularity both in private and public: he rose betimes, was careful about pleasing, easy of access, gave large and early audiences, wore the "*Lucco*" to which the people were naturally attached, and when he made his daily appearance in the Piazza where an early congregation of the citizens was usual previous to their repairing to their several offices, he was attended by sixteen servants and certain young men of his own family †. Here he spent some time in encouraging the magistrates to an impartial administration of justice and the redress of public grievances, after which he returned home to a hospitable and well-regulated establishment ‡. Against the advice of Giuliano and others

\* Nerli, Comment., Lib. vi., pp. 121-2.

† Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 111.

‡ Notwithstanding these popular manners, an incident occurred in the following September, that shows the real nature of his rule. Filippo del Pugliese, a rich Popolano, in conversation with some friends about the Medici, heard him called "*Il magnifico Lo-*

*renzo.*" Upon which he sarcastically repeated, "*Il magnifico Merda,*" and for this licence was banished from Florence for eight years to a prescribed space between two and eighteen miles distant from the city. (Vide *Giov. Cambi, Istorie*, tomo xxii., p. 28, *Deliz. Erud. Tosc.—Ammirato*, Lib. xxix., p. 315.)

but sanctioned by the pope, Lorenzo immediately thought of restoring the Florentine government to its original condition before the revolution of 1494. The council of "Seventy" was therefore reëstablished with the same powers and rules as under old Lorenzo in 1480. The "Council of a Hundred" was replaced with the faculty of being renewed by half-yearly elections in which those gonfaloniers who had passed the chair had the privilege of becoming members; and in this council were discussed, but with the previous consent of the Seventy, all important laws and measures of taxation. Yet to preserve some shadow of popularity the ancient national councils, of "The People" and the municipality or "Consiglio del Comune" were occasionally assembled for private bills and petitions, and not even for these until they had passed the "Seventy." But throughout all these variations the despotic character of the Balìa was sternly maintained; it not only renewed its own powers in September but appointed a committee of its members, seventeen in number, to reform the city and contado, with all the authority of the Florentine people. The "Otto della Pratica," were again substituted for the "Dieci della Guerra" and by the month of December every part of the government had quietly subsided into its original state under the elder Lorenzo. The sole difference was that the Council of Seventy were chosen only for a certain time but with the continued power of self-election, so that they became in fact senators for life\*.

The principal leaders of Florence under the auspices of Leo X. were at this moment Piero Alamanni, Lorenzo Morelli, Pandolfo Corbinelli, Jacopo Salviati, Piero Ridolfi, Lanfredino Lanfredini and others; and though Filippo Strozzi was not old enough to exercise the higher magistracies he and his friend Francesco Vettori had great influence with Lorenzo and no disinclination to support Salviati's policy of esta-

\* Gio. Cambi, *Istorie*, p. 12, vol. xxii. Del. Erud. Toscani.—Fil. Nerli, *Lib. vi.*, pp. 124-126.

blishing a more liberal and extended basis of government ; but in all other respects they were devoted to party spirit and the Medici. By their influence Niccolò Capponi and Matteo Strozzi besides many other friends and relatives of Filippo were especially favoured in the distribution of office the imposition of taxes and other beneficial indulgences, even to the length of disgusting several of the leading citizens ; and though Salviati lost two of his ablest seconds by the death of Giovambattista Ridolfi and Piero Guicciardini, he still with the aid of Filippo Strozzi, who joined him in nothing else, maintained these liberal opinions against all opposition and thus kept up a strong division in the cabinet\*.

After a mean and unsuccessful attempt to reconcile himself with Switzerland, now courted by almost every continental state in Europe, Louis concluded an alliance with the Venetians for a united attack on Lombardy and sacrificed the Duke of Mantua to facilitate their joint operations. To promote this object the Spanish war was suspended by a year's truce, and the French army on that frontier transferred to Lombardy while the Venetians under Bartolommeo d' Alviano attacked that province from the eastward with the assurance of having their territory restored to what it was before the League of Cambray†. It promised an easy conquest, because the enthusiasm which flared up for a moment on the restoration of Maximilian Sforza very soon subsided under the influence of his personal weakness his incapacity and the extortion of his Swiss allies, by whom the defence of Milan and its territory had been most selfishly assumed under the auspices of Julius II. This disappointment was aggravated by the sufferings of Milan under every government besides a natural restlessness of national character ; wherefore any change was hailed as a relief, a French invasion again became popular and many towns declared for the strongest party.

\* Nerli, *Comment.*, Lib. vi., pp. 126-129.

† Guicciardini, Lib. xi., cap. iv., pp. 202-204.

On perceiving this spirit Cardona delivered both Parma and Placentia into the pope's hands to preserve them from the invaders who had captured almost every city but Como and Novara\*; Trémouille and Trivulzio besieged the last, but strong Swiss reënforcements coming up to its aid a double attack followed both from within and without the town, the French were defeated with immense loss and even forced to a disorderly retreat beyond the Alps. On hearing of this disaster the garison of Milan under Sacramoro Visconte joined the Venetians who retired before Raimondo de Cardona although no war existed between Spain and Venice; but as his principal object was now the subsistence of his army which had been rendered difficult by the French invasion, he was anxious to form a junction with Maximilian; for King Ferdinand never could long afford to make war at his own expense in the unsettled state of Spain after the death of Isabella: he therefore desired peace on the frontier were it only to settle his new acquisition of Navarre and preserve tranquillity amongst the Castilian nobles who walked unsteadily under the yoke of a stranger; and in Italy his armies were always maintained at the expense of the country†.

Just at this moment the Venetians were mortified to see Leo X. who had experienced only kindness at their hands, also join the enemy and send reënforcements to Cardona and the Emperor: after various success against Alviano the united Spanish and imperial armies although of small force had the temerity to attack Padua before which they lost time, troops, and reputation; they were repulsed, compelled to raise the siege, and then moved on to Mestre whence they cannonaded Venice itself and even struck the convent of San Secondo with their shot from the nearest point of Terra Ferma. Mestre, Marghera and Fusine were burned, and a war of general de-

\* Guicciardini, *Lib. xi.*, cap. v., p. 215. iv., pp. 199-209; cap. v., pp. 210-226;  
 † Sismondi, vol. xi., cap. cxi., pp. 247. cap. vi., p. 247.  
 20-25.— Guicciardini, *Lib. xi.*, cap.

vastation and cruelty maddened all the Venetian population. Alviano impatient of being shut up in Padua assembled his forces and harassed the allies' retreat with such effect that they were reduced to the last gasp and would have been ultimately annihilated if an ill-judged attack near Saint Olmo, which failed from cowardice, had not been gallantly repulsed by the Spanish infantry and turned the tide of war against the Venetians \*. This finished the Lombard campaign, and both armies retired exhausted to winter quarters; but in Tuscany a dispute between Barga and Lucca occasioned some petty hostilities with Florence: who in fact seized on any pretence to break with that republic for the purpose of recovering Pietra Santa and Mutrone which were still unjustly retained. After losing many places of little consequence Lucca left the arbitration of her cause to Leo X. who of course decided in his own and country's favour, and thus Florence regained those long-lost and important fractions of her territory at a moment when her moral estimate had sunk below mediocrity amongst the states of Italy †.

The year 1514 was a period of unusual and almost universal repose: the ambition of Louis had been rebuked; a new and less warlike pontiff, although a more selfish and ambitious one, had ascended the throne; besides a general alarm at the progress of Sultan Selim, all combined to produce tranquillity and the Turkish movements induced Leo X. to make at least a show of preserving it, the Lombard war being now the only obstacle. Louis XII. besides his apprehensions from Swiss invasion always had a superstitious fear of the Church, so that urged by the queen and nation he ceded in 1513 by renouncing the Pisan council and was again formally received into favour ‡.

The truce with Spain was renewed and the death of Anne of Brittany followed by Louis' marriage with the Princess

\* Sismondi, vol. xi., cap. cxi., pp. 23-25. ‡ Guicciardini, Lib. xii., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, pp. 13-14; cap. iii., p. 45.

† Annirato, Stor., Lib. xxix., p. 314.

Maria of England maintained tranquillity in the west \*. War yet kept the Venetian states in some agitation, for Alviano still worried the imperial and Spanish armies without accomplishing anything of importance which was not balanced by some advantage on their part, while the pontiff vainly endeavoured to reconcile them. Leo deprecated the acquisition of Milan by France and even the presence of Frenchmen in Italy; but while he feared her prepotence he would not willingly have seen her depressed either by Spain and the imperialists, or by the more formidable and dreaded Switzers; and still less did he wish that Louis through fear of the last should be forced to join the two first and thus endanger Italy †. The conduct of Leo X. was suspected by all parties: in continual vibration between fear and will, he was essentially false and full of ambitious projects which differed from those of Julius in being exclusively selfish: the latter were for church aggrandisement or the independence of Italy; the former entirely directed to the private interests of his own family. He tried to form one great principality of Parma Placentia Modena and Reggio at the expense of Milan and Ferrara; and seemed to attach himself to the house of Spain and Austria for present success. On the other hand France and Venice had been tempting his ambition with the prospect of seating Giuliano on the throne of Naples, with the dukedom of Milan in the distance for his nephew Lorenzo: and the prophecies of Fra Angelo *Morto* ‡ assisted this expectation and gave currency to such a project amongst the Florentines §. Louis urged the Pope to join France and not trust the cunning hypocrisy of Ferdinand or the weak unsteady Maximilian, for both were false, poor, and

\* J. Nardi, Lib. vi., pp. 279-80.

† Macchiavelli, *Lettere Familiare*, and Vettori, *Lettere* xxiii., and xxiv.—Guicciardini, Lib. xii., cap. ii., pp. 15-26.

‡ Giuliano was a religious and even superstitious man, and on terms of close intimacy with this friar, who in

a letter to him, written from Viterbo while at the point of death, and signed "Fra Angelo *Morto*" (for he was already dead when Giuliano received it), confirmed all he had previously prophesied.

§ Jacopo Nardi, Lib. vi., pp. 276-7.

ambitious of conquering Italy, especially the emperor who would not even have spared the Pope or the Church in pursuing his selfish objects. On the other side Louis had also let out some hints of Leo's secret invitations to him to pass into that country, thus artfully raising suspicions amongst the allies, and was on the point of forcing the pontiff to decide when death stopped his own ambition on the first of January 1515.

He was succeeded by his son-in-law the Duke of Angoulême under the name of Francis I. as King of France and the inheritor of all his thirst of Italian conquest; of this he gave an instant sign by assuming the title of Duke of Milan which he claimed not only as an inheritance of the Orleans family but in right of the investiture made by Maximilian at the League of Cambray. He was twenty-two years of age, bold liberal, handsome, well-educated, skilled in knightly exercises, and universally popular especially with the nobles; being also energetic, warlike, and endowed with some talent, he was admirably adapted to fill the world with bloodshed misery and interminable war\*. The preparations of Louis had alarmed his enemies, and although somewhat relieved by the supposed necessity of Francis remaining quiet for a while to secure his throne, yet the recollection of Gaston de Foix afforded no agreeable anticipation of what might soon be expected from a young monarch of similar character and infinitely more power.

Francis encouraged the notion of his present pacific inclinations as regarded Italy, because it threw his enemies off their guard and gave him time to secure the alliance of his trans-alpine neighbours while he increased his forces under the pretext of defensive measures against Switzerland, to the number of six thousand lances. With England and the Archduke Charles his future rival, who at the age of fifteen then governed the Low Countries, alliances were soon concluded; with the

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xii., cap. iii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 44-46-47-48.—Nardi, Lib. vi., p. 280.



former because he and Ferdinand had recently quarrelled ; with the latter, amongst other reasons, because his Flemish subjects being inimical to any misunderstanding with France, were dissatisfied to have their commercial relations interrupted. It was also Charles's object to be on good terms with France and England on his succession to the kingdom of Spain when it occurred, and Francis was equally anxious to withdraw him from the tutelage of both his grandfathers.

The truce with Spain was not renewed because France refused to include Milan, and Ferdinand being apprehensive that such an omission might exasperate the Swiss would only renew it on existing conditions: the emperor was deaf to any overtures and the Swiss remained angry and obstinate, requiring a strict fulfilment of the treaty of Dijon which Louis XII. had hitherto avoided. Venice willingly renewed her alliance, and the pope, on whose will the conduct of Florence entirely depended, was urged to remain neuter until the course of events should influence him, but with the French monarch's assurance that no other power would offer either to Leo X. or his family a faith so sincere, conditions so favourable, or benevolence so disinterested! Neither Maximilian nor Ferdinand were deceived about the French king's intentions and therefore attempted to secure the pope who amused all parties with gracious and encouraging speeches while he reserved his judgment\*.

The result of all this was a league between Maximilian, Ferdinand, and the Swiss cantons to force Francis into a renunciation of his claims on the dukedom of Milan by the simultaneous attack of Burgundy and Dauphiny, and on Perpignan or Fontarabia, the former by Switzerland, the latter by Spain.

Francis continued his vast military preparations but managed to conceal his intentions until June, when the levy of a numerous German infantry, ten thousand Gascons and Navarese

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xii., cap. iii., pp. 47, 51, 52.

under the celebrated Pedro Navarra, a formidable artillery at Lyon, besides other indications left no doubt of his determination to conquer Milan. Through Giuliano de' Medici, who had just married his aunt Filiberta of Savoy, he hoped to persuade the pontiff to join him, more especially as the former would require powerful support not only to gain more dominion in Italy but to establish himself permanently in the governments of Parma Placentia Reggio and Modena, which had been conferred on him by Leo as the first step to their consolidation into an independent Medician principality. Leo however would only give fair words in return because the independence of Milan was of greater present consequence in his mind than the promises of France, nor were all the diplomatic powers of Francis sufficient to turn him or vitiate a secret agreement made with the allies for the defence of that important province.

Meanwhile all Europe watched these indications of Italian conquest with some anxiety, and Henry of England becoming jealous of French greatness vainly attempted to dissuade Francis from the enterprise even when at Lyon; but his army crossed the Alps in August and soon mastered every obstacle as far as the towers of Milan. Cardona who had remained for some time in a sort of truce with Venice had already advanced to Verona in defence of that city, while the Papal and Florentine forces under Giuliano de' Medici were on their march to Lombardy for the same purpose, but nominally to secure Parma Placentia and Reggio; for Leo still pretended friendship, and was at this moment deceiving Francis by hollow negotiations which that monarch imagined were nearly brought to a conclusion\*. Giuliano was attacked by fever and obliged to return to Florence where he soon after expired, while Leo disconcerted by the French king's unexpected passage of the Alps charged Lorenzo who succeeded him, not to advance against the French but

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xii. cap. iii., and iv., pp. 54, 55, 58.—Ammirato, Lib. xxix., p. 317.

maintain a strict neutrality, availing himself of a recent disturbance in Rubiera as a pretext for remaining in the Modenese territory while he despatched a confidential agent to excuse his first movements and continue the negotiations with Francis. This messenger was arrested by the Spaniards and his examination showed Cardona how far he could rely on Leo's sincerity in the approaching struggle: but the fate of Milan depended on neither pope nor Spaniard; that game was to be played entirely between France and Switzerland.

Already had twenty thousand of her sturdy mountaineers descended into Lombardy, ten thousand of them having already occupied the Alpine passes so skilfully that Francis with an army of near sixty thousand men despaired of forcing a passage, and his general Trivulzio with incredible difficulty was compelled to penetrate by narrow and almost unknown ways left unguarded by the Swiss from a belief in the impossibility of dragging artillery over them. This feat was however accomplished in five days by the vigour of Trivulzio and the French army which was soon concentrated in the marquisate of Saluzzo. So unexpected a success astounded even the Swiss who straightway began a parley which was ultimately broken off and hostilities recommenced without much effectual opposition until the king arrived at Marignano\*.

Here Francis encamped in order to give Alviano an opportunity of joining him, and also to prevent the united Spanish and Ecclesiastical powers from reënfencing a Swiss army of thirty thousand strong which was quartered in and about Milan. Cardona was on the Po near Piacenza where Lorenzo de' Medici with the Papal and Florentine armies remained apparently ready to cross the river and unite with him and the Swiss forces. Alviano with the Venetian army occupied the Cremonese territory on the left bank of the Po, all ready to unite with Francis, or else assist him by checking the allies in their

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xii., cap. iv., pp. 58-66, and cap. v., p. 75.

projected passage of that river. A reciprocal mistrust between the Papal and Spanish generals paralysed the force of both and after a mere show of crossing the river each remained idle in his intrenchments.

Meanwhile Milan was full of disorder; a strong French party favoured Francis; the Sforzeschi were for a continuance of hostilities; even the Swiss army, which filled and commanded that city, was in violent discord: many especially of the superior officers were for peace, the subalterns exclusively for war. With these was their own countryman and leader the Cardinal of Sion who by his eloquence lashed their courage into ferocity and they sallied out to attack Francis at the village of Marignano only ten miles distant. Although within two hours of nightfall they rushed furiously to the assault, carried the French intrenchments, captured many pieces of artillery and fought obstinately and impetuously until fatigue and darkness put an end to the combat. It was renewed at daylight with equal daring; but the king had not been idle or unskilful in his arrangements and his cavalry and artillery secured him until Alviano came opportunely up in rear of the enemy and secured the repulse. The Swiss retreated but in parade order; sullenly, slowly, with the captured artillery in their rear, and not a man of either army dared to attack them! such strength was there in that union of courage and military discipline which distinguished them at this period\*.

The loss on both sides was enormous; but as that of the Swiss was variously estimated from three to eight, and even to fourteen thousand men; and the French killed ranging between three and six thousand, there is no certainty: the fallen Swiss were however all of inferior rank, the French lost many chiefs of high distinction, a circumstance of no inconsiderable weight in those days of chivalry †. The consequences

\* Gio. Cambi, tomo xxii. Del. Ern. Tos., p. 77. — Guicciardini, Lib. xii., cap. vi., pp. 75, &c.

† Cambi, a cotemporary, but often inaccurate writer, makes the loss on both sides amount to thirty thousand

of this victory were an instantaneous retreat of the Swiss army from Milan with the fall of that city and all Milanese Lombardy except Cremona which by treaty was ceded to Venice, Parma and Placentia being still in possession of the pope. The citadels of Milan and Cremona soon capitulated and Maximilian Sforza retired to France after ceding all his rights for a pension, and the promise of a cardinal's hat if French influence were able to accomplish it\*. Leo on the news of this disaster was disposed to brave the consequences, nor did the defection of the Swiss army daunt him, but Cardona retreated towards Naples; time ran short for preparation, and his Lombard territory was sure to suffer first; nor was he without fears for Florence because Francis had already declared that one of his objects was the restoration of his old allies the Florentines to their liberty †.

That monarch although he religiously abstained from an attack upon the Ecclesiastical States, had no such scruples about Parma and Placentia which in reality belonged to Milan, nor of driving the Medici once more from Florence by an invasion on the side of Pontremoli, for both of which he was preparing when the Duke of Savoy and the papal nunzio offered more peaceful overtures from Leo. Nor was the king displeased at this, as besides his innate reverence for the papacy he feared a confederacy against him, and all France still trembled from the anathemas of Julius. The restoration of Florentine liberty severed from the personal interest of Francis was a chimera that soon vanished from the royal mind when the Medici no longer merited expulsion, but now on the contrary they were received, along with the church, under French protection, and suitable pensions bestowed to Giuliano and Lorenzo ‡.

men; but Guicciardini is a better authority: Cambi afterwards reduces this number, from subsequent accounts (for his history is a sort of diary), to twenty thousand Swiss, seven thousand French infantry, and seven hundred men-at-arms.—(Vide *Del. Erud. Tos.*, tom.

xxii., p. 78.)

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xii., cap. v., p. 92.

† Ammirato, Lib. xxix., pp. 317-318.

—Guicciardini, Lib. xii., cap. v., p. 87.

—Jac. Nardi, Lib. vi., p. 281.

‡ Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii°, p. 115.

But the worst part of these negotiations was the compulsory cession of Parma and Placentia to France which Leo could not easily forgive, and ere he consented was disposed to await the result of a Swiss diet then sitting at Zurich, which he knew detested Francis, rather than ratify the treaty: his own nunzio's reasoning and a sense of danger for Florence finally induced him to agree, but with so bad a grace that he rather left those cities unprotected and therefore open to French occupation, than surrendered them with diplomatic formality\*.

One very important point which this treaty secured to Leo X. for the prosecution of his aggressive policy was in the king's promise not to protect any ecclesiastical vassals or subjects nor give them assistance against their lord, but on the contrary oppose them whenever succours should be demanded. This left Urbino and Ferrara open to any aggressions, and for the more secret and personal views of both princes an interview was agreed upon to take place at Bologna where the Medici trusted to his own powers of persuasion while Francis hoped by liberal promises and concessions to Lorenzo and Giuliano not only to strengthen his Italian influence but persuade the pontiff to favour his designs on the kingdom of Naples.

Leo X. as the first native pope and prince of the republic was received with extraordinary honours at Florence in his way to this conference: after visiting his dying brother he proceeded to Bologna where a profusion of superficial benevolence and diplomatic conventions convinced the world of his determination to snap every tie whenever self-interest required it; and as a Medici, a pope, and prince of the Florentines he mentally resolved that the duchy of Milan should never be possessed by a Frenchman †. The conference at Bologna was

\* Guicciardini, *Stor.*, Lib. xii., cap. v., pp. 87-90.

† Guicciardini, *Lib. xii.*, cap. v., p. 90.—*Ammirato*, *Lib. xxix.*, p. 318.

brief; Francis returned to Milan attended as a mark of honour by six cardinals; and Leo to Florence on the twenty-second of December with the remaining twelve of those who had accompanied him to that city.

Siena was at this time governed by Borghese Petrucci son of Pandolfo, but far inferior in character and ability to that statesman; under his weaker sway the citizens were  
 A.D. 1516. divided, and even his own and his father's adherents were from various causes in a state of discord. This was not unobserved by Leo who became desirous that a state which separated his Florentine and ecclesiastical dominions should be, if not subject, at least entirely under his control as the first step to its ultimate conquest. With such views he commenced his intrigues and from the weakness of Borghese Petrucci was very soon enabled not only to expel him from the government and city but to establish his cousin Raffaello Petrucci bishop of Grosseto and governor of the castle of Saint Angelo, in his place. This prelate, who was devoted to Leo, entered Siena with upwards of two thousand men; a complete revolution ensued; all the "*Fuorusciti*" or exiles who had conspired against Pandolfo were recalled; a new league with the pope was concluded; Lorenzo de' Medici became condottiere of the Senese republic with a salary of 10,000 ducats; the adverse part of the Petrucci family were banished and persecuted, and even the returned exiles and others of that race were first oppressed and disgusted and then declared rebels, or murdered in their own houses: the Cardinal Alfonso Petrucci fell a sacrifice to Leo's vengeance on the pretext of an attempt along with two other cardinals to poison him, and was executed in the castle of Saint Angelo, while tyranny, universal oppression, and unbounded hatred distracted Siena\*.

The death of Giuliano on the seventeenth of March was

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xii., cap. vi., p. —Orlando Malavolti, Stor. di Siena, 103.—Ammirato, Lib. xxix., p. 320. iii<sup>a</sup> Parte, Lib. vi., folio 110-120.

some check to Leo's prosperity, but it relieved him from the great obstacle to his designs on the duchy of Urbino which gratitude had hitherto been the means of preserving to Giuliano's friend and benefactor: freed from his powerful intercession Leo turned eagerly to accomplish that duke's ruin and transfer his dominions to Lorenzo de' Medici. When power wills injustice a pretext is rarely wanting, and the cardinal of Pavia's murder at Venice during the pontificate of Urbino's uncle although it had been partially punished had never been completely pardoned by Julius II. He was moreover accused of having denied military aid to the pope although a stipendiary of the church; of having had secret communication with Leo's enemies, and various other crimes most cunningly interwoven to justify so abominable an act of spoliation. But the real author of this infamous transaction was supposed to be Alfonsina Orsina, who not satisfied with the precarious government of Florence wanted to establish her son in a substantial, permanent, and absolute principality which would descend to his posterity; and Urbino from its near neighbourhood to Tuscany was admirably adapted to such objects\*.

Lorenzo therefore at the head of a combined force of papal and Florentine soldiers and a detachment of the "*Ordinanza*†" attacked Urbino in May and occupied the whole duchy without much difficulty, the duke being totally unprepared for such an invasion; he was immediately created Gonfalonier of the Church, Duke of Urbino, and Lord of Pesaro, in addition to his civil and military command of Florence; but even from his first assumption of these native honours Lorenzo began to separate himself from the citizens and neglect the policy of his ancestors by assuming a richness and peculiarity of dress

\* Guicciardini, Storia, Lib. xii., cap. vi., p. 116.

† The "*Ordinanza*" was restored and reorganised in 1514 to the number of ten thousand men, with twenty

constables, four captains of columns ("*Colonnelli*"), or colonels, and one general in chief, named Jacopo Corso. — (Vide *Jacopo Pitti, Istoria Fiorentina*, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 113.)



and a haughtiness of deportment in social intercourse that none of his family had ever before adopted\*.

The peace of Lombardy between France, Spain, Venice, and the emperor restored Verona to the Venetians and  
 A.D. 1517. left a considerable force of disbanded soldiers of all nations unoccupied and discontented: the pith and nerve of this licentious soldiery was a body of five thousand Spaniards who after long service in the wars of Lombardy had ultimately become stipendiaries of the Venetian republic. They were commanded by Maldonato a colonel of considerable reputation who was instantly engaged by Francesco della Rovere with about eight hundred light cavalry, and secretly favoured by his father-in-law the Marquis of Mantua and the Duke of Ferrara, crossed the Po at Ostia on the fifteenth of January in the midst of a rigorous winter and shaped his course to Urbino. Lorenzo with superior forces, after the unsuccessful effort of a detachment stationed at Ravenna under Rienzo di Ceri and Vitello Vitelli, to prevent his antagonist's passage, endeavoured to oppose all further progress; but Urbino by forced marches through Cento, and eastward by Budrio entered the friendly territory of Ferrara whence he passed by Faenza; and though Lorenzo threatened him with superior forces at Cesina he still advanced on Urbino and recovered that capital on the sixth of February. Almost all the other towns except Saint Leo surrendered either before or after Urbino: Agubbio changed sides twice, but Pesaro, Sinigaglia, Gradara, and Mondavio, none of them being part of the duchy proper, remained with Lorenzo. Fano was unsuccessfully assaulted by the Duke of Urbino's troops, but by the universal aid which Leo demanded, and owing to the strength of papal influence, received from his allies; an army of between twenty and thirty thousand men of

\* Guicciardini, *Storia*, Lib. xii., cap. vi., p. 120.—Ammirato, Lib. xxix., p. 321.—Gio. Cambi, tom. xxii. Del. Er. Tosc., p. 101.—Salimbeni, *Cronichetta del Duca d'Urbino*, tom. xxiv. Del. Erud. Tos.—Gio. Cambi, pp. 49-50.—Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii., pp. 114-15.

all arms was soon ready to take the field against the ill-used and unfortunate Francesco. He challenged Lorenzo to single combat and was refused, but the war languished owing to the latter's incapacity until a wound in the head which confined him for forty days spread a belief in his death: the public spirit then rose; the city and palace guard were doubled: many suspected citizens were exiled and the Florentines generally congratulated themselves on so happy a riddance. Even the ruling faction had already appointed three commissaries to command their troops when Lorenzo suddenly appeared in Florence like an evil spirit and while passing on foot through the streets was by many taken for one, not for a thing of flesh and blood; so strong was the belief and so circumstantial the accounts of his death!

Leo however feeling indisposed to sanction such an act of authority as the nomination of military commanders, sent the Cardinal of Bibbiena to supersede them: this prelate although a celebrated man of letters and the author as is said of the earliest Italian comedy, was ill adapted to command mercenary and mutinous soldiers of various nations who were fighting with each other, and most of whom successively deserted in large bodies to the Duke of Urbino, so that he was soon compelled to take shelter in Pesaro; yet from want of funds and the direct interference of foreign powers in Leo's favour, the gallant but unfortunate Frederic finally capitulated and retired under comparatively favourable conditions to Mantua. This war lasted about eight months and cost 800,000 ducats the most part of which was disbursed by Florence; a great change from Soderini's economical administration\*!

Leo X. constant to the exaltation of his own family, succeeded in uniting it a second time with the house of France by obtaining for his nephew the hand of A.D. 1518. Madeleine daughter of Jean de la Tour Count of Auvergne and

\* Jacopo Pitti, *Lib. iiº*, p. 117. — Gio. Cambi, pp. 107, 114, 115. — Ammirato, *Lib. xxix.*, pp. 321-333.

Boulogne, and of a sister of François de Bourbon Count of Vendôme. This high connexion exalted the pride and raised the ambition of Lorenzo who becoming further inflated by standing proxy for the pope as godfather to the French king's son then just born, no longer could endure even the semblance of companionship and civil equality which with still unsubdued manners, the Florentines maintained towards him as they had ever done with his ancestors. In France therefore his ill-concealed intentions of reducing Florence in name as in nature to a mere principality disgusted many even of his most intimate friends; amongst these, Lanfredino Lanfredini and Jacopo Salviati, both men of great weight and influence were the most conspicuous. Puffed up with recent honours and stimulated, according to Pitti, by the base adulation of Francesco Vettori and Filippo Strozzi, Lorenzo on the journey homeward despatched his secretary and favourite Goro da Pistoia, who took an active part in state affairs, to propose that the citizens should not only assemble for the despatch of public business at his private dwelling, but that an ambassador should be sent to receive him on the road like a sovereign prince! Nations can more easily bear a gradual but substantial loss of freedom than the loss of their form and shadow; the former is generally and insensibly as it were sucked and squeezed from the latter without much change in shape or colour; the people are enslaved while they yet believe in their freedom, and are tranquil: but when ancient forms are broken with rough and sudden jar then is the nation awakened; its eyes are opened to its own degradation and public spirit is often aroused if times and circumstances and the tamed or still energetic character of the community admit of it.

At Lorenzo's proposal even his own government was astounded; the councils were mute or in confusion, and even where consent was likely to be granted it was lisped forth in slow and reluctant accents: when Lanfredini rose to speak all eyes were turned on him with anxiety while he boldly stated that

he saw no reason why ambassadors should be sent to Lorenzo, a private citizen like themselves, who well knew that in all his real necessities he could with the utmost goodwill of the citizens dispose of them and the commonwealth at his pleasure. Jacopo Salviati supported this opinion, and Lorenzo angry at the result dismissed Lanfredini from every public office desiring him to attend in future entirely to his farm and his merchandise. At this frown Lanfredini, bold as he was, fell sick; and Salviati being as bitterly rebuked thought it prudent to retire with his family to Rome until the death of Lorenzo\*.

The latter however backed by the councils of France, made a journey to Rome on purpose to gain his uncle's consent for his assuming the title of Lord of Florence, but was unsuccessful and even received with displeasure; he became sulky and morose, and he also fell ill soon after his return in December. Lorenzo's maladies, the result, in various ways, of his licentiousness, proved fatal and carried him off on the fifth of May, just seven days after his wife who died in giving birth to the celebrated Catherine of Medicis afterwards Queen of France †. A.D. 1519.

When every hope of Lorenzo's recovery was extinguished steady adherents were chosen to administer the government and every guard strengthened both at the palace and throughout the city; but Cardinal Giulio's arrival two days before his cousin's death quieted all apprehension, and after the funeral he applied himself to reform the government according to a plan already settled between the pope and Lorenzo.

\* Giov. Camb. tom. xxii., Del degli Erud. Toscani, pp. 149-50. — Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii°, p. 117. — Ammirato, Lib. xxix., pp. 334-5.

† Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii°, p. 118. — Nerli, Lib. vi., pp. 129, 130. — Cambi, p. 150, tom. xxii. The descendants of Lorenzo, brother of old Cosimo, after taking the name of *Popolani* as related, were now divided into two

branches, in the younger of which Giovanni de' Medici, commander of what were after his death called the "*Black Bands*," and son of the celebrated Caterina Sforza, already began to distinguish himself in the war of Urbino, and on the eleventh of June, 1519, had a son who afterwards became celebrated under the name of Cosimo I., Grand Duke of Tuscany.

The death of this Medici at twenty-seven years of age, unlike that of his uncle Giuliano was a subject of general though quiet rejoicing, and the succession of Giulio who was able and popular until he became pope, did not diminish the universal satisfaction. Aware of the public disgust at the arrogance and oppression of Goro da Pistoia Bishop of Fano and other ministers to whom Lorenzo had principally confided the public administration, Giulio at once declared his intention of governing differently, and soon reduced the finances to such order that many public debts were discharged, interest was lowered, some taxes abolished, and trade partly lightened of its load: the mode of election to office, the magisterial duties, and the periodical drawing from the Purses were all reformed with general satisfaction; and the personal attention of Giulio, so unlike his predecessor, left no room for underlings to disgust the public by haughty official insolence. His greatest difficulty was in managing the two opposite parties, one of which under Piero Ridolfi advocated a much closer government, in opposition to Jacopo Salviati and his followers who still boldly maintained the necessity of more liberal institutions. Giulio leaned exclusively to neither but communicated with both, and the consequence was a more open and violent encounter of opinions with less risk to the government than Lorenzo ran; and when after two years he was removed as legate into Lombardy he carried with him universal good wishes and regret\*.

To any man of justice, sound judgment and common firmness it was not difficult to gain the applause of a people fresh from the tyranny of Goro da Pistoia and his adherents and the proud callousness of Lorenzo: this Bishop of Fano was a man of resolution and ability but devoted to the pope and his family and therefore restricted the whole administrative power and patronage within the hands of about a score of citizens similarly purchased by the Medici, with the permission of giving

\* Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii°, p. 119.—Fil. Nerli, Lib. vii. p. 133.

loose to their worst and most mischievous passions. Some of them more prudent or more timid, acted with great caution, maintained an appearance of decency, and paid outward respect if not to virtue and justice, at least to public opinion; but others unblushingly sold honours office justice and everything to the highest bidder: they forced the richest damsels into their own families by compulsory marriages; compelled wealthy gentlemen to take unportioned brides; violently seized, and appropriated to themselves or their friends the houses and lands of their country neighbours; scared others from buying any possessions they had set their minds on in order to make a better bargain with the vendors, who even then had to wait their convenience for the payment. The universal terror of a heavy and continually recurring taxation of which they alone had the distribution, armed these miscreants with such a power as made the nation tremble; wherefore an opposition so bold and open as that offered by Salviati and Lanfredini was no slight exertion of patriotism.

After Lorenzo's death with the failure of old Cosimo's line, Leo was more liberal in his treatment of Florence and thence came a part of Cardinal Giulio's popularity, especially as Montefeltro and San Leo along with about sixty small towns or castles in the duchy of Urbino were transferred to the former state as a compensation for what had been expended in the war\*.

Ferdinand the Catholic died in January 1516 and was succeeded by Archduke Charles of Austria the future antagonist of Francis and a far more formidable disturber of mundane tranquillity: on the nineteenth of January 1519 his paternal grandfather also quitted this world's greatness and left ample range for the ambition of his descendant. In the following June Spanish gold and native predilections having proved superior to French influence, he was advanced to the imperial

\* Jacopo Pitti, Lib. iiº, p. 117.

throne under the too celebrated name of Charles V. About the same period the duchy of Urbino was annexed to the church notwithstanding the people's supplications in favour of their native prince, for Leo X. was not a man to relinquish any acquisition. His debt to Florence was self-payment, but the restoration of Urbino bore quite a different character and one more in unison with his conduct to Giovan-Paulo Baglioni of Perugia: the latter was about this time invited to Rome under promise of personal safety to plead his cause against Gentile, a kinsman who had been expelled from Perugia; but A.D. 1520. Baglione no sooner arrived than he was imprisoned, tortured into a confession of more than every crime he had ever committed; then beheaded and his principality taken by the pontiff\*.

Leo X. had previously attempted to get possession of Ferrara by perfidy in the midst of profound peace: Luigi Freducci was in the same treacherous spirit driven from Fermo and killed by the famous Giovanni de' Medici at Leo's command: his dominion seized on: a similar fate befel many other petty Italian tyrants; numbers fled without resistance; some repaired in desperation to Rome imploring the pontiff's clemency, and met only imprisonment torture and decapitation. But Ferrara was the great object of Leo as it had been with Julius, and to accomplish this robbery he endeavoured to seduce Rodolph Hello a German and captain of the duke's guard, not only to deliver up the citadel but to assassinate Alphonso himself. Hello revealed the whole plot step by step to his prince who had all the documents drawn up in a legal and authentic shape and deposited amongst the public archives of Ferrara, keeping everything quiet to avoid if possible any quarrel with so unscrupulous and powerful a pontiff †.

\* Muratori, *Annali d'Italia*.—Guicciardini, *Lib. xiii.*, cap. v., p. 221.

† Guicciardini, *Lib. xiii.*, cap. v., pp. 221-222.—Muratori, *Annali*, Anno

1520.—Sismondi, vol. xi., pp. 121-22.

—Guicciardini does not mention the intended murder of Alphonso, although he (then governor of Modena) was

The year 1520 witnessed a rapid extension of the new religious opinions and bold inquiries of Martin Luther the Augustine friar whose audacious spirit changed the history of the world. With this revolution the Medici were closely connected. Lorenzo de' Medici's mother Alphonsina Orsini soon followed him to the grave and his aunt Maddalena Cibo had departed some months before but if we are told the truth not without leaving behind her the seeds of infinite discord, of present misery and future good. The unbounded sale of indulgences in which Leo X. trafficked so largely throughout Christendom not only for the benefit of the living but the dead, had produced great scandal and indignation in many countries, but chiefly in Germany where the clergy were frequently seen to offer these favours at a mean price and even to gamble with them in the taverns to say nothing of more immoral and indecent exchanges. The easy nature of Leo X. towards his own family had bestowed on his sister Maddalena all the emoluments drawn from this source in many of the German dioceses, and her agent the Bishop Aremboldo exercised his commission with singular rapacity. The certain knowledge that these sums, instead of going into the apostolic treasury where they had at least a chance of doing some good, were only destined to appease the avarice of a worldly old woman without any merit beyond her relationship to the pope, imparted a more odious character to their exaction, to her priestly agents, and even to the holy-father himself. Luther was not slow to avail himself of this spirit in order to bring contempt on such monstrous pretensions and deny their validity; his congregations rapidly augmented, one step led on to another, until a vast religious conflagration blazed throughout Christendom\*.

charged with the military preparations of the plot. Perhaps he did not know of it; but Muratori, who probably drew his information from the original documents in the archives of the house of Este, to which he had free access, is too

accurate and too veracious an author to leave a moment's doubt on the subject notwithstanding Paulo Giovio's silence and Roscoe's hesitation.

\* Histoire du Concile de Trent, Livre i<sup>o</sup>, pp. 15-16 and notes —



Encouraged by the Duke of Saxony and his own wide-spreading influence he disputed the pontiff's power and the church's authority, became a daring iconoclast, encouraged the priesthood, and even monks and nuns to renounce their vows of celibacy and follow his own example: he denied the pope's authority beyond the Roman diocese and maintained that every other bishop was equally powerful within his own ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Everything determined in the councils or written by divines, all canon law or pontifical decrees, were equally assaulted and contemned and no authority but the Bible acknowledged. Luther then attacked the sacraments; ridiculed fasting, penance, and confession, and opened wide the many-coloured portals of self-judgment, mental liberty, and unshackled investigation\*.

Nor was this epoch made less interesting by Charles the Fifth's coronation in the west and Sultan Soliman's succession to Selim in the east, for being of the same age as Charles and of about equal power, what good or evil was in the process of time to proceed from either became a speculation of great moment, while the mischievous powers of Francis seem to have been insufficiently considered †. Francis still longed for Italy which after the fall of Urbino remained comparatively tranquil; Florence was peacefully governed by Cardinal Giulio under Leo's auspices; Venice owing the recovery of Brescia and Verona to Francis I. preserved that alliance; Genoa obeyed

(*Quarto Ed. Basle, 1738.*)—Guicciardini, Lib. xiii., cap. v., pp. 216-217.—Robertson (vol. ii., book ii., p. 114) denies this grant, principally because it could not be found in the pontifical archives by the search of an individual. Independent of the likelihood of such a grant having been destroyed by Leo or Clement, after its mischievous effects were made public, or remaining in the archives of the Cibo family, the facility of *missing* such a document

amidst the enormous masses of the Vatican is apparent. But Guicciardini is too accurate, and was too well acquainted with even the secrets of the Medici to be doubted on a subject then so notorious, and F. Paulo is too heavy a weight to shove aside so lightly, nor is it a likely story to have been invented.

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xiii., cap. v., pp. 217-218.

† Macchiavelli, Lettera Familiare.

Francis, who also ruled the dukedom of Milan by his lieutenants; the smaller Italian powers were in repose or reannexed to the Holy See; but the Duke of Ferrara still fearful of Leo's intrigues was fretted by seeing Modena and Reggio forcibly held from him by the pontiff and only wanted a favourable opportunity to vindicate his rights. A petty quarrel had sprung up into something like war between France and the emperor from a dispute between two of their vassals on the Flemish frontier; it was considered local and not likely to disturb the general tranquillity of Italy; yet this was the spark which ignited a mass of combustibles all ready prepared by inclination, ambition, and general circumstances. Francesco Sforza second son of Lodovico the Moor never would listen to any compromise with Francis about his claims on Milan, and though then at Trent moving heaven and earth in his own cause was little feared or regarded by that monarch who being in league with Switzerland and Venice felt himself strong on the side of Italy. The general prosperity of French affairs induced him to take advantage of the embarrassment occasioned by this Flemish dispute to demand from Charles V. an annual subsidy of 100,000 crowns payable to him from the moment of his renouncing all claims to the kingdom of Naples, while Charles on the other hand could ill brook the retention of Milan, an imperial fief, without any title from him, although Louis XII. had been regularly invested with that duchy by Maximilian at the time of its first conquest from Lodovico the Moor. These differences however might not have terminated in open war for a long time had not the extraordinary restlessness of Leo X. mainly contributed to produce it\*.

The rival monarchs, young ambitious and powerful, although no goodwill existed between them yet feared no breach of the peace in their Italian states: Francis  
A.D. 1521.  
 secure of the Venetians and as many Swiss as he had

\* Jacopo Nardi, *Lib. vi.*, pp. 286-7.

money to command, felt safe on the side of Germany, and Naples could neither attack nor be attacked without the pope's concurrence. The pontiff was therefore courted by both monarchs, and with judicious management might have maintained the peace of Italy, but this was not his object: why it was not seems difficult to say; he had already been unsuccessful in arms, he had to fear equally the victory of either monarch, for the conqueror would be master of Italy; his pontificate was tranquil, the ecclesiastical territory obedient, Florence at his command; and he himself addicted to ease pleasure and licentiousness. He shunned and hated business, devoted his hours to music light conversation and buffoonery, and appeared altogether so absorbed in sensual gratifications as to be insensible to the rougher excitements of politics and war. Besides this his extravagance both in giving and spending was unbounded, his magnificence beyond the usual splendour of princes, his expedients for raising money base, griping, and innumerable; and therefore after having expended the treasures of Julius he was constantly and urgently in want, for his fancy was untired and his prodigality daily augmented. The loss of Parma and Placentia, which that pontiff had acquired with so much glory, hung heavy on Leo's mind; the ardent desire of conquering Ferrara excited his cupidity, and the fears of an alliance between France and Spain against the Church and Italy were he to keep aloof from both, altogether acted as stimulants to war, but above everything (as the Cardinal of Medicis asserted in the hearing of Guicciardini) he hoped after expelling the French from Milan and Genoa to drive Charles V. out of Naples and thus realise his predecessor's patriotic wish of being the liberator of Italy\*.

Having been secretly treating with Charles since 1519 he now resolved to play the king against the emperor, and finally uniting himself with one monarch raise all Italy in arms against

\* Guicciardini, *Lib. xii*, cap. i<sup>o</sup>, pp. 1-5.

the other\*. Thus determined he levied six thousand Swiss for self-defence while intriguing with both, and under his powerful incantations thunder began to roll amongst the Pyrenees and a war commenced in Spain which healing intestine troubles for a moment there afterwards bathed all Italy in blood. Meanwhile he attempted to allure Francis with the prospect of conquering Naples some of whose neighbouring provinces were coveted for himself, and by the emperor's aid expecting to recover Parma and Placentia, endeavoured to secure him with the hopes of driving his rival out of the Peninsula. But secretly Leo inclined to Charles as well from natural dislike of France and the utter contempt of his own authority shown in the distribution of church benefices at Milan as from satisfaction at Martin Luther being now placed under the ban of the empire on purpose to gratify him: but his perfidious character was notorious in France wherefore the ratification of this treaty was purposely delayed, and Leo straightways concluding all his negotiations with Charles became the declared enemy of Francis.

This treaty which was signed in May 1521, but kept a profound secret, gave back Parma and Placentia to the Church and sacrificed Ferrara on the same altar; restored the duchy of Milan to Francesco Sforza and absolved the emperor from an oath which he had taken not to retain possession of the imperial dignity and sceptre of Naples at one and the same time: besides this, Alexander of Medicis the illegitimate son of Lorenzo Duke of Urbino was promised a fief in that kingdom of 10,000 ducats revenue and the cardinal a pension of equal value on the Archbishopric of Toledo.

The pope was already in close correspondence with a certain Girolamo Morone, a subtle intriguing politician, then at Trent with Francesco Sforza and in communication with all the disaffected of Milan, a body which the austere and

\* Ar. Stor. Ital., vol. i<sup>o</sup>, Documento, i<sup>o</sup>, and note.

haughty bearing of the French governor Lautrec had sadly augmented; Morone promised Leo a simultaneous insurrection throughout the whole of Milanese Lombardy if he were only sure of papal and imperial co-operation in its management\*.

After a vain attempt to raise an insurrection against the French at Genoa and another to occupy Como while the Milanese governor made a doubtful effort to possess himself of Reggio, where the historian Guicciardini commanded; war was formally declared on the first of August 1521, and the conduct of the papal army given to Frederic Gonzaga Marquis of Mantua with Guicciardini as his adviser under the title of Commissary General; while Prospero Colonna an experienced officer, but old slow and cautious, commanded the combined army then in position on the Lanza five miles from Parma. The rigour and oppression of French government had alienated all classes, and this was felt in the rapid progress of its enemies: the Cardinal of Sion's intrigues and the dexterity of Giulio de' Medici who had come from Florence as legate, seduced nearly all the Swiss troops from the enemy so that Milan was soon taken by surprise and treachery, and nearly all Lombardy fell into the hands of the confederates †.

The news of this success reached Leo at his villa of Malliana, where in the very flush of victory the pale hand of death had beckoned him away. Being attacked with a slight access of fever he removed to Rome where the physicians made light of it; but the rapid approach of danger soon became manifest and this celebrated man expired on the first of December not without strong indications of poison. Suspicion fell upon his chamberlain Bernabò Malespina who had presented him with wine the bitter taste of which was noticed by Leo and he was instantly imprisoned, but afterwards liberated by the Cardinal of Medicis on his arrival at Rome: neither would this prelate allow

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xiv., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, pp. 5-9.

† Ibid., cap. iv., p. 66.

any investigation through fear of Francis I., by whose command it was believed the murder had been done.

During the pope's illness intelligence of Placentia's capture arrived and that of Parma on the very morning of his decease; and so deeply had he at heart the possession of these cities that once when the Cardinal of Medicis was dissuading him from war Leo assured him that his principal motive was the desire of recovering them, and *that* grace once vouchsafed he would die contented. These wishes were singularly accomplished, and at the early age of forty-seven after nine years of luxurious refinement, magnificence, cruelty, and the most unscrupulous crimes he expired.

In Leo X. we find little to admire but his taste, his splendour, his love of literature, and patronage of the fine arts: he was fortunate in living when Italy glowed with literary genius and he well knew how to take advantage of the flame: on the other hand he was an unjust prince, a bloody unrelenting tyrant, dissolute, lascivious, and proverbially false: possessed by an exclusively selfish or domestic spirit of ambition, he entered Florence knee-deep in the blood of his countrymen and trampled on her reviving liberty amidst the red gleaming of barbarian lances. The robber and murderer of his vassals, the destroyer of his brother's earliest friend and benefactor, the treacherous assassin of an unoffending prince, the priestly hypocrite, the false and crafty politician, Leo X. emphatically supported the character of his race. When he assumed the tiara he deceived the world's expectations, for much was hoped from one who had the reputation of justice, piety and religion; while he only proved himself the high-priest of hypocrisy and guile: but he was persuasive, eloquent, and possessed of great ability; prodigal rather than generous, and acting more from momentary impulse than any rational estimation of the receiver's merits. Most of his time was devoted to pleasure, and his pontificate one long-continued carnival: the delights

of music, the table, and the chace, the extravagances of buffoons and jugglers, and all the attending profligacy of a youthful court increased the luxury and corrupted the manners (such as they were) even of the Romans, to a greater extent than was believed possible after the disgusting reigns of an Innocent, a Sixtus, and a Borgia. The trade in indulgences to commit sin with impunity was at least a poetical mode of pampering the splendid profligacy of an unscrupulous priest, and it was driven to an extent before unknown and unthought of even by the most licentious pontiffs. The sacred regalia was pawned to satisfy the hydra-headed desires of fancy, of unbridled passion, and insatiable ambition while Christian Rhodes and Belgrade were besieged and calling vainly on their pastor for succour against one of the most able of the Mahometan princes\*.

At Leo's death the Florentine government fearful of change placed a number of quiet yet suspected citizens in honourable confinement, but the cardinal liberated them on his way from Milan publicly rebuking the authorities for a proceeding which they were told savoured more of private passions than public benefit. He then passed on to Rome where all minor intrigues of the conclave finally resolved themselves into one great struggle between the two Florentine cardinals, of Medici and Volterra; the former supported by Charles, the latter by Francis, and to the general surprise also by Cardinal Pompeo Colonna who was leader of the imperialists. Giulio de' Medici influenced a powerful faction but Colonna's opposition paralysed him; the coarsest and most scandalous personalities passed between them in full conclave; Giulio's birth was objected to; Colonna asserted that Antonia del Cittadino was never married to Giuliano de' Medici, therefore called him a bastard, charged the cruelties of Leo as crimes against Giulio, and so vehemently

\* Platina, *Vita de' Papi*, p. 504. — *Lib. vi.*, p. 290.—Muratori, *Annali*.—*Giov. Cambi*, p. 184.—Jac<sup>o</sup>. Nardi, Guicciardini, *Lib. xiv.*, cap. *iv.*, p. 69.

urged the danger of perpetuating the pontifical dignity in the same family that Charles the Fifth's preceptor Cardinal Adrian of Tortosa who had never even seen the Italian soil, was by the consent of Giulio raised to the pontificate.

Disappointed and mortified the Cardinal of Medicis retired to Florence where his authority was threatened by Soderini's secret machinations and more open aggressions under French auspices on the side of Siena. His rule however had been so popular and consequently his power so firmly established that absence did not prevent the government from effectually defending him or maintaining Petrucci's authority in Siena and baffling the hostile movements of Rienzo da Ceri on the part of the rival cardinal. A.D. 1522.

Apprehensive of a powerful effort by Francis to recover the Milanese Giulio resolved to conciliate him: some overtures although in rather a haughty strain had been openly made to the Florentine government through Lautrec in the preceding December and had been favourably answered as if from an independent community without the name yet scarcely without the concurrence of Giulio, who had also a direct but secret communication to the same effect through Piero Spini a Florentine merchant of Lyon. Availing himself of this opening the cardinal despatched a confidential agent with 40,000 florins for the king and the promise of further supplies as soon as he had reëstablished his power in Lombardy. The gift was received as a pledge of Giulio's intention not to ally himself with the enemies of France, and the cardinal was anxious to prevent that monarch from wishing to change the Florentine government as well as to secure his favour in the accomplishment of more distant but loftier objects at Rome\*.

On the other hand he endeavoured to conciliate the people by

\* Gio. Cambi, p. 196, tom. xxii.—menti di Storia Italiana. Doc<sup>o</sup>. lxxix.—  
Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii., p. 121.—Docu- Jacopo Nardi, Lib. vii., p. 291, &c<sup>a</sup>.



an assurance in public assembly of the deceased pontiff's wish and even personal injunctions to him to establish the Florentine constitution on a wider base, a command which he declared himself then ready to obey; and reserving only a life-authority in certain things leave the republic essentially free\*. Whether Leo X. were sincere it is difficult to say, but in 1520 he ordered Macchiavelli to write an essay on the best mode of reforming the Florentine government, which with Macchiavelli's republican propensities and Leo's power was a delicate task, but he performed it well and wisely, leaving full authority under free outlines to the pope and cardinal while alive, but securing popular liberty at their decease in a form apparently good and probably well adapted to the people and existing circumstances.

Giulio besides other motives for liberality was jealous of his cousins Pierfrancesco and the famous Giovanni de' Medici Popolani, whose influence he feared might anticipate him or perhaps in time overthrow whatever form of government were established; yet his assurances made a various impression and generally unfavourable, because the audience was chiefly composed of his family supporters who desired anything but political liberty for the people; wherefore doubt, anger, joy and adulation divided the assembly, the parasites openly condemning it as a national misfortune which would bereave them of his paternal government.

What the precise nature of his reserved authority would have proved is unknown, but from his ability and experience we may conclude that combined with the papal dignity to which he confidently aspired, it would have sufficed to counterbalance any portion of restored liberty and enable him to place his cousin Ippolito, Giuliano's son, or Alessandro the reputed offspring of Lorenzo (but really as was believed his own) at the head of the republic. Many, and subsequently almost all except the

\* Jacopo Pitti, *Lib. ii.*, p. 122.—Fil. Nerli, *Lib. vii.*, p. 136.

followers of Savonarola disbelieved his sincerity, yet he maintained his purpose openly until his life was endangered, and we have no certain proof of his duplicity even at this epoch. He had reason too for this course of policy: his rival the Cardinal Soderini had taken immediate advantage of Leo's death to reëstablish his family influence in Florence and perhaps reinstate the gonfalonier in his former authority, and although not ill-treated by Leo he had never forgiven that pontiff's breach of faith in not fulfilling his promise of a matrimonial alliance between their families in the way agreed on and expected, and the rivalry of Giulio kept alive this enmity; wherefore hating both him and all his imperial supporters with the exception of Colonna, he engaged Rienzo da Ceri a distinguished condottieri in the pay of France who was then as Guicciardini and Ammirato tell us, "*doing nothing in the Campaigna of Rome,*" to move first on Siena and expel the Cardinal Petrucci a devoted friend of the Medici, establish a friendly government there by means of the exiles, and thus supported proceed against Florence itself; he was also promised the coöperation of a French detachment from Genoa under M. de Lescans,\* with the aid of Baglioni and the Duke of Urbino, who were however both subsequently bought off by the Cardinal of Medicis †.

All this kept Giulio in alarm and made it his interest to promise liberally, in secret to the king; openly to his countrymen; but in both cases with the power of emancipating himself if he should ever arrive at the pontificate; from the latter by his power and influence; from the former by his change of position and character. Although Rienzo da Ceri was really paid by Soderini while Francis gave nothing but his name and useless promises, that commander in a despatch to the king seems to have considered the expedition as purely French and

\* Called by Italian writers, "*Monseignor dello Scu,*" or "*dello Scudo.*"

† J. Nardi, Lib. vii., p. 279.

without even mentioning Cardinal Soderini assures Francis that a commanding influence at Florence would be worth six hundred men-at-arms who could be employed without expense either in the Roman states, the invasion of Naples, or the affairs of Milan, to which those of Florence were not of inferior interest to his Majesty. After having reduced Siena and Florence to the king's service Ceri proposed to march on Bologna and excite that people to restore Bentivoglio which would encourage Alphonso of Este to declare himself, secure two important passes for the French army, effectually stop any movement of Spain towards the Neapolitan frontier and facilitate the conquest of that kingdom\*.

Meanwhile Leo's death almost paralysed the league which his resources had alone sustained in Lombardy: the cardinals of Sion and Medici had repaired to Rome; Prospero Colonna found himself compelled to disband most of his troops, and the Florentine contingent marched homewards not knowing whether they were to be friends or enemies of the future pontiff. Parma was attacked, and its brave and generous defence by Guicciardini forms a bright spot in his character and history: Charles V. was fully employed against France in the Low Countries; Castile had revolted; Valentia was torn by civil war between the commons and nobility, and all the national resources were wasted in the struggle. Leo X. had left an empty treasury, exhausted means, and a weakened government; with a still powerful though defeated monarch for its enemy or friend as the case might be; besides a host of deposed princes ready to rise up and seize on their plundered property. The Duke of Urbino, principally through his subjects' attachment, soon regained his own and was followed by a swarm of exiled seigniors: Alphonso of Ferrara was no less active, and almost all Leo's acquisitions returned to their former masters. Such

\* Jacopo Pitti, Libro iiº, pp. 125-126.—Molini, Documenti di Storia Italª, Docº. lxxiii. (*bis.*)

was the state of affairs when Giulio de' Medici returned disappointed to Florence and though none of the family had ever governed so popularly he did not escape from their usual destiny, a conspiracy.

Amongst Giulio's audience when he proposed his measures of reform were some of the most notoriously unscrupulous citizens, who conscious of having incurred the public hatred for their activity in restoring the Medici and abolishing the Great Council, became alarmed at the prospect of its reëstablishment and therefore boldly remonstrated with Giulio on the folly of sacrificing old friends and servants in his eagerness for the general welfare. To which (if we are to believe the condensed and pithy history of Jacopo Pitti written in the same century) the cardinal replied, that due respect would be paid to all things; but when once the republic were thoroughly reformed the passions of a few malignant citizens would be powerless, and none who lived reputably and obeyed the laws need fear the many; wherefore it was incumbent on every citizen to assist in the good work of public reformation which would necessarily produce private advantage. And to manifest his intentions more palpably, says Pitti, he began to associate with the remnant of Savonarola's followers who lauding and magnifying his goodness began at last to believe that both the man and the time had arrived for the prophesied liberty of Florence. This enthusiasm spread amongst the people without displeasing the cardinal, who however was continually importuned by the great citizens not to abandon them to a furious multitude; so little indeed were they restrained that even at his own table they conspired to insult his friend and guest Girolamo Benivieni, a staunch disciple of Savonarola, by gross and unmeasured abuse of that reformer, his prophecies, and whoever put their faith in him; and gradually becoming excited in the discussion offered even personal insult to Benivieni himself. On this, turning angrily towards the cardinal, the latter replied "I do not deny, most illus-

“trious seignior that I am one of the Frate’s followers, and along  
 “with all the honest men of this city desire the public liberty ;  
 “but neither I nor they will commit a crime on that account nor  
 “ever appear in arms against the government: we devoutly  
 “pray to Heaven and you to concede it, so that in public it may  
 “be maintained with justice and fidelity, and in private with  
 “frugality and industry. But these loving eye-servants of  
 “yours abhor both law and liberty that they may tyrannise  
 “over everything at their pleasure, and they are obsequious to  
 “you in exact proportion to the liberty of violence and rapine  
 “you allow them: nor can you even in this fulfil their insa-  
 “tiable cravings, wherefore some day they will turn and rend  
 “you. Put aside then such miscreants as these and gratify  
 “the people by just and honest measures which will render  
 “your name and glory everlasting.” The cardinal remained  
 silent and his insolent guests so abashed by this spirited  
 address that they never ventured to renew the subject in his  
 presence\*.

This unexpected liberality of sentiment unfettered all the  
 ardent spirits of the day; reform and liberty, the Cardinal and  
 the Great Council were in every mouth; the mode and course  
 of proceeding were openly discussed even to the minutest par-  
 ticulars without any discouragement from Giulio whose policy  
 was to draw out real opinions; and not only the form of elec-  
 tion but the duration of the gonfaloniership, and even the very  
 men that were to fill that office, became matters of as regular  
 debate as if the decree had already gone forth and the people  
 were in full possession of their liberty. The Pallese on the  
 other hand were as violent against such discussions or any  
 mention of reform, while a neutral party stood by watching  
 events, but anxiously looking forward to the restoration of poli-  
 tical independence †. All the young literary men of Florence  
 who frequented the “*Orto Rucellai*” participated in, or rather

\* Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii°, p. 123

† Fil° Nerli, Lib. vii., p. 136.

gave form and pressure to this free discursive spirit: for a long period these celebrated gardens had been not only the favourite resort of Florentine genius and learning but the solace of every distinguished foreigner who visited Florence. Amongst the latter we may include Ariosto; amongst the former the illustrious and much calumniated Macchiavelli whose society and conversation was the delight of all, and so admired and beloved was he by his friends that unsatisfied with empty applause they voluntarily relieved his necessities by more solid marks of their approbation and esteem. There was need of it, as he indirectly tells us in the concluding lines of a letter already noticed, to Francesco Vettori, where with calm simplicity he says, "*Of my fidelity and honesty (in public employment) my poverty is the witness*" \*.

Macchiavelli had generally some fresh composition in hand for the instruction or amusement of this society and at their instance wrote his celebrated discourses on the Decades of Livy and his Treatise on the Art of War, both dedicated to these literary companions; the former to Zanobi Buondelmonti, of whom we shall presently have to speak, and Cosimo, or as he was familiarly called, Cosimino Rucellai; the latter to Lorenzo Strozzi. Many of this society excited by classic lore became enamoured with the ancients; they admired their virtues or what they deemed such, and aspiring to imitate them resolved to make their own names famous. Such intellectual energy produced a variety of essays on national government in which the subject of public liberty was handled with all that boldness and freedom that might be expected from a suddenly emancipated expression of sentiments inspired by vigorous thought and youthful enthusiasm. Macchiavelli; then about fifty-two years of age; Zanobi Buondelmonti, and Alessandro de' Pazzi, were the most conspicuous contributors, their labours being all dedicated to Giulio de' Medici who appeared to prize them exceedingly. Alessandro Pazzi in particular, a cousin of the

\* Jacopo Nardi, Lib. vi., pp. 283, 284.—Lettere Familiare. Lettera xxvii.

Medici and an able and learned man, subsequently composed also a Latin oration in the name of the Florentine people thanking Cardinal Giulio for the restitution of their republic and enthusiastically dwelling on the subject of national liberty \*. This political effusion excited general admiration ; it was read in private societies, eagerly copied, and as Nerli tells us sent by himself to Cardinal Salviati at Rome. The pleasure with which, according to Pitti, Giulio perused these essays was, after the failure of Ceri at Siena somewhat lessened by their intensity, for Nardi avers that he excused himself from reading this one on the plea of business desiring Alessandro Pazzi to leave it with his secretary Niccolo della Magna and hear his opinion. After some considerable delay and repeated applications Niccolo thus replied, "*Your oration pleases me much, but the subject not at all.*" This little incident combined with other circumstances cast strong shadows of doubt on the cardinal's real intentions ; a change was suspected, and men's feelings altered †. Giulio, in fact began to fear that the fermentation was becoming too active ; nevertheless the first of May was actually named for proclaiming the new constitution and restoration of the Great Council with all the powers that belonged to it retrospectively from August 1512. Its number was not to be less than eight hundred : a gonfalonier of more than forty-five years old was to be elected for three years ; first from four candidates named by the Seignory and chosen by the secret votes of the Great Council ; and ever after by a hundred electors drawn from the purse of that assembly. The Council of Seventy now increased by thirty new members was to be called the Council of the Hundred and together with the Seignory and Colleges to possess the same power as the old Council of Eighty, with the important addition of deliberative functions and a final decision on all imposts, by a majority of

\* Nerli, Com., Lib. vii., pp. 137, 138.—Jac. Nardi, Lib. vii., p. 282.—  
 † Fil<sup>o</sup>, Nerli, Lib. vii., p. 137.—Jac. Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 124.—Jac. Nardi, Lib. vii., p. 182.

two-thirds; sixty members being sufficient to form a house. Their post was for life and each vacancy filled up by the nominee of ten electors drawn by lot from their own purse, provided he was approved of by a majority of the Great Council. Twelve reformers were also to be created who along with the cardinal were invested with all the power of the nation, a *Balia* in fact under a more popular name, to carry out any reforms which they might deem necessary without diminishing the authority of the Grand Council. Finally all the more ancient councils, of the people, the community, and the hundred, with the existing *Balia*, were to be abolished\*. Such appears to have been the outline of Giulio de' Medici's reform bill, by which it may be seen that he still continued at the head of a powerful *Balia* with an authority, limited in appearance as regarded the privileges of the Great Council, but being united with his family influence, that of the expected pontificate, and the senate also, therefore involving the imposition of taxes, all being subservient to his will, he still remained absolute master of the republic. Nevertheless the reform would have been salutary and perhaps in time have proved sufficient for public liberty; because a freely chosen assembly of a thousand citizens supported by public confidence is not easily muzzled without the sword.

The anger of the whole race of tyrants who had under Medician auspices so long trampled on the people in all the pride of power, though excited to madness by the prospect of this change was somewhat assuaged by the reflection of their becoming senators for life; and infinitely more so, says Pitti, by that of being masters of public taxation which was the real end and aim of all their wishes and mutual hatred, although they might attempt to veil the features of avarice under the prostituted names of public honours and dignities †. But Giulio de' Medici's intentions whether true

\* Jacopo Pitti, Lib. iiº, pp. 124-5.

† Jacº. Pitti, Lib. iiº, p. 124.



or false were not executed; Rienzo da Ceri was still in the Senese territory and Soderini with an ulterior view to the popedom was eager to reëstablish his family in their pristine greatness at Florence. Putting no faith in the cardinal's sincerity himself, he believed that the Florentines were equally incredulous and that they would more willingly see his rival deposed and their liberty restored with himself and a good army to protect it, than receive such a boon from the heavy and doubtful hand of a Medici. The energy of Giulio finally dissipated this storm but it served as an excuse for postponing the reform bill, and yet so strong was the belief in his sincerity that on this very occasion Alexander de' Pazzi composed and published the Latin address already spoken of as having struck the first spark of insincerity from the breast of the cardinal. Still it was supposed to be only delayed; but while the many were eagerly expecting and the few deprecating this popular measure a circumstance occurred which destroyed it altogether. Luigi di Piero Alamanni celebrated for his poetical genius and along with his father a close adherent of the Medici, after Piero's death for some real or fancied injury became completely alienated; he was moreover mortified to find that as a former supporter he shared in all the odium of their tyranny and conscious that it was not unmerited, feared with more liberal institutions that he might fall even lower than his present unsatisfactory condition under that family. Wherefore, having failed in his endeavours to stifle the proposed reform, he in concert with his friend Zanobi Buondelmonti who also, in consequence of a family quarrel was alienated from the cardinal, urged on the expedition of Rienzo da Ceri in order to expel the Medici and establish an oligarchy, a proceeding admirably adapted to the interests of Cardinal Soderini who with French assistance thus hoped to clear his way towards the popedom. And though Piero Soderini avowed, and as was generally believed, still enter-

tained all his family attachment to liberty, he persuaded himself nevertheless that his restoration to supreme power by any means would benefit the republic, trusting to time and his own exertions for a complete adjustment of the constitution. There was at this moment unusual suffering and consequent discontent amongst the trading and labouring classes of Florence, the effect of numerous public and private loans and excessive taxation; and on this the conspirators principally founded their hopes of expelling the family which had occasioned it. Corn became scarce and dear, the silk trade was idle because the war had stopped its exports to France, and even money still due on previous consignments could not be recovered: we have the names of no less than thirty merchants of the best Florentine families and all heads of great commercial houses resident at Lyon but arrested on account of the war in 1521, who by a public memorial to Francis I. offer to renounce their country and "*to live and die in the subjection and protection of the said Lord (Francis) and be his very humble servants and subjects,*" &c. "To such evils," observes the learned and patriotic Marquis Gino Capponi in his note to this document, "to such evils was the foreign commerce of the Florentines exposed, and principally that of Lyon, which resembled a vast colony: this like every other greatness of an ill-constituted and ill-defended state accelerated its ruin. Sometimes it involved most troublesome friendships, chained the interests of the citizens to those of another state already too powerful and placed a part of the property and merchandise in a foreign country. By little and little the Florentine merchants after feebly assisting the decaying republic, separated themselves entirely from it and became exiles: and every sort of commerce being feared and hated more and more by new rulers because it was in the hands of enemies, even trade itself became as it were an outcast and the Florentines forsaking that vigorous industry which once constituted the country's greatness, placed

all their happiness in secure ease. Francis I. always prodigal and therefore continually in want of money, sequestered the Florentine merchandise at Lyon because the Florentines were friends of the pope: that of France suffered equal violence at Rome, but it was partially justifiable. This barbarous mode of warfare, formerly common, we have seen renewed even in our own days, and those who ought to have refrained most, set the example and suffered the penalty" \*.

These unsteady times also suspended the employment of capital; artisans were cast in idleness on the town; many citizens had straitened their circumstances by private loans to Leo X. and others for their own particular ends purposely augmented the distress not only by suspending individual business but under the guise of friendship frightened the less sagacious into following their example. All these were considered good materials for combustion by the conspirators, who were also apprehensive that the reform once established might prove so grateful to the community as to make them more ready to maintain it than they were to overthrow the existing government.

Their first act was to despatch Alexander Monaldi on a mission to Rienzo da Ceri's camp, and after acquainting him with the discontent of the people and Giulio de' Medici's activity in preparing for the so much desired reform, entreat him to lose no time in sending a trumpet to proclaim that he came not to injure the city but to deliver them from Medician tyranny. But Monaldi's heart failed him, the mission remained unaccomplished, and the ill success of Rienzo's own expedition precluded any further attempts in that quarter. Alamanni and Buondelmonti now feeling themselves insecure and tarnished as it were by secret treachery to the cardinal, endangered also by their open opposition to the public, finally determined to

\* Molini, Documenti, vol. iº, Doc. Lib. iiº, p. 126. — Gio. Cambi, tom. xlviii. and xlix., and note.—Jac. Pitti, xxii., p. 204.

secure their own safety and gain popular favour by murdering the tyrant and trusting to this abominable act for future distinction whatever form of government might be adopted. Thus resolved they communicated their intention to Jacopo Diacceto a learned and intimate friend of both who was already pretty well acquainted with their general sentiments; another Luigi, son of Tommaso Alamanni, an officer then in garrison at Arezzo, also joined the plot and several more citizens were cognizant of it.

While they were waiting for the appointed time (some great church festival) a certain courier called Francesco was arrested in consequence of certain suspicions and letters from Rome to the conspirators were found on his person. Jacopo Diacceto was immediately imprisoned, Luigi di Tommaso Alamanni captured at Arezzo, Zanobi Buondelmonti and the other Alamanni escaped and were declared rebels: the two prisoners were tortured into confession and beheaded: Antonio del Bruciolo, Batista della Palla, Bernardo da Verrazzano, Niccolo Martelli, and four others were all outlawed for knowing and concealing the plot. Piero Soderini although some days dead at Rome was also proclaimed a rebel. Monaldi was exiled for ten years and Francesco perpetually imprisoned at Volterra for carrying the despatches\*.

Such is shortly the history of this conspiracy as given by Pitti and differing much, not in the facts but the public motives of the two principal conspirators, from some other cotemporary writers who represent Zanobi Buondelmonti and Alamanni in common with all the young men frequenting the Rucellai Gardens as strongly and indiscreetly imbued with the spirit of ancient liberty and not as mere offended and neglected supporters of Medician tyranny. The conspiracy was determined, says Nerli (who was himself a friend of Zanobi and one of the Rucellai Society) without consideration or attention to the

\* Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii°, pp. 126-9.

discourse of Macchiavelli on that subject in the very work which he had composed expressly at their desire, and even dedicated to Zanobi and Cosimino; for if otherwise they would not have conspired at all or have done it more cautiously\*. And this alone inclines us to reject the suspicion which Nardi says was then entertained of Macchiavelli himself being cognizant of the conspirators' intentions in consequence of his extreme intimacy with them; the Florentine secretary independent of his age, his prudence, and humanity, all strong against the deed; was a man, not to follow, but to lead in such an enterprise had he known and approved of it †.

From the confession of Jacopo Diaceto, whose weakness under torture made him wrongfully inculpate Tommaso Soderini and thus render his evidence defective, the chiefs ‡ of this conspiracy had no ill-will to the cardinal personally, but acted solely from a love of liberty: on the contrary they would more willingly have made him the principal instrument of reform had they believed in his professions; but seeing that as external danger lessened his liberality contracted and finally disappeared altogether, they resolved to despatch him §.

Cambi and Ammirato scout the idea of their patriotism and attribute their conduct to private vengeance; but Giulio as a churchman and Archbishop of Florence not wishing to stain his hands with blood, or be judge in his own cause, (although he is said to have got the courier's confession by means of a spy in the character of a priest) charged the two criminal courts of the "Otto della Balia" and the "Otto della Guardia" together with a body of no less than sixty unofficial citizens

\* Macchiavelli, Dis., Lib. iii., cap. vi., — Nerli, Lib. vii., p. 138.

† Jacopo Nardi, Lib. vii., pp. 282-283.

‡ These were Zanobi Buondelmonti, Luigi Alamanni the poet, Luigi Alamanni the soldier, Alessandro de' Pazzi, Cosimino Rucellai, and Jacopo Diaceto, called "*Diacettino*." — There were two more Diaceti, one surnamed

"*il Pavonazzo*," the other "*il Nero*," from their usual dress, both of the Rucellai Society, but it does not clearly appear whether they were implicated or not.

§ Ammirato, Lib. xxix., p. 345. — J. Nardi, Lib. vii., p. 301. — Giov. Cambi, p. 203.

with the investigation and if guilty the condemnation, of the culprits; but he refused to admit the dying acknowledgment of Jacopo Diacceto, namely that he had under the influence of torture falsely accused Tommaso Soderini of being an accomplice, so that he also was included in the sweeping proscription of that distinguished family\*.

Giulio's wisdom in appointing so impartial, if it were really so, and so numerous a court to pass judgment on the accused was highly applauded, because it not only prevented any charge against himself of personal vengeance where facts were so strongly in his favour but it also saved him, high and powerful as he was, from the usual poisoner of all Florentine justice, the political strength and consequent vengeance of the culprits' friends and those of others implicated in the conspiracy. It was believed by the more liberal portion of the community that the murder of Giulio would have brought destruction on Florence from the arms of Spain; for Charles had in conjunction with Francesco Sforza just taken Genoa by assault to the terror and surprise of Italy, and having been so closely allied to Leo a bloody vengeance might be expected for the cardinal's murder, more especially as it would have been a pretext for disposing of Florence as best suited his own ambition †.

At the termination of these events, which all occurred during the first half-year after Leo's death, an immense concourse of citizens without distinction of party crowded the halls and ante-chambers of Giulio with earnest congratulations on his safety; nor were they insincere; many as we have just said considered that his escape was the city's salvation; a vast number were grateful to him for giving them hopes of future liberty, and the "Ottimati" of his own family supporters rejoiced because they trusted that this escape would bring him back to his senses on

\* Nardi, Lib. vii., pp. 301-2.—Gio. Erud. Tos. Cambi, pp. 205-210, vol. xxii., Del. † Ammirato, Lib. xxix., pp. 345-346.

that subject. They were not deceived; but Giulio addressed them earnestly, called heaven and earth to witness his own good intentions, complained of not being seconded as he deserved by a vast number of citizens, but trusted that the Almighty would yet give him strength enough to accomplish his object and gratify the public wish in despite of all opposition from unworthy men. Meanwhile a guard of infantry under Alessandro Vitelli watched over his personal safety, all further discussion on reform ceased for the present, and a great mass of citizens conducted themselves with marked and considerate delicacy towards him while they loudly condemned the conspirators. The leading official Palleschi lost not so favourable an occasion to repress all liberal sentiments by the strong hand of power and therefore recommenced their own oppressions with renewed ardour, but the cardinal suffered or affected not to perceive this, fearful on one hand of endangering his own popularity, and on the other of driving the Medician party into another conspiracy against him; and he resolved thus to temporise until he saw what the next vacant pontificate might do for him\*.

Meanwhile Pope Adrian arrived at Leghorn and Giulio about the middle of August accompanied him to Rome where soon being made sensible of Cardinal Soderini's superior influence he remained but a short time and then returned to Florence.

Charles V. had now nearly expelled the French altogether from Lombardy, and with the pretext of national defence laid Florence and every confederate state of Italy under contribution; nor was war the only evil that vexed her, for scarcely had the pontiff's arrival given some hopes of peace and order, when the plague broke out with violence at Rome and alarmed the Florentine authorities so much that a line of quarantine posts, the first precaution of the kind that we read of in

\* Jacopo Pitti, *Lib. ii*°, p. 129.

Italian history, was drawn round Florence at eighteen miles' distance and a delay of forty days imposed on all travellers towards that capital\*.

The pontiff had already made fruitless efforts to pacify Europe and unite all Christian powers against the Turks who were then besieging and soon captured Rhodes ; but A.D. 1523. finding his endeavours baffled by the determination of Francis to continue the Italian war he at once began to incline towards the imperialists whom notwithstanding his intimate relations with Charles he had hitherto opposed. Cardinal Soderini was at this time secretary to Adrian and outwardly seconded all his wishes to reëstablish tranquillity, but the latter at length discovering this prelate's duplicity by some secret correspondence with France in which he urged an attack on Sicily as a diversion of the war from Lombardy, he was committed to prison and his property instantly confiscated without a trial ! Lombardy was now in possession of Charles who every day became more powerful while Francis wasted his time and money in prodigality and debauchery, in loading the nation with taxes and turning French liberty, such as it then was, into slavish servitude. The Venetians became tired of their ally and looked elsewhere for the support of national interests ; they saw Francesco Sforza firm on the throne of Milan and finally signed a treaty with him, the emperor, and his brother the Archduke of Austria in July 1523, by which all the imperial family's pretensions to Venetian territory were abandoned for two hundred thousand ducats.

Previous to this transaction the imperialists at Rome had been exerting themselves to draw Pope Adrian into this confederacy and conjointly with the English ambassador invited Giulio there on purpose to influence him : the cardinal accordingly left Florence in April when Soderini's treachery being opportunely detected he was eminently successful, and remained

\* Ammirato, Lib. xxix., p. 346.



in full possession of the pope's confidence. Adrian having failed as a peace-maker now fairly laid by that character and uniting the papal arms with those of Florence, Genoa, Siena, Lucca and England, engaged to oppose France and look to the protection of Italy. Francis roused up by this formidable array assembled a powerful army at Lyon and was preparing to pass the Alps when Charles Duke of Bourbon's treason and subsequent flight from Moulins determined him to remain. The army however, commanded by Bonnivet High Admiral of France, crossed the Tesino in September 1523, but were driven back by Bourbon and Lannoy the governor of Lombardy. Old Prospero Colonna general of the allies died in the month of December, and the army, whose movements had hitherto been restrained and cautious, became infinitely more active under Bourbon and the Marquis di Pescara who succeeded him.

The family of Colonna after having devastated their native country and ruined themselves in private wars, were finally compelled to live by the sword alone and as common condottieri served any party that would employ them, so that different branches of the family were frequently opposed to each other in hostile ranks, and a Colonna once killed his nephew by the shot of a culverin purposely but unwittingly aimed at him. Prospero was considered one of the first as well as most skilful manoeuvrers of modern warfare, he excelled in defensive field operations and was the author of great improvements in fortification; but he latterly had become too cautious, and the spirit of Bourbon gave a new and a more energetic character to the war. The French army continued its retreat and was attacked with great impetuosity by Bourbon and Pescara while passing the river Sesia; seven guns were taken besides ammunition and provisions, and Bonnivet was so badly hurt that the command devolved on the celebrated Chevalier Bayard: immediately placing himself in the rear with his men-at-arms Bayard had his spine broken by the ball of an arquebuse while charging

some Spanish infantry\*; when struck, he called on the name of Jesus, and exclaimed "*Alas my God I am dying!*" Then kissed the cross formed by the hilt of his sword, with the faint ejaculation of "*Miserere mei Domine.*" Being immediately lifted off his horse by the attendant who writes his memoirs, he was laid at the foot of a tree with his face to the enemy. The Duke of Bourbon in rapid pursuit came suddenly up and on seeing Bayard endeavoured to express his grief and pity at beholding so good and gallant a knight in such condition. "Sir," replied Bayard, "*there needs no pity for me because I die an honest man; but I pity you when I see you in arms against your king, your country, and your plighted faith.*" Saying this he expired and the body was conveyed by a train of sorrowing attendants into his native province of Dauphiné†.

By the desperate valour of four hundred Swiss the pursuers were checked and Bonnivet made good his retreat to Ivrea, whence after abandoning fifteen or twenty guns at the Fort de Bar in the Valley of Aoste he reached France in safety. Thus ended this short and disastrous campaign for the possession of Lombardy which even if successful would have been dearly purchased by the death of Bayard. There is no man however great and good whose existence is indispensable to the community though his loss may be deeply felt; but if ever there were a private individual whose character was likely to infuse a high tone of moral sentiment and a gentler feeling of humanity into a warlike fierce and licentious nation in those wild unscrupulous times, it was the chevalier "*sans peur et sans reproche!*" While these military events were in progress Pope Adrian VI. to the infinite grief of the confederates expired in the middle of September 1523, and after a two months' conclave Cardinal Giulio de' Medici ascended the papal throne, taking the name of Clement VII. as indicative of his forgiveness of all enemies.

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xv., cap. iii., pp. 178-189.

† Berville, "Histoire di Pierre Ter-

rail dit le Chevalier Bayard."—Sismondi, vol. ii., p. 199.

This election gave universal content: in Florence he was popular from the mildness and equity of his individual rule and sociable manners; at Rome because he was known to have been the active agent in all that was then deemed glorious or creditable in Leo the Tenth's pontificate: he was a man of taste, literature, and business; not addicted to any great vice; of grave and sober manners and remarkable for his external maintenance of the ecclesiastical dignity. The splendour of his family and his absolute sovereignty over Florence imparted additional weight and influence to his pretensions along with greater respect to his person, so that even as cardinal he had been received by the whole court with distinguished honours on his last arrival at Rome, and soon became the most confidential minister of Adrian\*.

Much therefore was expected from Clement; but the conclave proved long, stormy, and full of difficulty from the unremitting opposition of Pompeo Colonna, so that the rivalry between this modern Julius and modern Pompey was on the point of creating a schism in the church when the sudden nomination of a fresh candidate belonging to the Orsini family frightened Colonna into giving his support to a Medici sooner than see so deadly an enemy seated on the chair of Saint Peter: Giulio promised Pompeo oblivion of injuries besides other benefits, and impressed this on both him and Soderini (who was now released by the College) in the choice of his pontifical appellation. He had at first determined not to change his name but was finally persuaded to do so because almost all those popes who had omitted it died within the year†.

The name of Clement however had benign influence over the

\* Ammirato, Lib. xxix., p. 347.

† Lettere di Principi, vol. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 100.

—Varchi, Lib. ii., p. 7.—Platina, *Vite de Papi*, p. 513.—Sismondi, vol. ii., p. 186.—Guicciardini, Lib. xv., cap. iii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 171-174.—It is curious that Theodore II., Leo V., Christofero, Gio-

vanni XV., XVI., XVIII., XIX., XX, XXI, Adrian VI., Marcello II., and others, all died within or in a little more than the year.—(Vide Platina, "*Vite de Pontefici*," and *Rossini's note to page 174*, vol. vii., of his admirable edition of *Guicciardini*.)

actions of his Florentine ministers in their eagerness to vindicate the legitimacy of his birth. Piero Orlandini a citizen of sixty-three years old and a friend of the Medici; a man of such reputation as to be one of the "Otto di Balìa" and on the point of being chosen gonfalonier of Florence, had laid a wager as was customary during pontifical vacancies, that Giulio would never be pope: when Clement's election transpired this debt was claimed by the winner Giovanmaria Benintendi: "You shall have it," said Orlandini, "but softly; let us first ascertain whether he *can* be canonically chosen pope," (alluding to his illegitimacy and simony). "And pray why can he *not* be made pope?" replied the other angry at the delay and in a louder voice on purpose to be noticed by the by-standers. This conversation, whether malignantly or not, was soon reported to the chief rulers, who either from private hate or to evince their zeal for Clement's reputation had him instantly in prison and within three hours (after the usual torture) his bloody head rolled on the pavement of the Bargello! One magistrate and one alone spoke boldly against this deed being done without the pontiff's knowledge, and at first gave an open vote to clear himself from all suspicion of being accessory to the murder\*.

Clement was of course kept ignorant of everything until too late; he reproved the officious magistrates, rewarded the justice of Antonio Bonsi, loudly expressed his disgust; but punished nobody! It was an act in vindication of his honour, for simony also was hinted at by Orlandini; it was the defence of his legitimacy; somewhat too strong perhaps; but still in his eyes unworthy of punishment! To so abject a condition were the once proud and independent Florentines fallen! But their spirit was not quite gone, and as we shall see, a few

\* According to Varchi, he however appears to have been finally intimidated, and on putting the question to the vote a second time, eight black beans, the full number, were found in

the ballet-box. But so fearful was Bonsi of the consequences, that he immediately repaired to Rome to excuse his audacious conduct in attempting to save an innocent man!

courageous citizens still remained to vindicate the rights of man \*. Yet these are the times, and these the people, to whom Macchiavelli is accused of *giving lessons* in tyranny !

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COTEMPORARY MONARCHS.—England : Henry VIII.—Scotland : James IV. —France : Louis XII. until 1515 ; then Francis I.—Spain : Ferdinand of Aragon until 1516 ; then Charles.—Naples and Sicily : Do.—Emperor : Maximilian, until 1519 ; then Charles V.—Popes : Leo X. until 1521 ; then Adrian VI. until 1522 ; then Clement VII.—Sultan : Selim I. until 1520 ; then Soliman I. until 1566, after whose reign the Turkish empire began to decline.—Portugal : Emanuel to 1521 ; then John III.

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\* Varchi, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 12.—Nardi, Lib. —Cambi, tom. xxii., p. 250.—Ammi-  
vii., p. 303.—Nerli, Lib. vii., p. 141. rato, Lib. xxx., p. 351.

## CHAPTER XI.

FROM A.D. 1524 TO A.D. 1528.

THE peculiar habits and character of a nation, however essentially bad, become in the public mind almost sanctified by ancient usage, and the more readily when they minister to the indulgence of evil inclinations in mankind: confirmed by time through successive generations they at last become attributes, qualities almost inherent in the moral and physical formation of the people, and spontaneously bursting into action like the instinct of animals, are necessarily difficult of cure. Conquest, the steady march of refinement, which is the education of states, change of political institutions, and a pure and enlightened religion, by altering the causes or forcibly suppressing the habitual outbreaks of destructive passions, may gradually by reason or coercion induce a different phasis of the human character; better or worse, gentler or fiercer, more free or slavish, according to the policy or intelligence, the influence or omnipotence of the ruling power.

The long reign of the Medici had neither been sufficient, nor yet so tranquil, nor altogether so much opposed to native character and habits, as to annihilate that ancient spirit of licentiousness denominated liberty, and perhaps justly, by the Florentines; at least when contrasted with the absolute lordships, the monarchies, and other forms of tyranny that surrounded them. The relation between the Medici and *Ottimati*, or *Notables* of Florence, was of a peculiar nature; a mutual compact to sup-

port each other in doing evil and leaving good to the protection of Providence : for however slavish the latter's conduct might outwardly appear, it really was no more than the price of their own licentiousness. *They* sacrificed no liberty but the people's ; they monopolised the honours and emoluments of the state and revelled in corruption ; they and the Medici were reciprocally necessary, each to each : a tacit agreement subsisted between them ; unscrupulous support on one side and unbounded licence on the other : their evil doings were winked at ; for they were too numerous to be coerced or neglected ; and the Medici, principally through their discord, were too powerful not to be feared : the petty robbery and oppression of individuals belonged to the former ; the higher plunder of the commonwealth to the latter ; from these something was returned to the people ; from those nothing ; all was irrevocably swallowed up by their voracious and insatiable rapacity and between these two thieves the nation was crucified. Yet a latent spirit of freedom brooded under the surface, and even amongst the Medician herd there were various degrees of turpitude : a variety of political opinion divided them, swayed to and fro it is true by anger, hatred, jealousy, and mortified desire, and ever ready to embrace what suited their predominant passions : nevertheless many when apart from their cupidity were naturally inclined to freer institutions ; others were less liberal, and others again completely abandoned to the Medici and absolute government. Amongst the remainder of the citizens there existed a stronger and more ardent desire for emancipation : eighteen years of real independence under the great council had preserved or rather re-created a more rational wish with better-understood notions of civil and political liberty. Hence its memory was so fondly cherished by the people ; hence the general animation excited by Giulio de' Medici's promises ; the sudden burst of intellect ; the fears, the hopes, the doubts, the expectations of every shade of party from the highest patriot to the lowest tyrant of

the state. Trade languished, workmen were idle, bread dear, an incipient pestilence in the town, and on the top of all fresh taxes were laid like piles of fuel to keep the flame of revolution more bright and burning.

Such was the state of Florence when Clement VII. became pope on the nineteenth of November 1523; when he sent the Cardinal of Cortona to govern that republic as his lieutenant with the rank of Florentine citizen, and when he ventured to confer this high distinction by pontifical command alone, not only on him but all his nearest kinsmen. Silvio Passerini of Cortona, though born in that city, was brought up entirely at Rome in total ignorance of the Florentine character and genius: neither, says Varchi, had he ability to comprehend, nor judgment to content them, if he had known them. He was covetous like most of the prelates; trusted nobody, asked counsel of nobody, but demanded honour and implicit obedience from all. No independent action or even deliberation was permitted to any public office or magistracy in Florence, but firmly believing that the Medician faction would never dare to fail him whatsoever might be his usage of them, he cared only about satisfying the pope; and for this was ready to commit any acts of public or private spoliation\*.

Two forced loans, a tax on the clergy, and an illegal sale of the trades corporation property, had excited general dissatisfaction amongst the irritable Florentines; even the Palleschi were in a ferment, partly from disappointment at Clement's want of liberality towards them compared with the excessive prodigality of Leo, and partly from the arrogance and imbecility of the ministers he had deputed to govern them. These minions in fact exacted greater submission and humility than Clement himself; an exaction so much the more galling as they were natives of subject cities, such as Cortona, Prato, and Pistoia, and however great at Rome were looked down upon as inferior

\* Benedetto Varchi, *Storia Fiorentina*, Lib. ii., pp. 13-15.



to the Florentine citizen. But the most disaffected portion of the community was that which desired a political reform with freer institutions : it has been just mentioned that the Palleschi faction was composed of discordant elements ; that one portion of these having plunged headlong into the Medician cause were become odious to the people, and being aware of this moved every screw and spring to concentrate the government into the smallest possible compass : they deemed every gain of the community a personal loss to themselves and having incurred the public hatred solaced themselves with a cruel exercise of their ill-gotten power. The chiefs of this faction were Piero Alamanni, Filippo Buondelmonti, Pandolfo Corbinelli, Antonio Serristori, and Piero Ridolfi ; but the last in consequence of his son's marriage with Filippo Strozzi's daughter ultimately became more liberal. To these may be added Ottaviano de' Medici, Bartolommeo Valori, Palla Rucellai, Roberto Pucci, and lastly Lorenzo Morelli the most aged and violent of all.

Another section of the Palleschi were willing to acknowledge the Medici as chiefs but not as princes and masters, and therefore wished for a more liberal government : the head of this party was Jacopo Salviati, but as he resided principally at Rome, Niccolo Capponi son of the famous Piero took the lead and was followed by Matteo Strozzi, Francesco Vettori, Luigi Guicciardini, brother of the historian ; Filippo Strozzi, Averardo and Piero Salviati, and many others. All these were against the close oligarchy sought by the former but suffered their liberality to range no further than an aristocracy of the Ottimati. These two factions were deadly foes and the courts of both Rome and Florence rang with their reciprocal abuse ; but the latter were less hated by the advocates for free government or "*Il vivere libero*," as it was then generally designated. Even the liberals were split in two, one party wishing to expel the Medici, but more from personal hatred than any peculiar attachment to freedom, and the other devoted rather to their

country than inimical to that family. Alfonso di Filippo Strozzi and Anton-Francesco Albizzi led the former; Marco del Nero and Federigo Gondi with numerous adherents were chiefs of the latter. In some others, such as Tommaso Soderini and Lorenzo Martelli both these feelings were united, and in many neither the one nor the other; neither hatred of the Medici nor love of the republic, but only their own grasping ambition and selfishness moved them, and always on the side of the most powerful. Yet amidst all this variety of feeling, of anger, and profession of political principle, there was scarcely a single man, if we may trust to Varchi, who was not ready to postpone the tedium of existing servitude or the sweetness of future liberty for the gratification of his own immediate necessities or desires! In this feverish excitement of fear and expectation the people only waited for a favourable occasion to exhibit some decided expression of their sentiments and they did not wait for it in vain\*.

One of the first acts of Clement was to restore to the Cardinal Soderini and all his family their forfeited rights and possessions as Florentine citizens according to his agreement in conclave †. He then turned his attention to Florence and if we may trust Jacopo Pitti with a sincere desire of enlarging the basis of government and humbling the pride and power of the Palleschi whose insolence even to him was intolerable and whose oppression of the people he sincerely deplored. Clement had the character of a profound hypocrite in whom simulation and dissimulation were innate, and who invariably covered the most dishonest practices under the sober mantle of integrity: nevertheless the above historian avers that he was pleased with the idea of what glory he would acquire by granting that liberty

\* Ben. Varchi, Storia Fiorentina, Lib. 3.<sup>a</sup>, pp. 15-19.

† Soderini died soon after and it was remarked in Florence that had the gonfalonier and cardinal changed

places, one would have been pope and the other prince of Florence. The talents and character of neither were suited to the duties of their station.— (Vide *Annairato*, Lib. xxx., p. 352.)

which his countrymen so much desired, and was only alarmed by the difficulty of overcoming the avarice, the ambition and the arrogance of his own faction which never would suffer the revival of that Great Council for whose ruin they scrupled not to place themselves in subjection to his family\*. He therefore might count on their open or disguised enmity; and yet to establish such an oligarchy as they proposed was to deliver the community in chains to their mercy, a proceeding that with present insecurity would render him eternally infamous. Neither could he ever hope to satisfy their rapacity when he remembered how Leo's unbounded prodigality despoiled the church and its treasures for their sake; incurred the hatred of both Rome and Florence; gave them cities, provinces, pensions, and benefices; and still they were unsatisfied and faithless. During Adrian's pontificate he was compelled as he declared to tolerate their oppressions in consequence of his own danger, and their natural inclination to tyranny was increased by the pride of sumptuous palaces, constructed with unusual magnificence from the revenues of augmented possessions, and by the softness and luxury which in the time of Leo they had learned of the Roman prelates; "a pernicious seed," says Pitti, "for the domestic manners and republic of Florence." He moreover considered that the greatness of his own family arose from the favour of that very people whom it had of yore assisted to humble the powerful, and now it was become the instrument that maintained the tyranny of existing oligarchs over the whole Florentine community †. Clement might thus have thought and thus have spoken; but all his love for Florentine liberty ended in a determination to put aside the legitimate collateral branch of his family now represented by the famous Giovanni, or Giovannino as he was then called, the son of Catherine Sforza and father of the Grand Duke Cosimo, and his brother Lorenzo;

\* Pitti, Lib. iiº, p. 131.—Varchi, Lib. iiº, p. 8.

† Jacopo Pitti, Lib. iiº, pp. 131-2.

both popular with the citizens. Giovanni young as he was had already acquired a great name in arms and vast influence amongst the soldiery who then swarmed in Italy; at Florence he was beloved and feared; and admired everywhere\*. Neither of these brothers were likely to be submissive and were therefore put aside for their two illegitimate cousins Ippolito and Alexander, the former fifteen years of age the latter only eleven: Ippolito as we have said was the natural son of Giuliano whose memory and popularity were expected to benefit his offspring; Alexander the reputed issue of Lorenzo Duke of Urbino but believed to be the child of Clement himself. There was a long minority before them therefore much docility expected from princes educated as they would be by his own creatures and dependents: but to give colour to this decision he managed to have an address on the subject of Florentine government made to him by the usual embassy of congratulation principally composed of the more liberal Palleschi, in which the necessity of one or even two chiefs of the Florentine republic was broadly demanded, though the embassy was by no means unanimous †.

The Cardinal of Cortona assumed the government in May and at the end of August Ippolito and Alessandro followed under charge of their governors Galeotto de' Medici, a grave modest and respected citizen; and Bardo Corsi who being a rich and learned bachelor was much blamed for seeking such an office ‡. Ippolito assumed the title of "*Magnifico*" borne by his father even when in exile, and was instantly admitted notwithstanding his extreme youth, as a member of the senate and Balìa besides other great offices of state, while the weight

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xv., cap. iii., p. 131.

† Varchi, Lib. ii., pp. 8-11-14.—The ambassadors were Francesco Minerbetti, Lorenzo Morelli, Alessandro Pucci, Jacopo Salviati, Francesco Vet-

tori, Antonio de' Pazzi, Galeotto de' Medici, Palla Rucellai, Lorenzo Strozzi, and Giovanni Tornabuoni.

‡ This date is from Varchi, but Cambi makes Alessandro's arrival on 19th June, 1525.—(Vide tom. xxii., p. 273.)

of government was borne by Cortona of whose coarse and rugged nature it is said that Clement designedly made use to repress the insolence of the Ottimati and thus increase his own popularity without appearing to coerce his adherents\*.

Before we proceed in our narrative of Florentine affairs it will be convenient to resume that of European politics in their general connexion with Italy and particular bearing on Florence. The victory of the Sesia neither weakened France nor removed the causes of war; hostilities were only suspended, not terminated, nor were the three great transalpine nations inclined to peace: Clement VII. both in his spiritual and temporal capacity was disposed to tranquillity and became the representative of Italy: although inclined to Charles who was even supplied with money from the papal purse he tried hard to restore peace and give real independence to Milan but in vain; the task was beyond him; greater powers were in the field, between which he had his choice but was compelled to follow, not lead; nevertheless he became necessary to both and therefore had a peculiar influence. He proposed a general peace, or a two years' truce: Charles accepted the former but refused the latter as it would only give Francis time to prepare for war: Francis for similar reasons reversed his acquiescence, seeing no chance of reasonable conditions. Henry VIII. of England led by Wolsey who hated Clement, would agree to nothing proposed by him, and affected to be himself the sole arbitrator of kingly quarrels especially this one, in which he had taken an active part; besides which, both he and Charles V. were excited to invade France by the representations of Bourbon, and giving too ready an ear to the exaggerated tales of that exile whose traitorous conduct had alienated even his own immediate vassals †. The result against Clement's advice, was an invasion of that kingdom by the imperial army under the Marquis di Pescara, but subject to the directions of Bourbon; and Marseilles was

\* Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 133.

† Guicciardini, Lib. xv., cap. iii., pp. 180, 191-2.—Sismondi, vol. ii., p. 202.

imprudently besieged instead of making an inland movement as recommended by the latter. The failure of this expedition which gave ample time for Francis to assemble a powerful army ; the consequent retreat of the invaders ; the parallel advance of the French ; their entrance into Milan ; the siege of Pavia, and all the current of the war which terminated with the captivity of Francis in a bloody battle on the twenty-fourth of February 1525, occupied the whole period from July 1524 ; a time of woe and misery to all Europe but pregnant with long and peculiar misfortunes to Italy \*. By this victory the balance was broken and that unhappy but ever coveted land left to the mercy of an ambitious and most unscrupulous conqueror who well knew how to improve his advantage. Venice had been in a state of almost constant war since the League of Cambray ; and her commercial resources, already most sensibly affected by Vasco de Gama's discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, were now nearly exhausted : the ecclesiastical coffers were drained by Leo's wars and extravagance ; nor as yet had the sordid economy of Clement time to restore them : Milan, never independent since Lodovico's fall, was now a mere province of Spain, and Naples in a similar state of subjection, while Florence still remained the private property of the Medici.

Clement after Bomivet's retreat and the subsequent return of Francis found himself in great perplexity : wishing to keep clear of both princes he had refused to maintain Adrian's league with the emperor, and as yet had avoided entering into fresh terms with his rival or any other state ; but seeing the formidable army led by Francis in person, and probably fearful of the enormous power of Charles especially if Milan should be added to the two Sicilies, he signed through the medium of Alberto Pio da Carpi and the papal almoner Gian-Matteo Ghiberti, a secret convention with France putting

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xv., cap. iii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 192-242. — Annirato, Lib. xxx., pp. 350-353.

the ecclesiastical states and the Florentine republic under her king's protection with the sole obligation of giving no assistance to the latter's enemies: at least all this was believed; for the particulars were kept so secret by Clement's caution that they have never yet been entirely divulged. In consequence of this however, by the pope's coöperation, the duke of Ferrara supplied Francis with a great quantity of military stores, and apparently by the same management, Giovanni de' Medici whose presence was now a host, quitted the imperial service for that of France and with fifteen hundred infantry escorted these very stores to the army. Although Francis had as yet neither reduced Pavia nor even the citadel of Milan, (for the city itself had been almost depopulated by recent pestilence) while the Viceroy Lannoy was still powerful, and Bourbon expected with reënforcements from Germany, he to the astonishment of Italy determined, and as is said by Clement's advice\*, to attempt the conquest of Naples. John Stuart Duke of Albany was accordingly ordered to march through Tuscany, join Rienzo da Ceri at Lucca, where a contribution was exacted and supplies of artillery secured; and then with thirteen thousand infantry and seven hundred lances to continue his enterprize. All these proceedings of Clement gave great dissatisfaction to the imperialists whose threatenings and complaints were loud and angry, although he assured Charles that no injury was intended against him by the recent treaty. The viceroy was for an immediate march to the succour of Naples, but the Marchese di Pescara asserted that Naples could be best defended in Lombardy and that the conqueror of Milan would be always master of that kingdom. During

\* Guicciardini says that Clement was against it, but adds that the king *felt certain* of his conceding a passage through the ecclesiastical states. (Vide Lib. xv., cap. iv., p. 213.) Ammirato is of the same opinion, and says that

the pope purposely delayed Albany at Siena to stop the expedition if possible. But Clement's public expressions and secret determinations were often widely different.

this time Venice kept studiously aloof but every eye, and ear, and mind, says Guicciardini, were turned on Lombardy and everything seemed moving forward towards the great catastrophe of Pavia\*.

Italy was astounded at the good fortune of Charles and the eyes of her princes were now open to their danger, wherefore to prevent entire subjugation a defensive league was proposed and every eye naturally turned on the pope: but Clement with his usual unsteadiness or rather his cautious dissimulation, after bending to and fro for a season, ultimately and perhaps prudently settled on the emperor, and in April 1525 signed a treaty for the Church and the Florentines the latter disbursing largely on the occasion, while their whole country was suffering even to female honour from the robbery and licentiousness of a victorious but mutinous and disorganised soldiery †.

The pontiff's position was certainly one of great difficulty and his fears greater, in consequence of some secret correspondence with Francis having been found amongst that monarch's papers at Pavia, but his irresolution was greatest of all. Venice offered at once to join him and Ferrara and with Albany's assistance and the Duke of Alençon's lances saved from the rout of Pavia, make head against the Imperialists and deliver Italy. They counted on prompt and powerful aid from France in money if not men; on an extensive levy of Swiss auxiliaries, and on the disorganised state of the imperial army from long arrears of wages and want of funds to satisfy their mutinous clamours. A rough draft of the treaty was even drawn out; but while Clement still hesitated his secretary Cardinal Schomberg, a prelate devoted to Charles, arrived suddenly from Milan and proposed an alliance on the part of the viceroy, offering to guarantee the House of

\* Guicciardini, *Stor.*, Lib. xv., cap. iv., pp. 206-10-12-16. — Ammirato, *Lib.* xxx., pp. 353-354. — Muratori, *Annali*, Anno 1524. — Jacopo Nardi, *Lib.* vii., p. 308.

† Ammirato, *Lib.* xxx., pp. 355-356.



Medici in the possession of Florence for 100,000 florins; and a like sum for the restoration of Reggio and Rubiera which had been seized by the Duke of Ferrara during the pontifical vacancy, besides other conditions, all subject to the approval of the emperor; amongst them the protection of Milan and the ecclesiastical states, Francesco Sforza being made a principal in the treaty and a place left for Venice if she were disposed to join\*. Clement's terror on account of the Church and Florentine territory was thus allayed and if the unscrupulous character of Charles and the subsequent conduct of the Colonna and of Bourbon be considered, he acted prudently; for he himself was defenceless and all else was distant and uncertain.

Meanwhile unmitigated plunder in the form of subsidies was inflicted by Charles on all the Italian states and unmitigated outrage by his soldiers on all the miserable people; no longer united they were no longer feared, and the most shameless breach of every tie that is commonly held sacred amongst nations was unscrupulously committed by the Imperialists. Italy was at the emperor's feet and he ungenerously trampled on her. Nor did the oppressors themselves agree; Bourbon and Pescara became indignant with the viceroy for having sent King Francis to Spain not only without their knowledge but against that minister's own declared intention of carrying him to Naples. This was the beginning of dissension, and of Pescara's high displeasure against Charles who supported the viceroy: nor was it lost upon the arch-intriguer Girolamo Morone High Chancellor of Milan, who foreseeing the fate of that principality began one of the most memorable intrigues in the annals of Italy: nothing less than with the full consent of Pope Clement, the Duke of Milan, and the Venetian republic to make the Marquis of Pescara King of Naples; and having once got rid of the French, to drive the Spaniards also from Italy and secure the

\* Guicciardini, *Storia*, Lib. xvi., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, pp. 1-15.

Duke of Milan in his dominions. Pescara consented if he could "*honourably*" accomplish the enterprise, and as the ingenuity of lawyers and the pontiff's infallibility succeeded in allaying his delicate and conscientious scruples, it was coolly determined to cut to pieces every man in his army who would not support him! This reputable plot was advancing rapidly when the continued absence of an important agent, (subsequently known to have been murdered on his journey to Milan) alarmed the marquis, who then revealed the conspiracy to Charles with an assurance that he had simulated from the first in order to unravel the whole proceeding! Whether this were truth or falsehood is still uncertain because no man can divine the secret motives of another's actions; but Morone was imprisoned and Sforza after a partial spoliation of his states, was compelled to take refuge in his own citadel where almost in a dying state he was besieged by Pescara.

This violence offered to Francesco Sforza showed the Italian potentates exactly what they might themselves expect from the continual professions and conciliating language of the emperor: Clement and the Venetians above all were indignant at being thus duped or betrayed by Pescara and were so much the more angry and suspicious because Charles had constantly avoided giving the formal investiture of Francesco as Duke of Milan, to which he was bound by treaty; wherefore this last act proved too plainly that a pretext alone was wanting to despoil him and make Milan the first step of the future Italian throne\*. Meanwhile the heavy contribution imposed on Florence bowed as she was under existing burdens, did not tend to diminish public discontent or soften the hatred to Cortona: A.D. 1526.

neither ultra-liberals nor more zealous Medician adherents saw any indication of what they had been formerly led to expect from Clement. The cardinal's hard and disgusting rule alienated many of the Medician faction, and some of its ablest supporters,

\* Varchi, Stor. Fior., Lib. ii., pp. 28-33.—Ammirato, Lib. xxx., pp. 356-358.

such as Piero Alamanni, Pandolfo Corbinelli, Antonio Serristori, Piero Ridolfi, and other adherents had been arrested by death. Meanwhile its adversaries gained strength and reputation; the Strozzi, Capponi, and Guicciardini, supported by wealth talent and popularity carried with them a powerful party, and Francesco Vettori the cousin of Niccolò Capponi and friend of Filippo Strozzi also belonged to them. Jacopo Salviati resided constantly at Rome but his family remained; and Capponi's cousins the sons of Alamanno, Averardo, and Piero Salviati, who were brothers-in-law to Matteo Strozzi and Francesco Guicciardini, added much to the strength of this party. Amongst all these, Niccolò Capponi was the man in whom public confidence and general respect was most concentrated and to whom the community looked as their future leader in the event of a revolution\*. The remembrance of their freedom and general independence under the influence of Savonarola and during Soderini's administration now became more vivid, encompassed as it was by that romantic affection and reverence for the "Olden Time" which recalls only its joys and comforts and forgets its evils.

Francis I. was relieved from captivity in the beginning of 1526 under conditions so hard that he determined not to fulfil them and had the sympathy of Europe in his favour: wherefore leaving his two sons to their fate as hostages in the emperor's power, and seeing the universal terror of the Italians at the latter's ambition and their own danger, he at once gave the rein to his desires, entered into a league with the pope and Venice, tacitly including the Florentines, and resolved once more to carry war into Italy. Hostilities soon re-commenced in Lombardy where Francesco Guicciardini was sent as "Lieutenant of the Church" instead of the old title of legate, to superintend the pontiff's army; Count Guido Rangoni had the chief military command and Giovanni de' Medici led the papal

\* Nerli, Lib. vii., p. 143.

infantry. The Marquis of Saluzzo commanded for Francis, and the Duke of Urbino with a Venetian "*Proveditore*," for that republic. Francesco Maria Sforza was still besieged in the citadel of Milan by the Marquis of Pescara who with Antonio de Leyva and the other Spanish chiefs seeing the inutility of a defensive warfare, urged the emperor to attack Clement in the Roman states and even beleaguer Rome itself. Cardinal Colonna and Don Ugo de Moncada the regent of Naples had already infringed a recent truce and treacherously assaulted Rome; they had taken three of the gates, driven Clement into the castle of Saint Angelo and plundered not only the Vatican but the church of Saint Peter, the third part of the Borgo, and every cardinal, prelate, and foreign ambassador that resided there. They then dictated a truce, and compelling the pope to recall most of his troops from Lombardy disturbed all the plans and movements of the confederates. Nor did Pescara and Leyva fail to exhibit to the world the weakness and unskilfulness of both papal troops and officers as displayed in the attack on Siena: Clement had in fact attempted with a large force to change the Senese government which had lately become hostile to him; but after a series of errors his army was completely baffled and his troops dispersed before the Camullia Gate of that city by a single effort of the inhabitants\*.

Meanwhile George Frundsberg from his private means and influence had levied troops and entered the Mantuan territory with large reinforcements, and Giovanni de' Medici at the head of four thousand infantry whom the pope had avoided recalling

\* "*Sacco di Roma*" da Jacopo Bonaparte, di San Miniato, pp. 62-70.— This gentleman of the ancient family of Bonaparte of San Miniato, between Florence and Pisa, and descended from an exiled Florentine race, was an eye-witness to the sack of Rome, little thinking what influence a descendant of his own family would in after ages

exercise not only over Italy but all the world, in the history of which he was destined to fill one of the most interesting and wonderful chapters — Guicciardini, Lib. xvii., cap. v., p. 219. — *Lettere di Principe*, fol. 104-106, vol. i<sup>o</sup>. — Muratori, Ann. 1526. — Malavolti, Lib. vii., Parte iii., fol. 129.

to Rome was sent against him ; but he, afraid of openly facing these German soldiers with his Italian bands, harassed them by continual and severe encounters until he was unfortunately wounded in a skirmish near Borgoforte, afterwards had his leg amputated, and expired at Mantua on the thirtieth of November 1526. The death of this daring and extraordinary young warrior at eight-and twenty is said to have struck terror to the heart of Italy whose every hope had long been fixed on him as her ablest champion : his courage amounting often to rashness and in the opinion of many to madness, had begun to subside into more calm and reflective valour while his military knowledge and experience gave augmented force and vigour to his genius\*. He was sincerely mourned by his countrymen for at no time could he have been less easily spared and all Italy felt the blow ; nay Clement himself whose fears and jealousy had excluded him from family power was forced to acknowledge his worth, and the selfish smile which at a more fortunate moment would have lightened his features, now melted into equally selfish sorrow at the death of Giovanni de' Medici. His renown spread even through England and filled all minds from the king downwards with unqualified admiration ; nay after death he lived in the hearts of his soldiers, who with mourning weeds and a sable banner still held together as in his lifetime, and under the dreaded name of the "*Black Bands*" proved in after wars the value of their "*father's*" and "*master's*" discipline †.

\* It was necessary to amputate his leg, and on the surgeon's information that ten men would be required to hold him during the operation he smiled and said, "*No one shall hold me,*" then taking a candle and fixing himself in a firm posture, held the light for the surgeons, and resolutely bore the operation (no slight or short one in those days), uttering but two moans while it lasted. (Vide *Marco Guazzo's Historic*, p. 49. *In Venegia*.—*Giolito*,

1546.)

† Segni, *Storia Flo.*, Lib. iº, p. 32.—Varehi, Lib. iiº, pp. 53 and 63 ; Lib. v., p. 30.—*Historic di Marco Guazzo*, p. 49.—Guicciardini, Lib. xvii., cap. iv., p. 195 ; cap. v., p. 237.—Jacopo Bonaparte, "*Saccotti Roma*."—Paulo Giovio "*Vite*."—Ammirato, Lib. xxx., p. 363.—Nerli, Lib. vii., p. 144.—Giul. Ughi, *Mem. Stor. delle Cose di Firenze*, MS., p. 36.

The importance attached by Macchiavelli to Giovanni's military genius and character may be seen in a letter to Guicciardini of the fifteenth of March 1525, where he writes: "I am about to say what will seem to you madness and will make a proposition that you will deem perhaps rash or ridiculous; but these are times that demand unusual, strange, and bold deliberations; everybody who can reason on worldly matters well knows how foolish and unstable is the multitude; yet constituted even as the people are they often suggest what is right and what ought to be done. For some days past it has been said in Florence that Giovanni de' Medici should display the banner of an adventurer and make war on his own account." This, Macchiavelli adds, roused him to consider that the people might be right: for no man possessed the confidence of the Italian nation so much as he: there were none whom the soldiers would so cheerfully follow, or who was more esteemed and feared by the Spaniards: he was daring, impetuous, of grand conceptions; and seized rapidly on great and broad principles of action. Wherefore, in Macchiavelli's opinion, by the secret assistance of Clement he might have assembled a formidable army and though apparently acting as an independent condottiere of the olden time, yet as a soldier of Francis and a Medici, the Spaniards would be in alarm, and pause ere they continued their ambitious projects against the independence of Italy, while it would give more vigour and confidence to Francis\*. This was too hazardous a measure for the cautious and timid nature of Clement, if indeed it were ever formally proposed to him, and his very timidity might have sharpened his perception to its ultimate effects as regarded Florence where his authority would not have stood a day against the power, the talents, and the popularity of Giovanni de' Medici †.

\* Macchiavelli, *Lettere Familiare*, Lettera lxxiv.

† Varchi, *Storia Fiorentina*, Lib. ii, pp. 53-54.

The Marquis of Pescara died in November 1525 at thirty-six years of age leaving behind him the character of one of the ablest men of his time but sadly tarnished by his double treachery to his sovereign, Morone and every other party implicated in the late intrigue about the kingdom of Naples. His decease made way for Bourbon to assume the sole command in Lombardy, with an army augmented by more than thirteen thousand German adventurers under George Frundsberg as already noticed: they had followed him for a crown a-piece and the promise of the wine, the women, and the pillage of Italy! But now the whole country was exhausted, Milan was ruined by pestilence and excessive contributions, and her sovereign after defending his citadel to the last was forced to capitulate and take shelter in Lodi: Bourbon had no money to pay his troops who turned insolent, mutinous, and ungovernable: their extortions and cruelty were horrible; every Spanish soldier became an executioner with all his implements of torture until voluntary or inflicted death put an end to his victim's sufferings and made way for some fresh object of unmitigated cruelty. These horrors were not confined to the inferior soldiers; Bourbon himself was forced into actions said to have been abhorrent to his nature, in consequence of the emperor's penury. The lord of half Europe and the Indies was now unable to maintain an army which any single one of his numerous possessions could easily have done while independent states. Morone who had been entrapped by the double treachery of Pescara was still in prison, and Bourbon by ordering him out for execution extracted 20,000 ducats as his ransom\*. Morone then became Bourbon's companion and very soon his most intimate counsellor and absolute governor, so powerful were his spells over the mind of all with whom he associated! Clement indignant at the Colonna, eager for revenge, and

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xvii, cap. vi., p. 243. — Jacopo Bonaparte, "*Sacco di Roma*," p. 76.

seeing that Moncada in his treaty only looked to the emperor's interest, at once broke the truce as they had done, deprived the cardinal of his hat, assembled under Paulo Vitelli all the troops he had been forced to recall from Lombardy, and ordered him to carry fire and sword throughout the Colonnese possessions. This was fearfully accomplished, but with great loss of reputation to the pope and misery to the people for a war of extermination was waged on the Neapolitan frontier against the Colonna by Vitelli and Rienzo da Ceri: nor was this all; Clement determined to attempt that kingdom itself and to this end invited Regnier Count of Vaudemont as representative of the ancient Anjou race to try his fortune there. Considerable success at first attended the papal arms, but the want of money soon worked out its usual consequences and Rienzo da Ceri returned in despair to Rome\*.

But now the storm began to thicken in Lombardy which was destined to fall with overwhelming force on the head of Clement and devastate beyond all former examples the ancient capital of the world. Bourbon's army was in such a state of disorganisation that it was with extreme difficulty he could after several trials induce the soldiers to quit Milan and form a junction with Frundsberg on the Trebbia; at length with the aid of Antonio de Leyva and the Marquis del Guasto five months' arrears were scraped together from various sources and battalion after battalion marched slowly and sullenly to Pavia, but all had crossed the Po on the thirtieth of January 1527, and mustered about twenty-three thousand men of various nations; ill-paid, insubordinate, and licentious†. In these circumstances Bourbon had no choice, he must have disbanded his army or maintained them at the enemy's expense; he could scarcely attack the Venetians for the confederate army guarded their territory, beyond which the Duke of

\* Muratori, *Annali*, Ann. 1526-1527.

† Guicciardini, *Stor.*, Lib. xviii., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 1, &c<sup>a</sup>.—Ammirato, *Lib.* xxx., p. 365.



Urbino had refused to follow Frundsberg, principally from hatred to Clement, and a wish to force him into the restitution of Montefeltro and San Leo. Florence or Rome therefore alone remained and the plunder of either offered a tempting bait to the cupidity of Bourbon's soldiers.

The year 1527, says Guicciardini, was replete with the most terrible and for many centuries the most unheard-of misfortunes: mutations of states, captivity of princes, the most fearful plundering of cities; famine, pestilence, death, flight, and rapine: and the only delay to the commencement of these frightful calamities was Bourbon's difficulty in withdrawing his army from Milan: this being accomplished he lingered for about three weeks in the vicinity of Placentia threatening it with a siege, but more from inability to proceed than inclination, until Alphonso Duke of Ferrara, who had now to Clement's great mortification joined the Imperialists, persuaded him to advance at once on Bologna and occupy that city if he could; or if not, at least there determine on his future course whether to march to the conquest of Florence or of Rome\*. It was, says Guicciardini, (himself a principal actor in this drama) an astonishing resolution of Bourbon and his army; who finding themselves without money, without stores, without pioneers, without the means of carrying their provisions; prepared to advance into the heart of an enemy's country and against adversaries that were far superior to them in number: still more surprising was the Germans' fortitude who leaving their country with a single ducat each, having suffered so much since their arrival in Italy, and with only two or three ducats more to subsist on, should now against the custom of all soldiers and especially those of their own nation, still go forward with no pay, and no reward but the hope of victory. But what made them bear all this was the authority and influence of George Frundsberg their captain

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xviii., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, pp. 1 to 19.

who allured them with the plunder of Rome and the greater portion of Italy\*.

With such hopes and such prospects Bourbon began his march about the last week in February, watched on all sides by the allies but with little inclination on the part of Urbino to molest him until fear should have compelled the pope to restore San Leo and Montefeltro, which Guicciardini much to Clement's dissatisfaction took upon him to promise†.

On the twenty-second of February Bourbon occupied San Donnino which was pillaged, and the papal army nearly twelve thousand strong under the Marquis of Saluzzo and Guicciardini (with whom also was Macchiavelli on a public mission) retreated from Parma to Modena followed by the Imperialists who continued their march by Reggio and Modena to the confines of the Bolognese territory: on the fifth of March the Venetians crossed the Po in pursuit and reached Rubiera when Bourbon and his mutinous army were in the neighbourhood of Bologna. During these transactions terror and irresolution marked the weakness of Clement: the ill success of the Neapolitan invasion, the disorder of his troops and finances, the failure of assistance from France, the lukewarmness of Francis from first to last, the slender expectations from England, far too distant and uncertain to be trusted, and the tardiness of Venice in paying Saluzzo's garrison in Bologna which rendered them entirely useless; alarmed too at the conduct of Urbino which exposed Tuscany to invasion, Siena being in favour of the emperor and Florence ready to revolt; all this proved too great for pope Clement's resolution, and after much vacillation he resolved on coming to terms. He therefore agreed with the imperial envoys Cæsar Fieramosca and Sernon, who had been sent for that purpose to a suspension of arms for eight months, but under rigorous conditions and great pecuniary

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xviii., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 22.

† Guicciardini, Lib. xviii., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 19.

disbursements both by Rome and Florence. Amongst other things Lannoy the viceroy of Naples was to repair to Rome as a guarantee for Bourbon's observance of the truce, of which Clement was doubtful, although from a letter intercepted by Guicciardini it became known that Bourbon had himself advised Lannoy to make truce with the pontiff\*. On the viceroy's arrival Clement's faith in the fulfilment of this convention became so firm or his coffers so empty that he disbanded all his troops except a hundred light horsemen and two thousand of the Black Bands of Giovanni de' Medici; and then despatched Fieramosca to Bourbon with the treaty, urging him to evacuate the ecclesiastical territory on payment of the stipulated sums†. But neither Bourbon nor his troops notwithstanding strong professions made by him to Guicciardini were so inclined and the investment of Bologna continued, while Urbino under presence of defending the Venetian territory against Bourbon after the truce was accepted, recrossed the Po and retired with all the Venetian army to Casalmaggiore‡.

For eight days Bourbon remained undecided, at length, either from inability to restrain his troops or predetermination, he wrote to inform Guicciardini that the former reason compelled him to proceed, and accordingly on the last day of March he had advanced to Ponte-a-Reno and passed Imola on the fifth of April, the Marquis of Saluzzo and Guicciardini having preceded him and occupied Forli. The viceroy expressed his indignation at Bourbon's conduct and quitted Rome on the third of April to meet him, assuring Clement that he should be compelled to observe the truce: on the sixth he arrived at Florence where he remained to treat with Bourbon's messengers being certain that nothing could now arrest his march

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xviii., cap. iº, pp. 22-29.

† For minute accounts of all these events, see the Letters of Giovanni Matteo Ghiberti, the pope's almoner, in the collection of state papers, called

"*Lettere di Principi*," "*Le quali si scrivono, o da Principi, o a Principi, o ragionano di Principi*."—In Venezia, Ziletti. 1585.

‡ Guicciardini, Lib. xviii., cap. iº, pp. 30-31.—*Lettere di Principi*.

but paying an enormous sum which was to be levied as usual on the Florentines\*.

Meanwhile Guicciardini strove hard, as lieutenant-general of the Church in Lombardy, to induce Venice, Urbino, and Saluzzo to make some effort against Bourbon even for their own sakes, as whatever course Clement might eventually be compelled to take they would assuredly suffer by his abasement; and he so far succeeded as to get them across the Apennines into the Florentine province of Mugello, while Bourbon in the last week of April had advanced by Meldola, Santa Sofia, and Val-di-Bagno as far as Pieve di San Stefano on the Tiber in the mountains above the upper Val-d'Arno: his envoys at Florence about the same time signed a convention with the viceroy, engaging Bourbon to respect the truce on payment of a large additional subsidy.

The viceroy was probably sincere, and Bourbon himself perhaps would rather have escaped from his daring and sacrilegious enterprise; but his troops were obstinate and he could not if he would control them: Clement himself appeared blind to all danger, nor could the efforts of Guicciardini restore his natural perception: the last convention at Florence completely lulled him to repose, and believing himself in perfect safety he dismissed the "Black Bands," sent the Prince de Vaudemont back to Marseilles and quietly awaited the event†. Bourbon had now reached Chiassa near Arezzo, and the allies were at Barberino where in a council of war it was determined at the suggestion of Federigo da Bozzole that preparations should be made at Ancisa thirteen miles from Florence to quarter the confederate army, which marched for that place the next morning. The vicinity of Bourbon, and the near approach of the allies to Florence created a powerful feeling of insecurity which, coupled with the public discontent nearly accomplished a

\* Lettere di Principi.—Marco Guazzo, † Guicciardini, Stor., Lib. xviii., cap. ii., pp. 33-40.

revolution and threw great difficulties in the way of all further military operations\*.

The young and ardent spirits of the popular party had been constantly gaining ground, and on the pretext of self-defence in the troubled state of Italy continual demands were made to the government for arms: these clamours increased after the death of Giovanni de' Medici who was considered as a sort of palladium; but the general tone of the liberals became more audacious as misfortunes thickened round the head of Clement and tax after tax was laid upon the city for his service†. At the approach of the hostile armies, both equally feared by Florence, arms were again loudly demanded by the people, who were encouraged by Niccolo Capponi, the Gonfalonier Luigi Guicciardini‡, and other chiefs, and not opposed by the Palleschi. A consultation was held on their demand at the Medician palace where Niccolo Capponi starting up with great animation insisted, "that matters of such importance which affected the common safety should not be discussed in the private apartment of the cardinal but amongst a greater number of citizens and in the public palace the residence of the Seignory."

These words soon became public and filled the different parties with hopes and fears: the demand for arms though reasonable was justly considered revolutionary yet complied with; not from any sense of justice, but a pure necessity arising from general discontent even amongst the Palleschi, and a determination of the latter to let Clement, who had treated them harshly, feel their strength and his own dependence. Staggered by the pope's apparent earnestness about the reëstablishment of political liberty, they had a few months before entreated him not to circumscribe their power or think of public freedom until he had made friends with Spain, when they persuaded

\* Guicciardini, Stor., Lib. xviii., cap. ii., pp. 40-41.—Discorsi di Marco Foscarini, tom. xxiii., p. 208, Del. Erud. Toscani.

† Varchi, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 54.

‡ Brother of the historian and author of the Commentaries: he was accused of playing a double part.

themselves that Charles V., who hated free governments, would be their firmest friend, because through such means he could more easily obtain a command of the public money. Clement unhesitatingly refused this, as he said, for the good of the community not his own private interest; but from his known falseness of character many believed that he had no real intention of accomplishing any measure of reform. The Palleschi were reminded of the many hard blows which they had already received, of the certainty that Clement would do his utmost to humble them whatever might be his final intentions as regarded liberty; and, conscious as they were of meriting public hatred, their best chance was to strike at the power which controlled them and deceived the people. Amongst these also suspicions were rife that the pope had only been amusing them on the all engrossing subject of liberty until Ippolito and Alessandro having learned their part should be able with external aid to become absolute lords of Florence.

This disaffection of the Palleschi increased public confidence, more especially as the chief magistrate Luigi Guicciardini although hitherto a strong adherent of the Medici, now showed himself disposed, and as Pitti avers through a trimming disposition, to yield everything to the people. The youth of Florence led by Piero Salviati a young and wealthy noble and very intimate with Ippolito, were the prime and salient movers of this clamour for arms, and the gonfaloniers of companies had orders to distribute them: but government becoming alarmed at its own boldness suddenly revoked the decree and a universal burst of indignation instantly followed\*. Previous to this Salviati had led on his young followers so audaciously as to scour the city by night in arms, and intimidate all the public authorities, until he

\* The young leaders of this affray, excited by the older citizens, were Giero di Alamanno Salviati, Giuliano Pondi, Alamanno de' Pazzi, Dante Castiglione, Francesco Spinelli, Antonio Berardi, Batista del Bene, Niccolo

di Giovanni Macchiavelli (*not the secretary*), Giovambatista Giacomini, Giovanfrancesco Antinori, and many others all of the highest families. (*Varchi*, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 55.)

was persuaded by Ottaviano de' Medici to remain quiet, but much to the sorrow of many, who beheld this opportunity of revolution lost through his weakness or inability\*.

The pope either could not or would not notice these outrages but contented himself with sending the cardinals Cibo and Ridolfi to Cortona's assistance: the former was legate of Bologna and the latter being either related by family or friendly connexions with all the discontented citizens was of little use to Clement in this emergency; an additional force of fifteen hundred infantry proved more efficacious for the moment. Florentine tongues were however at all times difficult of control and several citizens were imprisoned for abusing the Medici: everybody felt the public danger not only from without but within the town, and numbers of citizens, after placing their daughters in convents for protection, transferred their own fortunes and other personal property to foreign countries †.

Irritated by disappointment the malcontents were resolved on revolt and the Duke of Urbino's approach gave them a fair occasion. The cardinals and two young Medici had gone to Castello about two miles off, to meet the Duke of Urbino and were no sooner missed than a report ran like lightning through the city that they had fled in dismay: the Piazza and the Mercato Nuovo were presently in commotion; somebody had been insulted, no one knew how, by what, or by whom, but Lodovico Martelli, a young citizen, killed one of the palace guards; tumults instantly commenced; cries of "*Popolo*," "*Popolo*;" "*Libertà*," "*Libertà*;" resounded from every side; the palace gates were forced with but little resistance; the Seignory remained terror-struck, or favourable; the gonfalonier was willing to be compelled; and when Paulo de' Medici and Baccio Valori rushed up stairs to confirm his allegiance they were roughly driven back with shouts of "*Noi non vogliamo più*

\* Discorsi di Marco Foscarì, tom. — Varchi, Lib. iº, p. 55.  
xxiii., p. 208, Deliz. Erud. Toscani. † Varchi, Lib. iº., p. 62.

*Grandi, e si ha a vivere a Popolo e a Libertà.*” “We want no more oligarchies, but a popular and free government.” This changed the intentions of many waverers who with their armed followers were slinking away towards the Medici palace, but now headed by the youthful insurgents they forced the Seignory to declare that family rebels, to restore all state criminals, and reëstablish the popular government. The only dissenting voices were Federigo de' Ricci and Giovanni Franceschi one of whom was wounded and both outraged by Jacopo Alamanni and others; indeed so violent was this youth and so doubtful of Luigi Guicciardini that the latter was with difficulty protected from violence, and while crying out “*I am with you,*” “*I am one of yourselves,*” he was forced to an open window and then led on to the Ringhiera that his voice for “*People and Liberty*” might be better heard by the citizens\*.

Although the most prominent actors in this scene were the young Florentines, almost all the older and graver part of the community of every faction were not only present but the real movers of revolt. A sign from Niccolò Capponi made the guard drop their levelled arquebuses and the palace was instantly taken; and during every subsequent proceeding he, Matteo Strozzi and Francesco Vettori stood by, prompting and directing the younger citizens. But the rising was evidently sudden, premature, and unplanned; for no measures of defence or even of common security were adopted; the city gates were not closed, nor any other precaution taken for keeping out the proscribed family; whereof having timely notice, they and the cardinals returned with a strong detachment of soldiers under Urbino himself who occupying every approach prepared to besiege the palace. Francesco Guicciardini had entered Flo-

\* Discorsi di Marco Foscarelli, tom. xxiii., p. 208, Del. Erud. Tos.—B. Varchi, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, pp. 62-81.—B. Segni, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, pp. 7-9.—Ammirato, Lib. xxx., p. 369.—Paulo Giovio, Lib. xxv., p.

17.—Guicciardini, Lib. xviii., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 41.—J. Nardi, Lib. viii., pp. 322-324.—F. Nerli, Lib. vii., p. 149.—J. Pitti, Lib. ii., pp. 135-137.—Marco Guazzi, Ist., folio 65.



rence with the army but alarmed at this determination and its frightful consequences managed by means of Federigo da Bozzole one of the Marquis of Saluzzo's officers well known in Florence to bring about a capitulation\*.

This probably saved Florence from destruction and Guicciardini acknowledges to having received due praise for it at the time but complains that he was subsequently blamed as faithless and interested by both factions; by Cortona because he allowed a natural anxiety for the safety of his brother and other beleagured citizens to hinder the establishment of Medician rule by force of arms; and by the rest he was accused through attachment to the Medici of exaggerating the external danger and thus inducing them to yield without necessity. Tranquillity was however reëstablished, an amnesty promised and to a great degree fulfilled: but this day was the beginning of troubles, and perhaps more than anything facilitated Bourbon's successful assault of Rome for the allies instead of following him remained in and about Florence, they did not even advance to Ancisa as at first settled; but the two Venetian ambassadors took advantage of this general agitation in order to force the Florentines into the league according to their promise made through Palla Rucellai before the confederates entered Tuscany †.

Besides paying a certain number of troops in the general cause, they now offered or were forced to restore San Leo and Maiuolo to Urbino, and promised to make no terms with the emperor even though Clement should desire it: this convention with some modifications was completed on the twenty-

\* Marco Foscarelli however says that Bozzole wanted to cut them to pieces but was opposed and overruled by the Count Galliazzo, seconded by the Duke of Urbino, Foscarelli himself, and others who were against such cruelty. Guicciardini says that Federigo was greatly incensed on issuing from the palace, but that he pacified him previous to

his joining the others, and takes credit for doing so. No other author gives him this credit; but he asserts the fact! so difficult is truth to be found. † Varchi, Lib. ii., p. 92.—Segni, Stor. Fior., Lib. i., p. 10.—Guicciardini, Lib. xviii., cap. ii., pp. 43-4.—J. Pitti, Lib. ii°, pp. 137-38-39.

eighth of April ; Urbino profited by the occasion and his own position to recover these towns and it caused great delay for Bourbon was still rapidly advancing upon Rome. The viceroy had already attempted to stop him in a personal interview by carrying 80,000 ducats from Florence as the first payment of a larger sum for the imperial army; but so exasperated were the soldiers at the idea of losing the promised plunder of Rome that he with difficulty escaped from their hands and afterwards ran equal risk from the enraged peasantry who had been everywhere plundered by them. On this he retired to Siena not without exciting suspicions of having secretly acted in concert with Bourbon, who in face of the confederate army and other difficulties opposed to an attack on Florence had determined as the easier task to follow the advice of Morone and the Duke of Ferrara and march directly on Rome\*.

The truth was, that excepting some inadequate supplies from Siena, Bourbon had neither money nor victuals, and never could have sustained his army long in Tuscany against the confederates supported as they were by the Florentines, who would have valiantly defended their native city as they did a few years later single-handed against the same but then more powerful antagonists.

The Florentine insurrection as we have seen began and ended in one day ; on the next, that same faction who with armed hand and frowning aspect were ready to drown their city in blood, might have been seen in civic robes fawning on the boy princes of Medici, with mouths full of adulation, excuses, congratulations on present success and happy auguries for the future : like stage-players, the piece being finished, their robes were laid aside and with an easy change of countenance they resumed their nature. The more these citizens were favoured the more exacting false and insatiate they became ; with a face of sorrow

\* *Discorsi di M. Foscari*, tom. xxiii., *Del. Erud. Tos.*, p. 206.—*Guicciardini*, *Lib. xviii.*, cap. iii., p. 47.

on one side for the late confusion, and one of joy on the other for its happy termination, they put no bounds to their flattery while they vaunted their own foresight and sagacity in having often predicted these troubles, and for so doing had been calumniated: they had mingled, they said, with the insurgents only to check their violence, which they could alone do by seeming to uphold all their most turbulent actions, and thus they showed their devotion to the Medici.

Many with more audacity congratulated their masters on the happy termination of this revolt with a self-satisfied air as if they themselves had been the peacemakers, and perhaps with more veracious professions of devotion; for they were accused of mixing in the throng expressly to detect the real sentiments of leading men that government might know exactly whom to reward and trust to. Such was the slavish nature of the Palleschi and others of the great Florentine families! But all or almost all had some plausible excuse; some palliative which gave them a just claim on Medician gratitude and reward; so that from Ippolito and the Cardinals down to the secretaries, chamberlains, porters, and even to the lowest menial of the Medician household, all were importuned as friends to vouch for their former service and fidelity\*!

These professions passed for their real value, but were apparently accepted as sincere by the Medici who only awaited the pontiff's decision for their ultimate guidance. During this time the citizens who had really risen in the cause of liberty concealed themselves as much as possible, for little trust was given to the amnesty when a favourable occasion should arise for dispensing with it, and their fears were augmented by heavy fines having been already levied on several who had been active in the tumult. These punishments kept up agitation and alarm so that many quitted the city for security;

\* Varchi, Lib. iii., pp. 96-7.—Paulo Giovio, Istor., Lib. xxv., pp. 23-24.—Pitti, Lib. ii°, pp. 138-139.

nor was the mutual attitude of the Medici and Paleschi or "*Statuali*" less suspicious in despite of every effort: the former from their recent experience of the general odium against themselves and the infidelity of their own parasites, the latter from a consciousness of this infidelity and the apprehensions it occasioned. Both feared the popular spirit, and for present security Francescantonio Nori, whose father was killed in the Pazzi conspiracy, a resolute man and devoted to the Medici was made Gonfalonier of Justice\*.

The Florentines in truth had little reason to love Pope Clement's rule; they had lost their liberty, if not under him with his strenuous assistance, and were afterwards half-ruined to supply the prodigality of those who had destroyed it: they had fallen from the rank of an independent nation to be the private vassals of a simple fellow-citizen and their very name had ceased to exist in European diplomacy as an independent state. Five hundred thousand florins were forced from them for the war of Urbino, and those places received as compensation for part of this expense were wrested again from their hands. Five hundred thousand florins more had been disbursed by them for Leo the Tenth's war against France: 300,000 were paid to the imperialists during Giulio's own administration; afterwards as Pope, he had extracted 600,000 more for the sole purpose of maintaining another unlucky contest; and now the amnesty being already broken, it was feared would soon be utterly disregarded †. The will to do this was certainly not wanting either in Cortona or his advisers; for not only Count Piero Noferi captain of the palace guard but many others of the violent Paleschi offered to massacre all the Piagnoni, urging him to vengeance with these significant words, "*You have the pigeons in the dove-cot: twist their necks.*" And Lucca degli Albizzi although from extreme age

\* Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 139-140.

Stor., Lib. xviii., cap. iii., p. 66.—

† Discorsi di M. Foscarini, tom. xxiii., p. 185, Del. Erud. Tos.—Guicciardini,

J. Nardi, Lib. viii., p. 328.

he could scarcely speak, mumbled out the vulgar proverb "*Chi spicca l'impiccato, l'impiccato impicca lui.*" "He who cuts down the hanged the hanged will hang him." Nevertheless Cortona more from timidity than clemency only punished with fines for the moment, but sent a list of the most active citizens in the revolt to Rome, all young men of lofty spirit and high character with great literary acquirements, whose heads would probably have paid for their temerity had not the capture of Rome itself prevented it. Clement however in his existing difficulties only recommended forbearance and caution, until further orders\*.

The latter was rigidly executed, for not only the gates, the river passages, and all the streets leading towards the public place and palace were strongly guarded but the palace itself, that of the Medici, and every other quarter of the town were swarming with troops and artillery: none were suffered to cross the great square but known partisans; the portico called "*Il Tetto de' Pisani*" was filled with the soldiers' corselets and other armour ready for instant use; all who had taken part in the rebellion were called "*Piagnoni*;" for Savonarola's spirit still moved in Florence; every passenger was examined with scowling aspect by the troops, and the citizens passed silently along scarcely daring to raise their eyes in presence of an insolent soldiery: nothing but the sound of drums and trumpets was to be heard, new bands of ferocious mercenaries were continually showing themselves; parades, reviews, musters, and other military operations were incessant, and if more than three citizens were seen together, or even two when talking loudly, the rush of soldiers towards them was instantaneous; their mouths were stopped, their persons threatened, and if

\* Besides Giovanni Rinacini, Giuliano da Ripa and Girolamo Buonagrazia, who were fined; the list consisted of Pier Francesco di Portinari, Piero Vettori, Salvestro Aldobrandini, Francesco Nasi, Francesco Bandini, Gio. Lanfredini, Giannozzo de' Nerli, and two Pandolfini, one very learned but not good, the other very good but not learned. (Vide *Varchi*, Lib. iii., p. 98.)

a cry were at anytime raised the shops immediately closed and everybody sought his own dwelling with increased terror and precipitation\*.

This state of anger and intimidation lasted until the twelfth of May when the terrible catastrophe of Rome and the death of Bourbon although long kept secret, at last became public in Florence. This chief had pushed on with inconceivable rapidity and first descried the towers of the "Eternal City" on the evening of the fifth of May; he instantly demanded a free passage for the troops and on receiving the expected refusal would have stormed Rome that night but could not inspire the soldiers with his own daring impetuosity; wherefore dismissing them with a short but animating speech he prepared for the morning's achievement.

At the dawn of day he was seen in brilliant armour covered with a white surcoat leading his troops to the assault; in another moment the walls were mantled as by a rising fog with crowds of desperate assailants, and in the next, Bourbon, the high-reaching and faithless Bourbon was laying a bloody corpse before the yet unconquered city! "*Soldiers, conceal my death; push on the assault; for your's is the victory;*" were the last accents of this extraordinary and misguided prince; and his character has perhaps been loaded with more of the bad, than the good qualities which by many were acknowledged to belong to it.

Rome was taken; and never even by the most barbarous nations was she treated so barbarously: religious hatred, and military license, habitual and systematic cruelty, all acting on the most violent and disgusting of human passions, combined to stain this deed with the deepest tints of mundane wickedness; and yet, says Varchi, "*no punishment was ever more just!*" So notorious was Rome in those days for her excessive wickedness! This event astounded the Medici as much as it exhilarated the

\* Gio. Cambi., tom. xxii., p. 317.—Varchi, Lib. iii., pp. 94 to 105.

people; the Florentines alone amongst all the Italian nation rejoiced in the sad catastrophe, for it rang the knell of their tyrants and announced their own regeneration\*.

The cardinal had sufficient force to keep all things down, but not without blood, and for this he had either too much conscience or too little resolution: besides which he was sure of no one; nay even the Cardinal Ridolfi secretly favoured the malcontents. The conduct of Filippo Strozzi too and his wife Clarice de' Medici, Lorenzo Duke of Urbino's sister, entirely discomposed his schemes: Strozzi was justly irritated with Clement for leaving him a hostage in the hands of Ugo de Moncada at Naples while he unscrupulously broke the treaty: from this predicament Filippo escaped through the help of Zanobi Buondelmonti who by means of an intrigue against the Medici induced Moncada to give him his liberty when solicited by Clarice in person. He was angry too because his eldest son Piero Strozzi had not been made a cardinal; and Clarice was still more indignant not only for the above reasons but also because she had not been permitted to inherit her brother's property. Filippo escaped from Rome just before the assault, in despite of Clement's prohibition to the contrary, and joining Clarice who awaited him at Ostia with one of Antonio Doria's galleys, soon after arrived at Pisa.

Uncertain of events and unwilling to commit himself too hastily, he sent Clarice on to Florence and followed soon after, in consequence of her report and her spirited behaviour towards the younger Medici whom she hated as illegitimate intruders. Filippo Strozzi's aid was courted by both parties, for his riches his influence and his popularity were extreme; and being all things to all men, he was beloved and courted by all. Clarice had spoken boldly and severely to the cardinals and younger Medici in their own palace, and Filippo after an interview with

\* Bonaparte, "*Sacco di Roma*," pp. 121-153.—Varchi, *Lib. iii.*, pp. 105-106. Firenze, dal Fra Giuliano, Ughi dalla Cavallena, dall'Anno 1501 al', MS., p. 40. — *Memorie Istoriche delle Cose di Parte i<sup>a</sup>*.—Paulo Giovio, *Lib. xxv.*, p. 17.

Niccolo Capponi and the other liberals also repaired there attended by many citizens. Pretending complete ignorance of what had occurred he quietly listened to Ippolito's narrative, who after complaining of Clarice's asperity declared that notwithstanding this they, principally from what she said, had left the Seignory free to act but with his assistance they would soon change their policy, for none would dare to stand against the brother-in-law of Capponi, the cousin of Matteo Strozzi, and the bosom friend of Francesco Vettori, if they would only unite in favour of the Medici, having the Seignory at their command and three thousand well-armed troops to support them. They even descended to prayers and supplications, reminding him that "the time might come when his benevolence and assistance exercised towards them in their hour of need would not be repented of." Filippo replied in courteous and general terms; blamed the harshness of Clarice and offered to go instantly to the palace and do everything in his power to serve them. He then departed\*.

Meanwhile the bold aspect of Florence under the influence of Niccolo Capponi and other leading citizens had scared the Seignory who once more sacrificing the Medici to fear and interest strove hard for popularity. For this they had already decreed that the Great Council should open on the twentieth of June with the same forms and powers as before, but its smallest number as low as eight hundred: that a board of twenty reformers, one fourth chosen from the Minor Trades, should be elected for three months to modify the Great Council at their pleasure: that thirty citizens from each quarter not under twenty-nine years of age should be chosen as *Arroti* or assistants, and along with the Seignory, the Colleges, the *Balia*, and Council of Seventy (who chose them) were for four months to exercise every function of the councils of "Seventy"

\* *Dis. di M. Foscari*, tom. xxiii., p. 214, *Del. Erud. Tos.*—Varchi, *Lib. iii*º, pp. 105-14.



and "Hundred" combined; that is to say, have the nomination of all public officers, ambassadors, and commissaries, as well as the charge of general taxation until the Great Council assembled, and at the termination of their office they were to be replaced by the old Council of Eighty elected for one year from the members of the Great Council. The Arroti amounting to a hundred and twenty were immediately nominated, but the selection of the Board of Reformers owing to its great power was necessarily a work of caution, more especially as the Paleschi government trusted to them for the preservation of their own authority.

These measures gave universal satisfaction to those who merely skimmed the surface of public affairs and saw only the ripple of their own motion: more sagacious watchers detected therein a future oligarchy in place of the Medici, and the people's natural instinct made them suspicious and uneasy at they knew not what, until a clearer perception confirmed their discontent. It was explained to them, that the Arroti elected by the old Paleschi government and acting with it, were for the most part its creatures or adherents, therefore desirous of a restricted rule, and that the "Twenty," necessarily chosen by this new council could only present a more concentrated form of the same spirit with vast powers for moulding the Great Council to their will: and though many of the Arroti might be liberals still the "Seventy," the "Balìa," the Seignory, and the Colleges, were nearly equal to them in number and with a few more votes could always accomplish their objects. There was no remedy for this but a change of spirit in the councils and we shall presently see how this was effected\*.

When Filippo Strozzi first heard of this revolution he sent Giovanni Bandini to inform Count Piero Noferi that his guard was no longer required at the palace: he then returned to the Medici, told them of what had passed and that the thing being

\* Varchi, Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>, p. 114.—Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 142.

done he was of course unable to exert himself in their behalf which would only create confusion and deprive them of the benefits already conceded in consideration of their previous rank. They were then informed that they themselves, the young Duchess Catharine, and all their descendants were to be considered as Florentine citizens; that they with their adherents would be held irresponsible for every occurrence after the revolution had begun, that their motions were unfettered; that all the public privileges already bestowed on Ippolito notwithstanding his minority were continued and confirmed: that the Medician family should be thenceforth exempted from public contributions of every description and on every occasion, except the ordinary permanent tax of the Decima which was paid by all, and that no proceedings should be legally instituted against the goods or persons of the mother, brothers, or nephews of Silvio Cardinal of Cortona\*.

The joy of Florence when these things became public was beyond expression. "Men and women," says Varchi, "young and old, gentle and simple, priest and layman," all went forward rejoicing, and the prophecies of Savonarola were in every mouth, not of the vulgar alone but universally. Noferi had retired with his troops to the Medici palace but the people were still uneasy, for though no longer servants they did not yet feel themselves masters: agitation accordingly recommenced, whereupon Strozzi and Capponi advised Cardinal Cortona and his pupils to calm the public mind by retiring to their villa of Poggio-à-Caiano. According to Segni (for Varchi barely hints at this interview) Filippo Strozzi was formally deputed to announce that the departure of Ippolito, Alessandro, and the two cardinals Cibo and Cortona, would be agreeable to the people; whereupon accompanied by many young nobles, for the name of citizen was already melting away, he proceeded to the Medician palace and in a set speech informed them that it

\* Varchi, Lib. iii., pp. 115-16.

was not enemies but their friends and partisans who had taken this step, because they chose rather to live free though shorn of wealth and dignity, than be endowed with both at the mere will of a master and under the yoke of servitude. When Strozzi finished speaking the young Medici withdrew to an inner chamber for private debate; but the deputation soon became impatient and Filippo calling upon his proud-spirited wife who had come on purpose to see the issue, said; "Clarice " it is expedient that these people should depart, wherefore go " thou and address them in the manner best suited to that " purpose." Clarice willing and prompt, indignantly entered the chamber and in a haughty tone so as to be heard by the deputation thus spake. " It would be unworthy even of a " woman like me to remain so long without deciding on the " acceptance of what is now offered you as the most secure if " not the most honourable mode of proceeding which in exist- " ing circumstances can be adopted. Before things came to " this pass you should have governed so that in peril and in " difficulty friends and faithful followers would not be wanting, " as in bygone times was done by *my* ancestors, who with " benevolence and gentleness rather than with fear and severity " gained the love and loyalty of the Florentines and afterwards " found them constant in adversity. But you, who by your " conduct have betrayed the secret of your birth and convinced " the world that you are not of Medician blood, and not you " alone but Clement the unworthy pope and worthless prisoner, " why I say are you surprised at the misfortune of having all " the community this day opposed to your greatness? Now " therefore depart; for in this evil hour the family honour de- " pends on *me*: begone, I say from this house and from this " city, for you have neither inherited it by nature nor by any " inherent virtue in yourselves: make haste away then from " this assembly or I will be the first to oppose you, nor will I " any longer suffer you to hold the rank you pretend to here."

As addressed to the children these harsh expressions about political misconduct were undeserved, but they applied to Cortona and being uttered with great asperity completely subdued her audience: Filippo was then called in alone, and the young Medici with tears in their eyes implored his protection with a promise of submitting to everything demanded by the citizens\*.

When this result was reported to the Seignory arrangements were made for their quitting Florence the next morning, and accordingly on the seventeenth of May 1527 the Medici departed for the last time; as they passed out through the Via Larga many foretold that the people would one day repent of their folly in ever having allowed these princes to escape alive; there was more truth than humanity in the sentiment. They were accompanied by Niccolò Capponi, Francesco Vettori and Filippo Strozzi as far as San Donato whence the two first returned to the capital, the last remaining to receive formal possession of the citadels of Pisa and Leghorn. He neglected his mission, for though these were ultimately surrendered through force of arms and money by agreements with their respective governors, Filippo Strozzi allowed himself at the moment to be deceived and overreached by Ippolito: he was therefore recalled from Pisa and all his subsequent efforts were insufficient to regain the public confidence; former popularity changed to present disgust, his presence became hateful to the more ardent reformers, and he was finally compelled to quit Florence with moral stains on his character of a more loathsome tinge than neglect of national interests or a mere careless indulgence to the beautiful Ippolito of Medicis†.

The departure of this family like the dispersion of a heavy fog gave new light and life to Florence: the people relieved

\* Bern<sup>o</sup>. Segni, *Storie Fiorentine*, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, pp. 16-18.

† Segni, *Lib. i<sup>o</sup>*, p. 28.—Nardi, *Lib. viii.*, p. 330.—Varchi, *Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>*, pp.

131-4.—Guicciardini, *Lib. xviii.*, cap. iii<sup>o</sup>, p. 65.—Scip. Ammirato, *Lib. xxx.*, pp. 372-3.—Giuliano Ughi, *Mem. Ist.*, Parte i<sup>o</sup>, p. 42. MS.

of their bonds, broke loose like children from school and running wild about the streets crowded every shop, formed groups at every corner, meeting, shouting, and discussing not only recent events but every other state affair, with a long untasted liberty bordering on licentiousness: it was waking from an uneasy dream to the bright morning sunshine! Many were ready for plunder and private vengeance; incitement was strong amongst the citizens to attack the houses of the Medici and their known adherents and let fire and slaughter do their work; a similar wish pervaded the multitude; but the mass of people was still under control, and the better-disposed citizens insisted on first forming and consolidating a government and then punishing: others thought differently; and many never thought at all, nor exactly comprehended what they wanted.

In the first moments of confusion the public eye was naturally directed to Niccolo Capponi as the principal actor and promoter of the revolution; all parties looked to him for advice although an old and well-known adherent of the Medici: as he walked the streets he was hailed by the title of LIBERATOR; any assurance from him was believed, any counsel listened to. A false report arose that the pope was released from the castle of Saint Angelo, that the Medici had outwitted Strozzi, had repented of their flight and were on the road to Florence: the excitement became extreme and even dangerous until Capponi appeared on the Ringhiera and addressed the multitude promising a speedy meeting of the Great Council the cherished object of them all: then the storm subsided and shouts of "*Liberator*," "*Consiglio*," "*Popolo*," "*Libertà*," resounded to the stars\*.

Niccolo Capponi and Filippo Strozzi were at this time the leading and most popular citizens of Florence, but their influence was very differently acquired. Capponi was grave, temperate, severe in his customs, and morally irreproachable:

\* Varchi, Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>, p. 119. — Segni Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, pp. 19-20. — Segni, Vita di N. Capponi, pp. 306-7.

simple even to parsimony in his habits and domestic regulations, and neither imprudent nor exacting in mercantile affairs; his family was educated in the same spirit, and he himself noted for a gentle artless simplicity of character which gave greater dignity to his acknowledged virtues.

Strozzi was an epicurean in its modern and sensual, not its ancient philosophical signification; a thorough voluptuary, equally licentious in morals and in habits; but full of taste, gentleness, and refinement: grace and elegance heightened his personal attractions and added new charms to the expression of an acute and cultivated mind: excelling in all the accomplishments of the age; liberal, hospitable, of great wealth, and universally prepossessing he bewitched the whole world; and vibrating between vice and virtue according to the varying impulse of his mind or the character of his company, he became "all things to all men." He had the art of making himself beloved by the young, esteemed by the old, revered by the aristocracy and caressed by the citizens, and all this so thoroughly and universally that although only a private gentleman he is described as living like a sovereign prince without guards in the midst of an affectionate people, for so rare so various and so abundant were the agreeable qualities united in him that scarcely a person could be found who was not captivated by some of them\*.

The Balìa which was created at the restoration of 1512 and had ever since been the instrument of Medician oppression ceased to exist as a governing council, and now united its power with the lately-created "Arroti," the "Seventy," the Seignory,

\* Segni, Lib. iº, p. 27.—Segni, Vita di Niccolò Capponi.—It might well be believed that such popularity said but little for the moral character of the Florentines did we not every day witness the easy progress and popularity of witty and amusing vice (even when unaccompanied by wealth like Stroz-

zi's) in a nation certainly moral and religious, and amongst gentlemen who scorn the vices that they tolerate for the sake of good-fellowship, political interests, and social amusement. Politics, music, and horse-racing, like misery, "make us acquainted with strange bed-fellows."

and the Colleges, in one great provisional assembly; but on the Medici's retirement it was formally abolished\*. The gonfalonier Antonio Nori and all the Seignory were devoted partisans of that race and consequently doubted by the people who became every day more suspicious: alarmed by these commotions and even threats of the Florentines the Medici retired to Lucca, nor could all Filippo Strozzi's influence hinder their flight; Florence therefore and even its territory were now quit of them; their power was gone, but not those who loved their power, although they had been compelled by a stronger power to dissolve it. The latter however had no mind to follow this example and abandon their own interests, on the contrary by a slight enlargement of the existing basis they meant finally to work out a close aristocracy and exhibited the Grand Council as a mere object of attention to the multitude until Pope Clement's fate should be decided, to whom if possible they intended to restore the government.

There is however, as both Macchiavelli and Varchi observe and as experience teaches, an instinctive feeling in the multitude which often sets them on the right scent, independent and ignorant as they are of any details or other precise knowledge of what should be accomplished for their own benefit, and this now showed itself in Florence; for scarcely were the Medici departed when a sensation of doubt and insecurity arose in the public mind and suspicions began to prevail that the people would be deceived by their liberators and get nothing but a change of masters. "They do not *want*," it was currently whispered, "they do not *seek* a free constitution but only " the government of the few, which they call by a Greek " name, as if we do not understand the word '*Aristocracy*;' " they have not expelled the Medici to make *us free* but " themselves powerful: they have, as the proverb says, '*got* " *the honey in their mouth and the razor at their girdle.*'

\* Fil. Nerli, Lib. viii<sup>o</sup>, p. 154.

“ For what other reason have they deferred assembling the  
 “ Great Council but to gain time until they see the turn affairs  
 “ may take at Rome? What does their council of a Hundred  
 “ and Twenty mean? Thirty from each quarter! Only a  
 “ realization of their long-dreamed-of government of the ‘*Otti-*  
 “ *mati!*’ Which of us does not know that the man who rejects  
 “ you as a companion will take you for a slave? We must awake  
 “ and be vigilant, for should these men remain we shall be  
 “ oppressed and subdued by three hundred instead of a single  
 “ tyrant: we must watch what they do, not what they say and  
 “ promise, and keep our eyes continually upon them ”\*.

Public suspicion was further awakened by Clarice Strozzi’s taking up her abode with the child-Duchess of Urbino then called “*La Duchessina,*” in the Medici palace where Cardinal Ridolfi and Ottaviano de’ Medici also remained, and its lofty halls still continued to be thronged by a crowd of citizens amongst whom even Niccolo Capponi was conspicuous and incurred so much odium as to have some difficulty in recovering public confidence. Andreuola Zati one day meeting him near the Medici palace said, “Niccolo you will be torn to pieces!” And on Capponi’s asking why, answered as the Florentines are wont, by a proverb. “*You have changed your bush but not your wine and the people will have the wine changed also*”†. Nor were there wanting many others who by such phrases, and significant hints not unmixed with threats and ridicule, gave him plainly to understand that neither his intimacy at the Medici palace nor any delay in assembling the Great Council would be borne much longer ‡.

This had its effect; for Niccolo Capponi apparently recalled to his senses either by a feeling of duty or danger, insisted on a macebearer §, or public messenger of the Seignory, being

\* Varchi, Lib. iii., p. 121.

† “Voi avete mutato frasca e non vino, e questo popolo vuole mutare ancora il vino.”

‡ Varchi, Lib. iii., p. 123.

§ “*Mazziere.*” They carried silver maces before the Seignory, and their persons were held as sacred as heralds, because they were supposed to represent the dignity of that magistracy.



despatched to clear the Medician residence of its obnoxious guests. The result was that Ottaviano concealed himself; Clarice and Catherine of Medicis retired to the convent of Santa Lucia, which was founded by and almost belonged to their family; and Cardinal Ridolfi after first taking refuge in a private house ultimately removed to his own archiepiscopal palace. This decided measure restored Capponi's popularity, awakened fresh spirit in the people and augmented their agitation; wherefore on the following day, which happened to be Saturday, (considered an important day both for good and evil to Florence), vast crowds gathered round the palace in deep and earnest discussion; suddenly a loud and angry shout rose from this multitude and a voice distinct and clear, and audible within the palace; cried "*It is true the Medici are gone; but it is also true that they are not gone, because they have left the selfsame magistrates to govern and command the city.*" Alarmed at this sign, many citizens assembled and after long debates the Medician members of the "Otto di Guardia e Balìa" a criminal court of great power were removed, and the magistracy of the "Otto della Pratica" abolished altogether. This was something, but not sufficient: the crowd became violent; they seized on the palace gate, and a proclamation to disperse was unheeded: the shops were suddenly closed; amongst the young citizens some indications of wishing to convoke a parliament alarmed both government and older men; for it was ever a triumph of faction in its rudest form and fiercest aspect; whereupon a numerous assembly of every class of citizens was summoned to the palace and a promise of convoking the so-much-desired Great Council on the following Tuesday announced to the people.

Thus was the grand object gained, and the reasons for delay though true were puerile and soon demolished: it was objected that the election purses were disordered, but this was at once remedied by ordering that each citizen claiming a seat in the

Great Council should bring a card inscribed with his own name and that of the gonfalon under which he served to prove his citizenship, for the Divieto and all other formal disqualifications were suspended. The other obstacle was still more trifling: the great council-chamber had been turned into a barrack by the Medici and was therefore totally unfitted for the assembly; but Tanai de' Nerli, a young noble belonging to one of the colleges, instantly engaged to remedy this, and at once setting to work with his companions, all of the first families in Florence, after a day and a night's incessant labour succeeded in reducing the council-chamber to complete order so that everything was prepared for a meeting on the Monday morning, when the "*Hundred-and-twenty Arroti*," the "*Seignory*," the "*Seventy*," the "*Balia*" and "*Colleges*," called altogether the "*Consiglio degli Scelti*," were to assemble. Such energy amongst the young nobility shows the spirit and temper of the time with the prevailing fear lest anything should occur to postpone or defeat their wishes: but thus urged the above council appointed the next day, the twenty-first of May, for the great assembly, into which all above twenty-four years of age were to be admitted except those to whom the Medici had accorded a seat in the Seignory and Colleges from the year 1512 to the last revolution unless they or their families had previously enjoyed those honours. This was called "*making a clearance of those who had come in at the window and not at the door of the councils*."

Instead of the "*Otto di Pratica*," the "*Ten of Peace and Liberty*," otherwise named the "*Dieci di Balia*," were restored with greater authority than they had ever possessed since the revolution of 1494. The "*Council of Eighty*" was re-established for six months in all its authority; the creation of a gonfalonier for not less than a twelvemonth or more than three years was decreed, commencing with the first of July; and all the measures of the Twenty Reformers were to continue unimpaired until

the following October if approved of by the Council of Eighty\*. Lastly it was decreed that from the moment this council assembled the mixed council of the Hundred and Twenty, Seignory and others necessarily ceased and dissolved. All those who had suffered in purse or person under the Medici were pardoned and compensated to the full extent of their loss†, and to propitiate Heaven a hundred bushels of corn were ordered to be distributed amongst the poor: thus the so lately agitated city was rejoiced and quieted. After the council-chamber had been cleaned, prepared, and sprinkled with holy water, it was consecrated by a solemn mass, and a primary meeting of the once more regenerated Florence took place on the twenty-first of May 1527, to the number of two thousand two hundred and seventy citizens ‡. A complete change of magistrates was immediately effected in the “*Ottodi Guardia e Balìa.*” Liberals were appointed to fill the office of the “*Ten of Peace and Liberty*” commonly called by its former name “*The Ten of War,*” and on the twenty-fifth of May the Council of Eighty was completed. The only thing that disturbed this general harmony was Filippo Strozzi’s failure at Pisa about the fortresses, and as it was believed that he had purposely favoured his kinsmen a fresh spirit against every one connected with the Medician government again broke forth encouraged and headed by Alfonso Strozzi, Tommaso Soderini, and Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi; the last who was one of the most active partisans of the Medici in 1512 and long after; who had no scruple in

\* Varchi, Lib. iii., pp. 123-127. — Nerli, Lib. viii., p. 158.

† Amongst them were Bardo Altoviti, Zanobi Buondelmonti, Luigi Alamanni, Niccolò Martelli, Luigi Cei, Dante da Castiglione, Batista della Palla, Giovambatista Pitti, Gherardo Spini, Giovanni Rinuccini, Francesco Cavalcanti, Jacopo Altoviti, Leonardo Malegonelle, Alessandro Monaldi and others.

‡ Giov. Cambi, pp. 318-322, tom.

xxii., *Del Erud. Tosc.*—Varchi, Lib. iii., pp. 129-130.—Ber. Segni, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 26.—Jac. Nardi, Lib. viii., p. 331.—F. Nerli, Lib. viii., pp. 153-158.—Jac. Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 143-144.—Paulo Giovio, Lib. xxv., p. 26.—S. Ammirato, Lib. xxx., p. 373.—Guicciardini, *Stor.*, Lib. xviii., cap. iii., p. 66.—Segni, *Vita di Capponi*, pp. 307-308.

destroying the Great Council of that day and along with it his country's liberty, was now one of the most active restorers of that council, one of the most violent champions of that very liberty, and the bitterest enemy of the exiled race! But he was then young, and a more intimate acquaintance with them had opened his eyes to their character and his own interest, if not to his country's welfare\*.

Opposed to this party was Niccolò Capponi with a numerous following of young and old citizens and all the Palleschi who were suspected by the people besides many others of that faction not so prominent in the public eye: such as Bernardo Gondi, Zanobi Carnesecchi, Jacopo Morelli, Giovanni Popoleschi, Mainardo Cavalcanti, and Lorenzo Segni, all of whom were either desirous of retarding every reform or bringing them about gradually and gently. Of all these Capponi availed himself to check the impetuosity of his antagonists and preserve ancient usages which even before the assembly of the Great Council they had attempted in various ways to infringe, but especially by forcing Antonfrancesco Nori and the existing Seignory prematurely from office. Much violence and even menaces had been used to intimidate that gonfalonier, yet he stood firm not only against every outward assault but against the more temperate reasoning of Capponi who wished him on public grounds to resign and pacify the citizens.

After the establishment of the constitution Albizzi's attacks were renewed, not by open force for Capponi was too strong, but by means of a religious procession under the guidance of Fra Bartolommeo da Faenza a friar of Saint Mark's and a reviver of Savonarola's school which was once more favoured. This scheme was baffled by the gonfalonier's acuteness, on which Albizzi with about thirty of his faction attempted to expel the Seignory by force and would have done so had not Capponi who always maintained a friendly intercourse

\* Nerli, Lib. viii., pp. 155-156-160.

with him, thrown himself between them and finally effected a compromise. By this another gonfalonier was for the sake of public peace to be elected as the twenty Reformers should decide, and a new Seignory chosen for three months in order to preserve the customary periods of election; but immediately afterwards a decree passed through both councils for the election of a permanent gonfalonier of justice in the following manner\*.

Sixty electors were drawn from the purse of the Great Council, each of which was to name one candidate eligible to all the magistracies and not under fifty years of age: after a careful scrutiny of these sixty candidates and a subsequent ballot, the six who had most black beans in their favour provided the number of these exceeded one-half, were again balloted for by the Great Council and the future gonfalonier was chosen by a majority of votes. The six citizens who now remained after the first scrutiny were Baldassare Carducci, Tommaso Soderini, Alfonzo Strozzi, Nero del Nero, Giovambatista Bartolini, and Niccolo Capponi; each being supported by a distinct party.

Carducci was chosen as the champion of those most inimical to and fearful of the Medici and all their followers, and who wished to revenge that family's neglect of their own imagined deserts as well as any other real or fancied injury: he moreover carried those with him who desirous of preserving public freedom suspected all the Palleschi, and might have had many more votes but was still absent at Padua where he had long resided to escape from Medician tyranny.

Alfonzo Strozzi was supported by many of the same party; but his manners were unpopular, and his activity against Savonarola lost him the Frateschi's favour.

Tommaso Soderini had the good wishes of those who wanted a free government and who had supported his uncle while in power; he had no opponents but the Palleschi, who equally objecting to

\* Nerli, Lib. viii., pp. 157-160-161.—Varchi, Lib. iii., p. 150.

Strozzi and Carducci gave every vote to Capponi because he alone could protect them from the vengeance of their adversaries. Soderini also lost many voices from an apprehension of his family influence which rivalled that of the Medici, moreover a long sojourn in foreign courts with foreign manners and arbitrary notions was ever unpopular in Florence.

Nero del Nero and Giovambatista Bartolini's chance arose from a general feeling of personal respect for two men, who having previously enjoyed the highest civic honours would never after condescend to serve the Medici: their supporters as may be supposed were very few, and those more perhaps to mark their hatred of the Pallesehi than from any abstract love of virtue.

Niccolo Capponi while he enjoyed public honours under the Medici had still maintained a manly and dignified conduct, a wisdom in his public and private deportment, a lucid reputation, and an independent mind: he was honoured by the Medici more on account of his high family and ancestral fame combined with his own personal character, than any solicitation on his part, and his behaviour in public office confirmed the public opinion of his merits: he was therefore supported by moderate men of all parties besides the whole phalanx of Pallesehi, and was elected gonfalonier of justice amidst general acclamation.\* Macchiavelli was not included in the new government although he returned about this epoch to Florence and died on the twenty-second of June 1527 only three weeks after Capponi's election. By a decree of the twenty reformers †

\* Varchi, Lib. iii., pp. 151-156.— Nerli, Lib. viii., p. 164.— Ughi, Mem. Ist., p. 42, MS.

† Their names were: For the Quarter of *Santo Spirito*, Tommaso Soderini, Nero del Nero, Francesco Mannelli, Niccolo Capponi, and Giovanni Bartolommeo. For *Santa Croce*, Giovanni Peruzzi, Giovanni Rinuccini, Federigo Gondi, Jacopo Morelli, and Francesco

del Zacheria. For *San Giovanni*, Larione Martelli, Raffaello Guasconi, Bartolo Tedaldi, Zanobi Carnesecehi, and Vittorio Landi. For *Santa Maria Novella*, Baldassare Carducci, Giovanni Acciaiuoli, Tomaso Giacomini, Giovanni Popoleschi, and Domenico Pescioni, or according to Cambi, Pasquini.

the new gonfalonier was to be installed on the second of June and his office to last thirteen months with the privilege of being reëlected: he was to be fifty years of age and could not refuse to serve: he was to inhabit the same apartments in the palace which had been occupied by Piero Soderini, with a salary of 1000 florins a year in six payments: he was empowered to initiate any public measure in the Seignory independent of the "Proposto" or ordinary president, and moreover preside in all the criminal courts when he chose to assist in their proceedings, but in such cases the court was bound to meet in the palace and plead before him, and during his period of office no son, grandson, or nephew of the gonfalonier could belong to the Seignory\*.

Thus were the Medici expelled and Florentine liberty re-established for the last time on a broad and liberal basis; but storms were already gathering round it, and the inevitable Medici though now bending to the blast were destined to right again and bear down with more destructive force on their unfortunate country.

One of the earliest acts of foreign policy accomplished by the new government was (in despite of Capponi's counsel and influence before he became gonfalonier) to confirm the Florentine alliance against Charles, a measure which first made that monarch a most bitter foe and caused their final destruction. But now Capponi lost no time in assembling the Great Council, and besides expressing his gratitude to the people and devotion to the republic, and advising rather a soothing than an irritating policy towards Clement, he strongly urged the citizens to put away all private and public differences and stand firmly together for the preservation of national liberty. "Do you wish," said he, "to be free? be united. Do you wish this republic to last long and happily? live in concord. Are you desirous of overcoming your enemies, or that they should not overcome

\* Varchi, Lib. iii., p. 135.

“you? conquer yourselves; put down enmities; let anger depart, set aside rancour.” He then warned them against Clement who would be more anxious to enslave Florence than to liberate Rome, and whose power and machinations could only be defeated by union and vigilance, at the same time it would be wiser to soothe him as pope than insult and irritate him as Giulio de' Medici, because deeds, not abusive words, were the true ingredients of victory.

This speech did not meet the feelings of all, for abuse of Clement and the persecution of his adherents was a favourite object of many who now burned for revenge\*. Five syndics were appointed to investigate the public accounts from the year 1512, and bring all defaulters to justice; this decree was aimed directly at the Palleschi and from its consequences Filippo Strozzi keeper of the public treasure, is said only to have escaped by the assistance of Capponi himself who connived at the destruction of a public account-book kept by Francesco del Nero which would as was generally supposed have condemned him †.

New modes of taxation and compulsory loans were now resorted to as unscrupulously and unmercifully as under the Medici, but by an ingenious though unjust contrivance the bulk of contribution was made to fall on the more opulent citizens especially of the Palleschi faction. Previous to the revolution too, Clement had issued a brief authorising the community to sell a tenth of the Church possessions, intending the money for himself although nominally destined to public service. This brief had not been yet executed and government dexterously availing itself of such authority raised a considerable sum with great rigour and to Clement's extreme indignation, who not only saw himself driven from Florence, a close prisoner in Rome, and powerless for want of resources; but his own false actions skilfully turned against himself and used as a weapon

\* Varchi, Lib. iii., pp. 156-162.

† Segni, Vita di Nic. Capponi, p. 312.



for his destruction\*. Sects and parties now began to sprout; jealousies, doubts and fears multiplied; the Palleschi were marked and vexed, not by Capponi who was fiercely accused of being too partial to them, but by their enemies in the Great Council. To widen the breach between Clement and Florence the arms of the Medici were everywhere pulled down by the younger and more ardent reformers under the impetuous Dante da Castiglione, Piero Salviati and others, and even some waxen images of the family which stood in the church of the Annunciata were demolished by a party of these young men disguised in masks †.

These insults exasperated Clement more than anything except the loss of his tithe, and prepared the way for deep and heartless vengeance. An offer had been made through Filippo Strozzi by the imperial agents on the part of Charles that if Florence would become his ally, or even remain neutral he would promise to defend her; and on this much discussion arose; but every attempt at such a convention was ultimately baffled by the French party under Filippo's brother Alfonso, and Tommaso Soderini, who had both become powerful in Florence. Not satisfied with their opposition they followed up their success, and rallying under the catch-word of Savonarola, that "*Gigli con gigli dover fiorire,*" Lily with lily would always flourish, carried a resolution that Giuliano Soderini then resident at his bishopric of Saintes in France should act as Florentine ambassador at that court and make the most favourable treaty he could for the republic. The result was a league between the kings of France and England the Venetians, Florentines, and Duke of Ferrara, against the emperor; by virtue of which Florence was to maintain four thousand infantry and four hundred cavalry in the wars of Italy either against Milan or Naples.

\* Nerli, Lib. viii., p. 166.—Varchi, ii°, p. 148.—G. Ughi, Mem. Istor., Lib. iv., p. 188; Lib. v., p. 26. p. 43, MS.

† Segni, Lib. i., p. 41.—Pitti, Lib.

No time was lost in assembling this force which consisted of the celebrated "*Black Bands*" of Giovanni de' Medici the best native infantry in Italy and principally composed of Florentines, under the command of Orazio Baglione, Giovanni da Furino, Lucantonio Cappano, Sampiero Corso, and Amico da Venafro: it was destined to join a large army under Lautrec which Francis I. was hurrying over the Alps ostensibly for Clement's release but really to attempt the conquest of Naples\*.

For national defence the whole Florentine militia was reorganized as in the time of Piero Soderini under a military board called the "*Nove della Milizia*" which deputed four resident commissaries to command the rural districts, leaving the urban guard of subject cities under the orders of the respective communities. All males from eighteen to thirty-six years of age were thus enrolled armed and disciplined, with monthly exercises and various weapons, to the number in the first instance of ten thousand men: and it is remarkable that their arms were imported from Germany: a strong presumptive proof of the decline of that branch of industry in Italy, once so famous for manufactures of steel and iron †.

Siena had at this time recovered her liberty by first expelling Fabio Petrucci and afterwards Francesco Petrucci: but as the government was devoted to Charles one of the first attempts of the French Florentine faction was to restore Fabio and with him a powerful French party to the command of that republic. For this a force was assembled at Colli where these exiles lived and under the guidance of Raffaello Girolami made an unsuccessful attempt on Siena: on this it was deemed wiser to remain at peace. Francesco Carducci went there as ambassador and as was said learned much of his democratic turbulence from that people: they were certainly good masters if

\* Annirato, Lib. xxx., pp. 373-374.—Segni, Lib. i., pp. 31-37.—Guicciardini, Stor., Lib. xviii., cap. vi., p. 119.

† Segni, Lib. i., pp. 37-38.

any Florentine ever required instruction on a point so peculiarly national\*.

During these transactions Clement continued a prisoner in Saint Angelo where to augment his misery famine slowly consumed the garrison, and then the plague which had long raged in Rome over-stepped the castle walls and fell heavily therein: there was no internal hope, no succour from without, although Urbino with an army of three-and-thirty thousand men was hovering round to mock the Pontiff's expectations. The viceroy of Naples died of plague and Don Ugo de Moncada succeeded him: he repaired to Rome with instructions to liberate the pope, assisted by Girolamo Morone and the Cardinal Pompeo Colonna who by this time had been gained by Clement. A convention was accordingly signed on the last day of October by which 400,000 crowns were to be paid to the emperor whom amongst other conditions Clement engaged never to oppose in Naples or Milan. Several hostages of the highest rank and wealth were given as pledges for this treaty and on the ninth of December Clement VII. was to be liberated, but doubting the Spaniards he escaped on the preceding evening disguised as a gardener or merchant and reached Orvieto in safety leaving all his hostages to their fate; a very doubtful one in those unscrupulous times, and in fact they were twice taken to the forum to be executed for non-payment of a sum which even in their greatest prosperity they could not have accomplished†.

When Clement's escape became known his levee was crowded by the chiefs of the League to congratulate him on recovering that liberty which if they had done their duty he never would have lost, and to which they could at any moment have restored him. But instead of reproaching them he broke forth into bitter invectives against Florence where his revenues he said had been sequestrated, his friends ill-treated, and not even

\* Segni, Lib. iº, p. 38.

† Muratori, Annali.—Segni, Lib. iº, p. 40.

the compliment of an embassy paid to his dignity. These complaints were repelled by the Florentines, who insisted that the Medician rents had been justly appropriated to liquidate the pontiff's debts to the commonwealth as was done in the case of every other citizen, but in his with more delicacy and consideration, and that when he entered into terms with Francis an ambassador would be sent to the pontifical court. Clement in the meanwhile secretly approving of his adherents' conduct at Florence advised them to watch occasions, be vigilant, and wait for better times: these misfortunes he said were sent by Heaven for their good; he had himself already learned from them how many errors had been committed by his ministers and thus enlightened should know how to proceed in future, while they might now be convinced that without the support of his house it would be impossible to maintain their ascendancy; wherefore he hoped they would thenceforward bear with the errors of his ministers as necessary evils like inclement seasons or other natural incommodities; things that from his existing position he could scarcely remedy as he did on the spot when a cardinal\*.

These reasonings being in harmony with the Palleschi's wishes were believed and excited new desires for a change or improvement of government, desires expressed in various ways by all parties and not discouraged by Capponi. It was at this time that Donato Giannotti, then secretary of the republic, wrote a letter on that subject to the gonfalonier, re-addressing it after the siege to Zanobi Bartolini Salimbeni, which is evidently the germ of his celebrated essay on the Florentine government: but Capponi never had the power if he possessed the will to carry any of these reforms through the Great Council †.

\* J. Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 150.

† Some parts of Giannotti's plan, which, when taken separately, suited their views, seem to have been afterwards adopted by the Medici, probably

through Zanobi Bartolini's means, but not in Giannotti's spirit.—Lettera di D. Giannotti. Del. Erud. Toscani, tom. xxiii., pp. 145-165.—Pitti, Lib. ii., p. 151.

In November 1527 Odet de Foix Seigneur of Lautrec once more led a French army across the Alps while Andrea Doria who by expelling the Adorni had just reduced Genoa to the devotion of France, commanded for Francis in the Mediterranean. The principal objects of this force were to recover the duchy of Milan for Francesco Sforza and conquer Naples for France, and Lautrec's progress was rapid: Terra di Bosco, Alexandria, and Pavia were successively stormed and the latter barbarously ravaged in revenge for the king's misfortunes. Milan where Don Antonio de Leyva had shut himself up with all his force was avoided; Parma and Placentia opened their gates; the Venetians soon joined their ally; Alfonso of Este supplied a body of cavalry, and without waiting to improve his victories in Lombardy Lautrec appeared suddenly at Bologna. While there he demanded a free passage through Tuscany from the Florentines and their quota of troops, or a pecuniary equivalent. Both were instantly accorded but he was advised to march by Romagna and avoid the plague famine and desolation which pervaded Tuscany. This advice was accepted and the Black Bands subsequently joined him under the command of Orazio Baglione with Giovambatista Soderini as Commissary. The French general after wintering at Bologna marched in the following February by Romagna and Ancona into the Abruzzi, and passing the Pescara established himself in the heart of the Neapolitan territory\*. This brought the Imperialists from Rome under the Prince of Orange, Bourbon's successor, and Alfonso Davalos Marquis del Vasto, who marching into the Terra di Lavoro and thence crossing the Apennines arrived at Troja in Puglia while Lautrec with thirty thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry all flushed with unchecked conquest was at San Severo well armed, disciplined, and eager for action. The Black Bands to the number of four thousand arrived soon after but in disgrace from having shamefully

\* Segni, Lib. iº, p. 40-51.

and wantonly plundered the city of Aquila which had lately capitulated with Lautrec and received them as friends. On the French General's complaint Soderini instantly put three of the captains to death: a fourth, Pandolfo Puccini guilty also of other serious crimes, being of higher rank and a Florentine citizen, therefore beyond his jurisdiction for capital punishment, was sent prisoner to Florence where he also suffered death by command of the "Ten of War" after an appeal to the "*Quarantia*" (of which tribunal we shall presently speak) and a second to the Great Council of the nation\*.

Niccolo Capponi although a religious man, bordering even on fanaticism, and a virtuous citizen, was by no means insensible to ambition or the charms of power: wherefore seeing himself suddenly raised to the supreme executive authority he became anxious to keep it, not by illegitimate means but by a prudent management of parties: and taking warning from Piero Soderini who ruined both himself and public liberty by neglecting the great families who had raised him to power, Capponi favoured as he was by the people generally, though a bitter faction existed against him, determined to strengthen himself by conciliating the Palleschi and other great citizens and at the same time form a powerful government for the country. All his old habits, tastes, friendships, domestic relations, and the distinguished rank of his own family connected him closely with the high Florentine aristocracy, and even the aid of those who had flourished under the Medici had principally enabled him to reëstablish public liberty, wherefore he thought it but fair not only to protect them from injustice but also to give them their due portion of public honours and authority, more espe-

\* It is curious that Segni and Varchi, both cotemporaries, disagree completely about Puccini's crime. It is probable that both are right, but according to Varchi the head and front of his offending was mutinous behaviour and the

murder of a brother officer who had given him the lie: besides other grave charges.—Varchi, Lib. vi<sup>e</sup>. pp. 79-94. —Camb. tom. xxiii., pp. 21-22. Del. Erud. Tos.—Segni, Lib. i<sup>e</sup>, pp. 56-57.

cially as their long habits of public business and statesmanship rendered them particularly useful. This induced him occasionally to seek the counsel of Francesco Vettori, Matteo Strozzi, Francesco Guicciardini and others, but from the violent outcry against him he was compelled to confine himself to private interviews instead of cabinet councils.

All those in fact who had been neglected by the Medici, who had not been fortunate enough to fatten on public property, who had in any way been punished or injured and panted for revenge; as well as those who were really attached to public liberty, united from various motives in the outcry against Capponi: he was accused of designing to restore the Medici, or at the least of creating an oligarchy; and many without any real suspicion of his integrity feared that such counsellors might work on his gentle and easy disposition to the ruin of national liberty. It was these feelings and jealous fears that caused Dante da Castiglione, Piero Salviati and the whole faction of youthful reformers to commit what they knew would be deemed an unpardonable insult by Pope Clement, and thus preclude all accommodation. The violation of the churches shocked while the demolition of the waxen images and votive offerings amused the Florentine community; but the insult to Clement was deep and serious. All this ill blood rendered the lives of the Medician faction exceedingly uncomfortable and even insecure; and violence would probably have soon followed in despite of Capponi's efforts had not the increasing intensity of the plague thinned out Florence and scattered her citizens\*.

Brought into the city in 1522 by a traveller who had eluded the quarantine guards, it had been insidiously creeping through the more unhealthy quarters and frequently showing itself with violence in particular spots but was kept within bounds by isolating the infected places, until one day after a crowded procession made to celebrate recovered liberty in 1527, it sud-

\* Varchi, *Lib. iv.*, pp. 171-3.—Segni, *Lib. i°*, pp. 40-43.

denly burst all bounds and for three months raged through Florence, destroying from three to four and even five hundred souls a day, while in the rest of the dominion about two hundred and fifty thousand persons perished.

The citizens fled for refuge to their most distant and solitary retreats; the city was emptied, the villas full; Prato which as yet had escaped contagion swarmed with noble fugitives: the shops, manufactories, warehouses and courts were closed; all public and private affairs first languished and then gradually ceased; there was a general cessation of business, the pestilence alone was active and occupied every mind: a board of health was established and its duties zealously and rigidly performed: the Great Council rarely met and only from absolute necessity; a law passed to reduce its legal number from eight hundred to four hundred, and even these could scarcely be assembled; yet so attached were the citizens to this assembly that those who had fled to their neighbouring villas, on hearing the campana's toll would often hurry in to Florence and resume their functions. Prayers, fastings, preachings; abstinence of every kind both private and public; a procession of the Madonna dell' Impruneta, and all the numerous resources of superstition were devoutly but unsuccessfully adopted. The white fillet, the sign of infection, hung sad and heavily before the door of almost every house in Florence; more than two-thirds of the palace inmates died; wills and confessions were made in the public streets and on the house tops, and yet so reckless were some, that Varchi the historian saw a young man named Cecco del Tanfura, thrust his head into an empty dead-cart which happened to pass and after looking round in youthful bravado drew it back. He soon sickened and expired. Flight and death had thinned out the magistracies; the laws were dormant and the city languid and enfeebled became a prey to ruffians of every description. The "Council of Eighty" with all the magistracies usually attached to it was summoned but scarcely ninety members could be



collected and these seemed lost in the vast and dismal solitude of the Great Council chamber. They crept to their places in fear, seated themselves aloof from each other, asked fearfully after mutual friends and relatives, heard only of death and misery and burst into tears. The gonfalonier exposed the deplorable condition of Florence and received almost dictatorial power with the assurance of an act of indemnity when all was over. Those that remained in the city used every precaution that knowledge ignorance or superstition suggested; there was no intercommunication; if people spoke it was at a distance, calling out to each other "*Stiamo chiaretti*," "Let us keep clear." They left their houses late and with full stomachs, carrying scented balls which they were continually smelling, as they said to comfort the brain, and used various other means of preservation ordered by the physicians or those who succeeded them; for the doctors were the first to fly and leave their trade to blacksmiths, farriers, woolcarders, cobblers, and sometimes women who with enormous gains thus exercised their ignorance and ingenuity. The few shops, and those of the lowest order which here and there remained open in the streets were inclosed by a barrier and the money given and returned through pans of water: domestic animals were killed, or sent away, or shut up to prevent infection: all persons suspected of it from previous communication with the plague-struck were compelled to wear a white scarf or sash: huts were erected beyond the walls from the Santa Croce to the Prato gate in one continued chain of pestilence; and all were attended with zeal and humanity by the glorious company of the "*Misericordia*." But even these sheds were insufficient, and churches and convents were turned into hospitals without scruple or hesitation. All were full. The exactions plunder and insolence of those who hired themselves to attend sick people became at last so great that two officers were appointed by the Plague Board with the necessary guards to erect

gallowses and whipping-posts, and execute summary justice on every offender.

Besides the tumours which usually appeared in the groins and armpits, the throat and breast were spotted with little boils or pimples of a fiery appearance between red and black with small livid stripes called "*Carboni*," more dangerous and difficult of cure than the "*Giavocciuoli*" or tumours, which were medicated by the application of fire as the only effectual remedy. If any person had a pimple however small and apparently insignificant on any part of the body and irritated it by friction or otherwise it was sure to become a "*Carbone*" and killed him in three days.

This fearful visitation was deemed little inferior to that of 1348, which though it killed more people began and finished in four months; but this lasted more or less for nearly six years and carried off even according to Varchi's belief, three-fifths of the population although his estimate of the rural mortality is far below Segni's. By the end of November the scourge had nearly ceased in Florence for that year, but no part of Italy escaped this infliction; famine augmented its torments, and impending war, and plunder, and devastation, hung in heavy masses over a devoted land, the fruits of kingly ambition and priestly turpitude\*! "O unfortunate age! O miserable times!" exclaims Macchiavelli in describing this pestilence, "where we are struggling with death and yet fearful of life! Florence is like a city stormed by the infidels and then abandoned. The streets lately so thronged and clean are now putrid and desolate, or filled with wretches whose fearful cries and importunacy impede you with danger and difficulty. The shops are shut, labour has ceased, courts and tribunals have disappeared, the laws are prostrate; theft and murder rife; the change and

\* Macchiavelli, *Descrizione della Peste di Firenze*.—B. Varchi, *Lib. vii.*, pp. 203-213.—Segni, *Lib. i<sup>o</sup>*, p. 42.—J. Nardi, *Lib. viii.*, p. 339.—Fil. Nerli,

*Lib. viii*, p. 166.—Gio. Cambi, pp. 330-340, tom. xxii. *Del. Erud. Tos.*—*Ibid.*, tom. xxiii., pp. 4-12.

markets, once so lively, are sepulchres or nests of ruffians; men walk alone and instead of friendly faces meet plague-struck citizens: kinsman shuns kinsman, brother brother, the wife her husband; nay parents fly from their own children and abandon them. The lively disputes in change and market are changed to wailings and sadness. Such a one is dead, another sick, a third flown, a fourth dying at home, a fifth gasping at the hospital, a sixth in guard of the death-office, a seventh missing; and such sayings now furnish out the conversation; enough to turn even Æsculapius himself sick. Many wander about seeking the cause of all these evils: the astrologers menace us say some; the prophets have foretold it, say others; this person remembers a certain prodigy; that person asserts that it is a quality of the time and disposition of the air, pre-disposed to plague; and that it was the same in 1348 and 1478, and so they go on with one thing and another until all come to the conclusion that not this alone but many more evils are ready to fall down upon us. Such is the agreeable discourse we are every moment entertained with\*.”

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COTEMPORARY MONARCHS.—England: Henry VIII.—Scotland: James IV. and V.—France: Francis I.—Spain, Naples, Sicily, and the Empire: Charles V.—Pope: Clement VII.—Turkish Emperor: Sultan Soliman I.—Portugal: John III.

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\* Macchiavelli, *Discrizione della Peste di Firenze*.

## CHAPTER XII.

FROM A.D. 1528 TO A.D. 1529.

FLORENCE was now free, and for the moment acquired a certain degree of consideration amongst contending nations, but her independence did not strengthen her as an Italian state against foreign aggression: severed as she remained from the more powerful Church dominion if her respectability increased her national insecurity also became greater, and although higher powers were now strenuously courting her, like the rest her fate was only postponed until Charles and Francis had settled their own pretensions to Italian sovereignty. Nevertheless her ancient fame still emitted some rays of doubtful splendour, and Capponi's government built as it was on public opinion coupled with the deep energetic spirit of the people was of much too earnest a character not to give dignity to the commonwealth.

A considerable reformation of abuses both in manners and institutions was attempted by the gonfalonier, who as already said, encouraged speculations on constitutional reform; but previous to the resumption of our narrative it may be convenient to refresh the reader's memory by condensing into one point of view several little notices relating to the composition of Florentine government and the privileges of citizenship which lie scattered through the foregoing pages. It has been already mentioned that Florence during the greater portion of its republican state was divided into the four quarters of Santo

Spirito, Santa Croce, San Giovanni, and Santa Maria Novella : that to each was assigned four ensigns called "gonfalons" with separate devices, enrolled under which and comprised within their proper quarter were registered all the Florentine families that claimed the honours of citizenship. Each quarter had also its peculiar arms : those of Santo Spirito for instance were a dove, and on its four gonfalons were severally emblazoned a ladder, five cockle-shells, a scourge and a dragon. The bearing of Santa Croce corresponded to its name, and its four gonfalons displayed the car, the ox, the black lion and the wheel. The standard of Santa Maria Novella blazed with a golden sun, under which glittered on its four gonfalons a viper, a unicorn, a red, and a white lion. The cognizance of San Giovanni was its own temple and the four gonfalons bore a golden lion, a dragon, keys and the heraldic minever. Each gonfalon was carried by the captain of the company under the title of gonfalonier and in his military character was bound to appear armed with his company at the summons of the supreme "Gonfalonier of Justice" whenever the palace or public liberty were in danger. As their peculiar functions were to defend the people against the nobles they were called Gonfaloniers of the People's Companies ; but for shortness were usually denominated "The Sixteen." This was their military character ; and arming and organizing, as it did, the whole civic body in defence of common liberty vast power accrued to government as long as external danger from the nobles kept the citizens united.

But these "Sixteen" also formed a permanent and very high portion of the national government although of no authority while separated from the Seignory and therefore disabled from using their military influence to endanger the commonwealth. In company with the Seignory, they became a powerful member of administrative and legislative government, and being generally young men were often fierce, turbulent, and difficult to manage. As assistants to the Seignory they were indivi-

dually denominated "*Colleagues*," and collectively, with the twelve Buonomini whose functions were similar, "*Colleges*." In rank they were inferior only to the Seignory, and these three magistracies, because they together formed the supreme government, were called "*I tre Maggiori*," or the "Three Greater."

No citizen could enjoy what was called "*Lo Stato*" or in other words be eligible to public office under the name of "*Statuale*" with a seat in the councils, whose father or grandfather had not been a member of one, or had not had his right to be so, acknowledged either as *Seduto* or *Veduto*; that is, as having actually taken his seat, or having had his name drawn, examined, and acknowledged as a privileged citizen, but from some momentary obstacle such as being under age, had not been able to take his seat.

The seven major and fourteen minor trades or arts have been frequently mentioned, and also that each citizen no matter what his rank either in or out of Florence, was compelled to matriculate in one of them whether he followed it or not: if a member of the former he was said "to go with the greater Trades," "*Andare per la Maggiore*:" and if of the lesser "*Andare per la Minore*." And though the other trades were far more numerous they had no exclusive guilds or corporate existence, but were attached to and depended on some one of the above for their laws and administration of justice; for each corporation had its hall or residence and there held its sessions with absolute rule in all civil causes between its own members and dependents. They were governed by consuls, syndics, and other functionaries under the general name of "*Capitudini*;" had their respective banners: their assigned rank in public processions, games, and festivals; and could even assemble armed in defence of liberty; a word of very different signification in their dictionary and that of the poorer mechanics who were subject to them. After much contention for political power between the higher and lower trades it was finally settled that the latter

should furnish one-fourth of the public magistrates from the Seignory downwards but that the gonfalonier of justice should always be chosen from the former. These were all citizens : but the Florentine like the ancient Roman population was divided into two very distinct classes ; those who paid taxes and those who did not : the former were described in the public registers under the title of "*Sopportanti*" or supporters of the state ; the latter were unregistered, paid no decima or any ordinary taxation, and were accordingly called "*Non-Sopportanti*" or more commonly "*Plebei*" answering to the Roman "*Plebs*" and generally exercising low mechanic employments.

The "*Sopportanti*" were of two kinds ; one admissible into public office, the other not : the reasons were either because they could not pass the "*Scrutiny*," which was full of faction and abuse, or having passed it, neither they nor any of their forefathers had come under the category of *Veduti* or *Seduti* in the "*Tre Maggiori*." They were still citizens, but unprivileged and really disfranchised, under the name of "*Cittadini non Statuali*" or citizens not participating in state employment. On the contrary all who enjoyed official situations were named "*Statuali*" and were subdivided into the major and minor arts with the common appellation of citizen.

Hence it appears that the Florentine people were really separated into four very distinct classes namely, the plebeians ; the unprivileged citizens ; the privileged citizens of the inferior trades, and the privileged citizens of the superior trades. But besides these there existed another class of citizens who paid the ordinary taxes but did not reside in Florence ; the general consequence was great oppression of the plebeians, discontent amongst the "*Non Statuali*," extreme jealousy between the two classes of privileged citizens, and a deep spirit of faction pervading the community\*.

These feelings had been squeezed and distorted rather than

\* Varchi, Lib. iii., pp. 163-70.

crushed altogether by the pressure of Medician power, for they never assumed the character of loyalty or any other form of chivalrous devotion to that despotic race. Power, avarice, selfishness, personal ambition, were the real stimulants to Florentine loyalty, and like the heliotrope they turned to where the sun shone brightest. When therefore the exultation consequent upon recovered liberty had somewhat subsided and individual passions resumed their sway, the old restlessness broke forth through other channels, modified perhaps by times and circumstances, but still with its ancient character: new sects, new factions sprang quickly up, and all the natural turbulence of free institutions was again alive and active. As in most free states two great parties were soon generated; the contented and the discontented; or that which was in and that which was out of power. The Board for investigating public accounts with its fifteen years' retrospective action, had alarmed the conscience-struck many especially the Paleschi, and gave great dissatisfaction; a heavy imposition or "*Balzello*" did not mend the matter, particularly as an unheard-of and most arbitrary law was attached to it worthy of the worst times of the worst Medici, and yet passed by a fiat of the Great Council itself! It affected but a few of the most opulent and those almost wholly of the Medici party against whom it was aimed; but it struck at the very heart of justice and civil liberty and became so obnoxious as to be soon turned on its authors who like the Sicilian artist, were made the victims of their own ingenuity.

The treasury was empty, and the *Balzello* imposed a tax of 80,000 florins: this of course required time to arrange and collect; but money was wanted in the interim, and to supply this a law passed authorising the Great Council to name twenty citizens each of whom was compelled to lend 1500 florins to the government within eight days under a penalty of 500. The names of the nominators, to insure greater freedom,



were kept secret under the seal of confession, and the loan accordingly fell principally on the Palleschi: they had it is true, an appeal to the Seignory and Colleges who were the original authors of this law, but so clogged that none attempted it and so monstrous a precedent was followed up until self-destroyed by its own excessive injustice\*.

Capponi had succeeded in achieving the first rank in the commonwealth and determined if possible to keep it: he therefore courted the Frateschi, especially Fra Bartolommeo da Faenza (a monk who affected to follow Savonarola but without his talents) and was supposed to have more intrigues with the Friars of St. Mark's than ever became public. Whether Niccolo Capponi was a fanatic or a mere politician is hard to say, but during the fury of the plague when public councils could with difficulty be assembled or public business despatched, he made an oration on the misfortunes of the time before the Great Council and embodied word for word one of Savonarola's prophetic and most startling discourses which announced that after unheard-of misery to Florence and Italy the former was to enjoy permanent felicity! These times exclaimed Capponi with enthusiastic fervour, are at last arrived; and then falling on his knees he cried with a loud voice "*Mercy O God!*" Capponi was eloquent; the times appalling; his audience depressed and superstitious, and many of them Savonarola's disciples: this enthusiastic or dramatic action took them by surprise and the whole assembly, as if the Frate's spirit had again suddenly possessed them, fell on their knees and similarly implored Heaven's mercy. Nor did this satisfy Capponi, but still further to conciliate the Frateschi whose great prophet had recommended it, he proposed that the Lord Jesus Christ should be elected king of Florence! It was carried with only eighteen or twenty dissentients and an inscription to that effect placed over the

\* Varchi, Lib. iv., p. 187.—Nerli, Lib. viii., p. 166.

palace gate! But by this also Capponi secured his re-election as chief magistrate of Florence, while his fanaticism was secretly ridiculed by many who dared not openly oppose him\*.

Baldassare Carducci now an old but ardent and still vigorous man was full of energy and ambition; he had lost his election and had no goodwill towards the successful candidate, wherefore his object was to oust Capponi and assume his place: this opposition probably would never have occurred if the gonfaloniership had not been made re-elective; but the prospect of a second and third year of rival power was too much for the patience of Carducci or any other ambitious Florentine. Capponi was moreover mistrusted and accused, perhaps justly, of wishing to restrict the powers of government to a few of the noblest and richest citizens, and consequently to the Medician party; he was also suspected of a desire to reinstate that family, but with much less appearance of truth. He was nevertheless followed by a numerous party of friends, kinsmen, and political adherents so identified with him as to be called by his name in contradistinction to Carducci's faction; and from their supposed objects denominated "*Ottomati*" and "*Pochi*" or the "Few."

Those who favoured the liberty and equality of republican government received the title of "Anti-Capponists" and though numbering many rich and noble families in their ranks they still yielded to their rivals in both these advantages. As professed friends of the people they were also called "*Popolani*;" for the families which anciently bore that name had now changed into nobles, and from frequenting foreign courts, enjoying high distinctions, seeing their uncles sons and brothers made bishops, archbishops, and cardinals, they had imbibed a thorough aristocratic spirit, looked down on their fellow-citizens, and strongly leaned towards monarchy.

\* Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 152.—Cambi, tom. Segni, Lib. i., p. 69.—F. Nerli, Lib. xxiii., pp. 5-11.—Nardi, Lib. viii., p. viii., pp. 169-70.—Sismondi, vol. xii., 340.—B. Varchi, Lib. v., p. 53.—B. p. 14.

The Popolani soon quarrelled with Capponi and nourished so irritable a feeling against him as to be also designated "*Adirati*," the angry, or provoked; but a section of them which went further and would have persecuted the Paleschi even to spoliation and death were entitled the "*Arrabbiati*" or madmen, a name formerly given to the opposers of Savonarola. The Popolani were also insultingly called the "*Poveri*," the "*Plebei*," and the "*Ciompi*," because several citizens of the lower trades were amongst them; but an energetic body of young citizens with Baldassare Carducci at their head gave such life vigour and reputation to the mass as to leave ridicule pointless and render them formidable antagonists to any government.

Carducci always hated the Medici, and on this hatred and his having been injured by Clement was principally based his great popularity in Florence: but Capponi supported by the Paleschi was far more powerful, because the latter seeing themselves marked and proscribed they sought protection from and at the same time brought strength to the government.

Another source of Capponi's power was union, while his antagonists were in frequent disagreement: Tommaso Soderini divided popular favour with Carducci, and Alfonso Strozzi as a good hater of the Medici and no friend of his brother Filippo, shared largely in this feeling; they were supported by many friends of distinction and influence and exhibited more prudence, perhaps more cunning, with less violence than the fiery Baldassare whom they skilfully made use of as suited them. This weakened the popular party and the cause of freedom, if such cause ever existed where all but a few whose voice was drowned in the roar, played for a favourite stake, their own personal interest. Those few who really acted on public principle being unable to make any impression withdrew from both sides and collecting together formed a third but comparatively feeble party under the denomination of "*Neutrals*."

Florentine society is described as being at this period essen-

tially corrupt both politically and morally, for though there was a bold and ardent spirit in the people it seems to have been unhallowed by moral feeling, and as often occurred amongst the Florentines, was more the effect of impulse than principle\*. Yet there were certain attempts at improvement which showed a sensibility to the evils if not to the shameful-ness of corruption, and the recreation of the "*Quarantia*" is a proof of Capponi's desire to ameliorate the institutions of his country†. The "*Quarantia*," a tribunal already existing under Piero Soderini in 1508 the idea of which was borrowed from Venice, at that time the mirror of Italian statesmen‡, seems to have been suggested to Niccolò Capponi by the celebrated Donato Giannotti whose essay on Florentine government though not completed until 1534 when the author was in exile, appears to have been at this time partially sketched (as indicated by Pitti, and apparently confirmed by the chapter on this tribunal) for Niccolò Capponi while gonfalonier of Florence §.

Experience had long proved that criminal justice especially for state crimes, and even the administration of civil law, were both thoroughly corrupted by favour and negligence, bribery and party spirit, and that the delays and exactions of courts, advocates, and notaries had become a pest and scandal to the commonwealth. There was no political justice; the faction, not the

\* Francesco Vettori used to say, "That to maintain Florence long as a republic, one of two things was indispensable: either that the public revenues should be doubled, or the citizens reduced one-half." (Vide *Varchi*, Lib. vi., p. 96.)

† *Varchi*, Lib. iv., *passim*.

‡ There were three tribunals of this name in Venice, two for civil and one for criminal cases, all chosen from the Great Council, which were in fact so many committees of that body nomi-

nated as Courts of Appeal.

§ Cambi, p. 221, vol. xxi., Del. Erud. Tosc.—Nerli, Lib. v<sup>o</sup>, p. 100.—Jac. Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 151.—D. Giannotti, Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>, cap. xiii. Giannotti, whom Varchi ranks with Macchiavelli and the ablest statesmen of the age, though of low birth, succeeded Francesco Tarrugi as secretary to the "*Ten of War*," with the suffrage of all parties. He was a real friend of liberty, but too fond of running after great people.

law or the people, was considered; and this spirit pervaded all departments, so that every sentence became a party triumph no matter in what court it were decided. Capponi attempted to remedy this and other abuses, for though his influence in great political questions was reduced by the strength of opposition almost to that of a private gentleman, yet there existed an innate force in the gonfalonier's authority that could scarcely be withstood in purely domestic government, nor does he appear to have been much obstructed in his plans of forensic or moral reformation\*.

To correct these abuses a decree went forth enjoining the "Otto di Guardia e Balìa," the conservators of the laws, and all other criminal courts on pain of fine and deprivation of office to register every accusation complaint criminal action, "*Tamburagione*," or other secret information that should thereafter be brought before them; and further directing that the "*Tamburi*" of the respective magistracies should not remain more than eight days unopened, and then be examined in the presence of two-thirds of the court, with its notary and assessor, who were bound to present the cause for adjudication on the very day it was registered. Any magistrate who should presume to impede this was "*ipso jure*" admonished for ten years from every public employment and further punished by a heavy fine, to be unequally divided between the secret informer and the government †.

But ere we proceed with the description of this law it becomes necessary to explain the words "*Tamburagione*" and "*Tamburi*." The verb "*Tamburare*" which is peculiar to Florence arose in early republican times from a pernicious encouragement of secret accusations similar to that of the "Lion's Mouth" at Venice: boxes were placed for this purpose around the columns of all the principal churches especially the cathe-

\* Varchi, Lib. vi., p. 95.—Giannotti, Lib. ii°, p. 103.

† Varchi, Lib. iv., pp. 191-2.

dral, each marked with the name of its proper tribunal, and were denominated "*Tamburi*" or Trunks\*.

Whoever wished to prefer a secret charge or "*Tamburare*" any citizen, stealthily deposited a schedule in the "*Tamburo*," and if, as was usual, he wished to share the anticipated fine, half a broken coin or any other check secured it without further exposure or inquiry. These "*Tamburagioni*" had fallen somewhat into disuse, not from any peculiar improvement of moral sentiment but a sense of general insecurity sharpened by the supervening and rather awkward custom of *tambouring the magistrates themselves in their own accusation box!* Any man who suspected that he had been thus denounced immediately tamboured a part or the whole of the magistracy, which for its own safety at once destroyed every billet of accusation in the box. In this way the victim sometimes escaped, and such was the boasted liberty of republican Florence!† But to return.

The criminal courts were bound by this law of the "*Quarantia*" to determine every cause within twenty days from the time it was brought before them, but rigidly according to the laws of Florence: and failing either in point of time or legality, the president, clerk, and coadjutor of the court were on the twenty-first day to report such failure to the Seignory under pain of five years' admonition and heavy penalties; but if these officers did fail, the duty then devolved on any and every other individual member of the court. The Seignory on the following day then drew from two purses destined to that purpose for the major and minor trades, the names of forty members of the senate, or Council of Eighty. These were called the "*Quarantia*," and with other additions to be presently noticed, formed a court of appeal in all criminal cases except state prosecutions, which being under the exclusive jurisdiction of the

\* *Tamburo* literally signifies a drum, but there is also a sort of leather trunk that bears that name.

† *Varchi*, *Lib. ii.*, p. 33.

“Otto di Guardia e Balìa” these last within the above-mentioned time were bound to make a minute investigation and written process of the case and lay it in the first instance before the Seignory. This placed it “*ipso jure*” out of their jurisdiction and under the “Quarantìa,” nor could the “Otto” ever after presume to meddle with it; but in all other criminal cases the Seignory and colleges were to have the privilege of three days’ consideration, after which if not rejected they remained for the “Quarantìa’s” decision. To give more force and independence to this tribunal it was augmented by the gonfalonier of justice as president, by three of the other gonfaloniers, two of the Buonomini, the whole, or at least two-thirds of the court in which the cause originated, two of the Decemvirate of War, one of the militia board, one captain of the party Guelph, two of the “Otto di Guardia e Balìa” and two conservators of the laws (unless the cause came from them) one officer of the mount, one of the six officers of commerce and one of the “*Massai di Camera*”\*. These were all drawn by lot, were called suddenly together for the occasion, and along with the “Quarantìa” formed a court of between sixty and seventy judges, who thus constituted were deemed to be morally as free from bias as their number made them from intimidation.

No near kinsman of the parties under trial was admitted as a member of this court, and for every case of appeal it was bound to have at least three sessions of not less than two-thirds of the whole number. Great solemnity was used in passing sentence. The gonfalonier first rose, and followed by the rest advanced respectfully to the altar of the palace chapel where all took a solemn oath before the officiating priest that

\* The office of “*Massaio di Camera dell’ Arme*,” when created in 1471, consisted of but one officer, though probably augmented afterwards. He was a great officer, the governor in fact of the palaces of the government, podestà and captain of the people: he had charge of the records, the plate, furniture, &c., of these palaces, ordered their repairs, and had charge of the great clock of the public palace. (Vide *Tommaso Forte, Foro Fiorentino*, cap. excix., MS., *Maglibecciana Library*.)

they would give judgment according to conscience without passion or prejudice. Each member then returned to his place and having written on a separate schedule his own private sentence or judgment, deposited it with the others in a common purse whence they were successively drawn by the palace notary and put to the ballot, when that "*Vote*," (as the schedule was called,) which carried with it two-thirds of the black beans decided the question\*. If more than one vote were thus sustained the ballot was to be four times repeated, after which a bare majority carried it in case the results remained unvaried: but if in the fourth scrutiny no particular vote were found to have a majority, then six of those which at any time had been supported by the greatest number of black beans were to be selected from the mass and put to the ballot successively, a bare majority again deciding the sentence. If any pairs occurred they were to be once more put to the ballot until one succeeded, but after five unsuccessful trials the whole six were to be again balloted for repeatedly until some one of them gained the majority. The sentence was then ordered to be registered by the notary of the chamber under heavy penalties to him or any other that presumed to impede it, not excepting even the gonfalonier of justice himself, and the "*Otto di Guardia*" under similar forfeits were compelled to execute it. The most profound secrecy about what passed was commanded and rigidly enforced, and the sentence became final and unalterable except by appeal to the Great Council; but to make this available the appellant if condemned in bodily pains was bound to surrender himself, and if by fine to deposit the amount or find surety for its payment †.

This final refuge in the great national council; the shortening and limiting of trial; the compelling of courts to bind their

\* It will be remembered that contrary to our own custom the *black bean* was the "*aye*," and the *white bean* the "*no*," of republican Florence.

† Nerli, Lib. viii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 100 and 177.—Nardi, Lib. viii., p. 337.—Segni, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 57.—Varchi, Lib. iv<sup>o</sup>, pp. 191 to 202.



proceedings and sentences by the strictest ties of law; the consequent diminution of expense, injustice, insolence, and greedy exactions of lawyers and all the vexations that accompanied them, were great and acknowledged benefits. The world was astonished that a community so corrupt and disordered, in such a state of political agitation, with a constitution as yet new, unsteady, and alive with dangerous excitement, should ever have attempted a reform so bold and searching as it affected the passions and abuses of party; such a cleaving of vested interests, so venturous a blow to the weight of rank and power, of faction, favour, and intimidation! Yet it was much criticised: the right of appeal was said to depend exclusively on the court, not on the will of the aggrieved party, and was consequently open to abuse: the cognizance of state criminals belonged to the "Otto di Guardia" alone, yet by this law they were exclusively brought for judgment before the "Quarantia" while the former court still retained the power of deciding whether the crime came under that category, and so in point of fact maintained its former jurisdiction at pleasure! The consequence was that few except notorious state criminals went before the "Quarantia" from that tribunal. It was moreover said to impede the duties of other courts by the necessary absence of their members, to cool their zeal and slacken their industry, because they knew that the case would be finally judged by another tribunal: the Quarantia was also principally composed of senators who were mostly Ottomati and besides this had one radical defect, namely, that the judgments and sentences pronounced were those of individuals, not the voice of law, and therefore subject to undue influence from the prevailing passions of the day. Nevertheless it terrified not only the Paleschi who had for fifteen years been revelling in insolence and corruption, but many more of the same haughty and overbearing character. The Italian states wondered what might be expected from

Florence in prosperity when in danger and difficulty she showed herself so bold and uncompromising in the cause of law and justice as to reëstablish a tribunal like the Quarantia\*. One of the most beneficial portions of this law was the right of appeal to the Great Council which in the then social condition of Florence was a harbour of refuge where justice and sympathy if any where, might be expected; but as one object of the Quarantia was despatch and such appeals were found or said to occasion delay this power was abolished after Pandolfo Puccini's condemnation and the Quarantia's award became final.

A new law also decreed that whenever any capital case occurred requiring haste, and for which from its importance even the ordinary forms of law used by the Quarantia were too dilatory, power should be given to the Decemvirate of War and the "Otto di Guardia" to proceed summarily; and under this arbitrary provision Jacopo Alamanni was not very long afterwards despatched by them in a few hours†. This was a great addition to the power of government and the aristocratic faction and a sad blow to civil liberty, dealt too by the very hands that should have parried it, and shows how heedlessly or ignorantly the Grand Council watched over the rights and welfare of the community. But very few acted at this time from public principle; society was essentially corrupt both morally and politically, and though animated by a bold enthusiastic spirit was unhallowed by integrity.

Niccolo Capponi lost no time in attempting to correct all this, and with more heart than head, more sincerity than judgment,

\* Varchi, Lib. iv., p. 201.—It is curious that Varchi, Segni, and Nardi, all cotemporaries, speak of the *Quarantia* as a new creation under Niccolo Capponi's administration in June, 1527. They are followed somewhat hastily by Sismondi, although Nerli and Cambi, also cotemporaries, distinctly mark its existence in 1508, when with great difficulty Filippo

Strozi escaped from its jurisdiction on account of his marriage with Clarice de' Medici, which was a state crime. Of course this court must have ceased under the subsequent rule of the Medici, or it could not have been revived under Capponi.

† Nerli, Lib. viii., p. 177.—Varchi, Lib. vi°, p. 95.

enacted sumptuary and other laws which display more zeal and prejudice than justice or statesmanship. One of these was to prohibit the Jews, who had long been settled in Florence, not only from lending money at interest within the dominion but to banish them altogether from Florentine Tuscany; and on the eighth of April a decree issued from the Great Council prohibiting all tavern-keepers, after eight days, from selling any refreshment but wine. This had been long threatened, for these taverns like our English beer-houses had become a public nuisance and constant temptation to youthful sensuality: young citizens, many artisans, and the lowest classes of working men all thronged their numerous chambers indulging in every sort of expensive gluttony, in gambling and other low vices, to the destruction of morals and the ruin of unfortunate families. Amongst the lower orders the whole week's wages were often spent in one night of debauchery while their wives and children were left famishing at home in hopeless misery, and their employers cheated. Eighteen thousand barrels of the finest wine that entered Florence were annually consumed in the taverns alone and an outcry had long been loud against them but until now they had succeeded in bribing the ruling powers, who thus propitiated, assumed the homely garb and dry spirit of political economy unsoftened by morality, and insisted that public revenues would suffer too severely by the amputation\*.

Capponi urged on this reform perhaps too rapidly and therefore unwisely, for the most pernicious institutions when of long standing become so entangled with the welfare of multitudes that they cannot be suddenly torn up without wide-

\* Cambi, tomo xxiii., p. 17, Deliz. Erud. Tos. — No reflection is here intended on the useful and difficult science of political economy. Political economists can only be called upon for rules and principles; it belongs to the statesman to consider the moral effect

in his application of them: many a perfect theory fails in practice: the model works with ease when the engine built from it stops; and moral friction is seldom sufficiently considered in *carrying out* the principles of the economists.

spreading mischief. There was also an attempt to abolish the ancient magistracy of the party Guelph as only tending to maintain the dregs of faction after its spirit had evaporated; also to remove every distinction between the citizens of the major and minor trades which was only prevented by the objections of the latter, who being much reduced in numbers preferred their present somewhat dignified isolation to being immersed in the ocean of aristocratic citizenship\*. The silver girdles and massive gold chains amounting as they sometimes did to more than two hundred pounds sterling in value, with other magnificent dresses and ornaments of the Florentine women were next assailed and even the frailer portion were reduced to an external modesty. Gambling of all kinds and in all stations was forbidden, and a card-maker received employment under government in compensation for his ruined livelihood. All the severity of the laws was renewed against the disgusting and unnatural crimes then apparently so prevalent amongst every rank in Florence; discussions on religion were rigidly prohibited except by the clergy, and blasphemy was severely visited with all the rigours of law†.

In the prosecution of these reforms Capponi was supposed to have been much influenced by the friars of Saint Mark's, who with the rigid uncompromising austerity of Savonarola, imagined they were absolutely crushing all corruption when they were only pressing on its elasticity.

By a strange coincidence the Florentines at this moment formed part of a league one of whose objects was to unfetter their direst foe, and so strong was their attachment to France that no efforts of wiser statesmen could shake it: Vettori, Guicciardini, Macchiavelli, Alamanni, and others had failed to turn them: their only army, the Black Bands, distinguished alike for bravery discipline and ferocity, had done good

\* Nardi, Lib. viii., p. 336.

† Varchi, Lib. iv<sup>o</sup>, p. 190.—Cambii, tom. xxiii., p. 19, Del. Erud. Tos.

service everywhere but were now nearly annihilated by the effects of war and pestilence, so that the ruin of the French cause in Naples and the revolution of Genoa by Andrea Doria, who had freed his country from French rule and joined the emperor, filled them with terror, although they could never believe that Francis, for whom so much had been sacrificed in the midst of pestilence and revolution, would abandon them. Again and again did they recall the prophecies of Savonarola and his favourite expression that Lily with Lily must always flourish, when the event proved that "Put not thy trust in princes" would have been a wiser adage. Luigi Alamanni the poet, and one of the chief conspirators against Giulio of Medicis, had passed much of his exile at Genoa and there became intimate with Doria who having achieved its independence was unwilling that Florence should lose hers and thus leave Genoa surrounded by despotic states like a single brilliant amongst a band of robbers. Doria therefore secretly informed the Florentines that Clement was then treating with the emperor and quite willing to be reconciled provided Florence were restored to him, but that Charles waited to ascertain their intentions towards himself before he concluded the negotiations. By his own influence with the emperor Doria offered to guarantee the liberty of Florence if she would only make haste and treat; Luigi Alamanni was forthwith despatched to Barcelona whence he soon hurried back to assure his countrymen that not a moment was to be lost if they intended to make terms with the emperor. This question was accordingly discussed and lost in despite of all the exertions of the young and classic Luigi whose previous and somewhat feeble oration in favour of an imperial alliance had once before been sarcastically demolished by Tommaso Soderini, and the latter now with the same generous but less useful policy was equally successful, though opposed by Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi and all the government party\*.

\* Segni, Lib. ii°, pp. 118-126.—Varchi, Lib. v., pp. 10-23.

This indeed was the principal cause of its failure ; for the jealousy of the Popolani against the Palleschi blinded the former to the real advantages of this alliance ; and even Alamanni, in consequence of the Palleschi's applause, the very man even who would have stained his hands in Julio's blood was suspected of favouring Clement VII. and the Medici ! Such feeling coupled with the old mercantile enthusiasm for France finally prevailed and the negotiations were abandoned ; the most deadly foes of Clement giving their hand to his deliverer while his most devoted friends would have united with his most crafty and relentless persecutor ! More was in fact expected by the pope from Charles than Francis, and Guicciardini for one is said to have urged the Spanish alliance principally with a view to Clement's interests and ultimate restoration : but we have rather anticipated this\*.

The pontiff meanwhile remained at Orvieto where the tide of apostolic power was fast returning : ostensibly meek, patient, and shunning worldly cares, his soul still rankled with hatred, vengeance, and mundane ambition. His trials had been great and neither his faith nor apostolic character supported him ; anger seemed far more efficient, for when Venice treacherously occupied Cervia and Ravenna on pretence of guarding them for the Church, and when Alphonso of Este boldly recovered Modena through the timidity of its governor Filippo Nerli, he promptly excommunicated both ! Nor was he asleep in Florence : secretly and openly, by bribe and promise did he try to purchase adherents ; but his success was small ; he could not even accomplish the appointment of an ambassador to his court although seconded by the entreaties of France nor yet obtain possession of young Catharine of Medicis whom the Florentines retained as a hostage ; so that in the height and fury of his indignation he solemnly vowed that "*He would not be buried in consecrated ground unless he could return to Florence*" †.

\* Segni, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 116-127.

† Varchi, Lib. v., pp. 36-55 ; Lib. vi., p. 99 ; Lib. vii., p. 167.

Openly however he confined himself to milder expressions, and while he endeavoured to attach Francis by words and Charles, from whom he expected more, by concealed services, he declared that all he asked from the Florentines was to acknowledge him as pope if they would not own him for a fellow citizen, to give up his kinswoman Caterina de' Medici, and not persecute his friends\*. Charles V. by nature education and policy a cheat, ever addressed Clement with false and honied words even in the depth of his persecutions; and moreover entertained the project of reducing the papacy to its antique simplicity and pure spiritual functions: not from any peculiar reverence for the priesthood or morality although such a consummation was earnestly desired by multitudes even to the very populace (who cried that the crook and the sword were ill-matched) but because he himself intended to relieve the high-priest from all temporal duties by sending him to sing masses in the Lateran †. This seems to have been prevented by the menaces of England, the progress of Lautrec in Italy, Clement's own fears, and consequent distrust of the emperor, which induced him to escape in disguise from the castle of Saint Angelo and deceive his enemies: had this not happened the Prince of Orange, by Charles's orders would have gently forced him on board the imperial galleys at Ostia and thence in honourable confinement to Naples ‡.

Domestic ferment and external danger kept the Florentines in a constant state of uncertainty agitation and alarm: public expenses notwithstanding all Capponi's economy were necessarily great from the war, and repeated and severe

\* Varchi, Lib. v., pp. 36-55; Lib. vi, p. 99; Lib. vii., p. 167.—Ammirato, Lib. xxx., p. 378.

† Varchi, Lib. v., pp. 43-4.—Lettere di Principi, Carlo V. a Papa Clemente VII., vol. i°, fol. 110.—It is curious that the letter of Charles to Clement, congratulating him on the

recovery of his liberty, is dated from Borgos, 22nd November, whereas Clement did not escape until 8th December, 1527, unless all the historians are wrong.

‡ Varchi, Lib. v°, p. 46; Lib. vii., pp. 163-165.

taxation was resorted to: new modes were invented, old ones revived, arrears long standing and forgotten were culled from the public registers, and even four-and-thirty years of tolerance did not acquit the defaulters. New commissioners for new taxes with new powers, were created in May and June by the Seignory: new syndics in place of the former, emphatically surnamed the "*Tribolanti*" or "Tormentors," by the same magistracy, besides many legal reforms of great length and intricacy which though well, perhaps too well considered, in the initiatory council, all passed in one day through the great one without discussion, and probably without comprehension by nine-tenths of the assembly exclusive of the ministers of government, so great was the carelessness or so perfect the confidence in their rulers' wisdom!

The new mode of taxation evidently taken from one already mentioned as used in the earlier times of the republic, seems just and feasible in a small community, and merits description. Eleven citizens between thirty and seventy years of age nominated by and from the Great Council were compelled to exercise the following functions for two months, or somewhat longer according to the pleasure of the Seignory. They were each separately lodged and maintained at the public cost and after having given up two days to hear all that desired to address them, and having sworn to proceed impartially and have no communication with each other, at once began their duties.

An imposition of from seventy to seventy-two thousand florins was to be fairly proportioned amongst the citizens: for this purpose all the public registers of ordinary and extraordinary taxation and forced loans were placed at their command, and to the name of every citizen who paid the ordinary and permanent tax of the Decima a certain amount of this new imposition was attached if he were considered really capable. These manes; or "*Poste*" as they were termed; with the



corresponding sums, were inserted in a small book signed and sealed by each commissioner and presented by their respective authors to another board composed of six friars chosen by the Seignory from the convents of Saint Mark, Santa Croce, and the Badia of Florence. After the usual oath these priests proceeded to examine the eleven books, and from each "*Posta*" take the four proportions or assessments of the largest amount, the four smallest; and the three mean proportions which remained; then adding them together they struck an average of the whole eleven for the amount of taxation to be really levied on each "*Posta*" or citizen, respectively. After every name had undergone this previous scrutiny and final assessment they were entered in three separate books, one for each convent, in order that the necessary additions or abatements might be made separately in case the tax fell short or exceeded the proposed amount. Besides this they had to form a corrected register for every quarter of the town furnished with an index, so that each citizen could at once ascertain his liability; and as soon as the amount was collected the whole fourteen books were to be burned in presence of their compilers lest any man should thereafter know what they contained; so dangerous was the honest discharge of a public duty in Florence!

Five per cent. discount was allowed in remission of other taxation to those who paid up their quota within a given time, and afterwards the eleven commissioners were themselves taxed in a similar manner by a Board of Five, especially nominated for that purpose\*.

Great confusion and inconvenience was continually caused in Florence by the constant practice of writing all deeds, wills, and conveyances in a jargon which was neither Latin nor Tuscan, but belonged a little to both and consequently in most cases misrepresented the meaning and intentions of the subscriber, so that no man could make a will or any other conveyance

\* Varchi, Lib. vi., pp. 104-107.

without the assistance and additional cost of a "*Savio*" (as they were called) or Doctor of Laws, and at the risk of disputes and posthumous litigation\*.

To remedy this, instead of peremptorily commanding that the Tuscan language only should be thus used, a translation of every deed into Italian was enjoined on the notaries, and even this was repealed shortly afterwards; so strong is ancient habit and all the crooked interests that are wrapped up in it †.

The authority and dignity of the Ten Conservators of the Laws, an office established in 1428 was augmented especially as regarded the Great Council, where from the vast assemblage of citizens little order was observed: four conservators were therefore appointed to attend that assembly in whose absence no business could proceed, but their particular duty was to preserve order and prevent signs, signals, with other unseemly gesticulations and indecent noises in which this Florentine House of Commons continually indulged, as well as to investigate the legal qualifications of members, accompanied by the absolute power of punishment by fines and disfranchisement. It was common in Florence for certain officers who had the privilege of nomination to appoint their friends as successors with the understanding that this favour would be returned at the next change of magistracies: this was done openly and moreover large sums according to the value of the place were given for offices in the law, for the privilege of attending public councils, and so forth ‡; all of which were abolished or modified, and placed under legal control. A particular dress, either the mantle or the "*Lucco*" was under severe penalties made indispensable to attendance in the Great Council; the rapacity of

\* In the voluminous code of laws called the "*Florantine Statute*" (*Statuta Populi et communis Florentinæ*), compiled, or rather collected, revised, and arranged, by Paulo di Castro; the only one, as it would seem in Italian is a sumptuary law on

women's dress and ornaments; in order probably that they might not plead ignorance amongst their many ingenious ways of bantering the authorities, for which see *Sachetti, Novella* cxxxvii. † Varchi, Lib. vi., p. 97.

‡ The "*Baratteria*" of Dante.

notaries, who were the conveyancers of Florence, was curbed; to Pisa, still in a state of complete poverty and exhaustion, one of the expiring conditions of her capitulation was renewed with other favours for five years: the judicial tribunal of the Ruota was reformed, and finally Antonio Vespucci who for thirty years had faithfully served the republic was superannuated with his full salary, a custom not common in Florence, and probably imitated from the Venetians who never neglected such rewards\*.

All these reforms tend to show that there was an incipient spirit of justice and liberality working in the commonwealth which borrowing much of its character from that of the gonfalonier might have expanded into something estimable if the fates had permitted Florentine liberty to survive the storm that was rapidly gathering around her.

It now only remains for us to notice the manner in which the above measures and all other bills both private and public were carried through their various stages under the revived constitution. The new Seignory, whose election still continued bimensal although that of the gonfalonier was annual, were bound within three days after assuming office to nominate a Board of Eight citizens under the name of "*Formatori*" or "*Auditori*," the framers or auditors of laws and private petitions, as the case might be. This board was composed of four conservators, two gonfaloniers of companies, and two Buonomini, some of whom always represented the minor trades: whenever the Seignory or conservators of the laws were changed this board also was necessarily dissolved and recomposed, but commonly of the same individuals: six black beans carried their election as in other decrees of the Seignory and a similar majority was requisite for passing their own acts. When any "*Provvisione*" or legislative measure became necessary, it was first proposed and carried in the Seignory, then discussed by

\* Varchi, Lib. vi., pp. 107-112.

the "*Formatori*" and returned to the Seignory, who passed or rejected it in its amended form by a majority of two-thirds or six beans! It was then discussed by the "*Tre Maggiori*" or Seignory and two Colleges united where twenty-eight votes out of thirty-seven were requisite to "*vincere il partito*" or carry the question through this fourth stage of its progress. Its next appearance was in the Senate or "Council of Eighty," and having passed this it arrived at maturity and became law in the Great Council if favoured by two-thirds of their number. All these previous discussions, as may be supposed, must have caused a thorough investigation of the bill and insured it an easy passage through the last stage: yet to diminish every chance of rejection it might be put to the vote six times a day for three successive days, and even oftener by an express decision of this assembly. No more than twenty bills between public and private could be proposed in one day, nor could the same bill or private petition be proposed on the same day in two separate councils except by a particular dispensing vote of the Seignory and Colleges for the former, which sanctioned its introduction to the Senate if necessary. This suspension of standing regulations for the expediting of bills through the councils was familiarly and even officially called by the Florentines, who nicknamed everything, "*Far loro le gambe*," or "making legs for them;" and unless these legs were made, the bill was obliged to remain for three successive days in the Seignory's council-chamber ere it could be carried into the Senate of Eighty: but no less than eight votes out of nine in the former were required even to propose this suspension of the usual forms to the Colleges of whom eleven gonfaloniers and eight Buonomini were necessary to form a council. This acceleration of public measures was deemed inapplicable to private bills and never practised, and if the Seignory or either College happened to be changed before a bill had passed the Great Council and become law, the whole operation was necessarily repeated.

Such was the ordinary course of legislation under the new constitution which, says Varchi, "appeared admirable to many because each measure went through six discussions: on this much may be said: perhaps it may be thought I assert too much if I say that it was not prudently conceived, and from this arose two excessive and most pernicious inconveniences: one that things were not discreetly advised; the other that they were not discreetly discussed; and from these two proceeded almost of necessity the third; that they were not discreetly executed. Now what can be hoped from a government which neither counsels, deliberates, nor executes with prudence, which three things not only in public but in every private action ought necessarily to concur, I leave others to judge and proceed with my history"\*.

The growing strength of Clement who began to levy troops and had repossessed himself of Rimini and Imola increased the fears and suspicions of Florence, of which the triumvirate of Baldassare Carducci, Alfonso Strozzi, and Tommaso Soderini availed themselves to organize a more lively opposition against Capponi and his party especially the Palleschi, all of whom they conceived were advancing in public favour. Filippo Strozzi had never recovered his popularity and was generally detested by the Popolani; but his great riches, social qualities, and magnificent entertainments enabled him to preserve a certain influence amongst the younger citizens extremely serviceable to Capponi with whom he was in close and continual intercourse; yet being alarmed at the increasing violence of the opposite faction and insulted by Jacopino Alamanni, he first retired to the Rucellai gardens and ultimately on pretence of mercantile business, to Lyon. Clarice was dead and Filippo in addition to his unpopularity became anxious to propitiate Clement by at least a neutral conduct†. The day for electing

\* Varchi, *Lib. vi*°, pp. 112-114.

† *Ibid.*, *Lib. vi*°, p. 123.—Segni, *Lib. ii*°, p. 75.

a new gonfalonier was fast approaching and with it intrigues of every kind began to thicken and multiply. The breach between Tommaso Soderini and Capponi was widened by domestic rivalry, for both wished to marry their daughters to Francesco Nasi who could have but one and wanted neither: Capponi also, with an early foresight of Florentine destiny preferred a closer union with the Palleschi (for they were four hundred strong in the Great Council) by marrying his son to the daughter of Francesco Guicciardini, rather than a connexion with the family of Tommaso who wished to strengthen both by his alliance. Guicciardini was no friend to popular government; he had been employed by and was attached from interest and necessity to the Medici, but he wished for a close aristocracy or oligarchy where his great abilities and perfect knowledge of men and government would have insured an ascendancy\*. He was naturally proud and irritable, extremely ambitious, and notoriously avaricious; but rich, learned, and noble, and had held some of the most distinguished public employments in Italy: he was not popular, and being suspected of influencing Capponi, brought no political strength to that leader by the family alliance†. The latter was nevertheless on firm ground even in despite of a satirical oration or rhapsody written by Pierfilippo Pandolfini, who is described, variously as an accomplished profligate and a reputable young citizen: this pamphlet was secretly printed at Siena by Cardinal Rucellai and brought to Florence where it rapidly circulated and supplied new matter for sharpening an opposition on the eve of Capponi's re-election. This pasquinade failed from its very bitterness and perhaps its sincerity in describing the requisite qualities for a gonfalonier according to the notions of that faction, all of which Capponi wanted and Carducci possessed in abundance; wherefore the latter was thus held up indirectly as the better man, and he told the public so himself with all his vain impetuosity of character.

\* "Discorso del Guicciardino sopra il Governo di Firenze." Lettere di Principi, fol. 124, vol. iii°.—Segni, Lib. ii°, p. 113. † Varchi, Lib. vi., p. 130.

These two things gave Capponi many votes: vanity, violence, and scurrility defeated themselves, and Carducci stooped even to court the Paleschi who however were faithful and would not trust him. He lost his election in an assembly of one thousand nine hundred and forty-four citizens\*, but only by a small majority of fourteen voices and some of those alleged to have been unfairly procured by Salvestro Aldobrandini a man notorious for his cunning, violence, and dissimulation†. The re-election of Capponi added strength and ardour to his party and was generally popular, for personally he was respected and only doubted in consequence of his favouring the Paleschi. Clement's movements, in opposition to his declaration, showed plainly that he was resolved on reëntering Florence either by goodwill or violence, whereupon the Ten of War appointed Babbone di Pagolo da Berzighella and Francesco del Monte to command the thirty battalions of militia, and another forced loan from rich individuals arbitrarily nominated was unscrupulously exacted‡. A change of fortune and continued disasters befel the French and augmented the apprehensions of Florence: Filippino Doria had it is true defeated the Imperialists in a bloody naval engagement where the Viceroy of Naples, Cæsar Fiera-Mosca, and many other men of rank were killed, and the Marquis del Vasto, two Colonnas, the Prince of Salerno and others became prisoners; but this only hastened the catastrophe, for Andrea Doria whose engagement with Francis had just finished, quarrelled with him touching the disposal of del Vasto and the remaining prisoners. He probably had other grievances and perhaps even thus early planned his country's liberty, but the result was as already related, namely an engagement with Charles who empowered him to emancipate Genoa from Gallic thralldom and promised to guarantee her freedom: this was accomplished in September and so great was Doria's popularity that

\* Cambi says 1996 (Del. Erud. Toscani, tom. xxiii., p. 35).

† Varchi, Lib. viº, pp. 131-133.

‡ Ibid., p. 134.

it only depended on himself to become lord of that republic \*. The plague had long raged in Naples and infected the camp, for Lautrec had cut the aqueducts and swamped the country, thus either causing or adding to the pestilence: the papal nuncio, the Venetian legate, and finally Lautrec himself fell victims to it; the army now under Saluzzo raised the siege and retreated to Aversa; their rear was attacked and routed by the Prince of Orange; Pietro Navarra was taken and subsequently put to death by the emperor; Aversa shut its gates, cut the French garrison to pieces, and declared for Spain: the troops were nearly annihilated; Saluzzo remained captive; the Florentine Black Bands were almost exterminated, and thus ended this formidable invasion: a few of the confederate bands were still scattered over the country but the kingdom remained to Cæsar. After the recovery of Imola and Rimini Clement moved to Viterbo and thence to Rome which he found a desert; rigorous decrees were immediately promulgated for its re-population and then his hatred setted itself on the Duke of Ferrara and the Florentines. Of the latter we shall soon speak at length; murder and spoliation were destined for the former: Reggio was attempted by treachery; the duke waylaid between Modena and Ferrara, an attempt to murder him followed, yet all failed and all were stoutly denied by Clement; but very soon after, Hercules of Este's marriage with Louis the Twelfth's daughter gave that family some shelter from pontifical malignity †. On hearing of the French disasters Clement secretly resolved to accommodate matters with Charles and began by making one of the imperial ministers named Fra Angelio, a cardinal. The Florentines could scarcely believe in a coalition between Clement and Charles, but still undismayed bent all their energies to defend the commonwealth: gathering up a few remnants of their late

\* Varchi, *Lib. vii*º, pp. 172-181.

† Muratori, *An.*—Varchi, *Lib. vi.*, pp. 150-159.



bands and giving them commissions to levy soldiers, they continued their political contests in despite of war, famine, and pestilence ! The last had recommenced in March and raged with violence, followed in most parts of Italy by a pestilential fever differing from the plague, and called in Lombardy where it was worst, "*Il Mal Mazzucco.*" People went raging mad and threw themselves out of windows, down wells, or dashed wildly into rivers where they perished miserably, and no man could find a remedy : this remained a year after the plague but whether it ever reached Florence is uncertain ; there was sufficient misery without, and both public and private business became fearfully obstructed. Don Hercules of Este was engaged as captain general of the Florentine forces under the most favourable conditions for him, but extremely injurious to the public ; the Florentines depended on his high rank to preserve discipline, on his family connection with France, and above all on Alfonso's injuries and enmity to Clement, a feeling so congenial to their own ; but they were deceived in all\*.

Increasing apprehensions coupled with factious objects had early in the year led about a hundred of the young Popolani, encouraged by Carducci, Soderini and Alfonso Strozzi, to insist on the necessity of a palace guard, and they so influenced the Seignory that in despite of Capponi and other citizens their object was all but accomplished ; but all being violent partisans this guard had in fact the command of the palace until Capponi increased it by two hundred of his own most intimate friends and relations : it was even at the first but a loose and desultory body which similar opinions alone could have kept together, and became still more so by this opposition, wherefore a banner and a chief were demanded ; this although a very proper and reasonable request, so alarmed the authorities that after granting half of it, on condition that the standard should never leave the palace, they removed all

\* Varchi, Lib. vii., p. 195.

further danger by one of the most useful and patriotic measures that ever emanated from the Florentine government; namely the formation of a national guard composed of the whole body of citizens\*.

After the ancient feudal nobility perished, arms and military virtue were much neglected in Florence; most writers agree in acknowledging that the chivalrous military spirit which with all its faults is full of generosity and disinterestedness, failed nearly altogether: the nation though warlike was essentially mercantile and all its institutions imbibed that character. The soldier had no profession in Florence, he was bought and sold like any other commodity, and even the sixteen civic companies could only be considered as a mere city police after the aristocracy was annihilated. From the first period of Medician ascendancy the use of arms had been discouraged and even prohibited amongst the citizens, and though subsequent revolutions and the organization of a national militia had somewhat revived the native spirit, and the renown of Giovanni de' Medici and the Black Bands had still more exalted it, yet until this moment, although frequently discussed, there never had been any attempt to unite and discipline the citizens into one compact body of national defenders. The old and indolent were against it; some, like Filippo Nerli, feared the advent of a new Cæsar, and Niccolò Capponi was more adverse than any until the forced institution of a palace guard convinced him that it was the lesser evil. Perhaps nothing shows the insincerity of the ruling Florentines in the cause of real liberty more than their opposition to so useful an act, but faction was all in all and even the very brawlers of the so-called liberal party now raised a shout against the measure as a mere trick to get quit of the palace guard and place the nation again in the hands of the Medici! The Coryphæus of this faction was Jacopo Alamanni, who

\* Segni, Lib. ii., pp. 76-80. — Nerli, Lib. viii., p. 174. — Varchi, Lib. v., pp. 49-50.

incited by Dante da Castiglione, Cardinal Rucellai, Marco Strozzi and others, insulted the members of the Great Council as they issued from the palace by exclaiming to several "*Whoever voted for this law is a traitor to the cause of liberty.*" "*And thou,*" said Lionardo Ginori, (who along with Alfonso Capponi just at that moment appeared,) "*thou that speakest thus insolently can have but little brains*"\*. Other words in other ways and by other persons followed; daggers were finally drawn, Ginori being struck but not wounded, stumbled backwards and fell; his friends believed him killed; Jacopo ran to the base of Michael Angelo's statue of David crying out, "*Guard,*" "*Guard.*" "*People,*" "*People.*" "*Liberty.*" Batista del Bene alone answered to the first cry, but the two last were seldom heard in Florence without a tumult, and ever signified revolution. Alamanni tried to escape but the shops were suddenly shut and the place all in confusion: the various magistracies had not yet quitted the council-chamber; Capponi is said, probably in ridicule, to have fainted from terror and was carried away to his apartment, but Alamanni was finally arrested and the palace gate shut without opposition from his companions of the guard; the "Ten of War" instantly assembled, and by virtue of the late decree (after Puccino's execution) peremptorily condemned him. Rinaldo Corsi sternly proposed torture for the discovery of new facts and death for his appeal to the people; Carducci who was of the "TEN" tried to excuse rather than defend him as he should have done, being himself the original instigator, but failing in this, both he and Bernardo da Castiglione voted for immediate death: the former was intimidated, the latter uneasy, and both dreaded what torture might extract from the prisoner. Alamanni was therefore condemned one black bean alone, and that supposed to be Capponi's, being in his favour. "Jacopo," says Varchi, "because he tried to raise the people;

\* Nardi attributes the beginning of the fray to a taunt of Ginori's.

because he called on the guard; and because he was Jacopo Alamanni, was the same day decapitated in the palace and his head exhibited to the multitude."

The rapid justice, or injustice, and decision of the government gave as much strength to Capponi as it detracted from his rivals, for the conduct of Carducci and the palace guard affected all, nor was that of Bernardo less blamed by his party: this suffered still more by the departure of Carducci himself for France, to which court he had just been appointed ambassador in a sort of honourable exile and never returned to Florence\*.

The two factions however did not relax a single jot of their usual malignity though they in some measure united in completing the formation of the urban guard. This was divided into four gonfalons for each quarter under which all the citizens of Florence from eighteen to fifty years of age were bound to serve; but as there was no restriction to voluntary enrolment the three thousand men assembled between these ages seems according to Nardi and Pitti very soon to have augmented to four thousand by the addition of volunteers, perhaps beyond the legal age. They were variously armed with arquebuses, pikes, halberds, boar-spears partizans and two-handed swords; and about a thousand of them wore corselets. There was one superintending commissary for each quarter, sixteen captains of companies besides subalterns, who were drawn by lot, and through the militia board approved by the Senate every twelve months. Four old officers of the regular troops, one of whom had distinguished himself in the Black Bands, commanded and disciplined them under the superintendence of the commissary, whose business was to see that their duties were performed.

\* Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 165.—Nardi, Lib. viii., p. 338.—Nerli, Lib. viii., p. 176.—Varehi, Lib. vii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 188-192.—Segni, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 76-83.—It became a custom about this time at Florence to send what was called an "Under Ambassador," who without any autho-

riety to interfere in the functions of his chief, went to learn diplomacy, and sometimes acted as a spy on the ambassador's actions, as happened in this mission of Carducci. (Vide *Nardi*, Lib. viii., p. 338.)

Stefano Colonna of Palestrina commanded in chief under the "Nine Officers of Militia:" their arms and dresses were rich and beautiful; there was a fine spirit in the corps and an aptitude for military exercises the fruit of good-will, that soon brought them into perfect discipline and military obedience although all their officers from the captain downwards were in the first instance elected by themselves. They were moreover all Florentine citizens, and nearly all gentlemen; they took the palace guard but were not the gonfalonier's gaolers: one day in each month was set apart for a general review during which they were practised in every military manœuvre of the time: their perfect knowledge of these, their dexterity in the use of arms, and the order and union which reigned amongst them excited the wonder of veteran soldiers and the admiration of many others of high rank who came from different parts of Italy expressly to see them\*.

Four orations on the advantages of liberty and military virtue were ordered to be annually addressed to them in one of the principal churches by four of their own number appointed to that office; thus every means of moral excitement and reward was employed to render these troops worthy of their country, and themselves, and they succeeded. Such orations were however not always agreeable: a number of young and far from opulent nobles having about this time formed an association under the appellation of "*Fideli*" supped frugally and soberly together once a week; they were respectable in conduct, but as professed lovers of democratic liberty were suspiciously regarded by the gonfalonier and his party. One of these was Pierfilippo Pandolfini whom Pitti praises and Varchi decries, but from his having been selected by the magistracy of militia as one of the four citizens who in a public oration were to inculcate the love of liberty and virtue, it may be

\* *Provisione della Milizia*, vol. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 224.—*Segni*, Lib. ii, p. 86.—*Nardi*, 397, *Archivio Storico Italiano*.—*Pitti*, Lib. viii., p. 337.  
 Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 158.—*Varchi*, Lib. viii<sup>o</sup>,

believed that nothing very objectionable attached to his character. Pandolfini had already become odious to Capponi and the Palleschi by his pamphlet in which he had severely handled and condemned by implication, but without once naming him, all the gonfalonier's public conduct especially his open coquetry with the Medici and their adherents, and denounced all who did not declare themselves openly against that family. He described the bitterness of past servitude and the sweets of present freedom; exhorted his fellow-citizens to show themselves worthy of the divine bounty by choosing a man that could rule the people, who hated tyrants, who would establish law, chastise the enemies of public liberty, defend the good, and be earnest in the preservation of the commonwealth. Capponi condemned this discourse by public proclamation as rebellious, and forbid any citizen under a penalty to retain it in his possession\*.

Animated by the same free spirit Pandolfini took a similar course in his military oration from the pulpit of San Lorenzo to the trained bands of the San Giovanni quarter. He hailed their organization as the basis of freedom, a measure which had been long, often, and fruitlessly attempted; and now, as if by the hand of Heaven, so suddenly completed. After enlarging for a while on this theme and urging his audience to practise obedience and all other military virtues, he expatiated on the various forms of popular government, with the causes of their vitality and decay; praised civic mediocrity, blamed individual prepotency and its poisonous train; delineated with great ingenuity the suspicious conduct of the existing government, burst forth in words of fire against tyranny; and then by a sudden turn exhibited in high relief the nature, customs, objects, and particular signs of tyrannical citizens.

Truth made its way; many of his audience winced under the lash: each thought himself especially aimed at; each imagined

\* Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 172.

that every eye was turned on him alone, and they left the church determined to silence so dangerous an orator. Secret information was consequently laid before the "Otto di Guardia" that a club of young citizens lately formed under the name of "*Fideli*," were in the habit of assembling to discuss measures against the government and should be promptly crushed by the arrest of their leaders Batista del Bene, Giovanni Ringhiadori, and Pierfilippo Pandolfini. They were accordingly apprehended but defended themselves so boldly and effectively before the magistrates that Batista del Bene was at once absolved, while the other prosecutions, but more for words than facts, were continued. A new indictment was formally drawn up by qualified persons which is subjoined on the authority of Jacopo Pitti, as characteristic of the prevailing spirit.

"Pierfilippo Pandolfini who now stands before your lordships "as chief of a certain company of the '*Fideli*' is the most "seditious, wicked, and troublesome man in this city, and with "his malice, cunning, and oratory, and under the shadow of "good, has seduced many of your young citizens, unconscious "of his depraved and malicious intentions to enter into that "company by means of which he hopes to acquire glory for "himself in various ways; by hypocrisy, by the pretence of doing "good, by suppers, and by gaining the good-will of such citizens "so as to induce them afterwards, when it suits him, to second "his wicked and depraved intentions. He has never conceived "anything but mischief, and under the name of union for the "defence of liberty and the present constitution he never has "thought of or attempted anything but to subvert and excite "men's minds to tumults, disorder, and the plundering of "citizens' houses to enrich himself and others, like one who "never was satisfied nor is so now, at what has been effected "by the community. Pierfilippo is excellent at crying from "the pulpits against the tyrant, and persuading men to maintain "liberty; but his deeds are contrary to his words. What greater

“ tyranny is there than that of these conventicles which in hidden  
“ and secret places discuss public measures contrary to law ?  
“ What greater tyranny than not to be satisfied with what is  
“ already done by the government, but publicly and disrespect-  
“ fully blame and vituperate them, as you know for certain  
“ without any other testimony that he has done ? What greater  
“ tyranny than writing on public measures, as he has done,  
“ without license ? What greater tyranny and sin than severely  
“ beating his father and mother as this unhappy man has often  
“ done ? As from them when examined upon oath you will per-  
“ adventure learn if their parental affection does not conquer  
“ them. It is written that he who does not punish crimes per-  
“ mits them : and if such things as these be not speedily  
“ repressed they will soon be difficult of cure. This Pierfilippo  
“ and that Giovanni Ringhiadori whom I also mean to bring  
“ before you are malignant seditious and unquiet men and  
“ should be separated from the others. But tell me, what has  
“ this scoundrel of a Ringhiadori to do with the government  
“ and the republic ? Your lordships will perform good service  
“ in ordering him to be hanged. How men so seditious and  
“ malignant as these two, may or ought to be suffered in a free  
“ and quiet community, and how these conventicles and sedi-  
“ tions agree with a republic, your lordships are well able to  
“ judge without being reminded of it.”

Pandolfino repelled all these accusations by throwing them back on the accusers, asserting that none but tyrants persecuted writers, and only because they feared to enlighten men on the subject of their own rights. When these persecutions became known through the exaggerating medium of faction many citizens began to bestir themselves about the choice of a Seignory who would counteract any unjust acts that the Ottomati might endeavour to operate through the easiness of the gonfalonier who with his whole party were now more closely watched than ever\*.

\* Segni, Lib. ii<sup>e</sup>, pp. 128-30.—Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>e</sup>, pp. 178, 162.



Thus the violence of faction increased until a sudden and dangerous illness seized on Clement and for an instant lulled the storm : he was not expected to live a moment, nay for some time was believed to be extinct and the report of his decease spread over Italy : he recovered, and the tempest recommenced. The flattering and fraudulent language which this pontiff with a semblance of moderation maintained towards Florence was believed by his party and favoured by the gonfalonier : Capponi's two great objects were to attach the Palleschi, the richest, noblest, ablest, and most powerful of the community, to his government ; and to encourage Clement's hopes by using his own weapons against him so as to prevent an alliance with any other power, by which the republic would assuredly be sacrificed. Fore-seeing too the inevitable destruction of a liberty he could not save Capponi looked also to self-preservation, and like the unjust steward endeavoured to make himself friends of the "mammon of unrighteousness" by the promised marriage as Varchi asserts of Catharine of Medicis to his eldest son, and a cardinal's hat to his younger one\*.

However this may be, it is certain that Capponi had been for some months in correspondence with Clement, but indirectly through Jacopo Salviati ; and in a "*Pratica*" or sort of cabinet council where the pontiff's favourable disposition happened to be discussed he seized the occasion to produce some letters that confirmed it ; upon this a general opinion in favour of soothing and quieting the pope with some hopes of finally accomplishing his ends was beginning to prevail, when Baldassare Carducci suddenly rose and scouted the notion of Clement's sincerity, of his ever suffering a spark of freedom to exist in Florence, of his meaning anything but to get footing in the city by fraud and then to reëstablish his family by force in all its former tyranny. On the motion of Tommaso Soderini a middle

\* Varchi, Lib. viii., p. 273.—Segni, Vita di Capponi, p. 329.

course was adopted, and Zanobi Buondelmonti, who once designed to assassinate Clement, was charged along with Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi to play the pontiff's own game and express the profound respect entertained for him by the citizens along with their regret at any untoward proceedings of the community, which only proceeded from its present state of political agitation, and the gonfalonier was at the same time most strictly forbidden to hold, or according to Segni voluntarily renounced holding, further correspondence with Clement, Salviati, or any other person.\* The secret engagement of Capponi's son with Guicciardini's daughter had in fact transpired by accident and caused strong misgivings, for this able and elegant writer was believed and with reason to be as much devoted to the Medici as he was known to be inimical to popular government †. These things caused some alteration in the council of the Pratica; for Capponi had continued the ancient though pernicious republican custom of calling unofficial and of course irresponsible citizens to assist in the deliberations of government, and this had become so inveterate that its omission was considered as a slight by that class of men usually invited to such conferences. Such a custom might have been originally politic, and it was certainly beneficial to the ascendant faction because it attached many citizens by involving them in its measures and sharing power without official responsibility: but as the magistracies were mutable and the "*Pregati*" or "*Ricchiesti*," as these assistants were called, generally issued from the same circle, the former in time became comparatively neglected and the latter courted as a permanent and official body by all foreign ministers and negotiators in Florence ‡. Capponi seems to have carried this custom to an unusual, and considering the altered consti-

\* Segni, Lib. ii., p. 103.

Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 153 to 157.

† Lettere di Principi, vol. iii<sup>o</sup>, fol.

‡ Segni, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 115.—J. Nardi,

124, "*Lettera*" and "*Discorso*," &c.—  
Segni, Lib. ii., pp. 113 and 130.—Pitti,

Lib. viii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 342-345.

tution, certainly to an invidious extent but entirely from his wish to conciliate the Palleschi, who were the ablest statesmen and men of business in Florence: the regular magistracies and councils however complained of it; they were perplexed by private irresponsible people and compelled to check the free expression of their sentiments before them, so that what was partly intended to attract and unite the citizens served only to repel them\*.

The official Palleschi would probably have borne this quietly because it favoured their party, but the Popolani, or "*Libertini*," as they were now more familiarly called, would not suffer such men as Guicciardini, Francesco Vettori, and Matteo Strozzi to have any voice in public councils. The consequence of all this was a law which restricted the Pratica to the Decemvirate of War and their immediate predecessors, besides five citizens chosen half-yearly from each quarter of Florence under the name of "*Arroti*" †.

Thus deprived of their public assistance Capponi nevertheless continued to avail himself of their private counsel, and moreover persevered in his secret correspondence with Clement in despite of the prohibition: seeing the decline of the French arms and fearing the power of Charles who was already in secret alliance with the pontiff, he went about says Pitti "seeking power and benefit for himself with mischief and destruction to the commonwealth." Those of the Palleschi to whom he communicated his proceedings practised on his timidity, his selfishness, and his disappointed ambition, from the hopelessness of another reëlection in the present decline of his popularity; wherefore they urged him to anticipate his successor in gaining Clement's good-will by some signal benefit, and thus secure his own prosperity ‡.

Whether Capponi was or was not influenced by this last consi-

\* Nardi, Lib. viii., p. 342.

p. 157. — Nerli, Lib. viii., p. 186.

† Segni, Lib. i°, p. 41. — Pitti, Lib. ii°, ‡ Pitti, Lib. ii°, p. 173.

deration or whether as danger threatened he redoubled his efforts to amuse and retain the pontiff seems doubtful ; but his correspondence became more active through the medium as was believed (but denied by himself) of Giachinotto Serragli, with Salviati and Pope Clement at Rome\*. Capponi was a merchant ; to a certain point a statesman and diplomatist, but no soldier ; and he consequently trusted more to his negotiations than the arras of his countrymen. He had opposed the militia bill, objected to the cost of fortifying Florence, and probably expected little from the military spirit of the people : past events perhaps justified this or at least excused the incredulity, but he was besides of a soft and moderate character, though haughty despotie and difficult of approach in his official one : belonging to a family long celebrated for men of ability and patriotism who held a steady course between conflicting factions he had endeavoured to imitate them under a very different combination of events, and without the discriminating talent or force of character or even the stern determination that existing circumstances required. Either stung by his unpopularity or wishing to act a part that he felt sure would not be accepted, he proposed first in the Pratica and then in the Grand Council to resign his office. " Because," said he, " I see that I can be of no " further public service in my present position, nay by the " opposition of rivals every attempt at public amelioration is " impeded." He therefore entreated them to nominate some citizen in his place who should be less suspected and more acceptable to those that either envied his greatness or from being ignorant of facts believed him to be inimical to the popular government, but at the same time offered his means and labour as a private citizen for the public service. His resignation was not listened to, and an almost general expression of anger burst from the assembly yet not unmixed with fear and sorrow. The " Ten of Peace and Liberty " rose in a body and

\* Pitti, Lib. iiº, p. 173.

respectfully addressing Capponi protested against such a question being put to the vote or even discussed, and the council was dismissed in universal confusion. It was said that all this was a mere stratagem to excite public sympathy and recover favour; if not, an opportunity soon after appeared for a more effectual but far less agreeable accomplishment of his wishes than he had anticipated\*. Not long after this transaction the new Seignory for March and April 1529 were appointed and amongst them Jacopo Gherardi and Francesco Valori; the former a rough and fierce but sincere Popolano, a decided enemy of Capponi's, and firmly believing him to be false regarded even his most trifling actions with a jaundiced eye; but Valori was a different character. There were two Valori, Francesco and Filippo, nephews of Baccio and both popular from their father Niccolo's known hatred to the Medici: they were attached, or in concert with their uncle pretended to be attached, to the popular party by the youth of which he was courted as a known enemy of Capponi. Baccio is described as a man of astute mind, dexterous in conversation, and admirably adapted to excite civil broils and generate revolutions; prodigal, yet too poor for the full indulgence of his wants, he was ever a most devoted slave of the Medici yet still managed to gain favour with the Libertini by his ingenuity in devising schemes for obstructing Capponi's government, which he and they and Clement were equally anxious to destroy †.

Francesco Valori although affecting the contrary, was no less inimical both to Gherardi and popular rule; he had just come from Rome where by Clement's favour his sister had recently married one of the Tornabuoni who were kinsmen and devoted adherents of the Medici: this made him an object of suspicion to some of the clearer sighted, but with the many his violent popular opinions succeeded, and thus was he enabled to befriend the pope under whose secret instructions he acted. Both

\* Segni, Lib. ii°, pp. 130-132.—Varchi, Lib. viii°, pp. 230-1.

† Ibid., pp. 127-132; Lib. iii°, p. 158.

Filippo and Francesco therefore cordially assisted Baccio Valori in his schemes for ruining the republic and the first step to this was Capponi's fall, because Clement knew that Francesco Guicciardini, Francesco Vettori, Ruberto Acciajuoli and others of that party however well they wished the Medici would not stir a hand against the gonfalonier, so much had his protection and conciliation effected: and so sensible was the pontiff of this bar that while still at Orvieto, when a courtier was praising the kindness and protection shown by Capponi to the Palleschi, Clement turned shortly round and in a whisper said "*That is precisely our misfortune*"\*.

These Medician counsellors, as already mentioned, had warmly encouraged the gonfalonier's correspondence with Salviati, and according to the commonly-received accounts, he happened on the fifteenth of April 1529 to drop a letter in the council-chamber of the Seignory which subsequently fell into Jacopo Gherardi's hands: it merely contained allusions to the subject of a conversation which had taken place between Salviati and Giachinotto Serragli the writer, indicating that under certain conditions the pontiff would not meddle with Florentine liberty but begging that Capponi's son Piero might be despatched to a secret place near Rome for the conclusion†. This suspicious and somewhat startling epistle was, after some fair remonstrances with the gonfalonier himself, finally communicated to Francesco Valori and subsequently to Filippo who was to distribute copies amongst the citizens: Giovanni Ringhiadori and other young Libertini cried out *Treason*, and encouraged by Gherardi

\* Segni, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 127; Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>, p. 158.

† Both Varchi and Segni say that they give this letter "*word for word*," and yet though the tenor is the same, there are not two sentences alike in either. So much for historical facts! Segni's copy (as he was a nephew of Capponi's) is probably cor-

rect, unless there were *two* letters; one dropped inadvertently by Capponi; the other *purposely*, as Varchi asserts, and as Segni hints at, by Francesco Valori. This seems the only way, and a not improbable one, of reconciling these authors, and anyone might have *sent* a letter to Capponi.

armed themselves and occupied the palace, notwithstanding the ordinary guard, in order to support that prior and Valori in their measures against the gonfalonier. A council was instantly summoned; Capponi was impeached, examined, and deposed, and his successor elected. Gherardi acted with great violence, stigmatised him as a traitor and would have had him beheaded or thrown from the palace windows that night had not the gonfalonier's adherents been too numerous.

Francesco Carducci the new gonfalonier instantly doubled the palace guard and acting with great energy took every precaution for his predecessor's safety and fair trial before the council legally appointed for this purpose, consisting of the Seignory and Colleges, the Captains of Party Guelph, the Otto di Balìa, the Ten of War, and the Conservators of the Laws. Capponi, naturally timid, being thus suddenly degraded was scared by the violence of his enemies and so abject was his defence that all his friends were astounded, more especially when they heard him almost acknowledge his crime by endeavouring to exculpate his son, who though named in the letter was still considered innocent. In such circumstances they could only carry an adjournment until the following day to gain time for further exertions; but this was sufficient respite to allow of their using every means of persuasion, by prayers threats and promises, according to the various character of his judges; and so much the more zealously because his condemnation would inevitably involve themselves in trouble as accomplices whether right or wrong. Nor did they omit to visit the prisoner, to reassure and excite him to a more rational and dignified defence: his apprehensions of violence were relieved by the new gonfalonier's precautions, and his confidence revived so much that instead of an habitual placidity of countenance or the recent marks of terror he came next day before his judges with a severe and grave aspect not unmixed with indignation, and made a bold,

spirited, and convincing defence. Many of them had been regularly informed of his proceedings and approved of them; even his great opponent Tommaso Soderini was cognizant of all and in the most generous and spirited manner had resisted Gherardi's motion for death and torture: more selfish motives were assigned; but as no proof exists history must give him credit for his actions.

Capponi indignantly but respectfully vindicated his own conduct; insisted that what he had done was for the universal good; that it had saved the republic from war and probably destruction, by turning Clement's mind towards a legitimate and friendly restoration of his family to their rights as citizens and thus preventing any coalition with foreign powers, by which he asserted that Florence would surely be sacrificed: he demanded with honest pride if they thought the son of Piero and the descendant of Neri and Gino Capponi was likely to turn traitor to his country; or whether so many years of zealous and faithful service was no voucher for his own integrity; whether the man who first raised his voice against the Medici was now likely to recall them; and whether he who had been so trusted and honoured by his countrymen was then going to turn ingrate and bruise the hand that cherished him\*.

We are told by Varchi that the court of magistrates legally appointed to try the gonfalonier having assembled, Niccolò Capponi appeared before it in a black cloak with the "Cappuccio" thrown back on his shoulder as was the custom, in token of respect; and his countenance, in general remarkable for extreme placidity, seemed now more than stern. After a short pause during which his looks were cast upward towards heaven,

\* Varchi and Segni give two very different speeches as Capponi's, the latter rather tamely, the former full of vigour, spirit, and eloquence. Paulo Giovio gives a third, which he showed in MS. to Nerli, who praises its composition and vouches for its argument,

but it is not comparable to Varchi's. It is a pity that we have not Capponi's authenticated speech. Many literary Florentines however believe that Varchi's report is genuine but this for several reasons seems doubtful, yet it has been thought better to insert it.



having received permission to speak he replaced the "Capuccio" and amidst the most profound silence with an indignant gravity thus began.

" I never could have believed, O magnificent Gonfalonier, exalted Seigniors, and you most honourable Magistrates my present judges and fellow-citizens, that Niccolo di Piero Capponi, who I am, would have been compelled in these bonds to defend himself as an enemy of Florence, as a friend of the House of Medici : and to speak more plainly, as a traitor to his country ! But since the power of fortune, or the will of men, or both one and the other have thus decided, behold me here before your Excellencies, yet hardly so much to defend myself and my cause as from a wish not to leave truth and innocence undefended. Certes the wickedness with which I am charged is so great and I so far from having, I will not say committed, but ever even thought of it, that I can hardly venture to judge which is greatest, the malignity of those who have so falsely and so abominably accused me, or the simplicity and innocence of others who so lightly, so inconsiderately, not to say rashly, have believed it ! And although I well know how many and powerful are my enemies, and to what end and by what arts they thus persecute me, nevertheless this, I know not whether to call it perfidy or malice, gives me more anger than pain, and brings with it two things which besides your prudence and goodness, my most honoured magistrates citizens and judges ; greatly, and most justly if I am not deceived, both comfort and console me. One is that I know how in all human actions whether good or bad, it is not the deed itself but the motive of the doer and his object in doing it that should be considered : the other, that the light of truth is so clear and luminous that the mists of human envy and malignity which cover it with false and iniquitous calumny, may indeed veil it, as clouds veil the sun's splendour, once

“ and partially, and for a season, but wholly and everlast-  
“ ingly, never.

“ Being assured of these things and confiding in your great  
“ prudence and goodness, I hope that innocence will be more  
“ effectual in preserving my life and honour than the iniquity  
“ of my enemies and adversaries in satiating their own cruelty  
“ and ambition. I know at least that I am not injured in really  
“ having wished, nor are they benefited by the appearance of  
“ wishing to preserve the freedom of this high and magnificent  
“ republic : nor amongst so many venerable magistrates and  
“ discreet citizens will the modesty and humility be less felt,  
“ with which to avoid false, infamous, unexpected, and un-  
“ merited danger, a man necessarily defends himself, than the  
“ audacity and arrogance of those who to bring shame and  
“ irreparable injury on others have no scruple in offending.  
“ And in order that everybody may know how candidly and  
“ simply I proceed according to my nature and habits, I will  
“ not deny as I could and perhaps ought ; nay, I freely confess  
“ everything that my rivals and censors, not only at the street-  
“ corners and shops but in the public places the churches and  
“ even in the very convents themselves, have said and con-  
“ tinue to say against me : namely, that I have received letters  
“ from the friends and agents of Pope Clement at Rome and  
“ have answered them. The question then which now remains  
“ for discussion is whether the having done this be worthy of  
“ reprehension or punishment as they wish and advocate, or  
“ really perhaps of praise, at least of approval and certainly  
“ excuse as I myself think and repeat. Now, in order that you  
“ my most just and prudent citizens and judges, may be better  
“ able to comprehend and consequently more fairly determine  
“ this matter ; I will shortly and truly declare the motives which  
“ induced me thus to act. I say then that when I was first  
“ elected gonfalonier, considering diligently within myself not  
“ only how great and honourable was the post, but also how

“ grave and perilous, as being equally subject to the envy of the  
“ mean and ambition of the proud ; the idea of this dignity,  
“ which the magnificent and illustrious people of Florence  
“ conferred when they had by divine aid rather than human  
“ counsel become free, held me for a short time in doubt  
“ whether I should rejoice or not. On one side it was a  
“ satisfaction to feel how much the good-will and judgment  
“ of the citizens favoured me ; on the other, well knowing  
“ the deep obligations of so high and important an office  
“ and how insufficient my own weak judgment and abilities  
“ I felt extreme embarrassment, fearing that I should neither  
“ be able to fulfil my own duties nor their expectations, and I  
“ felt this the more sensibly because my disposition was never  
“ to resist or oppose but always to submit and cede to those who  
“ really were, or who held themselves superior to me ; a mani-  
“ fest proof of which is my having only two months past in the  
“ Great Council requested leave to resign the gonfaloniership  
“ as you well know who forbid me to do so. But returning to  
“ the first point : I say that finding myself for the above-men-  
“ tioned reasons all doubtful and perplexed, I first prayed  
“ devoutly to God for his divine grace and then turned every  
“ thought and faculty to one end and object, and that was, at  
“ every personal risk to preserve the freedom and safety of this  
“ powerful and magnificent city. To accomplish this, two  
“ things above all others were necessary and both equally  
“ difficult : the first was to reunite the citizens and hold  
“ them firm and peaceable : the second to restrain the anger  
“ and mitigate the virulence of Pope Clement who is of a par-  
“ ticularly cruel and vindictive nature, in order that he being  
“ allured by his own expectations of recovering Florence should  
“ not unite himself with Cæsar for our ruin, Cæsar himself  
“ being deeply offended with us on many accounts, but espe-  
“ cially for the assistance our army afforded to Lautrec against  
“ him at the siege of Naples ; and being no less cruel, no

“ less vindictive than Clement he also is seeking our ruin. Now,  
“ as to the first of these two things it is well known that I have  
“ left no means untried both by words and actions, but verily  
“ with small success. to secure as members of this com-  
“ munity those citizens who from their old adherence to the  
“ Medici are called Palleschi, and not only protect them against  
“ public and private injury but let them share the honours of  
“ the commonwealth. This brought on me the censure of many  
“ and was the occasion of my being called, besides other taunts  
“ and reproaches, not only ‘*Doge*,’ which indeed I was ; but  
“ ‘*Doge of Venice*’ they insultingly named me ! Thus endea-  
“ vouring to tax me with discontent at popular government  
“ and a desire to introduce that of the Ottimati as if the  
“ supreme dignity of this most noble city were not sufficient  
“ for me, or that I were ignorant of the necessity of adapting  
“ government to the character and habits of the people ! And  
“ whoever asserts that those citizens accustomed to be ruled  
“ and benefited by the Medici can never by any conciliatory  
“ acts become, not to say reconciled but even attached to this  
“ free government, is according to my judgment in a profound  
“ and palpable error ; because they are thoroughly acquainted  
“ with Clement’s nature and well know how deeply he thinks  
“ himself injured by them, and none of them are so dull or so  
“ blind as not to perceive and understand that the Pope, al-  
“ though he outwardly feigns to hold and esteem them as friends,  
“ in secret detests them as enemies little inferior to the rest of  
“ us ! And, according to his judgment, this is not without just  
“ reason, since they, (in five days it will be exactly two years  
“ ago), instead of running to defend his house against the peo-  
“ ple hurried on along with that people to attack it ; and in  
“ lieu of advising the Cardinal of Cortona to maintain his  
“ position and aiding and encouraging him to do so ; they after  
“ the capture of the public palace persuaded him with Ippo-  
“ lito and Alexander to escape frightened and unassisted from

“ the town. As to the second thing ; considering as I did  
“ the extreme difficulty to which Pope Clement was reduced,  
“ because on one side he would not hear of relinquishing the  
“ dominion of Florence, and on the other, pressed by a sense  
“ of mortification at the idea of being reconciled and even  
“ allied to a man who had only yesterday it may be said  
“ with so much shameful injury and injurious shame, held him  
“ many months in captivity : considering I say all this, and well  
“ knowing that according to his nature and usual habits he  
“ worked cunningly and tempted me maliciously ; first by ask-  
“ ing only trifles (things of little moment which in fact were  
“ not unreasonable) in order to arrive insensibly at the gravest  
“ the most important and in short the most injurious actions ;  
“ wherefore not to provoke him I determined to use his own  
“ arts against himself, and with so much the more justice be-  
“ cause his object was to destroy the freedom of his country  
“ which I was endeavouring to prevent, therefore I thought it  
“ right and even my duty to reply. In the hope of thus soften-  
“ ing his incredible bitterness of spirit I continued amusing  
“ him with words, so that he should not have at least any  
“ apparent reason to complain of private citizens, nor so mali-  
“ ciously to accuse the leaders as he was continually doing ;  
“ fearing moreover that in a fit of despair he might ultimately  
“ throw himself into the emperor’s arms and so unite the spi-  
“ ritual and temporal powers against us I thus acted. These are  
“ the deceptions ; my most noble and prudent fellow-citizens and  
“ judges, which I have used against this city ; these are the ma-  
“ chinations that I have been guilty of towards this republic ;  
“ these in short are the treasons that I have committed against  
“ this people and my country ; for these alone am I accused, de-  
“ famed, and reprehended and pierced to the quick, not less  
“ deeply than falsely, by my accusers calumniators and rebukers.

“ And if any citizen ask, after the injunction laid upon me  
“ by the ‘ Pratica ’ to discontinue such correspondence, why I

“ still continued it ; I will answer that I had no other reason  
“ than the abundant zeal and affection which I bear and shall  
“ ever bear to the liberty and prosperity of this Heaven-beloved  
“ and to me most precious people ; which same liberty and  
“ prosperity, not by mere private and cabinet recommendation,  
“ but by the whole people, publicly in the Great Council was  
“ confided and commended to my care. And as the captains  
“ of ships when overtaken by a tempest are not to govern their  
“ actions according to the will and pleasure of the crew and pas-  
“ sengers but by what reason and experience teach them ; so  
“ those who govern republics ought to follow, not what others say,  
“ but what they themselves judge wisest for the country. Certes  
“ it would go hard at time of need were the commanders of  
“ armies in protecting themselves from the enemy, or choosing  
“ their encampment, or in giving battle ; instead of their own  
“ judgment to follow the wishes and convenience of their sol-  
“ diers ! Nevertheless it was not by my own mere will but with  
“ the knowledge and advice of many kind and prudent citizens  
“ that I have always continued this negotiation, as numbers,  
“ (several of whom I now see amongst my judges) well know  
“ and can most truly witness. And as I doubt not that the  
“ opinions of others might have been and perhaps were more  
“ prudent and judicious than mine, so am I equally certain  
“ that mine sprung from great benevolence and excellent  
“ intentions ; and finally whatever I have said or done in the  
“ management of this affair was said and done with a good  
“ object and in the full belief that I thus benefited the liberty  
“ and welfare of this (more dear to me than life) my own  
“ delightful country. Hence is my hope that what I have  
“ done should not merely be excused and sanctioned but also  
“ applauded not only by you O incorruptible judges ; but if  
“ the love of my country and truth does not deceive me, as I  
“ believe it does not ; by our children and our children’s chil-  
“ dren after them. I now pray to God that the time may

“ never arrive when our posterity, blessing the remains of Nic-  
“ colo Capponi, may curse and execrate those of his rivals and  
“ adversaries to whom I am now going to address myself; and to  
“ you, Signior Jacopo Gherardi, before all the rest! To you  
“ who not content with having by means of public suspicion  
“ deprived me of the chief magistracy, nor with beholding me  
“ in this sad and mournful garment; are still with unmitigated  
“ violence trying to deprive me of life and honour! I now de-  
“ mand, what is your motive? (for never in word or deed have  
“ I offended you) what motive urges you to behave so cruelly  
“ and persecute me with such hate that the axe and the block  
“ are scarcely sufficient to slake your thirst for blood? almost  
“ as if I had, nay even without the almost, but as if I really  
“ had delivered your own dwelling and all this city up to sword  
“ and fire! I know that you, being ashamed to confess before  
“ this venerable council of most sapient magistrates and judi-  
“ cious citizens, that you have not been incited so much by  
“ your own malignity and wickedness as by the ambition and  
“ envy of others; being ashamed I say to confess this, you  
“ will reply, if not with a loud and sonorous voice, certainly  
“ with wickedness and malignity; ‘*That letter which I picked*  
“ *up that thou didst not remember to have dropped from thy*  
“ *bosom, written from Rome by Giachinotto Serragli agent of*  
“ *Jacopo Salviati who is the secretary and near relation of*  
“ *Clement.*’ Well; but if I deny that the letter came from  
“ Rome; that it was written by Giachinotto Serragli, and that  
“ I never dropped it at all; what would be your answer, you  
“ knowing nothing for certain and being unable to prove any-  
“ thing against me?—And if I were to add that this letter  
“ was written by *you* or some other who hates me as much as  
“ you do, and who purposely dropped it to raise an infamous  
“ outcry against me, or rather most iniquitously to deprive me  
“ at once of life and honour; what would you reply? Come;  
“ speak; to turn thus pale is not enough; you must become

“ *white* when you accuse me with such asperity ! although I  
“ believe that such wanness is less remorse than anger but  
“ even this last is unreasonable : if taverns were closed ;  
“ gambling interdicted ; blasphemy prohibited ; this was no  
“ more my fault who proposed the law than that of the many  
“ magistrates who approved it or the Great Council that  
“ passed it. But not to distress you more, I will keep to what  
“ I have already promised and restore your natural honesty by  
“ conceding all that *you* have said and what you want *me* also  
“ to say ; namely that the letter came from Rome ; that  
“ it was written by Giachinotto Serragli ; and also (if it will  
“ give you greater satisfaction) that I did drop it ; and then  
“ I will only ask, what in Heaven’s name was there in  
“ that letter about which you have made and are still  
“ making such an uproar beyond that which I have already  
“ not only ingenuously confessed but veraciously justified ?  
“ ‘ *Oh* ;’ you will say ; ‘ *It tells us that thou didst send thy son*  
“ *Piero beyond the frontier with some proposition.*’ Why the  
“ letter itself plainly declares this ! But the question is whether  
“ I really *did* send him ? ‘ I do *believe*’ (you will reply) ‘ *that*  
“ *you sent him.*’ And I rejoin, that I *know* I did not ; and  
“ that your belief ought to have small force against my cer-  
“ tainty ! Even if I had so despatched him it was not the act  
“ of sending him but the cause of sending him, or rather the  
“ commission which he had from me that should have been  
“ considered ; which commission never having been given by me  
“ could scarcely have been known by you. ‘ *I did not know it,*  
“ you would here reply, as I understand you have elsewhere  
“ done, ‘ *but I guessed it, and one may easily conjecture that it*  
“ *would not be good, but most pernicious to this city.*’ Then do  
“ you really wish that in a matter of such importance credit  
“ should alone be given to your divinings and imaginations ?  
“ And is it in your eyes the office of, I will not say a good  
“ Christian or a good citizen ; but of a reputable man ; or



“ simply even of a man, to accuse any one so abominably and  
“ place his life and fame in jeopardy without any other founda-  
“ tion than conjectures which often, nay generally or rather  
“ almost always turn out empty or fallacious? But let it be  
“ conceded that your divinations should be believed and faith  
“ given to your conjectures; where have you learned and so  
“ easily too; now tell me on your faith; where have you learned  
“ that my commission would not have been good but on the  
“ contrary most injurious to this city? From my countenance  
“ perhaps? From my words? From my actions forsooth? Why  
“ I was the first who dared with great personal risk to with-  
“ stand the existing tyranny and vindicate our liberty by  
“ insisting that the Pratica should be held in the public palace  
“ and not in the private apartments of the Medici! From my  
“ life? I have now lived sixty years and more unblameably  
“ without ever exciting a complaint from any person!—or  
“ rather perhaps from the death of my father Piero? or perad-  
“ venture the life of my grandfather Gino? or from the labours  
“ of so many of my ancestors for the liberty and prosperity of  
“ this republic? or finally from the frugality and moderation  
“ of all the Capponi family? Tell me now Signor Jacopo  
“ Gherardi; do you make no distinction between a mother and  
“ a stepmother? Who, think you, love their country best the  
“ children or the step-children?—I crave an answer.—What  
“ gratitude, or rather what ingratitude would have been mine  
“ to the Florentine people if, unlike my father when in the  
“ midst of war and barbarous enemies he tore up the articles  
“ of capitulation in the face of the French King to maintain  
“ the liberty of this republic! (and he was I may say, no more  
“ than a private citizen, I, gonfalonier of justice! in the midst  
“ of peace! amongst relations, friends and fellow-citizens!)  
“ if I had capitulated to enslave her? Declare I beseech  
“ you; putting what is rational out of the question in order that  
“ you may not deride me for always demanding reasons; but

“ say, is it *likely* that I, having the power of living free and  
“ with lasting honour to myself and race, should seek a ser-  
“ vile existence with perpetual infamy to both? And finally  
“ I demand whether you have really allowed yourself to  
“ suppose that in a trial where life and honour are at stake, in  
“ presence of so many severe magistrates and honest citizens,  
“ that your falsehoods will be believed before my truth?  
“ You show but little knowledge of the wisdom or religion  
“ of these most honest judges if you allow yourself to think  
“ so. But even if nothing of all I have alleged existed,  
“ ought you not against a fellow-citizen, and one also who  
“ was, not to say superior, at least a companion and col-  
“ league; ought you not I say to have proceeded, if not with  
“ more modesty and consideration, at least with less rashness  
“ and audacity? For I wish not (having more regard to your  
“ dignity as a member of the Seignory than you had to me as  
“ gonfalonier) I wish not as they deserve; to call them by their  
“ proper names of rage and madness; but why is it that you  
“ thought proper so suddenly and hastily to assemble such a  
“ crowd of young citizens and cause them with half-concealed  
“ arms to stalk audaciously through the prior’s apartments and  
“ even before my own chambers in order to intimidate me?  
“ Why arm the militia? Why take possession of the palace?  
“ Why shut and bolt the palace gate? What good, think  
“ you, was meant by that tumult which under your direc-  
“ tions arose ere yesterday in the court and on the steps of  
“ this palace by the very people who were placed there to  
“ prevent disorder? From whom did they come and what was  
“ the meaning of those imprudent and insolent shouts? Im-  
“ prudent and insolent do I say! rather let me call them  
“ impious and nefarious and in the midst of other barbarities,  
“ most barbarous and abominable! ‘*Throw him down; pitch  
“ him headlong from the windows*’ was the cry! and that I still  
“ breathe and look upon the pleasant and beautiful light of day

“ I owe first to God’s mercy from whom all good proceeds,  
“ and next to some spirited and humane citizens who inter-  
“ posed to save me ; but it is not your fault that I and my son  
“ Piero were not most barbarously murdered in this palace and  
“ even in my own chamber ! Civilised men Seignior Jacopo  
“ should conduct themselves in a civilised manner : in well-  
“ ordered republics, judgments, not arms ; laws, not men,  
“ should control and govern. Have you not yet learned, after  
“ having been so many years the father of a family, what  
“ punishment is due to disorderly men who for any cause  
“ raise the people and arm the younger citizens, already from  
“ their nature too easily excited and prone to novelty ? Is  
“ it hidden from you what a grave offence is committed and  
“ what punishment is incurred by him that on his own autho-  
“ rity puts to death another man in what place soever it may  
“ happen, even though he be a private person of the lowest and  
“ humblest class ? How much graver then when it is a gon-  
“ falonier of Florence in the very palace of the government !  
“ Are *you* alone forgetful that the magistrates are sacred and  
“ inviolable ? Do you believe ; (or do you want a special  
“ privilege) that those things which to all others are unlawful  
“ and forbidden, to you are lawful and conceded ? What  
“ greater difference is there between princes and tyrants than  
“ that these kill whom they please and how they please ; and  
“ those only culprits and by the forms of justice ? But I will  
“ not depart from my own nature and habits to excite hatred  
“ against you for those things which would justly bring down  
“ on your head what you unjustly were trying and are still  
“ trying to bring on mine ; I will only say that if the good  
“ of this city and public utility were as dear to you as you  
“ say, you would not either to satisfy your own anger or the  
“ ambition of others, put them both in the peril that you have  
“ now done : for if what I hear be true (and may it please  
“ God to make it false) that preparations have been made

“ by many not to let me issue from this palace alive; it is  
“ equally true that there are no fewer nor less powerful who  
“ are preparing to save me : those want me to be condemned  
“ before I am heard, and to be put to death before I am  
“ condemned; these cannot suffer justice to be impeded and  
“ reason vanquished and oppressed by force. And because  
“ even now I think I hear the sound of arms and see close  
“ at hand the extreme danger in which, with ultimate injury  
“ and the annihilation of this republic, the city is involved ;  
“ commiseration for my country and love for my fellow-citizens  
“ force and constrain me to do that which I had determined  
“ to avoid, only to prevent my cause or rather the crimes of  
“ others from bringing us to civil war, murder, the ruin of  
“ houses and violation of sacred edifices : namely to recom-  
“ mend myself and righteous cause to your consideration ; as  
“ well because I thought my innocence in itself sufficient, as  
“ not to appear diffident of your justice and integrity. Where-  
“ fore magnificent gonfalonier, exalted seigniors, and you my  
“ most honoured magistrates, citizens, and judges ; to you all  
“ and severally I now address myself with equal humility  
“ both of head and heart : and I pray and conjure you with all  
“ my strength and ability, that in giving your votes and  
“ judgment in this cause you will vouchsafe to remember :  
“ first, that he who without just reason or foundation now  
“ accuses, is *Jacopo di Jacopo Gherardi* ; and he that with  
“ just cause and reason most justly defends himself is *Niccolo di*  
“ *Piero Capponi*. Secondly, that in your hands and in the  
“ hands which you hold there, are placed not only my life and  
“ liberty who am your most innocent fellow-citizen but also  
“ the liberty and safety of this city and the whole Florentine  
“ people, because the principal intention of Gherardi, of all that  
“ resemble Gherardi, and of those who make use of Gherardi as  
“ an audacious and unscrupulous man without respect for things  
“ or persons, is not so much to get rid of me as to render the

“ commonwealth subservient to their own private interest and  
“ change this public and free popular government to a licentious  
“ dissolute and particular dominion for themselves. Nor do  
“ they perceive, blinded as some are by hatred and envy and  
“ others dazzled by ambition and gold, that there is no shorter  
“ or better way (but with extreme injury and shame both to us  
“ and them) to place this community, together with the most  
“ noble and potent city of Florence and all its vast and  
“ flourishing dominions, in the arbitrary power of Pope Clement,  
“ and consequently reduce her from a state of liberty and hap-  
“ piness (may God avert this sinister but I fear too true  
“ augury) to a perpetual state of misery and servitude under  
“ the cruellest of jurisdictions ! ! ”

Capponi's speech was so vigorous and animated, so full of sincerity, and so unexpected either by friends or foes that while he spoke and for some time afterwards a dead silence pervaded the assembly and an indignant satisfaction glowed in the aspect of his followers: even Jacopo Gherardi himself, astonished at such vehemence of elocution and its total change from the tone of Capponi's last address, remained almost stupefied. Imagining that everybody regarded him with a frown he began to be apprehensive for himself and continued speechless; but soon recovering he justly insisted on some investigation, or some other test of innocence than a mere declamatory negation of the charge: it was he said far too grave to slur over, and Niccolo should either be cleared of crime or the people of doubt and suspicion by his punishment. But he spoke in vain; Capponi's friends were too numerous, and supported by a third party which although believing him in fault was appeased by his previous degradation and wished to close the wound in gentleness. The gonfalonier with true Florentine justice had in fact been already condemned and punished ere he was tried, and although his adherents allowed and even encouraged this for the sake of disarming public fury, it

became no less cogent a plea in his favour; wherefore without further investigation, without a single witness being called on either side, with nothing but Gherardi's impeachment and Capponi's defence and with his crime unproved, unsupported, unexamined in any of its bearings; the Court proceeded to judgment! Gherardi's first motion, to apply the torture, was negatived with a reproof from the "Decemvirate of Peace and Liberty:" the same fate attended his second, which was for two years' banishment: his third had greater success, and on this Capponi was condemned to remain for a specified period within the Florentine dominion under a penalty of thirty thousand crowns. Thus absolved he immediately quitted the palace but more like a conqueror than a half-condemned criminal; for such a train of friends and rejoicers attended his exit that when he turned to thank them at his own door a portion of the line had not yet been able to clear the public square before the palace\*!

Thus ended for a while the political career of Niccolo di Piero Capponi. Next morning he was seen calmly following his business in the markets and soon after retired in quiet to his villa to avoid the crowds of visitors who, from foreign ambassadors downwards, kept thronging his antechambers. He had escaped a great danger; for so bent was Gherardi on his death that besides filling the palace with the young armed "Libertines," who had been excited to madness ere he gave the obnoxious letter to the Signory, he had actually ordered the headsman to attend and endeavouring to intimidate the remaining priors by menaces and force of arms moved that

\* Casa Capponi is now the Hotel of the "Four Nations" on the Lung' Arno at the foot of the Bridge Santa Trinità. In the great hall are some fine paintings of his father Piero's exploits well preserved.—Guicciardini, Storia, Lib. xviii., cap. iv., p. 198.—Segni, Vita di N. Capponi. — Giov.

Cambi, tom. xxiii., pp. 40-43.—Fil<sup>o</sup>. Nerli, Lib. viii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 182-3.—Jac<sup>o</sup>. Nardi, Lib. viii<sup>o</sup>, p. 344. Varchi, Lib. viii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 243-271.—Segni, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 132-153.—Jacopo Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 173-179.—Paulo Giovo, Lib. xxvii., pp. 108-114.—Ammirato, Lib. xxx<sup>o</sup>, pp. 379-80.

Capponi should be decapitated! Twice was the question put, and twice it failed one vote alone being wanting; but his friends were staunch; upon which Gherardi started up and drawing a dagger, furiously exclaimed "*This at least shall carry the question if it cannot carry the votes!*" Whereupon Lorenzo Berardi a young and ardent friend of the gonfalonier instantly drew his poniard and advancing towards Gherardi sternly said, "*And this shall un-carry the question!*" This resolution saved Capponi for that night and paved the way for his final absolution\*.

About the letter there is some mystery; Varchi positively asserts that it was written on purpose to ruin Capponi; that having been given by Clement or his agents to Francesco Valori while at Rome the latter purposely dropped it according to his instructions, and Segni also hints though indistinctly, at some such transaction. If so it was probably a copy, or one of the same tenor differently composed as these authors profess to give it for there are too many minute circumstances produced by Segni, whose father was a principal actor in the scene, to doubt for an instant that Capponi did receive a letter; that it surprised him by its variation from all others which had hitherto come; by its being the first since he had dropped the correspondence; by its incomprehensible allusions; and because it was written by Serragli with whom he disclaimed having had any previous correspondence. Lorenzo Segni advised him at first to destroy the letter, but Capponi convinced him that the better way would be to lay it before the Pratica, and this would have been done had not it fallen into the hands of Gherardi †.

Francesco Carducci the new gonfalonier had been elected amidst angry shouts from Capponi's armed partisans without and the feverish anxiety of his friends within: their eagerness to save him prevented opposition in the councils, and the rapidity of

\* Segni, Vita Capponi, p. 345.

Segni, Stor., Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>, p. 158.—Vita

† Varchi, Lib. viii., pp. 252-3. — di Capponi, p. 341.

election, the person chosen, and the numerous restrictions now placed on the exercise of supreme authority, all show the change that events had already operated in public opinion and the strong suspicions of the popular faction. To the present gonfalonier scarcely more than the splendour of supremacy remained: he was created for eight months merely to fill up the broken period, with a *Divieto* or prohibition from the same office both as regarded him and all subsequent gonfaloniers for two years: he was forbidden to receive any foreign ambassador, envoy, or any other political agent of prince or republic except in presence of the *Proposto* or Provost of the Seignory; or in his absence one of the priors of his own quarter. He could maintain no agent on his own account in any foreign court or state, nor write in his own name to any Florentine ambassador, governor, or other functionary of high rank; nor open any letters addressed to himself or the Seignory, except in presence of the provost: and to complete his trammels the private door of his apartment on the ground-floor of the palace was walled up, the chambers themselves taken from him and his residence fixed on the first-floor in such a way that no entrance nor exit could be made except through the priors' lodgings. A thousand florins fine, a trial before the *Quarantià*, and liability to punishment at any time during five years after leaving office, were the penalties attached to a breach of these regulations. Capponi's danger facilitated the passage of this law which however his friends intended to be merely provisional; they were mistaken, for the six remaining candidates amongst whom the new gonfalonier was chosen indicated a great revolution of political feeling: not one of Capponi's former rivals was even thought of; a totally different class now floated on public opinion and the successful candidate not only ignoble, but belonging to the minor trades, was scarcely known to Tommaso Soderini and the haughty Florentine aristocracy. They were indignant at the slight, astounded at their own loss of credit, and repenting their share in Capponi's fall determined



to procure his absolution \*. The public too were surprised, for Carducci had twice failed in trade and evil to the commonwealth was foreboded with its power in a bankrupt's hands! Yet he was an able man; his inaugural speech pleased the community, and had he not too eagerly and ambitiously clung to office by courting Capponi's adherents he would probably have been more successful; but in attempting to gain both parties he ultimately lost all †.

One of his first acts was a reform of the *Specchio* the management of which being in the hands of notaries was open to abuses of the most serious character, for few if any citizens were safe when it pleased those who exercised the duties of this important office to deprive them of their rights of citizenship by an assumed debt to the community or supposed arrears of taxation. In lieu of notaries therefore a citizen from each quarter was now elected by the Great Council and compelled to keep such a register of all those who paid taxes within his district as would enable any man to see his liabilities †. These must have been great for all, and few probably if rigidly dealt with could have entirely escaped the *Specchio*: Florence was in fact overburdened with debt the fruits of tyranny and war, and the reëstablishment of liberty was not unexpensive: the ordinary revenues remained almost stationary, perhaps diminished, while public and private expenses increased; luxury augmented and peculation generally supplied the means, as peculation or bribery will always do when the standard of sensual pleasures is governed by fancy in the upper, and by misery in the lower classes of society. The deficiency in ordinary revenue was compensated by extraordinary impositions which frequently embraced the whole population, and by forced loans of the most unjust and arbitrary character which were seldom or ever repaid. From this incessant but irregular

\* Varchi, *Lib. viii*°, pp. 248-250.

† *Ibid.*, *Lib. ix.*, p. 15.

‡ Varchi, *Lib. viii.*, p. 279.

and undefined meddling with private resources involving a close investigation of their condition which is always dangerous in a mercantile community, arose much of the civil discord and consequent unhappiness of the Florentines. A new and severe reformation of the Decima followed by a general and indiscriminate tax on city and suburb to fortify the former, together with a stricter maintenance of sundry moral regulations occupied the first days of the new gonfaloniership\*.

When Clement's expectation of a peaceable return to Florence was destroyed by Capponi's lengthened negotiations, and when that statesman's fall cancelled the little repugnance which his caution might have otherwise generated, to attack the city by force of arms, his secret negotiations with the emperor were continued and on the twenty-ninth of June the treaty clandestinely begun at Rome by Charles's ambassador Mussetola was terminated at Barcelona by the Pope's nunzio Nicholas Schomberg Archbishop of Capua †.

The pope conceded little in this treaty; the emperor much; for he was eager not only to break up the Italian confederacy but to make some amends for his late persecution of the Holy Father: Charles therefore received only the formal investiture of Naples, free of all tribute but the usual White Pony, and permission to tax the clergy of his dominions: in return he agreed to secure Ravenna, Cervia, Modena, Reggio, and Rubiera to the church by his influence with Venice and Ferrara; to reëstablish the House of Medici in Florence, and give his natural daughter Margaret in marriage to the young Alexander now the only lay representative of that family, for Ippolito had been made a cardinal in the preceding January. Alexander was illegitimate; the child of a Moorish woman; but whether the offspring of Lorenzo Duke of Urbino; of Clement himself; or of some unknown person his mother's character rendered it im-

\* Varchi, Lib. viii<sup>o</sup>, p. 279.—Segni, xxviii. — Relazioni Venete, Serie ii<sup>a</sup>, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 110. vol. i<sup>o</sup>.

† Carlo Capello Lettere, Lettera

possible to determine; it was sufficient that the Holy Father loved him as a son and destined him to rule Florence. The extravagance and licentiousness of Francis was the principal cause of Lautrec's failure before Naples and the subsequent destruction of that commander's army: he had afterwards sent another into Lombardy under François de Bourbon Count of Saint Paul, composed of badly paid and miserable troops, for even the scanty funds which Francis remitted were plundered by that general and his underlings, and he moreover quarrelled with Urbino who was still pursuing those cautious movements so congenial to his own disposition or private interests, and the spirit of Venetian policy. Saint Paul neither relieved Genoa nor beleaguered Milan although Don Antonio de Leyva was almost exhausted in men and means and detested by the inhabitants for his excessive cruelty; he failed in a treacherous attempt to capture Andrea Doria while quietly inhabiting his palace at Genoa; he could not even prevent a reënforcement of two thousand raw Spaniards reaching Milan from that city, although from their extreme misery they were scornfully called the "*Bisogni*," a name that subsequently became common to all Spanish recruits for the Italian army; and finally he was surprised, beaten, taken prisoner, and his army annihilated by Leyva at Landriano near Milan on the twenty-first of June 1529\*.

Thus perished the last hopes of the Florentines, and scarcely had the news arrived when that of the treaty of Barcelona threw them into greater consternation, abandoned as they saw themselves to the vengeance of Clement: still they relied on the word and honour of Francis: it was a false estimate, and the treaty of Cambray soon convinced them of that monarch's infamy and their own destitution. This treaty, concluded in August by Louisa of Savoy for France, and Margaret of Austria for the emperor and thence called "*Le Traité des*

\* Segni, Lib. ii°, p. 109.—Segni, Lib. iii°, p. 167.—Varchi, Lib. vii°, p. 181.—Sismondi, vol. xii., p. 20.

*Dames,*" was one of the most disgraceful that ever stained the annals of French diplomacy. Francis who would appear to have lost "*everything but his honour*" at Pavia only for the satisfaction of becoming an utter moral bankrupt at Cambray, sacrificed all his allies without remorse. "He abandoned," says Sismondi, "those who had armed themselves during his captivity, who had made the Imperialists tremble after their victory at Pavia, who would have rescued him from prison had he not so precipitately passed into Spain, who from that moment had resolutely fought for him, and for him too had sacrificed their treasures their soldiers and their provinces. He made no stipulation for Florence who at his solicitation had provoked the anger of Charles V. and had often rejected advantageous offers of neutrality; nothing for Venice who had been his constant ally and with whom he had lately contracted more formal engagements"\*.

It is true that both Florence and Venice were named in this treaty; but how? with fraud and mockery! Florence was comprised, if within four months she could make terms with the emperor! with the very man who had only six weeks before solemnly engaged to deliver her bound hand and foot into the hands of her deadly enemy! The Venetians were as basely abandoned though not with so fatal a consequence; but both were equally excluded until it pleased the emperor to pardon them†. After avoiding the sight of the Venetian and Florentine ambassadors Francis when he at last deigned to grant an audience to Baldassare Carducci had the effrontery to declare the treaty of Cambray a mere stratagem for the emancipation of his sons; that he was not changed; and that he would be ever willing to assist the Florentines whom, (after refusing his consent to their concluding a separate treaty as they had done in 1512), he encouraged to make a vigorous resistance, and finally mocked them with the offer of forty thousand

\* Sismondi, vol. xii., p. 27.—Lettere di C. Capello.—Segni, Lib. iii<sup>e</sup>, p. 166.

Varchi, Lib. ix., pp. 3-13.—Lettere di Carlo Capello.

† Sismondi, vol. xii., pp. 27-28. —

crowns! "The treaty was concluded," says Carducci, "with the impious and cruel determination of that king and his agents to sacrifice his confederates; so that this fact will be a perpetual record to all Italy to show how much faith may be placed in the alliances, promises, and oaths of that crown." Charles on the contrary did not forget a single friend, and even the deceased Bourbon's family were studiously cared for though subsequently despoiled by the double treachery of the false and despicable Francis. Carducci had been duped by him throughout, and it was only from a second ambassador, Bartolommeo Cavalcanti, that the Florentines were informed of what was really preparing against them\*. The allies endeavoured to make better terms, and in consequence of the danger then gathering on the Turkish frontier of the Austrian dominions coupled with the emperor's pecuniary embarrassment, finally succeeded in concluding successive treaties with Charles at Bologna by which all Italy, Florence alone excepted, was restored to tranquillity. Charles in fact did not wait for the treaty of Cambray but summoning Doria with his galleys to Barcelona and loading him with honours he embarked on the twenty-ninth of July and landed at Genoa on the twelfth of August with twelve thousand men. There he ratified the Treaty of Cambray and prepared to put it into immediate execution with a scattered Italian army under himself at Genoa, the Prince of Orange at Aquila, the Marquis del Guasto in Apulia, and Felix of Wurtemberg in Lombardy: besides the Milanese garrison and a small Italian force under Fabrizio Marmaldo of Calabria; in all about thirty thousand men\*.

As soon as the emperor's arrival at Savona became known an embassy of four citizens was nominated to treat with him but so divided in political opinions that little unanimity could be expected either in their despatches or exertions: these were Niccolo Capponi, Matteo Strozzi, Raffaello Girolami and Tom-

\* Lettere di Carlo Capello.—Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 12.—Nerli, Lib. ix., p. 185.

† Sismondi, vol. xii., p. 31.

maso Soderini. Niccolo had always favoured an alliance with Charles and gentleness towards Clement, and while gonfalonier Matteo Strozzi had been one of his firmest supporters; but Tommaso Soderini, and Girolami whom the latter had gained, were of the new ruling popular party. Raffaello Girolami's family had always opposed, while he himself adhered to the Medici; but ambition spurred him on to the achievement of republican supremacy in Florence which by dexterity in winning both factions he finally obtained: his opinions were warlike and blustering while Soderini shrunk from the coming storm, and Strozzi was more inclined to save his private fortune than make any sacrifice for the independence of his country\*.

Luigi Alamanni the sub-ambassador had met Charles V. at Savona in hopes of procuring for them a favourable reception, but except in fair words he was totally unsuccessful; the emperor still firm to his engagements would not treat with Florence unless previously reconciled to Clement; he reproached the embassy through his chancellor with assisting France against their liege lord (for he affected to consider Florence an imperial fief) and altogether treated them so roughly that Capponi, Strozzi, and Soderini are said to have quitted the court while Girolami and Luigi Alamanni remained a little longer; but after following Charles as far as Piacenza from which place at Clement's desire he was excluded, Girolami made the best of his way to Florence. Segni probably with more truth says that the embassy continued unbroken to Piacenza where Capponi persuaded his colleagues to write a joint letter informing the Seignory of the real state of affairs and that in the pontiff's clemency alone could they hope for safety†.

Soon after this Matteo Strozzi discreetly retired to Venice

\* Pitti, Lib. ii<sup>o</sup>, p. 186.—Varchi, Lib. ix., pp. 42 and 43.

† According to Carlo Capello, full powers were secretly given, after this first audience, to the ambassadors to

treat with the emperor without any exception of persons, and therefore including Clement. (Vide *Lettere*, from xlii. to xlvi., and l. *Relazioni Venete*, vol. i<sup>o</sup>, serie xi<sup>a</sup>.)

where his son Lorenzo had opened a bank; Tommaso Soderini pretended sickness and took refuge at Lucca but Capponi with a finer spirit determined to share the perils and misfortunes of his country. At Castel Nuovo di Garfagnana he met Rinaldo Corsini and Michaelangelo Buonarroti who were apparently flying from the devoted town. They informed him of Albizzi's retreat from Arezzo, the deplorable condition and terror of Florence, with their own fears of its safety; upon which Niccolò exclaimed in extreme excitement to Strozzi who was yet with him, "Let us begone Matteo for I want to see if I cannot prevent my native city from being designedly ruined by a parcel of disgraceful bankrupts who have tyrannically infringed all laws and usurped the people's authority." Overcome by the violence of anger he was struck that night with fever, and attended by his daughter expired on the eighth of October almost continually repeating "*Oimé! Oimé! Dove abbiam noi condotto quella misera patria!*" "Alas! alas! to what have we brought our unhappy country" \*!

Thus died Niccolò di Piero Capponi who with all his errors was one of the most honest citizens of Florence: mild, virtuous, and sincere, yet not untinged with the general selfishness nor free from the ambition of the age, he also shared largely in the aristocratic spirit of his order. With considerable experience and ability as a statesman he was morally timid, and not a man to direct the wild spirits of a revolution like that of Florence in so peculiarly arduous a conjuncture. A noble, but somewhat wild and unregulated desire of freedom and national independence pervaded the community; it burned most fiercely below, and though slacked by wealth, power, and an exclusive aristocratic spirit, was still unquenched, and only left that body the alternative of sharing or being entirely consumed by the flame. Unwilling to yield, unable to temper or direct this spirit,

\* Varchi, Lib. ix., pp. 36-40.—Segni, Lib. iii., pp. 170-175-203.—Segni, Vita di Capponi, p. 364.

Capponi fell and the flame waved fierce and high above him : but then the outward storm arose and after a fierce conflict the fire of liberty was for ever extinguished by its blast !

Capponi's character may here be aptly summed up in the few but emphatic words of his learned and distinguished descendant the Marquis Gino Capponi of Florence in his explanatory notes to the "*Documents of Italian History.*" "Nicholas was as practised in business as sincere in mind, but neither availed him in those difficult times : he was unfortunate both in life and reputation, and perhaps his country was even injured by one who really loved it so much. With judgment enough to foresee the inevitable ruin of the republic he had not the soul to illustrate its downfall. If amongst the 'Arrabbiati' there was often a scarcity of counsel, in him there was neither enough vigour nor wisdom to direct those dissolute forces to a good object : it was necessary to rule them better, but still adopt them : he was wrong to compress them. His worst measure was the attempt to reconcile himself with Clement : no concord or tempered government with the Medici was possible, and in the 'Ottomati' neither force nor union sufficient to mitigate the coming monarchy. A large proportion of the people were debauched ; credit, or virtue, failed in the magistrates : the real popular strength seemed to be incarnate in Ferruci and died with him"\*.

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COTEMPORARY MONARCHS.—England : Henry VIII.—Scotland : James IV.  
—France : Francis I.—Spain, Naples, Sicily, the Low Countries and German  
Empire : Charles V.—Pope : Clement VII.—Portugal : John III.—Sultan  
Soliman I.

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\* Doc., Stor. Ital. da Molini, *note*, p. 80, vol. ii°, N°. Doc°. ccxiii.



## CHAPTER XIII.

FROM A.D. 1529 TO A.D. 1530.

A PEOPLE accustomed to tyranny if they ever regain their freedom maintain it with difficulty; it is a strange and dangerous weapon and they handle it awkwardly: liberation  
A.D. 1529. kindles into licence; licence becomes anarchy, and the latter state of this nation is worse than the former. Or else theoretical systems of government are vainly discussed when the people are impatient for results and hypothetical constitutions, instead of armed battalions, are apt to occupy the first leaders of revolutions while external enemies are gathering around them or some daring citizen preparing to snatch the jewel from their hands.

In the revolutions of states like those of Italy, when old institutions were preserved, the forms of freedom still dimly loomed through the storm and the strife was oftener between factions than principles; for many subaltern tyrants were sure to remain, unwilling to relinquish their power or restrain their noxious aspirations. Injury, hatred, vengeance, fear, and ambition combined to disturb society, and an alternate rise and fall of factions formed the painful theme of their history until one or the other was annihilated. Few states thus circumstanced could in later times arrive at real liberty without suffering under some and probably a military despotism, which begins by destroying faction and producing order, for it is the sword that finally settles the fate of nations. Springing from a liberal source such despotisms are necessarily imbued with something

of the prevailing spirit, or at least is compelled to respect it ; and while jealously maintaining its own authority, governs with free institutions until a more rational liberty be established. In Florence arms were as yet only a resort of the occasion ; faction had planted, eradicated, and restored freedom ; but as the powers of despotism approached to quench her ardent spirit arms became necessary.

Capponi for a while sustained the revolution or rather his own party, and an abler man might have confirmed her liberty ; he had the will without the genius for such a task, and believing that Piero Soderini was ruined by a democratic policy he loaded the aristocratic scale until the people becoming sensible of their own lightness, by a sudden effort restored the equilibrium. Under a more commanding mind this policy might have succeeded, but opposition paralysed him and it became a half measure disapproved by the people, wherefore both he and his country were sacrificed. After Capponi's deposition the government expanded ; it was more democratic, more vigorous, less experienced, but not less turbulent : the Seignory and Colleges now insisted on having a voice in the Pratica, and a new infusion of democracy was thus poured into the governing council from these two last-named magistracies. The gonfalonier was essentially democratic, a vigorous and able man who might have done good service but for his selfish ambition : endeavouring to gain the Ottomati and Frateschi, Capponi's party, he incurred the suspicion of his own, and was always hated and contemned by the nobles as a low trader and bankrupt, who had usurped their authority. Nevertheless Carducci made strenuous efforts to meet the coming war which after the repulse of their ambassadors at Genoa and Placentia the nation saw was inevitable.

The imperial presence lulled Italy into a momentary peace, the quiet of fear and expectation ; the court of Placentia was thronged with Italian princes and embassies, all eager to pacify

the lord of Italy. Florence first broke the Italian confederacy by sending her ambassadors to Genoa, and now like a shattered bark she found herself rolling alone and helpless on the swell of this fallacious calm: weak, mortified, exhausted; she saw the gathering storm, the flash of the waves, and the distant gleams that betokened her destruction; but proudly collecting all her remaining strength and considering what she once was rather than what could now be accomplished, she boldly girded up her loins and made ready for the danger! The sister republics of her youth had successively withered or sunk into more than primitive imbecility; she alone remained, the depository of their glory, their virtues, their vices, and their knowledge; the last and only representative of their early freedom! Opposed by the power of Spain and Naples, the Church and the empire; basely abandoned by France and unassisted by Venice, her alternative was submission to a Medici or the valour of her arms: she chose the nobler and the manlier part, and resolved that her fall should not at least be inglorious\*.

The Florentines for a long time had ceased to be military; the pernicious custom of employing mercenaries as we have seen was adopted by them even more than by others, and at the very moment when Florence controlled the restless Visconti, when she braved the imperial authority, or checked the high reaching sallies of the kings of Naples, but few of her sons were in the field and Florentine steel only glittered at distant intervals in the ranks of her legions. She was essentially commercial, yet prompt to war, and not a military nation: full of moral courage and constancy, of daring and warlike talent, as the conduct of her commissaries had often shewn and as the Donati, the Medici and others had fairly proved, she still preferred gold to iron and, like the Venetians, rather discouraged a military reputation amongst her citizens. For

\* Lettere di Carlo Capello, *passim*.

these and other before mentioned reasons the Florentines had avoided personal service unless on some extraordinary occasions such as the storming of Pisa, and with the exception of a few scattered individuals made no study of war. The organization of the militia by Macchiavelli who did study and write on it, first broke in upon this pacific spirit and the reputation of the Black Bands with their distinguished leader flattered the pride and awakened something of the ancient military spirit of the people. This however must of necessity have been limited until the shadow of their coming tyrant cast a gloom over the city; it was then that they really revived, and seizing the long-neglected weapons sternly devoted themselves to their country. Besides the young urban guard there was the rural militia of ten thousand men between the ages of eighteen and thirty six: they were principally arquebusiers, received permanent pay, and were divided into thirty companies; sixteen on the right and fourteen on the left bank of the Arno; the former commanded by Balbone di Brisigbella, the latter by Francesco del Monte, each of these condottieri having five hundred regular soldiers on which to form and discipline them\*. Stefano Colonna, Marco Orsini, Napoleone Orsini, Giorgio Santa Croce, and Malatesta Baglione were also engaged as military commanders: the last, whose father had been put to death by Leo X. was, after his sudden retreat from Arezzo, made mili-

\* Each of the following places on the right bank of the Arno, turned out a company viz., Pescia, Vico Pisano, Barga, Pietra Santa, Fivizzano, Castiglione delle Terziere, Scarperia and Barberino di Mugello, Borgo San Lorenzo and Vicchio and Dicomano, Ponte a Sieve and Cascia, Firenzuola and Piancaldoli, Marradi and Palazzuolo, Castracaro and Portico, Modigliana, Galeata, Val di Bagno, Poppi and Castel, San Niccolo and Prato Vecchio, Bibiena and Castel Focog-

nano and Subiano. On left bank, San Miniato al Tedesco, Campiglia Pomarance, Radda, Greve and Colle. San Gimignano and Poggibonzi, Terra Nuova, Castel Franco and Laterina, Il Bucine and Monte Varchi, Monte a San Sovino, Foiano, and Civitella, Monte Pulciano, Cortona, Castiglione, Arezzo, Anghiare and Montedoglio and Monterchi, Borgo a San Sepolcro, Pieve a Santo Stefano, Chiusi and Caprese. (Vide *Varchi*, Lib. vi., p. 134.)

tary governor of Florence and Stefano Colonna commanded the urban guard\*.

Raffaello Girolamo and eight veterans of the Black Bands were commissioned to raise five thousand infantry from the provinces of Arezzo and Cortona, then supposed to furnish the best troops of Tuscany, and the former with Zanobi Bartolini had supreme authority as commissary over the whole civic and military force within the walls, which obliged him to sit with the Ten of War, Malatesta Baglione, and Stefano Colonna, in daily consultation. There were seven thousand foreign mercenaries, from three to four thousand of the young urban guard, besides three thousand Perugians and two thousand Corsicans, followers of Baglione. Stefano Colonna had charge of San Miniato of which we shall soon speak, and there were altogether thirteen thousand infantry and six hundred horse paid by Florence of which seven thousand were in the city and the remainder distributed in Prato, Pistoia, Empoli, Volterra, Pisa, Colle, and Montepulciano; all important places and full of provisions, the whole expense of this army being about 70,000 ducats a month.

Florence had now changed its character; all industry, all employment except the trades necessary for existence had ceased, and the city echoed only to the clang of arms. The whole force of artisans was employed under Michael Angelo Buonarroti, Rinaldo Corsini, and Francesco da San Gallo, in strengthening the defences and completing those works which Clement had already commenced in 1521 †. North of the Arno Florence is free from any commanding eminence from which much mischief by hostile batteries might be expected; but all to the southward is either built on the skirts of hills or lies immediately under them: the southern wall runs in a triangular form from east to west joining the river in both points

\* Segni, Lib. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 37.—Varchi, Lib. vi<sup>o</sup>, p. 134.—Nardi, Lib. viii., p. 349.  
 † Segni, Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>, p. 202.—Ammi-  
 rato, Lib. xxx., p. 381.—Nardi, Lib. viii., p. 349.

and contains the five gates of Saint Nicholas, San Miniato, San Gorgio, San Piero Gattolino (now Romana) and San Frediana. The two first are under the hill of San Miniato and about long musket-shot from its summit. This hill with the church that crowns it were fortified by Michael Angelo, and defended by the whole line of gates and rampart as far as the Porta San Gorgio which with a considerable portion of the wall is situated on the height of that name and could only be battered from a distance. It declined along the skirts of the Boboli gardens, then vineyards, to the level ground at San Piero Gattolino, from which point to the western junction of the wall with the river, almost every part is commanded by the heights of Bello Squardo. Michael Angelo who was made chief engineer, with his coadjutor San Gallo threw up works of defence a little within the rampart, against the plunging fire expected from the latter height; but neither the present fortress of Belvedere on the hill of Saint George to the southward; nor that of San Giovanni in the plain north of the city were as yet in being, the Porta di Faenza then occupying the position of the latter. Bastions were erected before every gate, and heavy embankments thrown up within the walls to strengthen them against the shock of artillery\*.

Florence was at that time surrounded, up to the very gates by rich beautiful and very extensive suburbs full of churches and other public and private buildings: the magnificent villas of the citizens like spangles on a green fan, glimmered amongst vines and olives in the space between, but all was now demolished and for a mile round a sad but necessary scene of ruin and desolation succeeded as if by magic to one of taste luxury and refinement †. Neither did the Florentines despair

\* Ammirato, Lib. xxx., p. 341.

† Lettere di Carlo Capello, Venetian Ambassador at Florence, Lettera xxxii., Relazioni Venete, vol. i<sup>o</sup>, Serie xi<sup>a</sup>.—Giul<sup>o</sup>. Ughi, MS., p. 44.—Segni,

Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>, p. 171.—The sufferers were made public creditors to the full amount of their losses, with five per cent. interest, but never compensated under the Medici.

even when told of Louisa de Savoy's passionate exclamation "That she would have sacrificed a thousand Florences to recover one of her grandchildren"\*. On the contrary, the baseness of Francis gave additional spirit to the government; the spirit of indignation joined with the spirit of liberty; and Carducci seconded by Bernardo da Castiglione, Giovambattista Cei, Niccolò Guicciardini, Jacopo Gherardi, Andrea Niccolini, Raffaello Girolamo, Luigi Soderini and many other determined "Arrabbiati" infused their own vigour and energy into the people †. Every means, legal or illegal, human and divine, were put in requisition with more zeal than judgment: the image of Madonna dell' Impruneta was first carried in procession through Florence with the usual ceremonies; then all the old officers of the Black Bands who had escaped destruction were sought for with avidity and commissioned to make new levies of soldiers: three financial measures passed the councils early in August; the first created "*Sixteen officers of the Bank*" for one year with enormous powers and vast responsibility, who were bound under heavy penalties to make a loan of 80,000 florins and pay it into the treasury within two months, receiving twelve per cent. interest besides their salary, or more according to circumstances.

The second was a board of five citizens to levy direct contributions on all those who, from whatever cause, had escaped extraordinary taxation during the preceding year. The third was a commission of four citizens to collect the arrears still owing to government ‡. All this was borne patiently and even cheerfully; church plate and jewels were appropriated to the public service; private ornaments had a similar fate; one-third of the ecclesiastical property was sold, and all the sequestered possessions of rebels. The immoveable goods or property be-

\* Varchi, Lib. ix., p. 29.

† Lettere di Carlo Capello, *passim*.

‡ The first *five* were, Giov. Dini, Pierozzo di Pierozzo, Lorenzo Pedoni,

Agnolo Anselmi, and Andrea Benvenuti. The *four* were, Antonio Boni, Giovanbatista del Barbighia, Niccolò Salvetti, and Antonio Mazzinghi.

longing to trades' corporations, or religious and other companies, underwent the same process but with fair interest; and no stone was left unturned in accumulating resources for the war: national independence, liberty, public and individual safety, all were now in peril and for these everything else was promptly sacrificed\*.

The harvest was ordered into fortified places, but being unusually abundant the command was carelessly obeyed, so that the enemy profited by the supplies this afforded to the army. Borgo San-Sepolcro, Pisa, Pistoia, Arezzo and Cortona where the Florentines were unpopular gave hostages; all other fortresses were put into a state of defence with trustworthy governors: seven commissaries or dictators were elected to watch over state affairs in Florence and see that the republic received no injury; they were unequal to the task: timid, interested, irresolute, and discordant, they paralysed each other, caused the evils which they were created to prevent, and proved worse than useless to the commonwealth despite of some spirited citizens that belonged to them †.

The time had now arrived for Hercules of Este to assume his command wherefore Jacopo Guicciardini was despatched to Alfonso of Ferrara with 3500 ducats, which was the monthly pay of a thousand horse for the prince's body guard, and instructions to require his attendance. Alfonso received the gold but delayed his son's departure, and after paltering awhile refused to complete his engagements but retained the money, the troops, and the general; and he not only withdrew his ambassador from Florence but lent two thousand pioneers and a park of artillery to Clement. Hercules was indignant at this treachery and would have escaped from Ferrara and proceeded alone to Florence had not either fear or respect for his father restrained him ‡.

\* Lettere di Carlo Capello, *passim*.—Varchi, Lib. x<sup>o</sup>, pp. 144 to 155.—Giul<sup>o</sup>. Ughi. MS., p. 45, &c.

† These commissaries were, Jacopo Monelli, Zanobi Carnesecchi, Antou-

francesco degli Albizzi, Bernardo da Castiglione, Alfonso Strozzi, Agostino Dini, Filippo Baloncini.—Varchi, Lib. ix., pp. 30-34.

‡ Varchi, Lib. ix. pp. 35 7



To Philibert de Chalon Prince of Orange a kinsman of Bourbon's as well as a participator in his treason and then Viceroy of Naples was intrusted the expedition against Florence and the unworthy task of restoring the Medici. He was ordered by Charles to place himself under the pope's command followed by the self-same Spaniards and heretical Germans whose chief had once brought a silken rope to hang that Pontiff! And to these, under del Vasto, Ferdinando Gonzago and others, all of whom he had beheld revelling in the blood and spoils of Rome; "to this same man," says Nardi, "who in Clement's own person as it were imprisoned Christ and scattered the holy relics of his saints, did that Pope, after a formal pardon, commit the task of robbing the fair city of Florence his dear country of her liberty"\*! Clement's only scruple was the expense; and the immediate payment of 30,000 florins with the promise of 40,000 more was all that the Prince of Orange could obtain; but the pontiff did not hesitate to propitiate the troops by allowing them to finish their last year's plunder of the wretched citizens not exactly by a second devastation, but by giving permission to gather in the arrears of those ransoms which they were compelled to leave untouched in 1528.

The prince concentrated his forces at Foligno on the confines of Perugia: they consisted of three thousand five hundred Landsknechts or "*Lanzi*" (the two names by which all German soldiers were known at that period in Italy) and of five thousand veteran Spanish infantry; these at least were the flower of his army, the ferocious followers of Bourbon and of the cruel Antonio de Leyva; soldiers whose usual oath even before they quitted Lombardy was, "*By the glorious sack of Florence*" †. Such were the men that Clement let loose upon his country! So high indeed were their expectations, that the army which in September did not exceed sixteen thousand of all arms soon amounted to thirty thousand, and before the siege terminated

\* Nardi, Lib. viii., p. 350.

† Lettere di Principi, vol. ii., fol. 206.

had swelled up to forty thousand ruffians whose great boast was that "Florentine brocades would soon be measured by the spear instead of the ell"\*. The fortified town or Castello of Spelle on the Perugian frontier first surrendered, but Perugia itself was a serious difficulty which Philibert overcame by offering good terms to Malatesta: the latter preserved his country by at once accepting them and retreated with five thousand followers on Arezzo probably even thus early fore-shadowing the recovery of all his possessions by future treachery†. He had demanded of the Florentines either more troops or permission to treat, and they being doubtful of his faith granted the latter; but he had already concluded his treaty on the tenth of September before the Florentine envoy reached Perugia‡. On the twelfth he marched to Arezzo followed by the Prince of Orange, who took Cortona by capitulation after one severe repulse Antonfrancesco degli Albizzi, public commissary at Arezzo, scared by the reduction of Cortona, by the probability of Orange marching direct on Florence, by Baglione's sudden appearance, and probably influenced by that wily and treacherous commander but certainly by a private letter of the gonfalonier, at once evacuated that strong and well-provided place and made a disorderly retreat to the capital. He escaped decapitation by producing Carducci's letter who fearful of a capitulation with Clement was anxious to concentrate the troops in Florence for the encouragement of the citizens§. The loss of Cortona and Arezzo were sad blows, because the Ten of War depended on those cities for

\* The people of Spoleto, a friendly town, were so well aware of their dangerous character, that when obliged to receive the prince with some of his cavalry, four citizens armed to the teeth civilly took hold of each bridle and hospitably led every horseman to his respective quarters, where they were sedulously attended by their four armed hosts who never left them, so that the prince seeing himself as it were a pri-

soner, departed the next morning in a fright, right glad to escape from this formidable hospitality. (Vide *Varchi*, Lib. x., pp. 128-132-206.)

† *Varchi*, pp. 139-142.

‡ *Varchi*, Lib. x., pp. 137-141.—*Segni*, Lib. iii., pp. 177 and 196.—*Carlo Capello Lettere*, Lettera xlvii.

§ *Segni*, Lib. iii., pp. 199-201.—*Varchi*, Lib. x., p. 142. — *Guicciardini*, Lib. xix., cap. vi., p. 223, &c<sup>a</sup>.

arresting the enemy who could never have penetrated by the swampy passes of the Chiana or leave such fortresses in his rear with impunity \*. Thus abandoned Arezzo resumed her ancient independence, opened her gates to the Imperialists on the eighteenth of September and zealously seconded their efforts during the campaign. Castiglione Fiorentina, Firenzuola, and Scarperia soon bowed their heads to the powers of Cæsar as they rolled darkly onward and thickened round the capital. This was the great moral trial ; and the signal of retreat for those timid and treacherous spirits who feared or loved the tyrant, or despaired of their country †. Some, such as Jacopo Salviati, had lived long abroad and attached themselves entirely and openly to the Medici ; others like Bartolommeo Valori or rather his nephews for he was open enough, added deceit and treachery to their Medician propensities and betrayed while they duped their countrymen ‡.

By a severe but justifiable edict soon after promulgated no less than twenty-eight of the principal suspected citizens who had thus absconded including Salviati were declared rebels unless they returned within a given time §. Some citizens seem to have been purposely omitted either from respect to past services or undiminished confidence and the hopes of their voluntary return : amongst these may be noticed Tommaso Soderini who alarmed by the penalty soon reappeared ; also Matteo Strozzi, and lastly the great Michael Angelo Simone Buonarroti

\* Carlo Capello (Lettera li.) says that the evacuation of Arezzo was a deliberate act of the government in order not to have too many garrisons.

† Nerli, Lib. ix., p. 192.

‡ Segni, Lib. iiiº, p. 212.

§ They were Jacopo Salviati, Giov. Tornabuoni, Luigi Ridolfi, Alessº. de' Pazzi, Nicº. Orlandini, Antº. Taddei, Niccola di Filicaia, Agostº. Riccialbani, Mattio Cini, Ruberto Acciaiuoli, Baccio Valori, Giov. Corsi, Palla Rucellai, Raffacelo Pucci, Atonº. di Bongianni

Taddei, Antº. de Nobili, Alessº. Rondinelli, Salvestro de' Medici, Franº. Guicciardini, Francesco Valori, Alessº. Corsini, Bernº. Rucellai, Baccio Capponi, Teodoro Sassetti, Agostino del Nero, Maso della Rena, Piero di Andrea de' Medici, and Onofrio Bartolini Archbishop of Pisa. Salviati's crime was the having tried to persuade Malatesta Baglione not to engage his services to the Florentines. (Vide *Carlo Capello Lettere*, Let. xii., vol. iº, *Relazioni Veneti*, Serie iiª.)

who had fled in anger but subsequently returned from Venice at the earnest request of his country. That such a mind and such a man should have flown from personal danger is as unworthy of belief as it is unworthy of Sismondi to assert it without giving Michael Angelo's own explanation which lay before him as he wrote. Varchi tells us that when asked by a friend at Rome in his, the historian's, name why he had quitted Florence, Michael Angelo replied. "*That the Seignior Mario Orsino (who was one of his most intimate friends) had said to him one day while in conversation that he entertained very strong fears of Malatesta's making terms with the pope, and betraying them.*" "This opinion," continues Varchi, "he like a loyal and zealous man, for the safety of his country instantly reported to the Seignory, but the gonfalonier Carducci rather rebuked him for being over-timid and suspicious, than praised him for his extreme and solicitous caution, and seemed to think lightly of the warning. Wherefore he, between this apprehension and the continual solicitations of Rinaldo Corsini that they should leave Florence together, (affirming that the city would, not in a few days, but in a few hours be in the power of the Medici) was induced to quilt twelve thousand florins in a sort of doublet and with Corsini and his own pupil Antonio Mini left Florence by the 'Porta alla Giustizia,' which was least suspected and consequently least guarded, but not without some difficulty although he was one of the nine magistrates of militia," &c. \* Vasari coincides substantially with this account; but the editor of the "*Raccolta d'Elogi d'Uomini illustri Toscani*" seems to doubt Varchi's perfect acquaintance with the secret history of this transaction and to suppose that Buonarroti had some commission from the government, (as he undoubtedly had in July 1529), and it would be satisfactory to all who revere that great man's memory to see some irrefragable testimony of his having been so commissioned in the following

\* Varchi, Lib. x., pp. 133-192. — Vasari, Vita di Buonarroti, vol. xiv., p. 140.

September or the beginning of October when he met Capponi at Castol Nuovo di Garfagnana.

This second departure and meeting is too minutely noticed by almost all the cotemporary historians to be doubted, and so sensibly was his loss felt by the government, that the "Ten of War" ordered Galeotto Giugni the Florentine ambassador at Ferrara to make use of every influence with Buonarroti to induce his return, promising all the securities he might require. Not satisfied with this, a special messenger and intimate friend named Bastiano Scarpellino was despatched to him at Venice with an ample safe-conduct and assurances of perfect impunity: on this Michael Angelo returned and adapted all the powers of genius to the defence of his country. "He was received," says Varchi, "with acclamations and, not a little envied by many individuals, was immediately employed and at work" \*.

One of Carducci's first acts was an endeavour to unite the citizens by a general amnesty with a view to reassure the Palleschi, and he has the credit of seeking it on public motives though in the opinion of some not without an eye to his own continued exaltation. This act of grace had been attempted during the administration of Capponi but always unsuccessfully; it was then deemed more politic to keep the Medician faction in a constant state of fear, with their old sins like mill-stones about their neck, so that the slightest additional misdemeanor might sink them; but the vigorous and ready Carducci who was not suspected of Medician attachments soon carried his point and in obedience, as he said, to the law of Jesus their chosen monarch who commanded a forgiveness of injuries, a general and retrospective amnesty was proclaimed on the twenty-eighth of June with a universal oath of allegiance to the republic on pain of exclusion from the Great Council. Raffaello Girolami was the only ambassador of those sent to

\* Allegrini, *Raccolta d'Elogi d'Uomini Illus., Toscani*, vol. ii°, *Elogio cexliiii.*—Varchi, *Lib. x°*, p. 192.

Genoa who manfully returned to give an account of his mission, and this he did by disparaging the strength of Charles, representing his want of resources and the impossibility of his remaining in Italy from the necessity of being present in Austria to oppose both Turks and Lutherans. Girolami therefore encouraged his countrymen to defend themselves to the last and thus at least acquire the sympathy of surrounding nations and the glory of dying in the sacred defence of their liberty and national independence. The community was agitated from the populace upwards; many of the principal citizens such as Lorenzo Segni, were openly for treating with Clement, and many more were secretly of the same opinion but afraid to declare it; again there was a vast number, especially the young men, ardent for war and unmeasured defiance to the pontiff. With these was the gonfalonier, who on the failure of their embassy called a full meeting of the citizens \*. “ Grave .. is the deliberation,” said he, addressing the most numerous assemblage of the Great Council that had yet been witnessed. “ Grave is the deliberation, and important above all others .. hitherto held or that may ever again be held O Florentines ! is .. that for which you are now in this place and in such numbers .. assembled; for it is not now a question of enlarging or re- .. stricting your frontier; not that of subsidising with more or .. less money some foreign potentate whose arms or reputation .. are to be our safeguard; not of concluding peace or truce .. with some near or distant commonwealth; but solely to de- .. termine whether you will tamely return into that servitude .. which you for fifteen years have suffered, or truly preserve .. the liberty that you have so lately recovered, but rather by the .. goodness of God than the will of mortal man. You are the .. prince of this republic, free and prudent, and I am here your .. minister. It is not my province to discuss the reasons that .. may be alleged on either side, they have already, and for

\* Lettere di Carlo Capello, *passim*.

“ some time past, been canvassed in private places, in the  
 “ markets, and in public assemblies, wherefore it would only be  
 “ vexation to repeat them; and as you are here prompt to give  
 “ your votes freely and independently for the execution of that  
 “ on which the majority shall decide, let us hope that in this  
 “ way your mind may be made known. If it should be in con-  
 “ formity with the opinion of not a few who in their partiality  
 “ have advised a reconciliation with Pope Clement, you will  
 “ enjoy in tranquillity that portion of your honour and your pro-  
 “ perty that may be spared by the extortions and licentiousness  
 “ of him who with fair words is now endeavouring to command  
 “ you to your eternal infamy and the disgrace of this miserable  
 “ age. But if you be disposed to maintain yourselves in this  
 “ by you (in words at least) so much lauded freedom, it will be  
 “ necessary to embrace it more nearly and dearly, ay and more  
 “ gladly too than your riches or your pleasures, nay even than life  
 “ itself; and you must resolve to expose all these, if need be,  
 “ not only to preserve it for yourselves your children and de-  
 “ scendants but for the eternal glory of so noble a city and  
 “ the dignity of the Tuscan name” \*. This speech had its  
 effect on all, but especially amongst the younger part of the  
 assembly: fifteen out of the sixteen gonfalons declared their  
 determination to peril life and property in resisting, rather  
 than honour and liberty in yielding to a tyrant, the gonfalon  
 of the Green Dragon of San Giovanni alone advising that even  
 without waiting for the appearance of Philibert they should  
 voluntarily submit themselves to Clement. The Gonfalonier  
 of Justice thanked the citizens for their support, formally

\* Pitti, Lib. ii., p. 189.—Varchi, Lib. x., pp. 172-174.—Varchi gives this speech differently; his history is full of admirable orations, evidently composed by himself and probably from those he had heard the speakers deliver; and in point of style, especially in perspicuity, they far excel his narra-

tive. Pitti is sparing of such ornament and perhaps more genuine on that account in what he does give: his style is pithy, condensed, and without ornament, except purity. He was just ten years old when these events occurred. I have chosen to give his report.

devoted himself to the cause, exhorted the young men to become skilful soldiers in this war, and after it a terror to their enemies; urged the magistrates and chiefs of departments to increased zeal and activity; implored the wealthy to sacrifice some of their riches for the secure enjoyment of the remainder, not only free from the impending tyranny but also from the wonted exactions of every foreign potentate who chose to pass the Alps for the plunder of Italy. Nor were his words useless; for although there was a treacherous spirit, and a timid spirit, and even a corrupt spirit abroad in the community, the stubborn spirit of liberty like Aaron's rod finally swallowed them all. Many rich citizens ministered voluntarily to the public wants both with purse and credit; example and mutual encouragement spread, and the gonfalonier, who in these excited moments cast off all legal restrictions and assumed an almost absolute authority, infused his own energy into the people while he intimidated the doubtful and disaffected by a stern uncompromising severity\*.

Of the latter, the Paleschi were now more than ever inclined to make their peace with Clement: Capponi was gone, and the burst of democracy consequent upon his fall left them no hope of ultimate rule; they had long been attracted by Medician gravity and as danger neared, eager to cancel past infidelity by present submission, they swept with fatal speed into its all-absorbing influence. These were followed by many a bankrupt and needy citizen whose best hope was in a change; by others who naturally averse to the Medici, yet believed their advent inevitable and from apprehension fell; by numbers of quiet and useful citizens intent on gain and zealous in their calling, but not disposed to peril either person or property in upholding the existing government. The great mass of men however remained faithful through love of liberty self-interest or an-

\* Lettere di Carlo Capello, *passim.* iii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 190-191.—Giul. Ughi, MS.,  
—Varehi, Lib. x<sup>o</sup>, pp. 166 and 177.— p. 45, *et seq.*  
Nerli, Lib. ix., p. 193.—Pitti, Lib.



bition ; and all, from apprehension of a Medician oligarchy were ready for every sacrifice ; the more so from having acted so openly and ardently against it. Amongst the lower order of citizens or "*Non Statuali*" there was a strong disposition to support the government because their condition had been improved, their hopes encouraged, and their ambition awakened : in private they were more noticed by men of higher rank and civic privileges, and a door had been opened for their entrance into public life and honours by the reënacting and extending of a law passed in 1494 which allowed twenty-eight new citizens to be admitted annually from that class into the great national council. This number was now augmented to sixty and the old qualification for civic rights, namely fifty years' constant payment of taxes, was reduced to thirty, so that men had now some chance either for themselves or children of obtaining such distinctions.

Others of lower condition were a sort of clients to great families and followed their movements, but the lowest mechanics, the idle and the vicious, loved the public games, the shows, and festivities of Medician rule and longed for their presence ; so that from highest to lowest there was a conflict, not of opinion and principle but of desires and passions, at any time difficult to manage but peculiarly so when the gratification or destruction of them was dependent on a powerful army without the walls.

Nor were the subject cities in a less tremulous state ; the Ghibiline Pisa had lost everything but honour and hatred to Florence, wherefore its anticipated fall by the arms of a Cæsar was peculiarly soothing to her feelings. Arezzo had never settled quietly under the Florentine yoke, for the Aretines were a restless acute race who longed for independence and expected some advantage from the troubles of Florence. Pistoia was faithful to the Florentine government by whomsoever administered ; her own bloody and everlasting

discord leaving no room for distinctions, and all the other cities followed this example and bowed to the ruling power. The neighbouring states generally hated and feared and wished for the downfall of Florence; the Senese nursed up their ancient jealousy and though detesting Clement for a recent attempt to restore Fabio Petrucci, their national antipathies triumphed, and pretending allegiance to the emperor took an active part against her. The Lucchese were more favourable: the Duke of Urbino depended on, as their general, affected to depend on the Venetians: Genoa under Andrea Doria would fain have seen Florence in the imperial ranks; but the time was past and she looked forward to the secure possession of Seravezza from the Medici. Charles the Good of Savoy was entirely occupied with Geneva then wild with religious reform: Mantua and other small states did not affect Florence except as members of a league now virtually dissolved: Venice a principal member looked to her own behoof without much feeling for Florence except in relation to herself: the Duke of Ferrara had already betrayed the Florentines and aided their tyrant, even the very man who would have despoiled and murdered him! Francis I. intent only on recovering his children and reckless of honour justice or humanity, still flattered and beguiled them: Henry VIII. had quarrelled with Charles V. about Catharine of Aragon, and Clement to favour the emperor took part against him; but he was too far off to render assistance except by money, and Wolsey had refused any loan to Portinari the Florentine Ambassador\*.

Charles V. was all-powerful, more so than any monarch since Charlemagne, yet in continual need of money, and nothing but his sagacity in choosing able but cruel and unscrupulous commanders could have enabled him to maintain his armies. With Naples and Milan in his hands and the Church at his feet he

\* Lettere di Carlo Capello, Venetian Ambassador at Florence, to his government, Lettera x., Serie ii<sup>a</sup>, vol. i<sup>o</sup>, Relazione Venete.

was little less than king of Italy, and terrible to all her princes. But he was embarrassed by want of funds, by the rapid and turbulent progress of the reformation, and above all by the arms of Sultan Solyman who with a numerous host had invaded Austria and laid siege to the capital: on this above all things did Florence calculate to remove her danger by forcing the emperor's speedy departure to his brother's aid and the salvation of Christendom. This too was the opinion of the pope and other Italian states: Clement therefore offered reasonable terms which were stifled in the birth; and the latter while watching only their own interests, encouraged Florence to hold out because every impediment to the emperor would enable them to make a more favourable bargain for themselves\*.

On the joint report of the Florentine ambassadors which was with so much difficulty accomplished by Capponi, Francesco Vettori, Andreuolo Niccolini, Jacopo Guicciardini, and Pierfrancesco Portinari were despatched in embassy to Clement but the latter, or else Francesco Nasi the sub-ambassador, hurried on to arrest if possible the march of Philibert until all hope of reconciliation had failed. The envoy soon saw that no chance of accommodation existed except by absolute submission; nor was Clement moved from his intent by all the remonstrances of Jacopo Salviati and Ruberto Pucci: he thought the enterprise easy and no moral or religious scruples arrested his revenge †. Nevertheless, to encourage hope, the Cardinal of Capua was despatched to the prince in order to suspend hostilities for a moment while he repaired to Florence, but with demands so extravagant that he soon departed unsatisfied, and Clement hearing of the emperor's leaving Placentia hastened with an escort of three hundred cavalry to meet him at Bologna. The pontiff was accompanied by the Florentine embassy, and at Cesina, alarmed by the rapid advance of the Turks and their

\* Lettere di Carlo Capello, *passim*. † Segni, Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>, p. 170.—Varchi, Lib. —Segni, Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>, p. 210.—Pitti, Lib. ix., p. 54, and Lib. x., p. 155. iii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 193-197.

investment of Vienna, therefore doubting Charles's ability to support him against Florence, he suddenly proposed what might have been considered reasonable terms if any dependence could have been placed in his integrity or had any real wish of reconciliation existed in the Florentine government. But they thought, and truly too, that there was no middle course for an ejected Medici between absolute exclusion and unbounded tyranny. Clement declared himself ready to "make peace with Florence; to maintain its free government, Great Council, the creation of magistrates, and the urban militia, all in their existing state; provided that his nephews were readmitted as citizens, Catharine of Medicis restored, his armorial bearings replaced, ambassadors sent to his court, and that Florence joined the imperial league: and moreover that a gonfalonier should be elected for life out of sixty names presented to him whence he was to select ten for public approbation: that a council of eighty or a hundred should be also created for life ten of whom were to be of his own nomination independent of the Great Council."

Francesco Vettori an intimate friend of Clement, and Francesco Guicciardini who had already joined him had considerable difficulty in settling these terms, and Francesco Nasi was despatched with them to Florence. Carducci was too well aware of the temper and apprehensions of the councils not to foresee their immediate acceptance of such conditions, and dreading any compromise with so deceitful an enemy and all the consequences of his once gaining admission to Florence, ordered Nasi to keep them secret: the latter was induced to obey by the advice of Donato Giannotti secretary to the Decemvirate of War, but took care to have the conditions registered by Donato as vouchers for his own fidelity\*. Immediately after this no less than sixty suspected citizens were arrested at different times

\* Nerli, Lib. ix., p. 204.—Segni, Lib. iii., pp. 209-11.—Carlo Capello, Lettera lxiii.

and amongst them Filippo Nerli, the author of the Commentaries, and Filippo Valori, whose brother Francesco had already absconded. His uncle Baccio had accepted the office of commissary in the hostile camp and was the only distinguished Florentine as yet base enough to serve openly in an official employment against his country\*.

The pontiff arrived on the first of November at Bologna where the emperor joined him three days after, accompanied by Antonio de Leyva and a guard of six thousand infantry: on entering the palace he knelt to his former captive, and then retired with him for secret conference, both occupying one house with free communication between their apartments. The palace was filled with ambassadors from half the world; a new league of all the Italian powers, except devoted Florence, was concluded in December: the Turk had suddenly retired from Vienna, no one then knew why, and left the emperor free: the pontiff's hopes of Florence again mounted: the Duke of Milan, who had not been even named in the treaty of Cambray, arrived under safe conduct to implore the clemency of Cæsar and through papal interference and his own failing health, was permitted to linger out the remnant of a miserable existence in a now more miserable country. The Venetians were compelled to restore all they held of the Duchy of Milan, which at Sforza's death would necessarily devolve on the emperor; to relinquish what they possessed in Puglia to the crown of Naples, Cervia and Ravenna to the Church, and enter into a league for the common defence. The Duke of Ferrara found himself obliged to leave his dispute with the pope about the possession of Modena to the arbitration of Charles who was meanwhile to occupy that city. Francesco Sforza was to pay one million of ducats for his exhausted dukedom, marry a niece of the emperor's, give up Pavia to Antonio de Leyva as a reward for his cruelties, and let the citadel of Milan remain in the hands of

\* Segni, Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>, p. 212.—Nerli, Lib. ix., p. 198.

Charles, besides a pension to the Marquis del Vasto and other drainings of this naturally rich and therefore unhappy province. A place was left for Francis as soon as he had fulfilled the conditions of the late treaty with the recovery of his sons, and the whole of this important transaction was afterwards solemnly proclaimed in the church of San Petronio in January 1530\*. But it is now time to resume the narrative of Florentine misfortunes.

The ambassadors who from their own want of powers to conclude any negotiation, powers that had been expressly and jealously withheld, although forced to despatch Francesco Nasi to Florence did not discontinue their efforts, but what better terms could be then expected from Clement short of an absolute renunciation of all his family pretensions is not so easy to conceive. It was perhaps proper, as it certainly was bold and generous to reject them and such conduct would have gained due praise had the struggle been more fortunate; but as it was, and especially after the retreat of Solyman, the question became one of prudence or desperation: yet it was a noble strife! Florence alone against the church and all the power of Cæsar! Seeing their mission fruitless the ambassadors had their audience of leave, and Jacopo Guicciardini indignantly declared that their country had recalled them in despair because they could not awaken the pontiff's feelings sufficiently to relieve her from the scourge of that licentious soldiery with which he had encompassed her; but in so doing she had also commissioned them to tell him that she would defend her liberty to the death, and that as there was no pity to be found where it ought to be, in Christ's vicar and the prince of christendom, she would trust to God's justice and judgment and her own right hand for the consequences. "Be it known to you," continued Guicciardini more sternly addressing the pontiff, "Be it known that in the defence now made by Florence, which is

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xix., cap. vi., *passim* — Segni, Lib. iii., pp. 214-216.

“ also your country, she first defends her liberty, a gift of God  
“ to mortals, the most lovely and admirable of all worldly en-  
“ dowments; then she defends her property, her children, her  
“ religion, things above all others dear and precious which  
“ your army, a mixture of barbarous nations and enemies of  
“ every justice, have partly robbed us of partly murdered  
“ and partly endangered without your showing, I do not say a  
“ shadow of mercy, but every hour rendering your unmitigated  
“ cruelty more apparent towards that city in which you were  
“ born, educated, honoured, and by whose means you reached  
“ that exalted dignity you now enjoy. If pity for such a  
“ country do not move you, what can ever move you to mercy  
“ or compassion? If the cruel spectacle of this country, lace-  
“ rated and wounded in every part, does not fill you with  
“ horror; by what frightful monster, by what tremendous fury  
“ can you ever be put into fear or repentance? I cannot, when  
“ I think of the cruel ravages that my afflicted country suffers;  
“ I cannot contain my tears nor stop that burst of feeling  
“ which renders me unable, I will not say to speak, but even to  
“ bear this miserable existence; and *you* holy father who hold  
“ the place on earth of the merciful Redeemer of this universe;  
“ *you* are not moved! you do not command your army to  
“ desist, and not inflict so much ruin on that country, which  
“ even if she have erred by the fault of some (who too jealous  
“ perhaps of liberty have not allowed her to perform every  
“ little duty towards yourself) has at least in this done well;  
“ that she determines to be free, and will never again suffer  
“ the yoke of servitude.”

Clement is said to have writhed in anger during this speech and along with others then present at once stopped Guicciardini: Vettori continued with a milder tone and language and succeeded in soothing the violence of Clement who in a loud and angry voice exclaimed that, “He had no intention of  
“ destroying the liberty of Florence; that he well knew what

“ *he* ought to do; but *they* on the contrary were the impious tyrants who under that name of ‘*Popolo*’ had expelled the citizens and concentrated in a few ‘*Arrabbiati*’ without rank or honours all the public authority”\*.

The embassy then retired and immediately returned to Florence: Vettori, who had acted with more mildness and less resolution than the rest, alone feared to show himself, and suddenly changed from Florentine ambassador to a privy counsellor of the pope by whom he then and for a long time had been pensioned: he was declared a rebel and all his possessions confiscated. Francesco Guicciardini had done and suffered in the same manner; he was universally hated, being proud and imperious like most of his race and as a lawyer unjust and mercenary. “He believed,” says Varchi “or wished others to believe that he had saved Florence from being plundered, and thought that so great a benefit had been left not only unrewarded but even unacknowledged by both the people and the Medici; wherefore he remained and was allowed to remain unemployed during the whole time, his connexion with Niccolo Capponi being of more use to him than the above service, done as he pretended for the people and the Medici: without mixing in public business he passed his time between Florence and his villa and was then occupied in writing much of his history”†. Some in Florence were less fortunate; for besides those suspected citizens who were confined in October, all the resident Spanish merchants were closely watched and every action rigidly though not roughly investigated, but the slightest unguarded expression amongst the citizens in favour of Medician rule became dangerous. Carlo Cocchi was accused of having said that Florence belonged to the Medici wherefore it would be better to admit them at once than cause a war, and that he thought the “*Campana*” should at once sound for a

\* Nerli, Lib. ix., p. 204.—Segni, Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 216-19.

† Varchi, Lib. x., pp. 168-170-171.—Segni, Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>, pp. 216-19.



parliament. Now a parliament was justly held in abhorrence by the liberal Florentines; who wishes a parliament wishes destruction was an ancient proverb, and Cocchi was accordingly arrested, tried by the "Quarantìa," and instantly beheaded\*.

Seven days after, on the twenty-third of October, Vittorio Franceschi called "Fra Rigogolo" a Franciscan monk of San Miniato, in despite of his clerical privileges was also decapitated for either having spiked or endeavoured to spike four of the largest battering guns in that outwork. A more celebrated man soon followed him to the scaffold: Ficino di Cherubino Ficini grandson of Marsilio, but says Varchi, "very different from him; for he was no less a great philosopher than a theologian, and truly divine as well in his life as in his learning." Ficino's crime was having asserted that Florence was better under the "Balls" than under the people, and that having been so magnificently embellished and so long held by the Medici they had a prescriptive right beyond all others to a great share †. He was condemned without remorse by the same tribunal for his sincerity in defence of that house which had nourished all his family! Others were tortured; and so severe a system of discipline was maintained that every enemy became silent and terror-struck while the friends of liberty were bold

\* "*Chi vuole parlamento, vuole guastamento.*" And so convinced was Savonarola of the danger of parliaments that he had the following stanza inscribed in golden letters in the Great Council Hall:—

"Se questo popular consiglio, e certo  
Governo, popol, della tua cittate  
Conservi, che da Dio t'è stato offerto,  
In pace starai sempre, e'n libertate;  
Tien dunque l'occhio della mente  
aperto,  
Che molte insidie ognor ti sien parate,  
E sappi, che chi vuol far Parlamento  
Vuol torti delle mani il reggimento."

"If, O people, you preserve this popu-

lar council and certain government of your city which God has offered to you, you will always remain peaceful and free: wherefore keep the mind's eye open; for many snares are hourly preparing for you; and know, that who-soever wants to call a Parliament wants to wrest the government from your hands."—And Segni tells us that during the whole time the campana was ringing, vengeance was allowed to be taken with impunity for all private injuries, even to wounds and death in the streets, but not within doors.—(Vide *Segni*, L. b. v., p. 296.)

† Segni, Lib. iiiº, p. 213. — Varchi, Lib. xº, pp. 158-60.

eager and unanimous: Carducci infused spirit into all, and it was then remarked by Nerli and others, and he was no friend of the gonfalonier, that if Piero Soderini had evinced such energy in 1512 the republic would have been saved; but on the other hand it was alleged that if Piero Soderini had been gonfalonier in 1529 the freedom of Florence would have been preserved: a far more doubtful case, for there was no trusting a Medici\*.

This energetic spirit and the slow advance of Philibert gave heart to the people; it confirmed their already wavering resolution and infused new vigour into the defensive operations. Under the auspices of Carducci, who despised his detractors and was only intent on work, and with Michael Angelo's genius and example, labour never ceased by night or day until the city was declared tenable and a growing confidence invigorated the whole community.

The fortress of San Miniato was exclusively commanded by Stefano Colonna who remained there nearly insulated: it was the most important outwork, and great labour had been expended to protect it by strong ramparts and deep ditches which are still in many parts visible. They were thrown up with uncommon rapidity, and the soil being a tenacious clay and formed into unburned bricks mingled with flock and coarse tow, constituted a solid and durable revetment impervious both to rain and the breaching effect of artillery †. By a public decree every building sacred or profane, every tree even to the smallest vine and olive within a mile of the walls, was promptly and unhesitatingly demolished, and every proprietor's name registered as a public creditor to the amount of his loss: the devastation was fearful, for each suburb was a city in itself, and some houses such as that of the Baccelli family in the suburb of San Gallo were worth 20,000 florins, or near 30,000 pounds of

\* Nerli, *Lib. ix.*, p. 193.—Varchi, *Ammirato, Lib. xxx.*, p. 385.—Nardi, *Lib. x.*, p. 177. . . . *Lib. viii.*, p. 356.—*Lettere liv.* p

† Varchi, *Lib. x.*, pp. 208-213.—*lv. di Carlo Capello.*

the present day. But notwithstanding this so enthusiastic was the spirit of freedom that bodies of young citizens led by the proprietors themselves were seen ruining house, after house, villa after villa, with great beams to which they gave the name of "*Battitoio*," suspended and used as battering-rams, while others despoiled the gardens and orchards and bundling all into fascines carried them off to the defences.

Amidst this wild and melancholy scene, in itself a solemn and impressive lesson, one gentler act shone forth in glorious illustration of the power of genius over even the roughest natures where a single latent and congenial spark exists to be awakened. A multitude of soldiers and rustics armed with one of these "*Battitoios*" had with loud shouts demolished most part of the church and convent of San Salvi when by a fall of the ruins a large painting "*al Fresco*" of the Last Supper suddenly burst upon their view. In an instant as if both arms and tongues had been severed they stopped, gazed, and were silent; a newborn sentiment of admiration took possession of their mind, and turning away they refused to continue the work of desolation! This noble picture therefore remains to the present day, a splendid though now sadly injured specimen of Andrea del Sarto's genius\*.

As every rose has its thorn, another action of much less noble character shadowed the enthusiastic spirit of the time and added bitterness to revenge. The destruction of the arms and images of the Medici although so feelingly resented by Clement was only a youthful frolic in itself and excited more laughter than anger in Florence; but when Dante and Lorenzo da Castiglione urged on as was believed by their brother Giovambatista, who, says Varchi, "had nothing good but his name and his looks,"

\* "The great Emathian conqueror bid spare  
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tow'r  
Went to the ground," &c.<sup>a</sup>.—

Carlo Capello, Let., Lettera lvii. and lix.—Varchi, Lib. x., pp. 185-6.—Gulio.  
Ughi, MS., p. 45, *et seq.*

rushed with a band of wild companions and maliciously set fire to the Medician villas of Careggi and Castello and the more splendid one of Jacopo Salviati, and would also have destroyed the magnificent palace of Poggio-a-Caiano had not fear of the enemy prevented them; it became a work of barbarians, and far more serious than the other in its ultimate consequences. They had in fact so committed themselves with the Medici that despairing of pardon, nothing which could widen the breach between Clement and the Florentines came amiss to them, and even Carducci was suspected by many especially by Cardinal Salviati, not only of countenancing but ordering this disgraceful act. They however were compelled to conceal themselves for some time from his real or pretended anger, and it seems not unlikely that the gonfalonier though not accessory to the deed was far from regretting its occurrence, as an additional obstacle to any compromise with Clement\*.

The Duke of Ferrara's treachery left the post of captain-general still vacant and the republic conferred it on Malatesta Baglione whose head quarters were established in the garden of the Serristori near the church of San Niccolo as the nearest point to the enemy. Heavy rains, want of artillery, and possibly some desire of bringing round an accommodation through the repeated embasseys that had been sent to him from Florence delayed the Prince of Orange longer than a General who was really intent on finishing the war would have permitted, and probably saved the city from capitulation or a storm. While the works were incomplete the people wavered, and the remaining Palleschi waxed bold; the gonfalonier was startled, held a more ample "Pratica," and even called some of the most devoted Palleschi to assist in it†: but when Baglione with the Perugian and Aretine garrisons were once safe in Florence and the

\* Carlo Capello, Lettera lxii.—Varchi, Lib. x., pp. 137-8.

† Such as Luigi della Stufa, Matteo Niccolini, Lucca degli Albizzi, Otta-

viano de' Medici, Francesantonio Nori, Francesco Vettori, and many others of the Medician party who still remained in Florence.

defences perfect, his courage revived and every idea of surrender vanished\*.

On the tenth of October after having received eight guns which the Senese from enmity to Clement had purposely delayed, the Imperialists quitted Fighine, and on the fourteenth were seen from the towers of Florence moving in heavy columns to their destined position in the plain of Ripoli, with detachments scattered round the Villa Bandini, the Convent of Paradiso and other heights but pushing their advanced guard within a mile of the capital †. The German division had not yet appeared on the side of Bologna so that all the right bank of the river and the northern plain were open to receive supplies which poured in abundantly, and the investment as yet was confined to the southern quarter beyond the Arno. This quiet was soon disturbed by Ramazzotto Count of Tossignano one of the papal captains who regardless of anything but plunder had already taken Firenzuola, Scarperia, and other places, and after ravaging the Mugello suddenly descended on Prato, carrying terror and devastation along with him. The prince was reënforced too by a number of small but experienced Italian condottieri all of noble families with several companies under them, forming what had not long before been habitually denominated "*Colonelli*," whence our more modern appellation of colonel. Amongst them were the Count of San Secondo, Piero Luigi Farnese who afterwards became so infamously notorious; Alessandro Vitelli, destined to act a conspicuous part in the subsequent affairs of Florence; the two brothers Sforza and Braccio Baglione, kinsmen but mortal foes of Malatesta; Marzio, Sciarra, and Camillo Colonna, all three enemies of Stefano; Giovambatista Savello and many more of considerable repute in those angry and turbulent times ‡.

The Marquis del Vasto or Guasto, who with the Prince of

\* Nerli, Lib. viii., p. 192.

Lib. x., pp. 205-6.

† Carlo Capello, Let., Lettera lv.—

‡ Varchi, Lib. x., p. 129. — Giulio Ammirato, Lib. xxx°, p. 384. — Varchi,

Ughi, MS., p. 48.

Orange seems to have pitied Florence, now led the Spanish infantry; those cruel but intrepid bands who on the first glimpse of that city as from the heights of Aparata it burst upon their view with all its golden plain, wildly brandished their weapons with bacchanalian joy and shouted in their accustomed strain “*Signora Fiorenza get ready your rich brocades, for we are coming to buy them by the pike’s length\**.”

There were at this time assembled about twenty thousand Italian troops besides the regular army of Philibert, and independent of Count Felix of Wittenberg’s force, with a strong detachment of Spanish “*Bisognosi*” which subsequently occupied the northern bank of the river and completed the investment†. On the seventeenth the imperial advanced guard had entrenched itself at Giramonte: on the twenty-fourth Count Piero Maria de’ Rossi and Alessandro Vitelli had brought sixteen or eighteen pieces of heavy ordnance from Siena which were placed on the high grounds of Arcetri and Santa Margherita à Montici, and first directed against the villa Barduccio and the outwork of San Miniato on the belfry tower of which were mounted two guns under the direction of a celebrated bombardier surnamed “*Il Lupo*”‡. The prince took up his position on the crest of that chain of hills which extends in a curve around the southern line of walls from the south bank of the river near the villa of Rusciano on the east, to Monte Oliveto on the west. Rusciano itself was occupied by Savelli, Villa Gallo by San Secondo, Giramonte by Vitelli, the hill of Montici by Sciarra Colonna, Francesco Guicciardini’s villa on the Ema by Giovanni da Sassatello and other captains; the prince himself occupied some houses of the Guicciardini in the plain of Giullari; a little way off in the Casa della Vacchia, was Baccio Valori; in the Villa Taddei the Duke of Malfi; in Villa Barducci, Pirro Colonna Count of Castel di Piero; in Villa Luna, Valerio Orsino and nearer the

\* Giul. Ughi, MS., p. 206.

† Paulo Giovio, *Storie*, Lib. xxvii., p. 149.

‡ Carlo Capello, *Lettere* liii. to lxiii. — Varchi, *Lib.* x., p. 208. — Segni, *Lib.* iii<sup>o</sup> p. 220.

Porta San Giorgio was the Marquis del Guasto and part of his veteran Spanish infantry; the rest were posted in various places further west even to Bello Squardo. Some of the Germans were quartered round the prince, and the remainder in divers places above and below amongst the hilly ground, west of the Italian and mixed with the Spanish infantry \*. The Prince of Orange seeing that he was not likely either to intimidate the besieged or make any impression on their defences determined to blockade the town and therefore threw up works on Monte Olive to a steep height crowned by a convent and commanding the Pisan road about three quarters of a mile westward of the San Frediano Gate. This was intended to cut off all communication with Florence by the left bank of the Arno and a strong detachment of Landsknechts was pushed forward across the stream to the convent of San Donato which commanded the Pistoia road just beyond the "Ponte-alle-Mosse." This convent strong and vast in itself was reënforced with additional works, and supported by Ramazzotto's bands from the Mugello on the side of Prato, commanded all the western plain and subsequently communicated with the imperial forces of the right bank of the river at and eastward of Montughi on the Bologna road †.

At this moment the Florentines had about eighteen thousand infantry and six hundred cavalry on their muster-roll besides the urban guard; but not above thirteen thousand actually and effectively in arms of which more than eight thousand according to Varchi were in garrison at Florence and the remainder distributed amongst the few places of importance which were to be defended; such as Prato, Pistoia, Pisa, Leghorn, Volterra, Empoli, Colle and Monte-Pulciano. The various battalions in garrison at Florence were under six colonels and about eighty captains, of which seventeen were Florentines of good family; a plain indication of the strong

\* Varchi, Lib. x., pp. 206-8.

† Segni, Lib. viii<sup>o</sup>, p. 221.

military spirit that Giovanni de' Medici's genius had awakened amongst this nation of traders\*. They, and numbers of their followers, were for the most part remnants of the Black Bands which had been diligently sought for after their dispersion in the Neapolitan war; and it is remarked with pride by Varchi that there was "no officer who had served Giovanni de' Medici, even as a servant boy or page, but what in time became not only a captain but a very distinguished one" †.

The whole population of Florence had now become military; mothers and sisters were to be seen arming their sons and brothers and accompanying them to their stations while superannuated fathers exhorted them to die in defence of their country: in the first night-assault made by the Imperialists Varchi saw an old man hurrying to the ramparts leading his almost infant son along with him. "What are you doing here with that young child?" exclaimed the historian. "*Why, I mean that he shall either escape, or die along with me for his country's freedom*" replied the indomitable parent ‡. "Mothers and sisters," says a cotemporary historian, "whom I have seen remove arms from the children's apartment in alarm lest they should by some accident be hurt, I then saw placing swords in their hands and encouraging them to manly exploits."

Napoleone Orsini was engaged to defend their most distant possessions in the neighbourhood of Monte-Pulciano, for Alessandro Vitelli was scouring that country in every direction: Orsini had been Abbot of Farfà but preferring the camp to the

\* The Florentine captains were, Strozzi Strozzi, Niccolò Strozzi, Fran<sup>o</sup>. de' Bardi, Andrea Gherardini, Caccia Altoviti, Carletto Altoviti, Barbarossa de' Bartoli, Ivo Biliotti, Mariotto Gondi, Antonio Borgianni, Luigi Altoviti, Gigi or Luigi Macchiavelli, Alessandro Monaldi, Giovanfrancesco Tedini, Raffaello Ricoveri, Zanobi or

Bobi Ciafferi, Lorenzo Tassini, Gualeotto Strozzi, Caponsacco, Bernardo Strozzi, Benedetto or Betto Rinuccini, besides others, who were as well as some of the above, serving at Pisa and other places. (*Varchi*, Lib. x., p. 203.)

† Carlo Capello, *Lettere* I., lii., lix.—*Varchi*, Lib. x<sup>o</sup>, p. 203.

‡ *Varchi*, Lib. x., p. 230.



cloister became one of the most formidable gentlemen robbers of the day. He had assembled a strong band of followers on his own domain of Bracciano by whose aid and in revenge for the sack of Rome he committed great cruelties on the imperial troops wherever they could be found. After doing some service for Florence Orsini was surprised and as is said not undesignedly beaten, his column was dispersed by Alessandro Vitelli and he never after returned to the ranks of Florence but on the contrary joined the papal army\*. On the twenty-fourth of October when the prince had completed his lodgments the siege of Florence may be said to have actively commenced: trifling skirmishes and occasional discharges of artillery filled up the time until the twenty-ninth when four heavy guns were placed in battery on the high ground of Giramonte and directed against the belfry tower of San Miniato which commanded the camp and did infinite mischief: two of them soon burst, and after firing a hundred and fifty rounds without effect this practice was discontinued. The tower was massive with a wide projecting cornice over which the bombardier above mentioned had slung bales of wool which vibrated to every shot and threw them off without damage. To free his communications with Siena and thus secure his supplies of provisions from molestation, the prince had taken Colle and San Gimignano, and resolved not to expose his soldiers to much active warfare against the capital itself until he had received further assistance, although at this moment he must have been in command of more than thirty thousand men. Yet the Florentines were so little alarmed that the land and villa where the Prince of Orange lodged was without difficulty sold by the owner as in times of peace, like the Romans of old who bought and sold the ground on which

\* Varchi, *Lib. x.*, pp 264-6.—Ammirato, *Lib. xxx.*, p. 386.—Segni, *Lib. iii<sup>o</sup>*, p. 226, and *Lib. iv.*, p. 238.—Paulo Giovio, *Lib. xxviii.*, p. 170.—Sismondi, *vol. xii.*, p. 61.

Hannibal was encamped \*. To accomplish this the Prince of Orange with the Marquis del Vasto and Baccio Valori had made a journey to Bologna and after the Milanese and Venetian affairs were arranged, the disposable battalions of Spain and Germany with twenty-five pieces of cannon crossed the Apennines and by occupying Fiesole and all the northern plain completed the blockade of Florence. This had been accomplished by the strenuous exertions of Clement to restore Sforza, along with general tranquillity in Lombardy, in order the sooner to wreak an odious vengeance on his country †. He was however in no enviable state of mind; the enormous expense; which Charles took good care should be thrown principally on him; his apprehensions lest that monarch should abandon him; some sense of shame, and the general vituperation which his vindictiveness had generated even in some of those whom he employed, in the Prince of Orange for instance and the Marquis del Vasto, all fretted him; for both these chiefs were too generous not to sympathise openly with the Florentines while they obeyed their monarch's orders. In their intercourse with Florence they showed this sympathy, which Clement's stinginess augmented, yet so little was the political history of that commonwealth supposed to be known to Charles, that Lottieri Gherardi by the counsel of these two generals who commiserated her misfortunes, was despatched to give the emperor a true notion of it as regarded the Medici: because, as they asserted, he had been erroneously informed and made to believe that Florence of right belonged to that family as their hereditary dominion ‡. But Charles having

\* *Vide* Lettere di Carlo Capello, Lettera lix., for this and numerous other instances of the spirit and devotion of the citizens.

† Carlo Capello, Lettera lix.—Segni, Lib. iii<sup>a</sup>, p. 226.—Muratori, Annali.—Varchi, Lib. x., pp. 230 and 253-259.

‡ Varchi, Lib. x., p. 192.—The fact seems undoubted but Charles V.'s ignorance extremely questionable: he probably knew more than some even of his most exalted instruments in *their* ignorance believed.

had some trouble with liberty both in Spain and the Netherlands was not the man either by nature or education, independent of his engagements, to listen for a moment to such reasoning unless conducive to his own undertakings.

Sallies and skirmishes were continually going on from the first moments of the siege until the blockade became complete by the descent of the second imperial army from the narrow passes of the Apennines; but on the second and tenth of November combats of a more serious nature proved to the beleaguering army that they had soldiers of another spirit and discipline to cope with than the disunited and discontented citizens of Rome. The first was a sally of the besieged which gradually extended from the Siena road to the gate of Saint Nicholas and lasted until night without any decisive result; but the Prince of Orange supposing that on Saint Martin's eve, a festival then usually celebrated, the inhabitants would be less vigilant; the night proving more than commonly dark with continued torrents of rain he marshalled a large force which advancing in perfect silence and carrying four hundred ladders simultaneously invested the whole line of walls from the Porta di San Frediano to the gate of Saint Nicholas: it seemed a hazardous act, for the fortress of San Miniato was close in the rear of his right with a skilful governor and daring garrison. But the Florentines were on the alert; the young urban guard, which never once failed in discipline courage or activity, was at its post; the rest of the garrison took the alarm and assembled in perfect silence: without a word, without any confusion soldier and citizen pressed on steadily to the walls amidst torches and lanterns and illuminated houses; the booming of an occasional gun as chance permitted aim alone breaking this universal stillness. Anon the clash of spears and halberts, the crashing of ladders and the cries of falling men, reverberated from gate to gate, from tower to tower until the sounds of retreating trumpets proclaimed the complete and universal repulse

of the enemy \*. It was immediately after this sharp lesson that Philibert repaired to Bologna convinced that a hundred thousand determined citizens would yield to nothing but starvation.

Stefano Colonna who was a skilful and enterprising commander, tempted probably by the pleasure of beating up the quarters of his kinsman Sciarra with whom he was at feud as much as a desire of distinction, determined in the beginning of December to return the Prince of Orange's late visit with less ceremony than the latter apparently expected, from the small precaution taken to secure his lines. Wherefore after communicating the project to Malatesta and those few officers entitled to his confidence, he in despite of this captain's usual opposition to every enterprise of moment (for he had not yet been invested with the chief command) took the occasion of Vitelli's absence against Napoleone Orsino and made every disposition for an attack.

About a thousand or according to Segni three thousand men four hundred of whom wore corselets, were divided into three columns, commanded by Stefano himself, Giovanni di Turino, and Ottaviano Signorelli: the last was to issue from Porta Romana; Turino from Porta San Giorgio, and the Colonna, previously from the gate of Saint Nicholas. To these were added a detachment of the young Florentine guard under their banner of the " Unicorn " led by Alamanno de' Pazzi. After the Spanish custom, each soldier was ordered to wear a white "*Camicia*" or shirt over his arms to distinguish him from the enemy, and hence this kind of attack took the name of "*Incamiciata*." Colonna forbid the use of the long pike, it being an impediment in night attacks, also of the arquebuse, lest a chance shot should give the alarm, and would only allow of halberds partisans and two-handed swords, which were then in universal use amongst the infantry. Stefano, as is said from

\* Carlo Capello, Lettera lxi. — Ammirato, Lib. xxx., p. 385.—Varchi, Lib. x., p. 229.

his enmity to Sciarra Colonna who was quartered there, resolved that his first and principal point of attack should be Santa Margherita-à-Montici, and ordered Mario Orsini to discharge two guns from the bastion of San Miniato the moment he saw the enemy's camp in arms and pressing on Colonna. This was to be the signal for Signorelli and Turino to make their sally supported by a fourth column under Marino Orsini which from the above position could fall plump on the adverse host while Malatesta watched over all, ready to make the signal for a simultaneous retreat when necessary. At this signal each column was to retire leisurely to its post and all the batteries were to open on the Imperialists if they attempted to follow. Trusting to these arrangements Stefano Colonna about ten o'clock on a dark and rainy December night issued with a javelin in his hand from the gate of Saint Nicholas in the midst of his "*Lance Spezzate*" or body guards, and turning round to the troops merely said, "*My brave fellows I am about leading you to certain victory if you will only follow me and do as you see me do.*"

They then marched in profound silence through the valley formed by the two hills of Rusciano and Giramonte to a place called "*Le Cinque Vie*," whence after killing two drowsy sentinels they reached Santa Margherita-à-Montici and attacking Sciarra Colonna's advanced guard committed great slaughter until Smeraldo of Parma his lieutenant, for Sciarra was absent, seeing so many white figures busy at work soon divined the cause and shouted "*To arms*," "*To arms*," "*Help, help*." This roused the whole camp, the Florentines ceased not their strokes, the enemy flew in disorder, and the confusion was increased by the sudden escape of a drove of swine which rushing with great violence through every rank disordered the assailants almost as much as they added to the alarm and disorder of the assailed. The shouts of the soldiers, the cries of "*Arms*," "*Arms*," "*Help*," "*Help*," the clash

of weapons, the din and wild rushing of the swine altogether spread a strange uncertain sound even to the distant quarters of Philibert; the Germans soon awakened and then there was another alarm, lights kindled, shout answered shout, guns were hurriedly discharged, and all the camp became a scene of utter confusion: the prince himself with torches and followers pressed forward to the rescue; succours advanced on every side; the whole position from Oliveto to Rusciano was quickly in arms without knowing why, or what, or where was the enemy; Mario Orsini hearing this tumult made the preconcerted signal long ere Colonna would have wished; his artillery thundered over the hills, flashed on the disordered camp, and doubled along the walls of Florence: Philibert suspected treachery and became alarmed but not confused or intimidated, although he believed the battle to be general on finding himself thus simultaneously attacked at his left and centre and his right already in confusion. Whereupon after promptly naming those who were to guard the camp he plunged into the thickest of the fight cheering and directing his men and exposing himself everywhere like a gallant soldier without overlooking the duties of a general: but the strife now grew fierce and desperate; it was the struggle of sword and lance and battle-axe in close and deadly conflict, every blow shattered an adverse corselet, every thrust told; the camp reëchoed to the stroke of arms the shouts of soldiers and the cries of stricken men; the danger was extreme, and that night might have seen the dispersion of the imperial army and the glorious triumph of Florentine liberty, if Malatesta either fearful or jealous of the result had not sounded a retreat far sooner than Colonna required or intended: but there was no remedy, and each column retired in perfect order to its place of issue slowly calmly and unmolested. The besiegers astounded at what had occurred congratulated each other at having escaped so easily and remained under arms until daylight, when orders were given

for entrenching the imperial camp and in other ways securing it from any more such visitations.

This gallant affair gained Stefano Colonna great credit throughout Italy, for every eye was then fixed on Florence: the Imperialists lost two hundred men killed in the field besides a great number of wounded; and incredible as it may seem, we are assured by Varchi that not a single Florentine soldier was killed and he could almost he says have added wounded, but that night while on guard at San Miniato with his company of militia he saw one man brought in with his thigh hurt by the ball of an arquebuse\*. So deep and general was the alarm that not only the camp followers but numbers of the troops deserted, and flying in all directions declared that the army was routed; whereupon the inhabitants of several Florentine towns rose on the papal and imperial commissaries and either murdered or ignominiously expelled them †.

A little before this the period of Francesco Carducci's office had drawn so near its conclusion that the election of a successor became expedient, and he against all law was eager to continue in a post which though as arduous as it was dangerous he felt that both his heart and head were equal to, and so strong was his ambition that it blinded prudence and made his vanity ridiculous to the citizens. He is said, though the proofs (at least after the siege began) seem to lie the other way, to have lost the affection of his own party by courting that of the Medici which always affected to despise him; but Carducci, whatever may have been his private errors or previous conduct as a trader, was not a man to be despised as gonfalonier of Florence: he now assembled the Great Council, and in a tolerably vain speech

\* Carlo Capello says that there were two wounded, and that the war was altogether bloody; for the Florentines put all their Spanish and German prisoners to death as those people did the Florentines they captured. (Vide

*Lettere* lxi. and lxxviii.)

† Carlo Capello, *Let.*, *Lettera* lxxviii. — Ammirato, *Lib.* xxx<sup>o</sup>, p. 386. — Varchi, *Lib.* x<sup>o</sup>, pp. 238-43. — Segni, *Lib.* iv<sup>o</sup>, p. 237. — Paulo Giovio, *Lib.* xxviii., p. 171.

after exhibiting the dangerous condition of the republic from the division of parties and its prospects of ultimate success against the enemy; very pointedly recommended himself as the only man who from his known zeal and experience of public affairs as they then stood, was worthy of filling so difficult and laborious a post. His ambition masked his words to his own perception but not to that of his fellow-citizens: the speech though agreeable to some was easily measured; it disgusted most people, even some of his own best friends and was ridiculed by all. His very name therefore was omitted amongst the candidates, the law remained inviolate, and Raffaello Girolami a man really inferior to Carducci was elected with general satisfaction\*.

Girolami was light, vain, and blustering, but popular and had been strenuously working towards this point: he had filled the high offices of commissary general of the troops and ambassador to the emperor: to the nobles he was acceptable as being most noble: to the "*Ostinati*" or followers of Carducci no less so, because he had returned boldly to Florence from his mission and spoke out as boldly in favour of the war: to the Paleschi because he had been a known friend of the Medici and they hoped much from old recollections: the neutrals also supported him, and the other citizens generally because he had flattered all in private by a seeming conformity of wishes, and most of them hoped to see an accommodation brought about by his interference †. There were some however that knew him better and appreciated him accordingly. He was elected on the second of December and immediately took up his abode in the palace according to law, until the day of his inauguration the first of January 1530.

\* The unsuccessful candidates were, Uberti de' Nobile, Bernardo da Castiglione, Alfonso di Filippo Strozzi, Andreolo Niccolini, and Antonio Giugni.

† Nerli, Lib. ix., p. 196.—Segni, Lib. iii°, pp. 226-230.—Paulo Giovio, Lib. xxviii., p. 175.—Varchi, Lib. x., pp. 235-238.



The annual change in the urban guard now took place and so high and united was their spirit that every captain descended cheerfully to the lower ranks and did his duty as if he had never occupied a more exalted though certainly not a more noble station. Had the old citizens acted as well as these young ones, says Varchi, they would have deserved more praise and peradventure have been ultimately more fortunate: but their fortune without the town, although relieved by some brilliant strokes of military genius especially of the cavalry, was already on the wane, for the war was not alone round Florence; she had lost all her dominion but Pisa, Leghorn, Empoli, Volterra, Borgo San Sepolcro, the citadel of Arezzo, and Castracaro in Florentine Romagna: where the gallant Lorenzo Carnesecchi was doing wonders alone and unassisted, except by a despicable supply of money from the Venetians, who were luring the Florentines on with false expectations until they had made their own terms with Cæsar; and while thus surrounded by hostile armies it was mortifying for them to see numbers of citizens crowding the imperial camp and shamelessly struggling for employment against their native country! Not all in arms, but as governors, commissaries, and in other official situations under Baccio Valori who as the pope's commissary general had the management of everything\*.

This was indeed a dismal sight, a sad prospect for Florence; yet she was not depressed and human life proceeded in its usual course as when the suburbs stood, still busy with life and industry, and when the vine, and the olive, and the fig, and the cypress adorned the plain, and when the villas glittered in the sun, and nothing was to be seen but the quiet labours of the field, nothing heard but the lowing of cattle or the sound of convent bells! But now, the whole expanse bristled with hostile spears, and desolation glared around! In the city no bells were tolled; but in their stead the roar of artillery was heard so full and frequent

\* Lettere di Carlo Capello.—Varchi, Lib. x., p. 225.

that the very women learned to tell the voice of each battery and almost of every gun as if they were the parish bells to which they had been from infancy accustomed ! The shot that occasionally reached the town gave no alarm and did no mischief ; the shops were open, the magistrates distributed justice, all the offices were busy, the churches were frequented, the priests ministered, the market was thronged ; no tumults amongst the troops, no quarrels amongst the citizens, for though much ill-will existed its expression was controlled. “ *This is no time for contest,*” was the cry ; “ *Let us put off our disputes until we have established our freedom !*” “ *Poor and Free* ” was written in large letters of chalk or charcoal on every corner and the successors of Savonarola confirmed these noble sentiments by their preachings and exhortations, and made many cheerfully undergo those privations which in better times would have been borne with murmurs impatience and difficulty\*.

The pope and emperor were openly caricatured by some officers of the urban guard, and though shocked at the impiety and somewhat alarmed at the scandal the more prudent citizens were even afraid to blame much less punish any such excess committed in favour of liberty †. Amongst those who most distinguished themselves during this siege was Francesco Ferrucci whose family though ancient was poor, and had not furnished any magistrate of distinction to the state for some generations : but his grandfather had signalised himself at the sieges of Pietra Santa and Sarzana, and both his brother and himself had learned the art of war as simple citizens under Antonio Giacomino Tebalducci and as is said, completed their mili-

\* Carlo Capello, *Lettere, passim.* — Varchi, *Lib. x.*, pp. 279 to 81.

† They painted Clement in his pontifical robes and the triple crown on his head ascending the ladder of a gallows, and Fra Niccolò della Magna, Bishop of Capua, his secretary, as the hangman pushing him off. Jacopo Salviati as a

penitent attending him in his last moments, and the emperor seated, with a naked sword in his hand, on the point of which was written, “ *Amice ad quid venisti ?* ” was shaking his head at him. Yet these were times when the popes had great spiritual as well as temporal power.

tary education, but probably in civil situations, under Giovanni de' Medici. Francesco continued attached to the Black Bands until their dispersion at Naples where he acted as sub-commissary to Giovambatista Soderini and Marco del Nero two of the most able and worthy of the Florentines. After that disaster he gathered up the remnants of Giovanni's soldiers and reconducted them as well as he was able to Florence; he then served with the Florentine detachment under Malatesta at Perugia but remained unemployed and neglected during the early part of the siege, and probably would have continued in obscurity had not Donato Giannotti then secretary to the TEN proposed him as the commissary at that time about to be nominated for Prato. There he quarrelled with the podestà, a weak foolish man, and was at once promoted to the rank of commissary general over Empoli and all its neighbourhood in everything connected with war and quite independent of the podestà, who was restricted to civil government alone. Ferrucci soon placed that town in a complete state of defence, filled it with provisions and stores and thus established a magazine for the supply of Florence; he was a severe disciplinarian, but just and considerate and the soldiers soon discovered that he would be their master but was also willing to be their friend. From Empoli he kept the country in awe and security by making excursions with a small but augmenting body of well-trained soldiers devoted to his service, and maintained an active partisan warfare against the enemy. The Imperialists on their first arrival had taken San Miniato-al-Tedesco, and with two hundred men and the inhabitants' aid scoured a great part of the country between Empoli and Pisa. Ferrucci was not the man to suffer this, and with sixty horsemen and four companies of infantry he made an attack on the place, planted the first ladder, first mounted, and after an obstinate resistance took the town; then following up this blow he assaulted and recovered the citadel and put its garrison to the sword\*.

\* Segni, *Lib. iv.*, p. 236.—Nardi, *Lib. viii.*, p. 363.—Varchi, *Lib. x.*, pp. 222-228.

While Ferrucci was thus employed Lorenzo Carnesecchi a kindred spirit and commissary of Castrocaro, organized a small force with scanty means and spreading terror through all the ecclesiastical states in that neighbourhood granted a truce only when his own resources were completely exhausted. These successes were in a great measure balanced by the capture of Lastra a town situated on the Arno about seven miles from Florence and of great importance for the protection of convoys from Empoli\*. Every place was now fast crumbling away from Florentine jurisdiction to which few were really attached, and all indulged in pleasing recollections of their own former independence as if the destiny of Florence would restore it. Montepulciano surrendered to Baccio Valori, and Ferruccio on the other hand twice defeated Pirro Stipicciano at San Romana and Marti, A.D. 1530. and he was again beaten near Montopoli by the Florentines.

During these proceedings Malatesta Baglione had been constantly intriguing to become Captain-General of Florence, an office for which, had he even been faithful, the crippling effects of licentiousness would have rendered him unfit: following Girolami's example he was all things to all men: nor was he long in discovering the right way and soon became a liberal with the "*Libertini*;" a pope's man with the "*Palleschi*;" an oligarch with the "*Ottomati*;" violent with the "*Arrabbiati*," but calm and tranquil and strongly advocating a middle course with the "*Neutrali*." Thus winding his thread he managed to deceive everybody except Carducci who was now made one of the three commissaries in place of Girolami: yet even with all this Malatesta would have failed had not Mario Orsini not been recently killed, or had Stefano Colonna shown any disposition to accept the post; but he constantly declared himself to be exclusively a French officer and was otherwise so cold and repulsive in his answers that the gonfalonier assembled a Pratica and proposed Baglione who was inaugurated with great pomp on the twenty-sixth of January 1530†.

\* Segni, Lib. iv., p. 236.

† Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 22-24.

As the Pratica has been frequently noticed in the foregoing pages it may be here explained that under the Medici it became a close cabinet council and during Capponi's administration preserved that character but with a more extended basis ; after his fall its constitution and numbers were regulated and subsequently enlarged until it became a great and popular though a secret assembly, in which every act of government seems latterly to have been initiated ; yet as Florentine institutions never lost that mutability for which Dante condemns them it is nearly impossible for a stranger now to trace them accurately through all their Protean forms until they became passive in the iron grasp of monarchy. The Pratica was commonly formed in the Council of Eighty where as it would appear, a certain number of citizens were assembled ; more or less, according to the gonfalonier's intention of having a large or restricted Pratica. He then laid the subject matter before them and proposed the question on which they were to decide, at the same time exhorting each member to give his opinion frankly on the course he thought most conducive to public good. The deputies from each quarter of the town then formed themselves into so many separate committees the several members taking precedence according to their official dignity or age. In these committees the question was discussed and the result announced through their chairman, but in writing, and all under an oath of secrecy\*. The opinion of the sixteen gonfaloniers was first asked, then the twelve Buonomini, afterwards came that of the Decemvirate of Peace and Liberty ; this was followed by the spokesman for the Quarter of Santo Spirito and so on with the others, a majority of votes carrying the question. The spokesman was not allowed to speak in his own name but repeat as nearly as possible the decision of his com-

\* This oath was badly kept, as we learn in many places, but especially in Carlo Capello, the Venetian ambassador's letters, who seems to have had little difficulty in immediately getting information of all their discussions. (Vide *Lettera xx. in particular.*)

mittee, and whoever did this in fewest words, always keeping to the third person, was most lauded; but they in general confined themselves to the simple expression: *Such a number being present; so many say "aye" and so many say "no."* They were allowed to give their reasons, but this was rarely done, and in a very few words. When something extraordinary and of unusual moment was to be discussed, or when the gonfalonier and Seignory wanted to gain some popularity, the *Practica* assembled in the great council chamber, the meeting then became more numerous and the citizens retired by gonfalons instead of quarters to consult; in such cases after the opinion of the "*Sixteen*," the "*Twelve*," and the "*Ten*" was delivered, came the first and second gonfalon, and so on through the whole sixteen; and what the majority of these gonfalons decided carried the question as regarded them. There were occasionally variations of forms and sometimes the ballot was used instead of open voting, but the general form was as above\*.

The three Commissaries of War were continually in close council with Malatesta Baglioni, and had great power over all the operations, one of which is characteristic of the time. When the guard on Monte San Miniato was relieved and each captain at his post Malatesta was ordered to repair there in person. "One morning," says Varchi, "by sunrise accompanied by all the trumpeters and musical instruments of the city; and in order to observe a custom; after many long-sounding flourishes made with terrible uproar as if in this manner to salute the enemy who saw and heard everything or rather to excite them to battle; not seeing any one appear, a trumpet was despatched to the camp to defy them; and after waiting a good while without further notice the roll of an infinite number of drums was heard accompanied by a general discharge of artillery great and small; and their number was

\* Varchi, Lib. x<sup>o</sup>, p. 168.

inestimable; which uproar resounded from the waters and all the neighbouring hills and the surrounding country and enveloped everything in the thickest mist with the smoke of the gunpowder, so that all Florence was at once rejoiced and alarmed with unwonted fear and pleasure." This was at the commencement of the siege; ere it terminated they had become well used to such sights and sounds: but we must now return to our narrative.

Towards the latter end of 1529 Clement at the instance of Malatesta who gave him some hope of an accommodation, despatched Ridolfo Pio da Carpi Bishop of Faenza, to treat with him in Florence partly about his own affairs and those of the city with the sanction of the *TEN*, but secretly to settle the mode of betraying it. It was nevertheless believed and probably with truth, that much of this was artifice; Malatesta's engagement was nearly finished and he thought that the Florentines through fear of losing his services would make him captain-general\*. The immediate result of this mission was an urgent recommendation from Malatesta to despatch another embassy to Clement whom he assured the Seignory would be found more tractable than heretofore: in consequence of this, the first act of the new gonfalonier after making his inaugural oration, was to call a numerous *Pratica* in the great council chamber where the suffrages were given by gonfalons, and there proposed the important question of another embassy to Clement. This full *Pratica*, which was in fact what we should call a "Committee of the whole House," on the third of January by a majority of thirteen hundred and seventy-three against three hundred and seventy-three decided in the affirmative; so earnest was the wish for peace. On the sixth Luigi Soderini and Andreuolo Niccolini were named ambassadors, and Ruberto Bonsi as sub-ambassador: the latter left Florence on the fourteenth accompanied by the historian Benedetto Varchi and

\* Guicciardini, *Stor.*, Lib. xx., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 3.—Varchi, *Lib.* xi<sup>o</sup>, pp. 4-5.

many other young Florentines, principally to see the coronation of Charles V. which was to take place on the twenty-fourth of the following month ; so free was the communication in those days between a besieged city and its enemy.

The pope knew these men to be weak but attached to liberty, and incorruptible : he also knew that they were instructed to cede nothing of the national freedom ; to recover all lost territory ; and not to allow of any change in the existing constitution : wherefore having no hopes from their mission he determined to make them ridiculous. Against all custom they were stopped at the city gate and had their baggage rudely searched by the custom-house officers ; one of the company Guglielmo Rucellai had a few pieces of gold thread and wire which without the ambassadors' knowledge he had brought as presents : these were seized and the circumstance made use of both as a subject of reproach and ridicule against the embassy even by the emperor himself as if the low and mercenary spirit of trade had infected the very highest officers of that so much boasted republic. In their first audience Clement declared that he never had any intention of destroying liberty ; but when the question of preserving their existing constitution was proposed he suddenly flared up, and in an angry voice exclaimed that he would never consent to maintain a government utterly devoid of faith and replete with violent passions, with outrage, and robbery : he reproached them with their severity, their treatment of Niccolò Capponi ; denied having sent the Bishop of Faenza to procure the embassy, refused to consider their propositions ; and finally threw the whole blame of past and present misfortunes on themselves. The emperor sternly refused them any audience whatever ; and in a second interview with Clement he as before burst forth into loud and angry invective and without allowing the ambassadors to speak, bitterly reproached them for every fault committed against him since the revolution commenced.



This reception soon became public and the courtiers of both courts taking up the tone of their masters ridiculed and insulted the ambassadors as sordid traders; they were even pointed at in the streets and everywhere derided, so that finding it useless to remain they returned to Florence on the seventh of February 1530 \*. But the ridicule of courts is not the voice of nations: men *will* quietly judge of events in spite of it, and form their own conclusions: numbers judge from results alone and justify an act by its success rather than by the wisdom and prudence or the folly that occasioned it. Multitudes now lauded the Florentines who at first had blamed them: they were called the honour of Italy; "they alone to their eternal praise had proved that there was not only no necessity to yield to the barbarous ferocity of transalpine nations, perpetual and mortal enemies to the Italian name, but had also shown how they could be opposed and resisted." The prowess and glory of Florence became all at once the theme of every society: like a volcano under eruption she burned brightly in the midst of Italy and every eye was curiously turned on the phenomenon! And it was surely a glorious sight to see one small city struggling alone for her freedom against two powerful monarchs and the united forces of Italy, Spain, Belgium, and the empire actually under her walls, and outnumbering all her efficient male population! These glorious exploits occupied the tongues and pens of the generous and high-minded of her countrymen; verse and prose vied in her praise; Latin and Tuscan extolled her glories or execrated her persecutors: some there were of shallower notions that blamed her as an interruption to the universal quiet, forgetting that the war of Florence was the peace of Italy; and that this sad disgraceful peace had *made* the war of Florence, and laid their country at the feet of Cæsar †!

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 12-18.

† Guicciardini, Lib. xx<sup>o</sup>, p. 1.—Varchi, Lib. xi<sup>o</sup>, p. 3.

To conciliate him and Clement, Francis degraded as he already was, despatched an ambassador to the Florentines with flimsy excuses about the peace that he had been compelled to make for the recovery of his children in which it was impossible as he averred to include Florence; wherefore he publicly advised them to make the best terms they could, and almost offered himself as a mediator while he openly commanded Colonna and Malatesta as French officers\* to quit the Florentine service yet secretly ordering them to remain! But what cut deepest was the withdrawal of his resident ambassador which the Florentines considered if not a direct insult at least as diminishing their reputation: nor was this blow lightened by his secret promises to aid them whenever he had recovered his children, nor by leaving a private agent amongst them, for the word and character of Francis were now appreciated at their real value, and so abject was his submission to both pope and emperor that he would have driven Baldassare Carducci from court had not the death of that ambassador, worn out with cares and mortification, rendered it unnecessary: and thus did Francis play false at one and the same time to the pope, the emperor and the Florentines †.

During all these transactions the siege, its sallies, its skirmishes and more distant operations continued in full vigour, ever and anon relieved by single deeds of arms and individual enterprise; by personal combats, and one remarkable and romantic duel which on account of its intrinsic interest and being a sample of the military customs of the age will be here described nearly in the words of Varchi who was possibly an eye-witness ‡.

\* Colonna was wholly French, and only lent to Florence, Malatesta was partly paid by France as a member of the league and partly by Florence. (Vide *Lettere di Carlo Capello*, *Lettere* xvi. and xx.)

† Guicciardini, *Lib. xx.*, cap. i., p. 4.  
—Varchi, *Lib. xi.*, pp. 18-19.

‡ It is however more probable that Varchi remained at Bologna after the embassy, as he certainly was present at Charles V.'s coronation, and after-

Lodovico Martelli and Giovanni Bandini were both suitors to a lady whose name from delicacy to her family the historian very cautiously conceals \* ; but she having plainly shown her preference for the latter, Lodovico was moved by rage and jealousy to prove that even in arms as in accomplishments he was not so inferior to Bandini as she seemed to imagine. This could scarcely have been accomplished had both of them been living quietly in Florence ; but it so happened that Giovanni Bandini being of the Medician faction had fled with the rest and was then in the enemy's camp, while Martelli served his country in the young Florentine guard. He had no private quarrel with Bandini, but this circumstance gave him a double opportunity of humbling a rival or dying with glory, if it should so happen, in the cause of Florentine liberty. A challenge was accordingly drawn up by Messer Salvestro Aldobrandini with all the precision of knightly language, declaring that Giovanni Bandini and the other Florentines in the imperial camp were traitors to their country, and that he Lodovico Martelli would prove it with armed hand, man to man, in the listed field against Giovanni Bandini giving him the election of place and weapons, on horseback or on foot as should seem meet to him.

It was said by some that besides the above cause of quarrel Lodovico had given the lie to his antagonist for having spoken slightly of the Florentine guard ; be that as it may Bandini without any lack of spirit and abounding in talent, yet being desirous of avoiding this duel, replied with more discretion than truth that he had not joined the enemy's camp to fight against Florence to which he was as much attached as any man, but to visit certain friends : this whether true or false should have satisfied Martelli ; but he being resolved to fight retorted in

wards followed the papal court to Rome along with his friend Giulio Vergili da Urbino, nephew of the celebrated Polidoro Virgili, who was then occupied on his History of England.

(Vide *Varchi*, Lib. xi., p. 62.)

\* Marietta de' Ricci was the lady's name, and at this distance of time there can be no scandal in divulging it.

such terms that Bandini could not suffer without forfeiting his honour as a gentleman of which he was especially tenacious, and therefore at once took up the gauntlet.

It was agreed that each should have a companion, and Bandini having been refused by Pandolfo Martelli as well as by several other Florentines in camp : in the world's opinion very little to their credit but says Varchi, " in that of understanding persons with great prudence ;" he selected Bertino Aldobrandi a mere youth the pupil of Francesco or Cecchino del Piffero brother of Benvenuto Cellini. Martelli's companion was Dante da Castiglione who being a man of stout heart and a thorough liberal really perilled his life for his country's love.

Lodovico and Dante left the Piazza di San Michele Berteldi on the eleventh of March in the following order. They were preceded by two pages in scarlet and white, mounted on fine horses with caparisons of white leather and followed by two other attendants on large and stately coursers dressed in a similar manner. After these rode two trumpeters, one of Malatesta's and one belonging to the Prince of Orange who never ceased sounding their instruments. Next came the Captain Giovanni da Vinci a youth of extraordinary beauty, as second to Dante da Castiglione ; and Pagolo Spinelli an aged citizen of great experience, as second to Martelli ; also Vitello Vitelli as the friend of both in case of Bandini's choosing to fight on horseback. After all these followed the two combatants on Turkish horses of marvellous beauty and value : they were dressed in surcoats of scarlet satin with slashed sleeves of cloth of gold and hose of the same, trimmed with white and silver tissue : on their heads were small caps of red satin, and hats of scarlet silk with white plumes. Beside each walked six grooms dressed like the pages on horseback, that is in doublets of red satin slashed on the right side with the right sleeve of white satin, the hose trimmed with white, and red bonnets. Behind all were several captains and valorous sol-

diers besides many of the Florentine guard who having dined with the champions accompanied them to the gate, which however no Florentine was allowed to pass except one wounded officer whose arm was in a sling and another citizen.

This cavalcade crossed the Carraia bridge and issued by the San Friano gate outside of which one-and-twenty mules awaited them laden with every sort of necessary, as well of food as dress, besides arms and armour for horse and foot, and disdaining to be beholden to the enemy's courtesy they provided themselves with bread, wine, corn, hay, straw, and wood; meat of various sorts, birds of many kinds, fish of every quality, all sorts of confectionery, tents and pavilions well furnished with plate and all other luxuries or comforts they could possibly require even to common water! Then there were a priest and a physician; a barber-surgeon, a chamberlain, a cook, and a scullion: they left the gate followed by all this baggage and wound under the walls until near Porta Romana when turning to the right they passed the fountain of that suburb and the house of Capponi where the hostile trenches terminated and thence on to Baroncelli, the whole camp crowding out to gaze, and as previously settled, no gun was to be discharged on either side until they had arrived in presence of the prince. On Saturday the twelfth of March, everything being prepared, they fought in two palisaded lists separated only by a rope, and surrounded by the camp guard of Spaniards Germans and Italians in equal numbers; they engaged in their shirts, in hose alone without doublets, and the right shirt-sleeve cut short off to the elbow: a sword, and a short mailed gauntlet on the sword hand, but the head uncovered: "Arms," exclaims Varchi, "truly honourable and gentleman-like, particularly because modern soldiers are apt falsely to believe that the use of defensive armour in duels is a thing that does not prove their courage and therefore is blameable; as if where honour is prized beyond life and entirely depends on it, there ever can be too many precautions taken in defence of

the latter" \*. These arms were chosen by Bandini to remove an opinion then prevalent about him in Florence that he was more discreet than valiant and proceeded with more cunning than courage. Dante cut off his beard, which reached below the pit of his stomach, and then entered the lists against Aldobrandi whom at the first onset he wounded in the right arm and lightly on the mouth, but was fiercely assaulted in return and almost in a moment received one severe and two slight hurts in the left arm which so disabled him that if the young Aldobrandi had restrained his impetuosity as he ought to have done, Dante must have fallen or surrendered. Not being able to manage his weapon with one hand alone, he seized it with both and keenly watching Bertino's motions saw him again \*preparing to rush forward with headlong fury, whereupon he suddenly stretched forth both arms and received him on the sword's point with a mortal wound in the mouth. The right eye instantly swelled up and Bertino although he had boldly vowed to die a thousand times sooner than surrender once; either overcome with pain from additional wounds in the breast or else being unconscious of his actions, yielded, and expired the same evening to the great mortification of the prince and the Count of San Secondo; for the latter even stood within the lists brandishing a partisan and encouraging him with his voice, entirely against the tenor of the herald's proclamation.

Dante da Castiglione excited by his success, twice shouted "*Victory*" with a loud voice to give Lodovico fresh spirit, for in no other way by the terms of the compact was he permitted to assist him. During this time Martelli at the first sound of the trumpet had rushed with incredible ardour on his antagonist; but Giovanni Bandini a perfect master of his sword and temper, wounded him over the eye and the sudden flow of blood almost impeded sight, whereupon he attempted three

\* This alludes to the then prevailing cause, and defeat was a proof of dishonour that victory attended the right.

successive times to seize Giovanni's sword with his left hand and three times did the latter draw it through leaving a gash behind, so that when Lodovico strove to clear his eye from blood with his shirt-sleeve the difficulty was increased; nevertheless he made one desperate lunge at Bandini which passed nearly a span through his side, but so superficially that a slight hurt on the left breast was all the injury. Then Giovanni dealt him a right-handed blow at the head which he parried with the wounded arm and at the same moment made a fourth attempt to wrest away the sword by which he got a fourth drawing wound and no better fortune. Maddened at this he seized his own hilt with both hands and placing the pommel against his breast ran furiously forward but Bandini no less active than strong, leaped dexterously aside and in the same instant cut Lodovico over the head crying out, "*If you wish to live surrender to me.*" To this Martelli, who could no longer see and had many wounds, answered "*I surrender to the Marchese del Guasto.*" But when Giovanni repeated his words the other yielded. Bandini received and deserved great commendation, for he first desired to avoid the duel but once involved he conducted himself with equal skill and courage, vanquished his enemy, and remained almost unhurt by two slight wounds, one in the wrist the other in the breast.

This however would never have happened but for the following circumstance: Lodovico Martelli was offered the choice of two swords Giovanni Bandini taking the other which broke when he began to brandish it; some said that he did this on purpose with his hands; others that he struck it on his right knee; but in whatever way it occurred Martelli's second insisted on Bandini's making use of the fractured weapon which by the laws of duelling he was bound to do, and more especially as Giovanni himself had ordered these swords to be made expressly for the occasion. Many others were of this opinion, thinking that it was an

artifice of Bandini to secure an advantage over his antagonist if he had happened to choose the wrong weapon, and if not, to act as he did. Pagolo Spinelli finally refused to act as second if a thing so at variance with common custom were allowed. "Which thing," says Varchi, "according to the laws and habits of modern soldiers is perhaps true, but according to the true, is most false; because amongst honourable cavaliers there should not only be no advantage of any kind in single combat but those even should be refused that the adversary spontaneously offers. And how could Lodovico ever have proved that which he engaged to prove, if with a perfect sword he assaulted an enemy who had only half a weapon, or rather a mere stump?" The prisoners were exchanged and returned the same evening to Florence where Martelli's friends thinking to soothe his affliction, persuaded the relations of Marietta de' Ricci to allow of her paying him a single visit; but its effect was only to plunge him into deeper dejection, and overwhelmed with mortification he died of that rather than of his wounds in four-and-twenty days after the combat\*.

This duel by the superstitious was taken as a prognostic of the final issue of the war: it was Florentine against Florentine; both parties suffered and were victorious; the popular first, as represented by Dante da Castiglione; the Medician next in the person of Bandini: the allusion was apt enough and amongst the imaginative and superstitious Florentines sure to be caught at and ingeniously applied.

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COTEMPORARY MONARCHS.—England: Henry VIII.—Scotland: James V.—France: Francis I.—Spain: Charles I.—Portugal: John III.—Emperor: Charles V.—Sultan: Solyman.—Pope: Clement VII.—Naples and Sicily: Charles of Spain.—Austria and Hungary: Ferdinand.

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\* Varchi, *Lib. xi.*, pp. 45-53.—Carlo Lib. iv., p. 248.—Nerli, *Lib. x.*, p. 222. Capello, *Let.*, Lettera lxxx.—Segni, —Paulo Gioivo, *Lib. xxviii.*, p. 183.



## CHAPTER XIV.

FROM JANUARY 1530 TO AUGUST 1530.



THE Florentines were now completely involved in a war of life and death : there was no longer any hope of an accommodation with Clement and the emperor's anger was dark against them : the influence of the pope and mortification at any successful resistance to his arms produced hatred and Charles determined to subdue them, so that their only hope was now in native valour and the faith of their servants \*. The first was equal to anything, but troops, numbers, and military knowledge were indispensable, and these could not be maintained without resources, to supply which every spring was put into action. The sale of ecclesiastical and rebels' property was for some time a fruitful source of revenue although disposed of at an enormous loss, lands worth thousands being sold for less than hundreds ; yet this too had its advantage : vast numbers of persons in the lower and middle ranks who hoarded and whom no one suspected of having money, like flies in the winter's sun, were tempted out by the extreme cheapness to become possessors of good houses or estates, and thus large sums which for many years had never seen the light were now thrown into circulation. Francis had utterly sacrificed the Florentines and meanly bowed to the fortune of Cæsar, and while still trying even after the recovery of his children to cajole them with empty assurances of friend-

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 61.

ship, he purposely prevented a supply of 50,000 ducats from the Florentines at Lyon by a prohibition to export coin \*.

The prospects of Florence were therefore dark and lowering; yet there was no wavering, the community held well together and although it would be folly to believe that a strong Medician party did not exist, or at least one that would willingly have made large concessions to that family for the sake of peace, it was kept down by the deep and earnest energy of the mass; or as the party writers of the day express it, of the few; but these few were the voice of multitudes. In the Grand Council there seems to have been strong indications of a desire for peace on some terms, but how much of their existing liberty they would have been then willing to sacrifice on the altar of the Medici cannot now be determined: one thing seems certain; that the Medici once in Florence, no matter on what conditions, were thenceforth its masters: those in power and probably all the leading citizens of every party were well aware of this, and self-preservation, if not some purer motive prompted them to repel any advances to apparent reconciliation. It is plain that by whatever means supported the popular leaders were strong enough to carry the spirit of freedom into full and powerful action even to its extreme, for by the very force of liberty they became despots but in a dangerous emergency when power was public safety; and the steady support of full five † thousand armed citizens remarkable for their courage and discipline proves that the mass of the community was with them and that it was not despotic rule under the veil of liberty, but the confiding spirit of a whole nation which formed the source and secret of their greatness ‡. The young urban militia were the palladium of Florence; the regular troops

\* Guicciardini, *Stor.*, Lib. xx., cap. i., p. 9.—Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 68-69, and 173.—*Lettere di Carlo Capello*, Lettera lxxxiv., P. S., and *note*.

† The urban militia were reviewed in May, and found to number, after more

than six months of siege, three thousand men between the ages of eighteen and forty; and two thousand between forty and fifty-five.

‡ Carlo Capello, *Lettere*, *passim*.—Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 88.

sprinkled as they were with veteran Tuscans were staunch and spirited, and amounting to about ten thousand men with the pay of fourteen thousand they served cheerfully, no strife or brawls or relaxation of discipline being known amongst them until provisions and pay became scarce, and then as it would seem, only in some of the wilder followers of Baglione. The city was therefore well and zealously guarded by the troops and there was no lack of spirit in the citizens\*.

To preserve this good feeling the various captains had been assembled in the church of San Niccolò and after mass each took a solemn oath in presence of Malatesta for the defence of Florence to the last, and the only failure amongst these officers was the seduction of three captains, Cecco and Jacopantonio Orsini and Giovanni da Sessa, by Napoleone Orsini when he played false to the Florentines. Their figures were painted by Andrea del Sarto under the name of his pupil Bernardo del Buda (for he was timid) hanging as traitors on the palace of the "*Mercatanzia*" near the Via della Condotta, and so like and admirably done that none who had even but once seen the originals could mistake them for a moment †. The Prince of Orange's military talents probably averaged those of the day in obsidional tactics, but with forty thousand troops abundantly supplied and experienced in war, to fail against a simple walled town of the middle ages, with shallow dry ditches, deprived of her strong and lofty towers, and only defended by a few more modern works hastily thrown up for the occasion, does not give us any very high notions of his ability ‡. It is true that a battering train whose guns could be discharged but once in five minutes and one or two of which generally burst before night-fall was not well calculated for rapid operations, wherefore a strict blockade was substituted for more stirring movements. Nevertheless the prince with new works and

\* Carlo Capello, Lettera, Lettere i. to — Varchi, Lib. xi<sup>o</sup>, pp. 30, 31, 32, lxxxv. and 64.

† Guicciardini, Lib. xx., cap. i., p. 4. ‡ Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 42, 62.

new trenches began to threaten a closer fire on the Florentine bastions especially that of San Giorgio, but between a want of skill and the difficulty of the operation Colonna was enabled to baffle him, or at least nothing was effected\*. While these things passed in Florence Charles prepared for his coronation at Bologna instead of Rome, where it was said his courtiers wished him not to go lest he should become acquainted with all the horrors and devastation committed by his lieutenants in that miserable city. It was then the custom for the emperors to assume three crowns successively, one of silver at Aix-la-Chapelle on succeeding to the empire, which Charles had long before accomplished; one of iron at Monza near Milan which confirmed their rule in Lombardy as kings of Italy; and one of gold in Rome, which was always conferred by the hands of the pontiff or his surrogate. The ambassadors of Monza had brought the iron crown † which Clement placed on Charles the Fifth's head in the church of San Petronio on the twenty-second of February, and on the twenty-fourth, his thirtieth birthday, a day considered fortunate, he was solemnly crowned as emperor with the golden crown amidst an enormous concourse of people, princes, and ambassadors, from every Christian nation, but with little pomp or magnificence ‡

On the twenty-second of March the lowering sky of Germany caused Charles to quit Bologna and soon after Italy, leaving the native potentates favourably impressed with his personal manners and politic endeavours to conciliate them, but sadly fearful of his power. Passing on to Mantua he was magnificently entertained by Federigo Gonzaga, and on the twenty-fifth of March erected that state into a duchy; after which he

\* Guicciardini, Lib. xx., p. 3.

† The iron crown was in fact made principally of gold. It is described as a golden circlet five inches in depth, with a thin plate of iron to keep it firm together. This iron was said to be a nail from our Saviour's cross, a

story imagined a century afterwards, says Muratori, by Ripamonte in his History of Milan.

‡ Guicciardini, Stor., Lib. xx, cap. i., pp. 5-6.—Muratori, Annali.—Segni, Lib. iv., pp. 245-6.—Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 38.

continued his progress into Germany to assist at the great diet of Augsburg where his brother was to be elected King of the Romans and the now powerful and increasing Lutheran heresy discussed\*. Clement, as Varchi tells us, "finding himself without money or reputation" left Bologna and an additional tax behind him on the last of March and having been sumptuously entertained by his mortal enemy the Duke of Urbino on his way, arrived in Rome about the ninth of April 1530 where he bent his mind anew to the conquest of Florence. Although the Prince of Orange was both by words and movements continually threatening that city with an assault he nevertheless resolved to trust entirely to the slower and more certain operation of famine, for few generals of those days were inclined to terminate a war if by any means they could excuse its continuance. His attention was therefore directed to reducing the Florentine territory without, and to the preventing any supplies of provisions from penetrating within the beleaguered town. The effect of both these operations was now beginning to be sensibly felt not only in the scarcity of victuals but of military stores and munitions of war. Ferrucci kept Empoli well furnished with everything, and as long as that depôt and Lastra were safe he managed to throw continual supplies into Florence in despite of the enemy: nitre was so scarce that every tomb and charnel-house of church and hospital was ransacked and the scattered remnants of mortality were recomposed in another form to despatch the living. At Easter Malatesta killed an ass instead of a lamb, consumed half of it in his household, and making the other moiety into pasties sent them as presents to his external friends: but this was not believed to be entirely as it seemed, and the universally increasing suspicion of his treachery gave it a secret and questionable import, more especially as the next morning's dawn brought a convoy of stores and provisions to the gates from the indefatigable Ferrucci. This was

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 59-60 to 62.

followed by a brilliant sally of cavalry under Jacopo Bichi a Senese gentleman in the Florentine service so renowned for his military skill and mental accomplishments that when he died soon after from a wound, Varchi lamented him as one of those extraordinary beings that may be equalled but can never be surpassed\*.

Bichi conducted this skirmish so gallantly that all were eager to take a part; even the crimson bonnet of the Prince of Orange and the scarlet tassels of Del Guasto's spear were distinguished amongst the hottest of the fight: the artillery ceased on either side and both camp and city were looking on in admiration when fresh bodies of cavalry dashed across the stream and were bravely charged on its bank; but their numbers increased too rapidly for Bichi's squadrons, and he reëntered the Porta di Prato amidst universal acclamations, both of friends and enemies. After this came a courteous challenge from the imperialists to any Florentine cavalier who wished to break a lance beneath the walls: there was no lack of champions, and a gallant encounter, almost equally balanced, left public judgment rather in favour of Florence.

Thus was the time filled up between the greater operations of the siege, but very soon after about five hundred horse with a numerous infantry descended from Fiesole and were encountered by band after band from the three gates of Santa Croce, Pinti, and San Gallo; reinforcements came up on both sides and had not a deluge of rain suddenly fallen and arrested the fight it would have swelled into a pitched battle and probably decided the destiny of Florence†. These frequent encounters seemed rather to whet than blunt the Florentine eagerness for a general engagement, more especially because the departure of Charles and Clement from Bologna and the failure of the latter's resources had injured the imperial army both in

\* Varchi, Lib. x., p. 90.—Paulo Giovio, Lib. xxviii., p. 180.

† Paulo Giovio, Lib. xxviii., p. 180.—Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 66-8.

discipline and efficiency : its strength had diminished, quarrels and even mutiny and fighting had arisen, and numerous bodies of troops were dispersed about the country in pursuit of plunder by which alone the greater part of them lived\*.

At the new Seignory's election for May and June a strong feeling for battle and as strong displeasure against Malatesta for opposing it, showed themselves in the community from the gonfalonier downwards ; the length of the siege and daily increasing privations augmented it, and the treachery of Francis destroyed all hope of extraneous assistance ; for he not only wanted to become the means of restoring Florence to the pontiff but also to secure that priest's favour by this debasing act†. Malatesta, whose spies were everywhere, was well aware of the general dissatisfaction and consented in conjunction with Colonna to make such a demonstration as would draw the mass of imperialists into action and convince the Florentines that his backwardness was prudence, not fear or disaffection. Of the former nobody suspected him ; but of the latter his promptly seizing this occasion to shift his quarters gave striking proofs. From the garden of the Serristori, where surrounded by his own troops he had hitherto resided, he now removed to the house of Bernardo Bini near Porta Romana a position not commanded by Colonna's works or soldiers, and where by a little military preparation he could bridle all that part of the city, gain possession of the gate, and send out or admit any troops he pleased not only uncontrolled by, but even unknown to government ; and this as we shall see, he too successfully executed. In order therefore nominally to satisfy the people, but really to scare them and have an excuse for not coming to a general engagement, he declared the necessity of feeling the enemy's strength and position by a powerful sally from the San Friano and Roman gates and the outwork of San Miniato. On

\* Carlo Capello, Lettera lxxviii.

† Guicciardini, Lib. xx., cap. i., p. 9.

the fifth of May every arrangement was completed for this movement, but a severe loss was at that moment sustained in the death of Amico da Venafro a skilful and daring chief of the Black Bands who was openly murdered on the Ponte Vecchio by his commander Stefano Colonna, against whom he had used some insulting and disobedient language. The principal object of attack was the strongly-fortified convent of San Donato-a-Scopeolo situated on a height beyond the Porta Romana and garrisoned by the Spanish infantry, then esteemed the finest troops in Europe, under Baracone de Nava an officer of distinguished courage and experience. This the Florentines attacked at a run in face of a rapid and destructive fire: the defence was equally spirited and the column from San Frediano taking the convent in rear gave new energy to the assailants: Baracone fell; the Florentines pushed forward with the cry of "*Serra*" "*Serra*;" "*Close*," "*Close*;" and soon mastering the hill and carrying the church would have completed their victory if the Prince of Orange had not instantly reënforced the garrison with a body of Italians and opened the three batteries of Giramonte, Barducci, and other new works upon the assailants. Nor were the Florentine artillery silent, nor was the contest here alone: at San Gaggio and Marignolle, Don Ferrante Gonzaga with his cavalry and large bodies of infantry were closely engaged; and from Boboli to Bello Squardo the fight waxed hot and furious: several bands of Spanish infantry had approached the Colombaia de' Bartoli, on which Giometto Paccherino and Jacopo Tabussi from the gate of Saint George, and other chiefs from the Porta Romana were ordered out by Malatesta against them. The prince became anxious, and brought up his German infantry and the battle grew everywhere more furious: the dust and smoke were stifling; gun replied to gun from lines and ramparts: the Florentines still held on obstinately at San Donato, and the wavy struggle of either army gave alternate hopes of victory. Malatesta old and crippled as



he was, could not resist the spirit of the scene : mounted on a little mule the veteran now forgot his treachery, his age, his weakness, everything but the courage and exploits of his youth ; raising with difficulty his useless arms and beating his spurs into the unconscious beast he would have dashed into the thickest of the fight ; nor did all the entreaties of the three Florentine commissaries avail until they actually held him back by force from the battle. As evening approached the struggle became if possible more violent until at "*Ave Maria*" Malatesta sounded the retreat and next morning's muster found two hundred of the bravest Florentines missing from their colours. The imperialists' loss was greater, but Venafro's death was that day considered as irreparable, because on his skill and gallantry the general hope had been fixed : even as it was, if Malatesta had led out all his force the general opinion seemed to be that a signal victory would have accrued. Yet by many even such an event was deprecated as likely to bring down on Florence a more than common vengeance from the emperor. Amongst the young Florentines who perished in this hard-fought and useless day was Lodovico Macchiavelli, son of the celebrated Niccolò, whose obsequies were along with those of the other slain celebrated in great pomp by the mourning citizens\*.

A solemn, religious, and penitential procession to avert the wrath of Heaven was then decreed at the instance of the friars of Saint Mark's ; but they had accompanied it with other injunctions so utterly selfish and cunning that Francesco Carducci could not refrain from exposing them in the councils and treating them with the contempt and ridicule they deserved †. Nevertheless on a public altar erected in the place of San Giovanni all the Florentine militia once more renewed their oath never to abandon each other, and to suffer every extremity of

\* Carlo Capello, Lettera lxxxiii.—Paulo Giovio, Lib. xxviii., p. 185.—Varchi Lib. xi., pp. 72-82.

† Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 83-87.

hunger, misery, and even death itself in defence of their country's liberty. Five thousand armed citizens took this oath while Baccio Cavalcanti harangued them in praise of freedom and national independence\*.

To secure these blessings new resources were necessary; almost every mode that ingenuity could invent in the form of loan and taxation had been tried and exhausted; even the sale of church and rebels' property had slackened either from fear or exhaustion; the latter was therefore now sold by a forced lottery instead of public auction or private contract; and soon afterwards a decree passed the Great Council, but not until it had been put to the vote eleven times, that all the uncoined gold and silver in every form that could be discovered in church, company, or private dwelling should be declared and carried to the mint, and the owners' names registered as public creditors to the amount. The silver was coined into half-ducats of a depreciated value but made a legal tender for that sum; their impression was a lily and on the reverse a cross crowned with thorns. Many jewels were also taken from the churches, and by all these means about fifty-three thousand ducats were raised in the month of May. This sum was about six times the contemplated amount and the law according to Nardi was carried *with facility*; the people even emulating each other in bringing their plate and ornaments with the same eagerness as in ordinary times they would have flocked to receive their salaries. Capello confirms this and the calm and sensible preamble to this law deserves recording †. "Considering that God and nature have created all things for the use and convenience of man, those who in urgent need refuse to make use of them are ingrates and do injury to the givers. Amongst these things gold and silver are produced for utility and convenience so

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 88.

† Nardi, Lib. ix., vol. ii., p. 206, Ed.

Firenze, 1836-41. — Carlo Capello,

Lettere, Lettera lxxxv.—Paulo Giovio,

Lib. xxviii., p. 188.—Nerli, Lib. x.,

p. 223.—Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 88.

that in time of need whoever holds them for ornament and not use, holds them against the will and command of God and nature : and considering that there is in our city a large sum without which people may live, if not with such splendour at least with equal comfort, and considering also that liberty is the most precious of man's gifts to which all others however precious are far inferior, it seems reasonable that everything else should be postponed to its preservation ; and the more so in our republic because in the conservation of liberty is included that of God's honour and holy name : seeing also how much glory was acquired by ancient republics of Christianity because men and women frequently sacrificed their most precious things to save their republic and their liberty ; and seeing that your city is reduced to such straits that it becomes a question to whom it will ultimately fall, and that the not continuing a prompt and effectual defence will expose honour, life, property, women, children and every other precious thing a prey to the most cruel tyrants ; and not wishing to tempt the Almighty who in man's troubles and necessities never deserts those who seek him with sincerity of heart, provided that they use the means which are suitable and required for those that seek their own safety ; hoping that by the herein-mentioned mode a certain sum may be raised with which our so-much-desired liberation may be achieved ; it is decreed, &c. &c."\*

In February 1530 Volterra where considerable dissatisfaction existed surrendered to the pope, but this city was too important to lose so tamely, wherefore Francesco Ferrucci with all the external power of Florence in his hands was ordered to retake it which he accomplished in a manner to be hereafter related : while absent on this duty the Prince of Orange seeing him so occupied about the less important place determined to attempt the greater, for Empoli was the life of Florence, and there Ferrucci had amassed a large amount of provisions

\* Carlo Capello, Lettera lxxxv., and *note*.

and warlike stores, and placed the town in so excellent a state of defence that he declared the women alone would be able to defend it with their distaves: nevertheless he left Andrea Giugni and Piero Orlandini with a competent garrison. Three divisions of the imperial army under the Marquis del Guasto, Fernando di Gonzago with his cavalry, and Fabrice Marmaldo of Calabria, who had lately joined the camp with three thousand unpaid but disciplined ruffians, undertook the siege. Marmaldo kept the field as a covering force while the other divisions invested the place: the batteries opened on the twenty-eighth of May and a breach was quickly effected in the walls sufficient for an assault which was made the same day with great gallantry and confidence by the veteran Spaniards; but a garrison of six hundred men well seconded by the inhabitants repulsed them with great slaughter and little internal loss. Diego Sarmiento captain of the Spanish "*Bisogni*" had the immediate direction of the siege and was joined by Alessandro Vitelli from the neighbourhood of Pistoia, who taking up his quarters at the church of San Francesco commenced battering that side and soon brought down a large cake of wall, but more cautious than Sarmiento he would not yet venture on an assault, especially as the citizens both men and women had begun even during the combat to retrench both breaches and show every symptom of a vigorous and obstinate resistance. The whole investing force including Marmaldo's division must have been near eight thousand men, yet the town was capable of making a long and successful defence against any force, and would have done it too had the chiefs been faithful. But Giovanni Baudini and Tito Orlandini were in the enemy's camp; the first a friend of Andrea Giugni, the last an uncle of Piero Orlandini who commanded the garrison: by these traitors and at the instance of Piero, Andrea Giugni who had been hitherto strongly attached to liberty, was induced to attend a conference in the hostile camp, and being a well-meaning but unwary man

was persuaded that no hope remained to save Empoli from storm and plunder and the women from outrage, except a timely capitulation; this he was not disposed to grant but Piero Orlandini either originally false or newly corrupted had already determined on treachery. Meanwhile the citizens alarmed by this secret conference determined to make their own terms with the enemy and that very night sent a deputation to Sarmiento offering to surrender on condition of life and property being respected but making no stipulations in favour of the garrison. Orlandini had purposely quitted the breach, had withdrawn the troops from the ramparts, and exhibited other unequivocal signs of negligence or treachery under the mask of confidence: these were not lost upon the vigilant and experienced Spaniards who instantly rushed to the breach where even without any resistance they could scarcely make their way. The town was stormed and sacked, the women outraged and everything in wild confusion when Vitelli's division came up and redoubled the general calamity: Bandini attempted in vain to allay this storm, but the Marquis del Guasto with sovereign authority and after infinite mischief, at last succeeded in quelling it. The commissary Giugni and Piero Orlandini were declared rebels, their goods confiscated, and their images painted as traitors to their country: the conduct of Giugni surprised everybody because he had loved liberty, had already distinguished himself in the wars of Florence, and moreover belonged to a family of so excellent a character as to become the subject of a proverb: the saying was, "*As the best man of the Antella family was the worst of the Florentines, so the worst of the Giugni was better than the best of them.*" A noble encomium, pity that one was ever found to belie it! He found the use of a good reputation and had many excusers and even warm defenders all willing to attribute this conduct to any cause but corruption: they failed: the government was naturally and justly indignant, for the loss of Empoli sealed the fate of

Florence; but with an unnatural vindictiveness it either did or wished to visit the father's crime upon an innocent child of eight years old by the punishment of death! An act exclaims Varchi with becoming indignation, meriting the greatest blame because in this as in other similar cases the rule of contrary has no place: a person not only may but ought to be sometimes honoured and rewarded for another's merits; but to punish and dishonour one for another's faults; NEVER\*\*.

Ferrucci was blamed as the greatest men will be when anything under them happens to fail, even their very success engenders discontent at the slightest interruption as a minute's delay in railroad speed makes us fretful and impatient. He was accused of having left too small a garrison; as if the place had not fallen by treachery and not by force! Of having been moved by ambition to remain at Volterra instead of returning to Empoli; as if his authority were not absolute everywhere beyond the Florentine ramparts†! The loss of Empoli was a terrible blow, for besides its value as a magazine and as the safeguard of communication with Pisa, the Florentines were about to assemble a new mass of troops in that fortress and by their means not only keep up a free intercourse with Pisa and the neighbouring country but reduce the Prince of Orange to extreme difficulty on the left bank of the Arno‡.

But this was not the only instance of treachery that now occurred: Jacopo Corsi the Commissary of Pisa and his son Francesco were condemned on the first of June to lose their heads for having secretly corresponded with Palla Rucellai who had lately incited the people of Pietrasanta to declare for Clement: it does not appear that Corsi or even his son had any real intention of betraying their country, but Jacopo concealed his son's correspondence and thus sacrificed both. A similar

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 91 to 96.— p. 9.—Segni, Lib. iv., pp. 257-9.

Carlo Capello, Lettera lxxxiv.—Paulo

Giovio, Lib. xxviii., pp. 194-196.—

Guicciardini, Stor., Lib. xx., cap. i.,

† Guicciardini, Lib. xx., cap. i., p. 9.

‡ Ibid.

crime with worse intentions cost Lorenzo Soderini his life; he was detected in a correspondence with Baccio Valori which gave accurate information of the state and prospects of Florence; but on several other occasions citizens' bodies were seen dangling from the Bargello windows as convicted traitors and no doubt these severities stifled the expression of public opinion, for the increased and daily augmenting privations of the people were rapidly inclining it towards peace\*.

The new and last Decemvirate of War of the ancient Florentine republic was elected on the tenth of June 1530 †, after which Stefano Colonna who wished to regain the popularity he had lost by the murder of Venafro proposed another "*Incamiciata*" against San Donato in Polverosa to open the Prato and Pistoia roads which since the loss of Empoli had become of infinite consequence. In the sally of the sixth of May he had agreed with Malatesta not to take any part, being as was said, desirous of showing the Florentines their error in preferring that general to him, wherefore he also became anxious now to make up for what they then suffered by his conduct ‡.

This project was proposed to the gonfalonier who immediately summoned a council of war in which the almost certainty of recovering both Prato and Pistoia if the Germans could be dislodged from San Donato was acknowledged and approved by all except Malatesta. He alleged the great risk, the certain danger, the stern valour and discipline of the German infantry, the strength of their position, and the bold vigilance of their commander, but seeing himself alone he treacherously acquiesced and declared he would share the danger. It was settled that Colonna's division should issue simultaneously from the two gates of Prato and Faenza, both leading directly

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 97.—Segni, Lib. iv., p. 267.

† They were Luigi Soderini, Niccolò Verrazzano, Cino di Cino, Agnolo Sacchetti, Giovambattista Cei, Francesco

del Zaccheria, Piero Popoleschi, Bernardo da Castiglione, Luigi de' Pazzi, and Francesco Giraldi.

‡ Varchi, Lib. xi<sup>o</sup>, pp. 72 and 100.

on the hostile lines which were doubly trenched and well mounted with artillery, while Malatesta with fifteen hundred men kept on the bank of the river communicating with the sally-port of Ognissanti to prevent any flank attack across the stream from Monte Oliveto and the adjacent works. On the fifteenth of June about two hours before day, Stefano Colonna left the Faenza gate with two thousand men while Pasquino Corso and his column of Malatesta's followers issued from that of Prato with instructions to halt half way from the camp and conceal himself until Colonna was well engaged, then dash forward and assist where most required. Instead of this and possibly at the command of Malatesta, he led forward half his column close to the enemy's outposts and cut down two sentinels, but not before they had alarmed the camp, where all were in arms and at their posts ere Colonna who had a somewhat longer march could come up. Hearing the noise he pressed rapidly forward and carried both trenches without a check, but unluckily instead of completing the victory the troops began to plunder, and murdered men women and children even in their beds. This disorder allowed Lodovico de Lodrone the imperial general to marshal two thousand pike-men under orders to remain steady on the defensive with their pikes levelled and as firm, say the Florentine authors, as a stone wall. After several messages sent to Pasquino Corso for assistance Stefano attacked this phalanx with impetuosity and being gallantly seconded, a severe and obstinate contest succeeded in which he received two pike wounds at once but both slight, and the combat continued without his being able to penetrate the serried lines of German steel that so sternly opposed him. Day had now dawned, and Malatesta had already heard the blast of trumpets beyond the Arno and saw the imperial cavalry dashing through the stream, but instead of opposing them he recalled five hundred arquebusiers who had occupied the Ponte-alle-Mosse close on Colonna's left flank which thus remained exposed,



and simultaneously made the signal for Pasquino to retreat, alleging the frivolous and untenable excuse besides other trifling reasons, that he feared being cut off from the town, which was impossible. Meanwhile Stefano Colonna seeing daylight appear and no signs of assistance drew off his men in good order from the contest and loaded with plunder retired unmolested to Florence with the loss of thirty killed and eighty wounded while that of the enemy was reckoned at a hundred wounded and five hundred left dead in the camp. Had his men not dispersed for plunder, or had Pasquino Corso supported him, or even obeyed his injunctions and remained quiet Colonna would no doubt have won his way, destroyed the camp, and cleared that quarter of the enemy; but he and the Florentines complained bitterly of Malatesta's treachery which indeed was too palpable to be for a moment mistaken\*. From this time forward Malatesta knowing the intensity of public feeling against him never attended any council without first occupying the palace with his own troops fearing as he said, the "leap of Baldaccio." All these things gave fresh hopes to the Pallechi who had constantly communicated with him in secret and praised him openly; and many young men with Zanobi Bartolini at their head changed sides on perceiving certain destruction awaiting the liberal cause†. This disaffection, the loss of Empoli, and Malatesta Baglione's conduct, depressed the mind of the governing party as much as it raised the hopes of their antagonists; the spirit of faction penetrated even into the convent where young Catharine of Medicis was confined; the

\* Carlo Capello, Lettera lxxxv. — Nerli, Lib. x., p. 231.—Paulo Gioivo, Lib. xxix., p. 201.—Segni, Lib. iv., p. 269.—Guicciardini, Stor., Lib. xx., cap. i., p. 10.—Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 100-107.—Segni and Gioivo differ somewhat in the details of this affair, but agree in substance with Varchi; all but the latter historian however

make Colonna issue by the *Prato* gate instead of the *Faenza*, which must be evidently a mistake, because Malatesta would naturally have kept his follower, Pasquino Corso, under his own eye and orders. Carlo Capello agrees with Varchi.

† Nerli, Lib. x., p. 232.

nuns split into two parties and each filled the common chapel with their orisons in favour of Medici or Popolani. Catharine as an inmate of the "*Murate*" convent, though a child, gave spirit to her party which was increased by family communication from without, especially since the events above related. The Medician arms presented in her name to the imprisoned Palleschi in the form of fine bread and flowers became known to the Seignory who instantly despatched Salvestro Aldobrandini to remove her quietly and secretly to the convent of Santa Lucia, not however without floods of tears from the unfortunate child, then but eleven years of age, who thought that she was taken away only to be murdered. Nor were her apprehensions entirely vain; for though Varchi stedfastly denies that any proposal so horrible as that of placing her in a public brothel was ever seriously and publicly entertained, he yet owns that private propositions *were* made, though not without a rebuke, that she should be slung from one of the merlons as a mark, if the enemy's artillery ever opened its fire on the walls\*. And yet this nation boasted of its civilization! Facts alone prove civilization not theories however beautiful and refined.

The scarcity of food was daily increasing but concealed as much as possible by the government, yet such secrecy could not last when no wine was to be had except for the sick and the sacrament: when the food of pigs became the food of men, when all the cats had been eaten, and when even rats, mice, and every noxious reptile became scarce, sold high, and were devoured with avidity! To crown all a pestilence filled the hostile camp and notwithstanding every precaution soon appeared in Florence; but how it came or how it departed, after only a brief visitation, no man knew, unless the great and increasing heats of summer destroyed the infection †.

Under these privations and difficulties which the people still

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 108-10.—Nerli, Lib. x., p. 227.

† Carlo Capello, Lettere lxxxiv., lxxxv., lxxxviii.

bore heroically, Clement uncertain of the war and distrusting Orange, imagined that they would treat with a less stern and resolute aspect and again offered them terms through King Francis and the Doge of Venice. But no trust could be placed in Clement who mortally hated almost every Florentine, the Paleschi because they had perfidiously abandoned him, and the Popolani because they had outraged and injured him. "I am not," said he, "that cruel and wicked man which the Florentines suppose, and some day I will prove to the incredulous that I also love my country." The Florentines thought otherwise, and their actual sufferings and devastated territory confirmed it: but Clement was also maddened by the successes of Francesco Ferrucci and Lorenzo Carnesecchi in Tuscany and Florentine Romagna: the career of the former will soon be noticed; that of the latter was less extended and eventful but not less brilliant and merits a short description.

Elected commissary in Florentine Romagna Lorenzo bent every nerve to his task and with few men and less money in a remote and isolated district showed such a spirit and fertility of genius that if he and Ferrucci had commanded together in Florence she would never have lost her liberty. Issuing from Castrocaro, a small but strong and well-built town on the Montone near Forli, he continually fought and always routed Leonello da Carpi, the President of Romagna: the town of Marradi in the distant valley of Lamone then revolted upon which he quitted Castrocaro with his small garrison marched about five-and-twenty miles amongst the mountains, quashed the insurrection hung the leaders, raised the siege of Castiglione, defeated a detachment of the enemy on its way to succour Marradi, and when the humbled president sued for peace he was haughtily answered that while public war existed no private individuals could make a separate agreement. On this refusal the president assembled between four and five thousand men with six guns and laid siege to Castrocaro, but Carnesecchi repulsed his

assaults, drove his men from the walls, destroyed his works, and finally sent the whole army flying across the frontier! Not content with this, he in turn became the invader and kept the ecclesiastical territory in such alarm that a second application for peace or truce was made and granted on good conditions for Florence, but only because he had not a florin left to continue the war a moment longer \*!

In most despicable contrast with the noble actions of Lorenzo Carnesecchi we must place the timid selfish and ungenerous conduct of the Florentine merchants at Venice: those of Lyon, London, and Flanders had given largely in their country's aid, but when these of Venice were intreated by Lorenzo to advance only 1000 or even 600 florins, promising with that small sum to achieve something worthy of their common country, he was sordidly and heartlessly refused! Nor did it avail him to offer the credit of Florence, which was then indeed fast ebbing and might have been valueless, nor was it likely to be saved by the insulated exertions of Carnesecchi however extraordinary; but he also offered to mortgage his own estate for the amount: Giorgio Ugolini a spirited young officer followed his example but in vain, their sordid purse-strings were drawn still closer notwithstanding all the Florentine ambassador's endeavours to open them.

These worthy citizens, some of the wealthiest of Florence, were led by Matteo Strozzi the great advocate for liberty, the opposer of Niccolò Capponi, and the selfish fugitive from his country's misfortunes; by Lodovico de' Nobili, by Filippo del Bene, by Giovanni Borgherini, and lastly by Tommaso di Giunta the celebrated Florentine printer of that day who seems to have been more intent on the liberty of his press than that of his country. Galeotto Giugni alone, without that fear of Clement which partly affected the others, sent 100 ducats on his own account from Vicenza but this was insufficient and thus the gallant spirit of Lorenzo Carnesecchi was paralysed †.

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 112-114.

† Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 114-116.

Florence was now stripped of everything but Pisa and Volterra; the latter had remained faithful, had organised an urban guard and adopted every measure for self-preservation, but there were two parties, one friendly the other inimical to Florence and when the surrounding country swarmed with enemies and little hope remained of supporting herself the latter prevailed and after some internal throes a formal surrender of the city was made into the hands of Clement before his departure from Bologna\*. The citadel still held out, but with difficulty, and the commandant strongly urged on the Seignory the necessity of a reconquest if it were only for the salvation of Pisa which thus isolated could scarcely stand. Francesco Ferrucci undertook this service and Andrea Giugni was ordered to leave Florence by Porta Frediana in the night with five companies of infantry, or about a thousand men, who fought almost every step of their way until they crossed the river Pesa where they would have been altogether dispersed if Ferrucci had not advanced with a large force and led them safe into Empoli. Resigning the immediate command of that place to Giugni, he on the twenty-seventh of April marched with more than the authority of a Roman dictator at the head of seven companies of infantry and four of light cavalry, averaging at that period about fifty men each, and leaving four companies in garrison with Andrea Giugni. Each soldier carried two days' food, and a certain number of pioneers with their tools, and provisions of rope gunpowder and scaling ladders attended the detachment to Volterra whose citadel they occupied the same evening. After one hour's repose from this march of forty miles Ferrucci sallied upon the town, carried all the retrenchments before the citadel, pursued the enemy to Saint Augustine's Place where more works were opposed to him, but worn out with toil his soldiers here began to check; it was the enemy's stronghold and was defended by a numerous and well-armed band

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 120-139.

with two pieces of artillery the circumjacent houses being all perforated so as to afford free internal communication safe from any fire. Seeing his soldiers' hesitation Ferrucci seized a shield and springing forward at the head of a few dismounted light horsemen cut down every man he saw flinching and finally carried the work against all resistance: having thus fought his way to the "*Via Nova*" he promptly broke into the houses on either hand and soon mastered the whole street where he lay for the night utterly worn out with toil. Next morning when all was ready for the assault a parley ensued; Pope Clement's Commissary Guiducci, after vainly attempting to amuse Ferrucci until Marmaldo arrived with succours, finally surrendered the place and the garrison marched out with arms and baggage, the commissary alone being detained a prisoner. The town was spared and the soldiers murmured, for he had promised them all the plunder; he however quieted this mutinous disposition by his personal influence and the promise of double pay for that month.

Volterra was instantly placed in the best state of defence that time would permit and there was none to spare, for both within and without were foes; the people had formally declared for Clement contrary to their usual maxim which was to obey the Florentine palace whosoever ruled there, and Marmaldo scoured the country with two thousand five hundred light Calabrian infantry\*. Ferrucci compelled by necessity more than inclination, placed the city under martial law of the most rigid and tyrannical character; money was indispensable and he extracted it without remorse by the terrors of death and the infliction of close and unmitigated imprisonment; this however was only against the rich and priesthood who could and did pay, and were moreover the authors and leaders of rebellion. Towards the middle of May Fabrizio Marmaldo appeared in the neighbourhood and sent a trumpeter to demand the town; this

\* Paulo Giovio, Lib. xxviii, p. 192.—Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 145-153.

man spoke with great insolence, whereupon Ferrucci cautioned him to appear no more unless with better language or he would hang him up without ceremony : after a sharp skirmish Marmaldo made a lodgement in the suburb of San Giusto and sent the same trumpeter with his former insolent demands ; whereupon Ferrucci true to his word most barbarously and against all usage hanged him in sight of both armies ! Marmaldo vowed a deep revenge and fatally redeemed his vow, but for the moment he contented himself by pushing on the siege with all the vigour that mining and the want of artillery would permit : he was brave, proud, and able, but had as brave and as proud and a still more able antagonist : he could do nothing against Ferrucci's vigilance ; the citizens could do nothing against his power, his austerity, nay if we are to believe Giovio his cruelty of government. But what would be cruelty in ordinary circumstances may be modified by necessity into a hard yet wholesome severity, the knife and the caustic are often requisite to save existence but the people of Volterra required no such existence at his hands. Francesco Ferrucci felt that the destiny of Florence lay chiefly with him, the people of Volterra being merely an instrument ; he had no time to spare ; prompt and rapid action and forced means to sustain it were indispensable ; the citizens had revolted and deserved punishment : he might have sacked their city ; he saved it, but made the opulent pay dearly for their crime by forced and unmitigated contributions ; not for himself but the salvation of his country. In this cause he despoiled the churches, sold the relics of saints by public auction ; a proceeding for which posterity admires him though at the moment it scandalized even his own soldiers : he moreover seized all the plate and ornaments of private families, and levied universal imposts for the maintenance of his troops and the city's better preservation. All this he had both right and authority to do, for his power from the Seignory was unlimited, he was a conqueror, and the citizens had really forfeited their

property by rebellion. If however it be true as several historians assert; though Varchi, Nerli, Cambi and Guicciardini are silent; that he starved fourteen Spanish soldiers to death in revenge for injuries received from that nation at Naples, why then Marmaldo was justified in afterwards putting him to death at Gavinana! But the tale jars so inharmoniously with the stern but lofty virtues of Ferrucci that the silence of such Palleschi as Nerli and Guicciardini is quite sufficient to discard it. Marmaldo seeing that little could be accomplished without further means applied to the Prince of Orange for artillery, whereupon the Marquis del Guasto repaired himself to the siege with fourteen guns and recommenced operations. Two breaches were opened in the middle of June; they were desperately attacked but more successfully defended: the inhabitants men and women zealously assisted in the struggle even to the sacrifice of their property; for whatever may have been Ferrucci's rigour, it was done in due order and was the deliberate act of a regular government; but a storm they well knew would sweep them all away in one promiscuous ruin. Wherefore beds, bedding, clothes, chests, every article of furniture no matter how valuable, was thrown from the windows of convents and private dwellings and carried to the retrenchments: caltrops and spiked planks were strewed all over the breach, shaly barrels of loose stones were rolled down the rocky steep on which the ramparts stood, and bursting below with tremendous force scattered wounds and death amongst the assailants: Ferrucci was severely hurt in two places and forced to retire: his absence, like the falling of the prophet's arm gave strength to the enemy, his presence again at the breach gave new vigour to his soldiers, the foe was everywhere repulsed and the calm of death succeeded! Many were killed, many wounded, but Volterra was saved and her defenders gained new confidence; this was well needed, for the Marquis del Guasto far from being conquered, on the seventeenth of June opened



two new batteries and sixty feet of the ramparts soon tumbled down the rocks which served as their basement. No time was lost, Spaniards and Italians rushed forward in mutual emulation to the assault, but Ferrucci was also there; enfeebled it is true with wounds and still more reduced by fever, he nevertheless had himself carried to the breach. Retrenchments, planks, caltrops, stones, all offensive and defensive means were here repeated; Ferrucci's voice and personal exposure gave heart to his people, it was all he could do; shouts from below were answered by cheers from above; the veteran Spaniards maintained their ancient fame; the Italians were not behind; all scrambled up the precipice; the caltrops tore them, the barrels crushed them, the spiked planks slipped from under and caught them falling on their bristly surface; stones and every other missile flew thick amongst them; and floods of boiling oil met them at the foot of the ramparts: many fell; but the rest with stubborn resolution won their way and under the white-plumed chief Diego Sarmiento, whose lofty figure towered conspicuous in the throng, four hostile banners were seen flying on the walls of Volterra! Then came the final struggle; the flags were torn down, their bearers rolled lifeless to the ditch, the artillery played slow and heavily, the more rapid arquebuse sent forth its volleys, and the stab and the thrust were rife; and thus the struggle held with various fortune for two long hours of blood and glory, until the imperialists repulsed on every side retreated to their retrenchments broke up the camp and marched that night for Florence\*.

Volterra being completely reduced and freed from enemies, was put into a more efficient state of defence and Ferrucci remained free to execute some fresh orders from government

\* Nardi, Lib. viii., pp. 367-369.— Lib. xxx., pp. 398-402.—Paulo Guicciardini, Stor., Lib. xx., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, p. 8.—Cambi, tom. xxiii., p. 54.—vivo, Lib. xxix., p. 197.—Segni, Lib. iv., pp. 225-262.—Varchi, Lib. xi., Nerli, Lib. x., p. 226.—Ammirato, pp. 148-166.

received on the fourteenth of July. On the first of that month were chosen the last free priors of the Florentine republic\*, and the general suffering became so great that even in the military magazines grain was no longer counted by months but by weeks and days. The gonfalonier endeavoured in vain to conceal this and evaded the citizens' questions by saying that "Heaven was not going to abandon Florence." They hoped so too, but wished to assist Heaven with their own exertions either by one great effort of arms or a capitulation, as one or the other seemed inevitable for universal safety. Práticas, discussions and councils, followed each other rapidly; the "Ten of Peace and Liberty" met daily; the commissaries-general now increased to six † lent their aid; Colonna and Malatesta were also frequently summoned and warmly urged to lead the whole force of the republic to battle. They both deprecated such an enterprise, partly perhaps from military reasons, but certainly as was believed, because both agreed in wishing to come to terms with Clement: Malatesta had been lukewarm if not false from the beginning, and always jealous of Colonna; but for some time the latter had evidently relaxed and become more intimate with him. The reason was plain: as long as France and Venice had not settled their affairs with Clement and Charles, they both encouraged Florence by hope and promise to resist stoutly, because it facilitated their negotiations; but the moment these were terminated the behaviour of Colonna also changed and his opinion chimed more harmoniously with the Perugian than before. Their judgment might have been correct according to strict military rules, but there are times when such rules must be broken and which genius ever seizes and makes its own; and this surely was one. A brave and noble people

\* Andrea Petriani, Tommaso Bartoli, Alessandro del Caccia, Simone Gondi, Niccolò Acciaiuoli, Marco Cambi, Agnolo della Casa, and Manno degli Albizzi.

† Andreolo Niccolini, Antonio Giugni, Francesco Carducci, Tommaso Soderini, Zanobi Bartolini, and Francesco Zati.

reduced to their last stake and ready to peril everything in one bold effort! Well armed, well disciplined, prompt in spirit, and not so greatly inferior even in numbers to the enemy! They were sure to lose everything by capitulation, they could do no more by battle and they would perish honourably! The military chiefs had no such feelings; *their* game was safe; many citizens of the highest rank and influence were with them, perhaps professional science, certainly humanity; though by them considered only as it helped their own selfish objects; yet adherents were hourly but covertly joining them and they refused the enterprise\*! High words arose between Francesco Carducci and Malatesta; the former was bitterly reprov'd by Baglione, and with reason too, for not having kept the war at a distance instead of losing Perugia Cortona and Arezzo by his folly: an army in the field he said might have done good service instead of being all collected within the city. Then addressing the gonfalonier he sharply bade *him* remember, how in his office of commissary he had forbidden all sallies and risk of any sort when the General desired to impede the enemy's works and lodgements, a thing easy in the beginning but impossible afterwards. He professed himself always ready to combat; only give him food and pay for the troops and three armies like the prince's should not reduce them; but he had sworn to defend Florence, and never could expose her to certain destruction for the mere purpose of satisfying a few citizens who against the universal wish would thus conduct themselves. He was sternly answered by Carducci and from this moment never attended the council, but kept to his quarters where well fortified and guarded by his own followers he felt secure and defied all the power of the Signory †.

Seeing how little could be expected from their generals and knowing that there was a constant communication between the malcontents and the camp by lights, signals, letters and other

\* Nerli, Lib. x. p. 225.

† Nerli, Lib. x., pp. 232-6.

means so that every movement was known to Baccio Valori, the government resolved to resume a project already discussed with Francesco Ferrucci which was to concentrate all the authority of the commonwealth in his single person, give him all the resources they could command, and every other assistance in their power in order to assemble an army of three thousand infantry besides cavalry at Pisa, then march through the Lucchese state and over the mountain of Pistoia, occupy that city by means of the Cancellieri who being Guelphs were attached to the republic, and thus reënforced make his way to Florence. The scheme was bold, hazardous, and not the best, besides being extremely difficult of execution, and Ferrucci was far from pleased with it, but that severe resolution of character so conspicuous in all his actions determined him to obey\*.

His own plan was to lead the war from Tuscany by a direct and rapid march, on Rome itself: the pope had no troops, and thus would either have been made prisoner, or forced to fly, or else have been compelled to recall the Prince of Orange for his protection. By proclaiming his intention to plunder Rome he expected to thin the imperial army of all its irregular troops whose only object was pillage, especially the Spanish "Bisogni" and the Germans; the latter mostly Lutherans, the former ready for any enterprise of gain, and both intent on plunder. This was too bold and hazardous a stroke for the Florentine government and Ferrucci quitted Volterra on the fifteenth of July with fifteen hundred men, leaving that city in charge of Marco Strozzi and Giovambatista Gondi the new commissaries who on foot and in disguise had the day before arrived from Florence with his orders. Leaving a competent garrison and taking hostages along with him he marched by the river Cecina to Vada, Rosignano and Leghorn, and arrived at Pisa the third day in despite of all Maramaldo's efforts to prevent him †. There he was joined by Giovanni Paulo Orsini son of Renzo da

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 207.

† Ibid., p. 208.

Ceri with an equal number of soldiers : Orsini was of a high and generous spirit and being ashamed of his kinsman the Abbot of Farfà's conduct had modestly offered his services to Florence in defence of Italian independence. Resources and activity were necessary and Ferrucci not yet recovered from his wounds, weakened from fever, and harassed in mind and body, was seen and wanted everywhere : nature finally gave way and a violent illness of many days' duration deprived the commonwealth of his aid when every minute was precious, every hour vital. Pay-day came but he had not wherewithal to satisfy his troops ; all murmured and the Corsicans nearly mutinied ; a contribution was levied on the town, citizens and strangers were indiscriminately taxed and it was rigidly exacted ; there was a great outcry, and one opulent merchant roundly declared that he would sooner be starved and hanged than disburse a single ducat. Ferrucci took him at his word ; ordered his instant incarceration without food, and if he chose to die promised that he should be hanged afterwards : both were serious and determined and the contest would no doubt have ended fatally had not the man's friends come forward and paid his contribution \* !

In Florence an equal want of money and equally severe measures were decreed but human nature even then asserted its rights and frustrated all. Six new commissioners of ways and means were added to an already existing board, and in the same council was proposed and carried a decree for the expulsion of all the useless mouths : this was a cruel case, and felt by all to be so because it fell almost exclusively on the poor, who would also be plundered of the little they had, if not all massacred in passing through the hostile camp ! Nevertheless three commissioners were commanded to see it executed, and proclamation was made that on pain of death all the peasantry and indigent poor should instantly depart. The scene of sorrow and misery which ensued was too much for the Seignory ;

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 207-9

famine, danger, liberty, all melted away in the natural kindness of human feeling; the proclamation was annulled, the decree revoked, and all who wished were invited to remain except the women of the town: but even this was not executed to any extent, and only about forty of the oldest and most abandoned were thrust forth in tears from the gate of San Gallo to seek a wretched existence amongst men more wicked and abandoned than themselves\*. On the thirty-first of July Ferrucci quitted Pisa by the Lucca gate at the head of three thousand infantry and five or six hundred horse; nor did he attempt to conceal from his followers the danger of the enterprise; on the first of August he passed within two miles of Pescia and thence on to Medicina a Lucchese town where he spent the night; on the second of August he arrived at Calamecca in the mountain of Pistoia intending to continue his march along the "*Monte Berzano*," and that part of the "*Prunetta*" range called "*La Croce delle Lari*," which would have led him to "*Ponte Pietri*" and the "*Collina di Pistoia*." Being deceived by his guides Baldassare Melocchi and Guidotto Pazzaglia of the Cancellieri whom he was ordered to trust, instead of proceeding by the summits of the hills and descending into the plain of Florence after reaching Montale above Pistoia; he was on the contrary led down to the left directly on San Marcello a place belonging to the Panciatichi which these chiefs were eager to destroy. Whether the forces of the Cancellieri preceded those of Ferrucci and ruined the town ere he arrived, or whether he were present and permitted it, is not quite clear; in either case it was a barbarous act: the inhabitants fled to the opposite mountain of *Carreto* and occupying a tower which once stood there hastily threw up some field works before their retreat was cut off. Ferrucci's army wet and tired were encamped in a field close by the town still called the "*Campo di Ferro*" or the field of iron: overlooking

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 167-168.—Carlo Capello, Lettera lxxxviii.

this stands a house, then belonging to Antonio or Mezzalaucchia di Pippo Calestrini, and here in a council of war it was determined to attack the Prince of Orange wherever he should be found. But Nanni a priest, a spy, and brother to Mezzalaucchia, overheard all that passed and hastened to inform the prince at Lagone near Pistoia where he had arrived with a strong detachment from the besieging army on purpose to intercept Ferrucci. Everything determined on by the Florentines was as already said soon known in the camp wherefore all Ferrucci's motions and instructions had been long reported to the Prince of Orange; and such treachery, whether committed by Malatesta or others, enabled him to baffle the Florentine commissary's utmost exertions by moving superior forces on every point. He ordered Maramaldo to intercept Ferrucci's march on Pisa, and if this failed, to watch his departure and hang on his left flank while Alessandro Vitelli kept close to the right. These orders were punctually executed, so that on Ferrucci's arrival at San Marcello he was between three armies each equal if not superior to his own; for Vitelli, besides a thousand Panciatichi who joined him under Bracciolini, had induced Clavero's column of Spanish "Bisogni" to retrieve their character by uniting with the Imperialists in this expedition. These troops had mutinied, or rather thrown off their allegiance altogether and yet in the face of the prince and his army were allowed to ravage the country with impunity and even to enter any service where they could find employment: a bargain with Florence had in fact begun but so treacherously that their deputies were hanged and they altogether bore so infamous a character that Ferrucci made sure of their junction had he been allowed to carry the war as he intended, to the gates of Rome\*.

Orange had selected the flower of his army for this enterprise: a thousand veteran Germans and a thousand Spanish

\* Segni, *Lib. iv.*, pp. 275-7.—Paulo Giovio, *Lib. xxix.*, p. 207.—Varchi, *Lib. xi.*, p. 211.

infantry; the four Italian columns of Savello, San Secondo, Marzio Colonna, and Ascalino; three hundred arquebusiers under Pompeo Farina and all his men-at-arms and light cavalry even to the Stradiote horsemen, then employed by every state in Italy. We are not informed of the exact number of troops who thus accompanied the Prince against Ferrucci but they must have exceeded ten thousand men, and Segni asserts that the German and Spanish infantry alone amounted to eight thousand; but most of the latter Varchi says were sent back from very shame at leading so large a force against so feeble an enemy. It is plain moreover that the camp was so weakened by these detachments as even to have prevented the Prince of Orange from venturing on this enterprise had he not had the written assurance of Malatesta that no attack would be made in his absence\*. Thus Ferrucci had the able and indefatigable Maramaldo with equal numbers coming down upon his left by the highlands of Mamiano, Vitelli with superior forces and all Maramaldo's ability, advancing from Altopascio on his right, and the Prince of Orange immediately in front with a veteran army three times as numerous as his own. He could have fought and probably would have beaten Maramaldo, but his object was to relieve Florence without delay and with all the force he could muster, and although he expected to be strongly opposed in his descent from the hills, he never supposed that the enemy's camp would or could be so denuded with impunity. As it was, he could still by sacrificing his baggage have pursued a higher route amongst the mountains and made his way into the Mugello, the Fiesoline hills, or even the Casentino where he would have found adherents and have been yet able to execute the Seignory's commands; to which, if personal ability and circumstances are considered, he was perhaps too scrupulously obedient. He however seems to have

\* Carlo Capello, Lettera xc.—Segni, Lib. iv., p. 276.—Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 213.



been deeply imbued with that chivalrous spirit which in those days deemed the avoidance of battle a mark of fear instead of a question of tactics, and not choosing to sacrifice his baggage which was principally composed of military stores, resolved to push boldly forward by the small town of Gavinana. At the precise moment in which Ferrucci was thus resolving, and refreshing his people at San Marcello scarcely two miles from Gavinana, (which for some unexplained cause he had not occupied) the Prince of Orange was similarly employed at Lagone half way between Pistoia and that town and about four or five miles from the latter: when Ferrucci heard of his being there with so large a force he repeatedly exclaimed, "*Ah! the traitor Malatesta! but let us go forward to where our own and our country's fortune calls us!*"

On Nanni's report the papal troops were ordered to resume their march the light horsemen, to take three hundred arquebusiers behind them, and then to push forward along with the Stradiotes, get possession of the passes, rejoin the infantry and endeavour to force the town ere the prince and his men-at-arms arrived to support them. Philibert with a joyous aspect then ordered wine out before the tavern where they were assembled and filling large cups drank success to the enterprise; but the sky hitherto serene had now become suddenly overcast and just at this moment poured down such floods of rain as were taken for an evil omen by his officers. Upon this the prince with a loud laugh exclaimed, "Soldiers, as far as I can divine we shall not be intoxicated when we encounter the enemy since Heaven has so kindly favoured us with water to our wine." These were his last words except of military command; then sounding to horse and marshalling his remaining troops he rode bravely forward to his bed of glory at Gavinana\*.

The advanced guard of light horsemen finding that place too

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 214.—Paulo Gioivo, Lib. xxix., p. 207.

strong for any sudden assault on the Pistoia side, made a circuit round the southern walls until they discovered the Florentine lances winding along the narrow road from Saint Marcello. On the first glimpse of the imperial horse the people of Gavinana, who were all Cancellieri, sounded their bells "*a stormo*," as it is called, and their angry chimes reëchoing to San Marcello hastened Ferrucci's departure. With an aspect more cheerful than his heart, for the enterprise was sorely against his judgment from the first, he formed the troops in two divisions, inclosing the baggage, and being completely armed he mounted a white courser, removed his helmet and thus shortly addressed them. "Beloved and valiant comrades, want of time on my part and your own great courage so often and in so many dangers by me witnessed and commended, will not suffer me, nor do I wish to say more than this; considering that in your hands is now placed the salvation or destruction of Florence and the important consequences that must arise from it, only follow wherever you see me lead and remember that generous minds more willingly meet an honourable death with great and everlasting fame, than live dishonoured and sink into an ignominious grave, or at least without leaving a spark of glory behind them." Then replacing his helmet Ferrucci led the first division along the road to Gavinana followed by the baggage, consisting principally of military stores and provisions, and leaving young Orsini to bring up the rear: his cavalry was likewise divided into two squadrons one commanded by the young and valiant Amico d' Arsoli and the Greek Niccolò Masi of Napoli di Romania; the other by Carlo da Castro and Carlo Conte di Civitello\*.

Meanwhile the Imperialists were fast closing round Gavinana whose inhabitants endeavoured to gain time by parley until Ferrucci's arrival; but Maramaldo was at the "*Porta Pucciana*" on the side of Maresea at the same time that the former

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 214.

entered that of "*Papina*" on the side of San Marcello; and Alessandro Vitelli was closing up by "*Prunetta*" while the Stradiotes and light cavalry hung on the right flank of the baggage and Orsini's protecting division. Gavinana or Cavinana is one of those small dilapidated towns or "*Castelli*" that like faded beauties still shows some signs of better days: a piazza sufficiently spacious, a public fountain, the ancient church and belfry tower, and a house made remarkable by Ferrucci's murder are now its principal features. There was in those days an enormous chesnut-tree overshadowing the public square beneath whose shade the battle raged most fiercely: it has long passed away; even its traditionary existence has melted in the lapse of ages while the hearts that bled for liberty under its wide-spread arms still live and flourish in the history of their country.

Gavinana is now a mere village but most romantically situated about a mile and a half to the eastward of the modern highway from San Marcello to Pistoia and is approached by the ancient rocky path through open groves of venerable chesnuts. The town stands on a tongue of land bounded towards San Marcello by a ravine of some steepness and depth, called, from the habitual swelling of the mountain stream which runs below, the "*Rio Gonjio*;" and on two other sides by similar but not so deep-cut water-courses: it is therefore strongly placed and was capable of making a good defence except against artillery by which it could be commanded in all directions. To the right of "*Porta Piorana*" or the Pistoian Gate and south of a steep and rocky ascent to the town is a beautiful lawn called the "*Vecchetto*" shaded by old chesnut-trees precisely in the same state as it is described when Ferrucci took his stand there after driving his antagonists from the town. About half-way on the San Marcello road is a small semicircular plain or open chesnut grove called the "*Doccia*" with some slight and doubtful indications of an entrenchment said to have been

thrown up by Orsini to protect the baggage, but certainly where he was attacked and afterwards driven into Gavinana by Vitelli.

It so happened, that while Ferrucci entered Gavinana by the San Marcello gate Maramaldo had forced his way through a dry and weak part of the wall, or more probably through the Picciana gate then loosely walled up, and met his enemy in the market-place. Here was no common encounter, nor any of that pompous show and knightly skill which in those days was wont to soften and adorn the hand of war: but a stern and desperate resolution on the weaker side to overcome or die, on the stronger not to be conquered by an inferior foe. There was no room for cavalry: Ferrucci leaped from his horse, and armed with a pike fought hand to hand with the enemy: the place was confined, the numbers great, the ranks firm and compact, no space for evolutions and no wish to make them. Each chief, each soldier glared fiercely at his adversary and struck and re-struck with all the bitterness of hate; they had met before under and on the ramparts of Volterra and one had been beaten: honour was to be regained, fame to be preserved, above all, *Florence was to be saved*: and with this last duty the fiery-eyed chieftain encouraged his soldiers to victory. He knew them all; he called them all by name, he praised their prowess, and showed them by his own deeds how to make their way through the enemy. Maramaldo was scarcely prepared for such a struggle, but being supported every instant by fresh troops he held his ground, and the red bands of the empire and the white bands of Florence, those with their numbers and quality, these in quality alone, pressed so equally on each other; yielding advancing and now bending like a forest to the blast, that after long and murderous conflict there was yet no sign of victory. While this contention shook the whole town and raged under the lofty chesnut in the market-place, Ferrucci's horsemen who had occupied a position outside of the Piovano gate were fiercely attacked by the Imperialists and not only stood the shock but

supported by a body of arquebusiers charged in their turn and routed their antagonists. In the midst of this disorder the Prince of Orange arrived with his men-at-arms, and indignant at what he saw charged up the steep ascent spurring on far in front of his followers until in the narrowest part of a narrow road where the fire was concentrated he fell dead with two shots from an arquebuse and thus fulfilled his destiny.

One of these wounds was in the breast, the other behind and if not made by the same ball would seem to favour the opinion then rife and generally believed that the pope had given secret orders to Piero Colonna, amongst other worthy commissions, to despatch the Prince of Orange whose general ambition he feared but whose particular designs on Florence alarmed him more\*. Whether it were possible for two wounds in opposite directions to be simultaneously inflicted when the enemy was altogether in front none now stopped to inquire; he was instantly despoiled of his magnificent armour and cloth of silver doublet, and his body left naked on the road but covered lest the sight should alarm the soldiers. Antonio Herrera who saw him fall was panic-struck and fled with the men-at-arms to Pistoia where he spread the true report of Philibert's death, and the false one of utter defeat to the Imperialists. During these struggles in and about Gavinana Gianpagolo Orsini was fiercely assaulted in flank by Vitelli near the "*Doccia*" where gathering his baggage together he for a while fought gallantly, but broken by superior force at length dismounted and rallying his men while Vitelli's troops were busy plundering, made good his retreat to Gavinana where he found Ferrucci after having won the town, leaning on his spear for a moment's respiration.

This chief believed himself safe from any further attack, the shout of victory outside confirmed his expectation, and the hope would doubtless have been fulfilled if a strong rear-

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 217 and 225.

guard of German infantry had not arrested many fugitives and suddenly entering the town bore with fresh force on the exhausted Florentines while they rallied all their own countrymen with most of the Italian columns, and these like returning waves nearly overwhelmed Ferrucci with another bloody inundation. The conflict again became general; the narrow streets once more rang to the sound of the arquebuse, the air trembled with the shouts of struggling thousands; Ferrucci, Orsini, and all the leading chiefs formed in close ranks and hanging firmly together, everywhere repulsed the enemy: throwing themselves where most wanted they carried victory along with them; Ferrucci's lofty figure towered above the rest and his voice was heard cheering, warning, sometimes rebuking, but without any mitigation of those powerful blows which at every stroke reduced the ranks before him. Nor was he less valiantly seconded; his spirit was caught up by all his followers; not a man would yield a foot of ground until transfixed with a lance cloven with a partisan or shot down by an arquebuse. Orsini and his band of captains followed close upon Ferrucci, but movement had now become difficult, blood streamed through the streets, vast heaps of killed and wounded choked up the way, and the living were repulsed by the dead; the Florentines could not advance a step and fresh swarms of rallied fugitives were still reinforcing the enemy. Vitelli too with his forces fresh from plunder and victory had now joined in the fight; the heat was intense; the troops exhausted; scarcely an arm could be lifted; blows fell lighter and lighter; and then Orsini calmly said, "*Scignor Commissary must we not now surrender?*" "No," exclaimed Ferrucci in a thundering voice and simultaneously lowering his head and spear, rushed upon a fresh band of antagonists who were bearing down against him. One captain on seeing the danger threw himself before him as a shield but Ferrucci put him back with a harsh rebuke and all the band of captains hastened to his succour; other combatants

kept wedging in and the conflict continued with undiminished fury: the enemy were again driven from the town and Ferrucci rashly following them found himself and his diminished band nearly surrounded by the multitudes who had rallied outside: here the battle continued until the undaunted commissary, unwilling to cede yet seeing himself cut off from the place, retired with Orsini to a neighbouring house where exhausted and wounded they still defended themselves for a long while with uncompromising resolution. This could not last; the town within was taken, its brave defenders killed wounded or prisoners, some had fled and both chiefs without were badly wounded, Ferrucci almost to death; not a part of him but was pierced with pike thrusts or shots of the arquebuse; neither could now wield their arms, and both reluctantly surrendered. Ferrucci became the prize of a Spaniard who for a while concealed him, but Maramaldo had him brought into the market-place and stripped of his arms; after much abuse he brutally stabbed him with a sword or javelin and ordered his soldiers to finish the task! "*Thou killest a dead man,*" were the last words of the dying Florentine as he fell beneath the steel of his murderer\*.

Thus terminated the brief and brilliant career of Francesco di Niccolò Ferrucci, a man who by mere force of mind and character rose in a few short months from neglect and obscurity not only to the highest honours and greatest power that could ever be trusted to any citizen of any state; but during the same short period gained a military reputation on a brief and limited field, equal to what some of the ablest generals of his age and

\* Nardi, Lib. ix., pp. 376-379.—Nerli, Lib. x., p. 237.—Cambi, p. 67, tom. xxiii.—Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 207-220. Segni, Lib. iv., pp. 276-283.—Paulo Giovo, Lib. xxix., pp. 205-11.—Guicciardini, Lib. xx., cap. i., p. 12.—Ammirato, Lib. xxx., pp. 405-8.—Cambi, never very consistent, becomes extremely loose in the latter portion of his history and relates this event

with blameable inaccuracy. He was growing old, and is evidently much more occupied with religious functions and processions than historical records. Guicciardini has the low malice scarcely to notice Ferrucci's last exploit and death, in a cause which was anything but agreeable to the Florentine historian of Italy.

country had ever achieved after long and arduous apprenticeship. Nor is it less glorious to him, considering the prevailing corruption of the time (when such men as the Prince of Orange and the Count of Saint Paul absolutely gambled away the money supplied to them for the pay of their soldiers) that Francesco Ferrucci had no thought, no act, no feeling, but for his country, and he loved her with more than Roman intensity. That he was of a stern implacable character even bordering on what in common parlance would be denominated cruelty can scarcely be doubted; but if the alleged yet very uncertain and incredible act of starving the Spanish prisoners be excepted there is nothing else that may not be completely justified by the strongest public necessity, the absolute salvation of Florence. The head and front of his offending consisted in what was sure to bring down the most virulent abuse, namely a system of rigidly-exacted contributions on pain of death from those who were well able to contribute, the seizure of private jewellery and ornaments, and the sale of church plate: all for the payment of his troops from whose plundering hands he had saved the citizens of Volterra with their lives, their property, and the honour of their families. His execution of the trumpeter was the fulfilment of a hard but open warning after direct insult, and if Maramaldo again degraded the office of herald to convey a second and wanton outrage well knowing the consequence, he could scarcely marvel at the deed. Nevertheless the act was barbarous but partook of the character of the age rather than that of individual cruelty. If we consider the difficulties of the time, the state of the country, overrun and exhausted by hostile armies: the arduous task and little experience of Ferrucci, his devotion to Florence, his indefatigable activity, his indomitable resolution, his prompt and implicit obedience, his vast mental resources, his fortitude in adversity, his vigilance in prosperity, and his unconquerable power of mind over physical weakness, besides his prudence of resolve and prompt-



ness of action; the indications of a great and praiseworthy character become palpable and lead us easily to believe that had he been spared Florence would never have been conquered. With his intrepid spirit, his form and features are said to have harmonised: lofty in stature as in spirit, a pallid complexion, aquiline nose, and a red and fiery eye which awed both friends and enemies: of great personal strength and the most daring courage he was ever foremost in danger; endowed with considerable fluency of language and no small share of military eloquence, he was beloved and feared by his soldiers whom he maintained in the most rigid discipline, a thing far from common in those terrible days of military licentiousness.

Upwards of two thousand men belonging to both armies died with Ferrucci in three short hours on that most bloody day, besides vast numbers of the wounded who quickly followed\*.

On the Prince of Orange's person was found a note from Malatesta promising that the imperial camp should not be attacked in his absence; a plain proof of all Baglione's suspected treasons, if any more than his general conduct were wanted. Paulo and Francesco Corsi; the Captain Montebuoni, Alfonzo da Stipicciano and Count Carlo da Civitella all fell in this conflict: Giovanpaulo Orsini who had never quitted Ferrucci, was ransomed; Giuliano Frescobaldi died of his wounds: Amico d' Arsoli, one of those who united the most daring acts of youthful courage with manly prudence on that memorable day was bought by Marzio Colonna from his captors at the price of 600 ducats for the sole purpose of murdering him! And this he

\* The dates for this battle vary from the second to the fourth of August, but the third would seem most likely (and this date is given by Cambi, tom. xxiii., p. 66, *Del. Erud. Tos.*) if a letter from Don Ferrante Gonzaga to his brother the Duke of Mantua, dated 4th August, did not apparently contradict it by showing that the prince transacted business with Cencio the day before

*in the camp*; and this would coincide with Varchi's statement that Ferrucci left Pisa on 31st July, slept at Medicina on 1st August, and at Calameca on the 2nd. But he makes the destruction of San Marcello and the battle of Gavinana occur on the same day, which is erroneous. (Vide *Lettere al Duca di Mantova apud Varchi*, Lib. xi., p. 262.)

accomplished with his own hand, because Ascoli had killed his cousin Scipione Colonna in battle! In the same manner Maramaldo averred to Paulo Giovio that he had no personal enmity to Ferrucci but sacrificed him to the manes of the Prince of Orange, for in that barbarous age it was not uncommon amongst the Roman nobles to attend battles like markets with a view of purchasing and afterwards slaughtering their enemies! Niccolò Masi was made prisoner by his own countrymen the Stradiote cavalry and fared well: Bernardo Strozzi with a wound in the leg was purchased for 1000 florins to be killed by Mariotto Cellesse who had come from Pistoia on purpose; but his heart relented, and he took him home instead, dressed his wound, nursed him like a brother, and ultimately set him free\*. While all these events were passing in rapid succession without, others of intense interest occupied the Florentine citizens within: as every tie of hope or expectation successively snapped; as war and famine strengthened, and pestilence again began to show its fearful aspect, despair increased in Florence, but of a noble character: the long and vainly indulged desire of issuing out in mass to glorious and decisive conflict caught new vigour from the want of outward aid, and the last trial was clamorously demanded; victory or honourable death. That there was a wide-spread eagerness for battle and continued resistance is glorious to Florence because its nucleus was the love of liberty, and as it mainly originated in men of pacific habits, in merchants, traders, lawyers, and others whose welfare depended on peace, much may be attributed to that ennobling spirit. Nor can we help admiring the ancient though barbarous, but indomitable resolution of that people who by a public decree ordered nearly the whole force both of militia and regular troops to support Ferrucci whenever he appeared, with the stern command either to return victorious or die. "*Having determined,*" says the Venetian ambassador Capello, in writing to his govern-

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 221.

ment; “*that those who remained to defend the gates and ramparts, if by chance the garrison of the city were beaten, should kill all the women and children with their own hands, set fire to the houses, and then sally forth and share the others’ fate; to the end that, the city being destroyed, there should only remain the memory of her citizens’ greatness of mind; and that it might be an immortal example to those who should thereafter be born free, and wished to preserve their liberty.*” They would so act they declared that travellers passing over the plain should say “*Here was Florence.*” Why this determination was not carried into effect will soon appear\*.

As many clear and turbid streams unite in one common bason, so do the various interests of a community, however bad and selfish in themselves, often join in some generally desired act and impart to it a graver character than it may really deserve: there were many in Florence, no doubt the numerical majority, who acted from a devoted love of liberty and national independence; many whose hostile tones were sounded through mere personal but well-merited hatred to the exiled race; others, and not a few, to whom war was a fertile source of private gain who were loud in its defence, and devoutly offered up their orisons for its continuance: but a more numerous class conscious of having offended Clement in word and deed expected nothing from his vindictive heart but the most cruel persecutions, an expectation which was afterwards most amply realised. Besides all these there were numbers even of enlightened and cultivated minds who still clung literally and fondly to the rhetorical flourishes of Savonarola, which he never intended, but they mistook for prophecy. These fanatics rather rejoiced than otherwise in the failure of every mundane hope, for the Frate had bade them be of good cheer, because when every human aid had ceased the angels of heaven would descend to the protection of Florence!

\* Carlo Capello, Lettera lxxxviii., and others.

Amongst these enthusiasts were Giuliano Capponi and Girolamo Benivieni both of them men of talent and literature: this delusion was more powerfully maintained by the fervent but measured preaching of the monk Benedetto of Santa Maria Novella whose commanding figure and sonorous voice gave greater force to his eloquence: Fra Zaccheria of San Marco, also a Dominican, united in deceiving the people by an assurance of celestial aid and final victory;\* but besides these there was, as often happens in times of general calamity, a prophet amongst the people themselves who was therefore implicitly believed by them although frowned on by the preachers: this was one Pieruccio who passed for what he was not, a simpleton, but uttered his vaticinations with true oracular ambiguity. He had many believers, because multitudes when in extreme suffering, like invalids when all regular means are exhausted, run eagerly to quacks for that comfort they cannot find elsewhere, and the individual misery of the Florentines was at this moment intolerable †. Fresh meat, nearly all the salted provisions, oil, wine, and wood had failed, and roofs of houses were everywhere torn down for fuel even to supply the soldiers: the stock of corn was counted for them by days; the citizens and lower classes had long consumed theirs or had been forced to resign it to the garrison; millet seed was used for bread, some Indian corn remained, water alone was drunk, and altogether not above fifteen days' provisions remained in the town on the twenty-third of July 1530.

About this time an eagle while hovering over the imperial camp was wounded by a Spanish soldier and fell on the river side within the city: a fisherman carried it to the Captain Ridolfo d'Assisi then on guard at Porta Frediana who immediately prepared it for dinner, but the Seignory on hearing of this circumstance instantly sent for the head as they

\* Cambi, tom. xxiii<sup>o</sup>. p. 65.—Segni, Lib. iii. and iv., pp. 213 and 259.—Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 177-178.

† Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 178.

were too late for the carcase and gave the porter four golden florins for his pains: they were anxious to catch at the slightest omen in their favour that might give spirit to the citizens and this catastrophe of the imperial eagle shot by an imperial soldier was too striking for neglect. On the other hand the famed banner of "*Libertas*" was blown by a sudden gust from the palace window before which it usually hung, and carried far away to San Piero Scheraggio and its infamous purlieus called the "*Baldracca*" ere it could again be recovered: this was an evil omen, and everything told on the excited fancy and downcast spirits of the people\*.

In such a state of fearful agitation the thirst of battle augmented and a large Pratica of sixteen citizens from each quarter in addition to the usual magistrates was assembled for the sole purpose of deciding whether the gonfalonier himself should not lead the army in a general assault: it was resolved in the affirmative and the noble office of leading his countrymen to death or glorious victory was most joyfully accepted by Girolami †. This strongly-expressed resolution perplexed Malatesta because he had counted on the accumulating misfortunes of Florence for throwing the fate of that city entirely into his hands, and by thus becoming the mediator between the pope and citizens apparently confer an obligation on both. The result of this Pratica therefore disconcerted him; the gonfalonier determined to second Ferrucci's movements by a simultaneous attack with all the garrison, leaving Florence in charge of the old men and rural militia alone while he led the urban guard against the enemy. The traitor Malatesta had no longer anything to expect from a falling state but

\* Gio. Cambi, p. 64, tom. xxiii.—Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 174-5.

† The spokesmen's names who reported the opinion of their constituents on this occasion were, Piero da Filicaia, Francesco Nelli, Lorenzo Ridolfi, Paulo Bartoli, Bono Boni, Aless<sup>o</sup>. Malegonello, Marco degli Asini, all Doctors of Laws, Tommaso Soderini,

Francesco Carducci, Pierfrancesco Portinari, Girol<sup>o</sup>. Morelli, Domenico Borghini, Bernardo da Castiglione, Giovanni Spini, Antonfrancesco Davanzati, Giovanbatista Cei, Lionardo Dati, Lionardo Morelli, Luigi de' Pazzi, Luigi Cappelli, Piero Migliorotti, Fran<sup>o</sup>. Serragli, Raffaello Lapaccini, and Bartolommeo Amadori.

much to lose by opposition to an angry pontiff his liege lord, and one from whom through the Prince of Orange he had assurances of being left unmolested in Perugia, besides the expectation of other favours. Eager to betray for his personal advantage and being a cruel tyrant himself he was incapable of feeling any sympathy with a free people, but unwilling to bear the name of traitor (such is the homage of vice to virtue) he endeavoured with more refined duplicity to accomplish his purposes.

By means of a follower called Cencio, who from the distortion of an eye, was nicknamed "*Guercio*" and intimate with Pirro Colonna a lately reconciled enemy and now confidant of Clement; he commenced an intrigue with the prince whom he entreated to send an envoy that night to speak before the Great Council such things as Malatesta himself should dictate. The prince believing this to be a device of the Florentines prompted by despair, agreed to comply on condition that the basis of any negotiation should be the restoration of the Medici in all their former dignity. This reply disconcerted Malatesta still more, because he could neither promise such terms nor advise the citizens to do so without discovering his own duplicity; he therefore requested that Don Ferrante Gonzago might be deputed to threaten Florence with fire and sword unless they immediately capitulated, besides other things which Malatesta was to inform him of. To arrange this, Pirro Colonna remained two days secretly in Florence, but as Orange persisted in his demands for the Medici negotiations were abruptly terminated. The prince believing that Baglione acted all along by authority imagined that some unexpected promises from France had caused this breach, and having gambled away the whole military chest began to be alarmed for the consequences. Clement in the meanwhile had secret information of all and was not displeased, because a capitulation would save Florence for his own private spoliation and at the same time bridle the Prince of Orange whose ambitious notions alarmed him. This

intrigue occupied half July: on the twenty-fifth Malatesta renewed it and had an interview with Philibert outside the Porta Romana where, as it was subsequently believed, he advised him to proceed against Ferrucci and gave him the note of promise already mentioned as having been found on his person. But as what really past at this meeting was unknown, the above conjectures and several others, though probable, must only pass for their apparent value; yet it is confidently asserted by Varchi that on the second of August "*Il Guercio*" was sent to entreat that Gonzaga might be empowered to offer terms to the Great Council and that although Malatesta could not promise the restitution of the Medici he would engage to quit Florence with his five thousand followers if that condition were refused. Francesco Valori was instantly despatched to Rome with this intelligence while a safe conduct was demanded for Gonzaga from the Seignory. The government immediately sent Bernardo da Castiglione to learn from Orange the nature of Gonzaga's instructions who on discovering their basis, at once replied "Let us talk of something else, for the Florentines are ready to concede anything but that, to the emperor." Thus terminated the conference much to Philibert's surprise who still believed Malatesta to be acting with the consent of his masters, but being now undeceived he at once marched against Ferrucci. Some days ere this the Seignory had indicated to Malatesta their intention of making one great effort and in his own and Colonna's name, for the latter now sided with him in everything, he professed his readiness to obey, caring little about public affairs which he saw reduced to such a condition as must necessarily have at last concentrated all power and credit in Francesco Ferrucci of whom he had become jealous. Francis I. too had recovered his children, and therefore had no longer any motives for embarrassing the emperor by exciting Florence to resistance; on the contrary, from the conclusion of the treaty of Cambray the Bishop of Tarbes

and the French ambassador at Florence used their utmost endeavours to make the Florentines cede to Clement \*; wherefore Colonna was content to remain quietly in his outwork, give his countenance to Malatesta, and let events take their course. The latter to gain time had demanded many things which he declared were necessary to put the troops in just condition for the projected enterprise: these being all promptly furnished, a large assembly of citizens was summoned including the two generals and all the inferior chiefs, and the gonfalonier in a spirited and at the same time pathetic speech encouraged them to make one bold and determined effort without which all that they had already done or suffered would be fruitless. "Will you," said he, "be content to see the Arno and Florence streaming with the blood of your citizens? Will you be content to hear the screams and shrieks of men and women rise higher than the heavens? Will you see your temples consumed, your churches in flames, your houses destroyed, your palaces ruined, your shops plundered, your sacred virgins violated, your daughters outraged, your matrons forced, your widows corrupted; and, what I cannot contemplate without horror nor utter without tears; your sons dishonoured and slaughtered at the same moment!" The whole assembly was moved;—even Malatesta and Colonna could not resist the general enthusiasm;—and with one voice declared themselves ready to confront the enemy, to conquer with honour or die without disgrace!

Next morning there was a general muster of the forces, which including militia amounted to sixteen thousand fighting men; but the whole population besides were more or less armed. On the twenty-ninth of July the gonfalonier assembled and again harangued the Great Council; he informed them of Francesco Ferrucci's progress and expected arrival to their rescue; this he said was the moment for action, and although they had against them

\* *Vide* Carlo Capello's Letters, especially Letter lii.



an earthly pope and emperor they still had the King of Heaven in their favour; and if mercenary soldiers would affront death a thousand times a day for not more than three florins a month, what ought not they to do for friends parents wives children and kinsfolk, or rather for their own salvation? Wherefore he conjured them for their body's sake to arm themselves well, and for their soul's sake to confess and communicate and then gallantly advance against the enemy. A solemn, public, and universal celebration of the Lord's Supper was held in the cathedral on the last day of July; a penitential procession succeeded; the first of August, usually a day of peculiar festivity, was spent in cheerful and earnest preparations for battle; arms of every kind were distributed to all that were able or willing to use them, and the whole population was conjured to be prompt, peaceful, and orderly\*.

It was expected that the next morning would see them either engaged with the enemy or in full march to give their hand to Ferrucci; but Malatesta had never ceased blaming their energy and indomitable resolution and was in despite of his solemn and public professions unmeasured in abuse of these "*traders and shopkeepers*," as he habitually called the Florentines. The Seignory affecting ignorance of all this sent a deputation to entreat that no more delay might be made in conducting them against the enemy, if it were only to cause a diversion in favour of Ferrucci, and that the gonfalonier and all would follow wherever Malatesta would lead. Thus pressed and perplexed between these spirited solicitations, his promises to Clement and intrigues with Orange, he determined to gain time by a written answer sent on the second of August, the very day of his secret interview with that general. This was a strong remonstrance urged by him and Stefano Colonna against the desperation of such an act, which they absolutely refused to put in execution, but they declared their prompt obedience to the Seignory's

\* Carlo Capello, Lettera lxxxix.

other commands. It was pure mockery, and the people felt it to be so; whereupon a stronger remonstrance and more spirited resolution passed the councils, declaring their determination to fight come what would, and never to swerve from it while a good spirit and hope of victory remained. Malatesta still more embarrassed repeated his stratagem and again in concert with Colonna made a second protest in which they assumed the tone and authority of masters, instead of servants of the commonwealth. This insolent paper was dated the third of August and while it shook the whole city with indignation intelligence arrived of the Prince of Orange having marched the night before with a large force against Ferrucci: the circumstance was instantly seized on to make a calm but energetic appeal to Malatesta on the importance of taking so favourable a moment for the attack, but he parried the question by stoutly denying that any considerable force had been withdrawn yet still amusing them with professions and busy preparations for a sally: he mustered and stationed the troops, gave the officers their instructions, distributed ammunition, encouraged the men, reconnoitred the enemy's position, and thus sedulously wasted time until night relieved him from further embarrassment. But scarcely had it set in when his Corsicans and Perugians were seen packing up their baggage, dismissing the few Florentines that served with them and showing every symptom of a projected retreat or an intention of attacking the town. This kept the urban guard under arms and vigilant the whole night: next morning saw the same empty bustling recommenced by Malatesta to gain more time and escape from the importunities of commissaries and captains: he was moreover already disturbed by the rumour of Orange's death and Ferrucci's supposed victory, which besides other considerations was probably the true reason of these measures, knowing as he did that one great object of the Florentines in recalling their commissary was to curb his own insolence. But on this

day the sad reality became known and elevated Baglione as much as it depressed the people. The defeat of Ferrucci had been falsely attributed to a violent rain which prevented his soldiers using a fierce and powerful firework fixed at the end of their pikes and adopted with great effect in repulsing men and horses; but the simple reason was his having been overwhelmed by numbers. The gonfalonier however cheered up his fellow-citizens and showed them that the same rain which had destroyed that chief gave them more chance of victory by swelling the Arno's water so high as to cut off all communication between the imperial armies. This sad news emboldened the Palleschi, who had recovered spirit and had been actively though covertly at work since the loss of Empoli, now to show themselves more openly, and Malatesta with increased audacity and less deception impudently declared to the Seignory that the game was up, all hope of victory vanished, and they had now only to put away their obstinacy, think no more of resistance and save Florence from plunder by instant capitulation. The Pratica had already despatched Donato Giannotti to persuade Stefano Colonna if possible to lead the people out against the enemy; but he was already in obstinate conjunction with Malatesta and from whatever cause was now equally false to the Florentines\*.

Although the consternation was general the Piagnoni, who compared Ferrucci to Gideon, still clung fondly to the angelic legions, the "armed cherubim and sworded seraphim" that were to save the city, so that new fears and augmented danger only made fanaticism more obstinate, and the government was still firm, consistent, and undaunted: a decree was instantly passed giving the seventy-two captains of regular troops their present pay for life, in peace as in war and even if serving other powers not enemies of Florence †. This increased the

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 175-206, and 224.

† Carlo Capello, Let., Lettera xc.

ardour and fidelity of the soldiers but it came too late; the die was already cast and Florence doomed to everlasting slavery! The conduct of Zanobi Bartolini Salembeni, once so patriotic, had completely changed: probably foreseeing the futility of resistance and the hopelessness of success, he determined to save himself and his native city from devastation: it was a mixed spirit! but from whatever cause he, although one of the four\* commissaries, had now become the counsellor of Malatesta! Tommaso Soderini though compelled by fear to run the hazard of his countrymen had shown himself too timid for the crisis and winked at his colleague's treason, and Antonio Giugni was bewildered by the force and rapidity of events. All this was dangerous, wherefore a decree of the Pratica at once dissolved the Board and reappointed Andreuolo Niccolini, the only trustworthy man amongst them, with Luigi Soderini, Francesco Zati, and Francesco Carducci as his colleagues. Stupified at this vigorous act and seeing the determination of the citizens towards battle Malatesta despatched his agent Cencio along with Colonna's secretary to Gonzaga, now General of the Imperialists, who on hearing their mission immediately drew up a treaty by which notwithstanding the Medici's return Florence was to remain free, and the final reorganization of that state be left to Charles the Fifth's decision within the space of four months; but nothing was to be concluded without Clement's approbation. Cencio was then sent with Malatesta's urgent advice to the Seignory to have no hesitation in accepting the proposed terms as he himself would guarantee the preservation of their liberty. The insolence of this man had nearly overcome their patience, but assembling a new Council the former warlike resolution was unanimously approved and confirmed, whereupon a message was despatched from them both to command Malatesta as lords, and to entreat him as citizens, for his own honour and

\* The commissaries general seem to have been augmented to four; but like many other changes in Florentine institutions, we only become cognizant of them by some sudden indication of the fact without other notice.

their salvation to lead the people out to battle, for which all were eager and everything prepared. But Baglione was now too powerful; many of the leading citizens openly adhered to him; multitudes had voluntarily sought refuge in his quarters; some throwing themselves, others the city on his protection: he publicly asserted, as if he were the master instead of the hired servant of the commonwealth, that he had come to defend, not to destroy Florence; but since the perverseness of the citizens would not allow him to do so, and in order not to become personally concerned in the desolation of so noble, rich, and by him so much beloved a city, he would demand his dismissal, after having first delivered his sentiments conjointly with those of Colonna in the most free and open manner to the government. The result of this determination was a third protest more insolent and arrogant than either of the former and which filled the Seignory with indignation\*: a Pratica was summoned and a resolution at once passed that he should instantly have the dismissal he so hypocritically demanded, but which he neither expected nor wished. They were also moved by the earnest hope that Malatesta's discharge would break up the stream of malcontents which was hourly setting towards him and now augmented by several of the popolani themselves; besides rendering the remaining troops still more steady and faithful especially since their late oath of allegiance to the commonwealth.

Andreuolo Niccolini and Francesco Zati were accordingly despatched in state to Malatesta with the answer of the government, which, says Varchi, "*was full of lies and flattery.*" But Malatesta already aware of its purport scarcely suffered Niccolini to open his lips ere he started up, stabbed him in the neck and would have despatched him outright had his strength been sufficient. Niccolini was hurried away bleeding,

\* There were in all four written protests, three of which are given by Varchi. (Vide *Capello, Lettera xc.*)

while Francesco Zati overcome by terror and forgetting both his own rank and the state's dignity threw himself at Malatesta's feet and begged abjectly for life. Baglione contemptuously answered "*I want not to harm thee, but that villain Carducci.*" But Carducci who from the first had been in continual jars with Malatesta, although he never contemplated such an outrage had prudently declined the commission\*. Malatesta continued storming so furiously that none dared speak to him, his house was in confusion and his followers taking advantage of it plundered the state mace bearers (a sort of lictors who attended the commissaries, Seignory, and other high functionaries) of their silver maces, and Niccolini of his mule and cloak. He himself was carried away and attended by Alamanno de' Pazzi and other young Florentines then present with Malatesta whose party had fearfully increased: his rage was unbounded, he declared that "Florence was no mule-stall and he would save her at all risks in despite of the traitors by whose obstinate rashness she was on the brink of ruin." In all this he was now hourly seconded by successive troops of the timid, the tired, the cowardly, the weak, the rich, the luxurious and disaffected, especially the old Capponi faction; so that by some writers it is asserted that three-fourths of the people were in favour of an ignominious peace †.

Rage and indignation possessed the government at this outrage, the gonfalonier ordered all the urban guard under arms and determined to punish Malatesta at every risk; but so extensive was the disaffection that of this hitherto staunch and devoted militia only one half answered to the call! yet these were still true and pushed forward with their wonted ardour to revenge the insulted state and drive the false Perugian out of Florence. But Malatesta was too wily, and far too experienced

\* Nerli, Lib. x., p. 240.—Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 226-237.

† Filip<sup>o</sup>. Nerli, Lib. x., p. 237.

a soldier to be thus caught; he knew his position and had secured it: expecting this out-burst he had already admitted Pirro Colonna and all his column within the works, had broken down the Roman gate, turned the artillery of his quarter against the town, dismissed the Florentine guard, and threatened to admit the whole imperial army if the militia advanced a single step against him. He had moreover secured for himself and followers a safe passage through the hostile camp on condition that free entry were left for the Imperialists who were all under arms at San Gaggio awaiting the catastrophe. He was evidently master: Florence fell into confusion, her own sons had for the most part forsaken her; her gallant bands were disbanded; men and women, small and great were terror-struck; neither soldier nor citizen knew what to do or say; people wandered about they knew not whither; some cursed the pontiff's cruelty, some invoked maledictions on the arch-traitor's head, some attempted to fly, some to hide themselves, some sought refuge in the palace, others in the churches, many of stouter heart cried aloud for battle; the more timid for capitulation; but the greater number seeing everything lost, quietly resigned themselves to Heaven's mercy and looked every moment to behold the city red with blood, their wives, sons, and daughters butchered and dishonoured, and the arm of death raised high over their cherished and once glorious country. Nothing, says Varchi, can be conceived equal to the despair and confusion of this unhappy moment when nought was expected but fire, sword, and devastation; and yet immense numbers were even then ready rather to lose their life in battle than their liberty in capitulation\*.

In this chaos the gonfalonier Seignory and councils foreseeing the inevitable consequences, after their long and glorious struggle resolved on surrender sooner than expose the wretched inhabitants to a storm. It was therefore determined to treat,

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 237-240.

but on the basis of untouched liberty and a complete amnesty for Florentines and foreigners of every nation who had taken part in the cause; that Don Ferrante Gonzaga should declare himself a guarantee for the fulfilment of all conditions; publicly in the pope's and the emperor's name, but also privately in his own person. As a preliminary step the command was restored to Malatesta and the office of commissary to Zanobi Bartolini: his return to the palace was however attended with some tumult by the "Ostinati" who were averse to any concessions, and the captain of the Gascon infantry boldly offered to attack and drive Malatesta from the city. These troops and Dante da Castiglione's company of urban militia guarded the palace that night, but in the face of every repeated oath about four hundred young men of the highest rank, amongst whom were the sons and sons-in-law of Niccolo Capponi, assembled next morning in arms at Santo Spirito determined to support Malatesta, or if necessary receive his support in that position; for everything was now unsteady uncertain and vacillating\*!

All these saw the impending ruin and fled like vermin from the falling edifice: they could save their goods, their persons, perhaps their life by doing so, and in the absence of liberty these were precious consolation, but they weakened their country by division at the very instant when union would have supported a loftier tone in their negotiations if it did not even elicit more favourable conditions. The Seignory attempted in vain to recall them to a sense of honour, religion, duty; but Malatesta and the Pulleschi, and all who cared more about living

\* Their leaders were, Alamanno de' Pazzi, Piero Capponi, Morticino degli Antinori, Piero and Filippo di Niccolo Capponi, Alessandro di Giuliano Capponi, Daniello degli Alberti, Giannazzo de' Nerli, Giovi. Lanfredini, Lionardo Ginori, Piero Vettori, Baccio Cavalcanti, Lorenzo Benvenuti - Francesco Guidetti, Filippo del Migliore, Pierfilippo Pandolfini, Bartolommeo

Bettini, Il Bravo da Somniaia, and Capacchio Niccolini. Amongst them were some old and middle-aged citizens, such as Giuliano and Lodovico Capponi, Giovanfrancesco and Lionardo Ridolfi, Lorenzo Segni and Mainardo Cavalcante, besides many others particularly of Capponi's and the neutral party.



comfortably than living free rejoiced in this schism as much as the real patriots deplored it. And "who is there," observes Varchi in his own quaint style, "who is there, wishing not to deceive themselves or others that will not believe how few indeed are they that prefer liberty to life, or honesty to profit." Bernardo da Verrazzano the commissary of militia for Santo Spirito was deputed to them but after unmeasured abuse narrowly escaped from the levelled arquebuse of Morticino degli Antinori; Rosso Buondelmonti the commissary for Santa Maria Novella had no better fortune, and just as insolent a reception; they even renounced all allegiance to government and basely declared that they owned no lord but Malatesta. Rosso instantly proceeded to Baglione's quarters and entreated him in the name of the Seignory to remove these young mutineers from Santo Spirito; but he peremptorily refused, declaring in return that he acknowledged no other Seignory but them. Things had now come to a crisis; Cencio was again in the imperial camp, and soon after Baccio Valori was in close conference with Malatesta at Casa Bini within the walls. There it was decided that as the Seignory could no longer command they must of necessity obey, and in this state of universal terror and revolt Bardo Altoviti, Jacopo Morelli, Jacopo Gianfigliuzzi and Lorenzo Strozzi were selected by government as ambassadors to arrange the terms of capitulation, while Baccio Cavalcanti was despatched to Rome on the business of reforming the state. On the ninth of August this embassy repaired to the camp, but while absent the armed malcontents from Santo Spirito crossed the Arno under Alamanno de' Pazzi and threatening Dante da Castiglione's diminished guard of "Ostinati" at the palace, for he himself had escaped, forced them though unwillingly to disperse after nearly approaching to a battle, and then compelled the Seignory to release all the confined Palleschi. The latter instantly repaired to Malatesta with strong expressions of gratitude for their liberation, every act of authority now passing in his name alone.

The ambassadors returned in the evening with the articles of capitulation which were approved on the eleventh, and completed on the twelfth of August 1530. By these it was stipulated that, "*Still preserving public liberty*" the emperor was to regulate the form of Florentine government within four months: that all exiles of the Medician party were to be recalled, all prisoners liberated: that the city should pay 80,000 florins within six months: that within two days fifty hostages should be selected by Don Ferrante Gonzaga and delivered into his hands until all conditions were fulfilled; and that all the remaining cities and fortresses should be surrendered to the forthcoming government. That Malatesta and Colonna should renounce their allegiance to the Seignory and become the emperor's soldiers for such a time and with such a force as should be deemed necessary to the fulfilment of the articles, and afterwards quit the city at the imperial command. That any citizen might remove freely and unmolested from Florence to Rome or other places: that all the towns captured by the Imperialists were to be returned to the city of Florence. That the pope, his relations, friends, and servants were to forgive and forget all injuries and live as brothers with their fellow-citizens, and that his holiness ("*as he always had done*") would show affection clemency and compassion for his country and countrymen; and also to secure this and all the other conditions the pope and emperor bound themselves by promise, as did also Don Ferrante Gonzaga in his own name, that they should receive the imperial signature within two months. Baccio Valori individually made a similar promise on Clement's part; all the papal and imperial subjects who had fought for Florence were pardoned, and thus ended the melancholy drama!

In this last scene a bruised yet still confiding people trusted to the honour and solemn promises of a deceitful priest and a nefarious sovereign, both of whom most unscrupulously trampled on every obstacle to their own selfish desires. Baccio

Valori and all his train of faithless emigrants then took up their residence in Florence while a famished population rushed madly to the imperial camp and cleared it of provisions: Valori occupied the public palace with a strong guard of Corsicans and in defiance of all agreements almost immediately assembled a parliament. Hardly three hundred citizens were to be seen; some more audacious than the rest would have given a free vote but were repulsed by the lance and the partisan; and Salvestro Aldobrandini addressing this miserable assembly almost in mockery as "*the Florentine people,*" asked if they were willing to depute their power to a Balia of twelve citizens for the state's reformation? This was repeated three times and finally answered by a few sickly cries of "*Yes, yes,*" "*The Balls, the Balls,*" "*The Medici, the Medici.*" After this solemn farce a Balia was named, the republican magistracy was dissolved in all its branches; the citizens disarmed, and at the end of four hundred and thirty years of uncertain and fitful, but altogether glorious existence, Florentine liberty was crushed for ever\*!

In this siege the Imperialists lost fourteen thousand men and two hundred captains; the besieged eight thousand including eighty captains, without reckoning non-combatants of the lower classes or the peasantry of both sexes who between Florence and its territory died in countless multitudes. Men and women, old and young, within and without the walls, were mingled together in one promiscuous ruin, a ruin unmitigated by any touch of humanity from their fierce and barbarous enemies! Besides what was destroyed by the Florentines themselves, immediately round the capital and the enormous sums squeezed from them by stringent taxation, forced loans, and public though necessary extortion; there was hardly excepting Pisa and Leghorn; a city, castle, town, hamlet, or village which was not sacked and often several times plundered or cruelly devastated;

\* Varchi, Lib. xi., p. 256.

and not a single palace, nay scarcely a house remained with doors or windows; even the very iron rings and wall-hooks were wrenched away and carried off by friends or enemies: and all this to satiate the vengeance of a coped and crowned miscreant of the house of Medici\*! Any eye that has once seen, any heart that has ever felt the native beauties of Florence; her gorgeous temples; her frowning mansions; her time-worn battlements; her busy suburbs again stretching their snowy arms along the plain: the plain itself, wide-spreading and sparkling with innumerable villas, with frequent palaces, churches and convents; with hamlets, villages, and far-distant towns; a garden rich in corn, in olives and in wine, and bounded by its many-coloured hills, all equally embellished by the hand of taste, industry, and refinement. He who has once seen this may conceive what a glorious prize presented itself to the gaze of those rapacious hordes who under the name of soldiers once ravaged and defaced it! And how sad the contrast when departing Freedom cast a lingering glance over this scene of desolation and sighed to think that all was vainly suffered in her cause! But Liberty had ever been adored and abused by the Florentines! They worshipped her as a veiled goddess! They knew not her real worth; they were blind to her charms: she was never courted for her own simple beauty, never duly appreciated; wherefore Florence never became her permanent abode. She left it to the inevitable Medici!

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COTEMPORARY MONARCHS.—Unchanged.

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\* Lettere da Don Ferr<sup>o</sup>. Gonzaga al Duca di Mantova, apud Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 262-267. — Cambi, pp. 68-75, tom. xxiii. — Nerli, Lib. viii., pp. 237-243. — Nardi, Lib. ix., pp. 379-384. — Varchi, Lib. xi., pp. 240-256. — Segni, Libri iv and v., from pp. 259-294. — Paulo Giovio, Lib. xxix., pp. 211-222. — Ammirato, Lib. xxx., pp. 407-412. — Guicciardini, Lib. xx., cap. i<sup>o</sup>, pp. 13-14.

## CHAPTER XV.

FROM AUGUST 1530 TO MAY 1532.

THAT Malatesta Baglione was false from his first connexion with Florence and that he practised a deep and subtile duplicity throughout the siege can scarcely be doubted: he was A.D. 1530. fearful of losing Perugia and therefore wished to propitiate Clement; but the supreme military command of Florence which he aimed at and finally obtained was too beneficial to forego, wherefore Baglione resolved to steer his course so artfully that while he became a principal instrument in the subjugation of Florence and thus perform the most important service that could possibly be done for Clement, he should still appear to be the friend and benefactor of the Florentines and so reap the fruits of treachery without incurring its odium.

But Malatesta was not prepared for so deep and stern a feeling or so noble and devoted a resolution in the "*Tradesmen*" he so affected to despise; and when he could no longer abuse their confidence, though still retaining the mask of friendship, he unblushingly declared his intentions because supported nay almost justified in his conduct by a vast body of discontented citizens who despairing of the commonwealth coalesced with its destroyer. It was the general's duty after proper remonstrance to obey the Signory or resign his command: he did neither; but on the contrary, while professing obedience assumed the authority of dictator. Yet from this conduct it would perhaps be wrong to infer that his objec-

tions to a general engagement, considered as purely military, were either false or futile, but their cogency assisted his treachery.

When Philibert had so greatly weakened his own camp by withdrawing all the men-at-arms, all the light cavalry, and a large force of German infantry to meet Ferrucci; and when the swollen Arno, as if seconding the gallant spirit of its sons, placed a watery barrier between the divided hosts of their enemy; then it would plainly seem that even good military reasons were wanting to justify Malatesta's conduct. His faith such as it was, he had in fact pledged to the Prince of Orange, and the billet which "*Il Zinzi*," a Pistoian gentleman saw taken from the latter's breast was probably thus carried about his person as the justification of so bold a step if death should prevent him from vindicating his own military reputation: but so little idea had Ferrucci of the prince being able to quit his lines with such a force that he at first would give no credit to the tale, and when convinced, the deep treachery of Malatesta flashed instantly across his mind and made him despair of the enterprise.

Both before and after this occasion it is probable that with reference to the strong position numbers and experience of the Imperialists, their close and entire command of the whole southern line of gates and ramparts, the easy passage of the river and consequent certainty of a flank or rear attack by the northern division while the Florentines were engaged on the southern bank; that the military objections urged by Baglione and Colonna, besides other experienced officers, were sound and wholesome; still the people were eager to try that ultimate chance of salvation and he was their servant; he should have resigned or obeyed and he made a show of both while busy rivetting the fetters of the citizens. By barricading the bridges and turning his guns on the town he commanded all beyond the Arno, justifying this conduct by his desire of saving Florence despite of herself.

and with the open support of the malcontents this enabled him to cast away disguise and deliver the city in chains to her tyrant. If Malatesta had only been true there is little doubt that Florence would have baffled the enemy; Ferrucci would probably have succeeded, and victory crowned her arms; and this might have roused up Venice, Lombardy, nay all Italy against Charles and secured existing liberty: but it would be too much to say that in the face of such a power Florence could have long maintained her freedom unless France again appeared with sincerity and vigour in the field\*.

The entire reason of Colonna's mutability is still unexplained: much of it was believed to arise from his discomposure at not having the chief command thrust upon him instead of Baglione; much from his growing jealousy of Ferrucci's fame whom he foresaw would occupy the highest place and shine with the greatest glory if successful: yet Colonna appears to have kept personally free from actual treachery and actively coalesced with Malatesta only in what as an officer he could safely assert; namely that as a dry military operation the Florentines' scheme of a general battle was preposterous. Between the two and to their eternal shame Florence was sacrificed, her liberties destroyed, her citizens exiled tortured and murdered, and her name blotted from the list of independent nations †. Both Clement and Florence were exhausted by war and the terms of peace were perhaps more moderate than might have been expected, certainly more than would have been granted by an angry and vindictive priest had he been himself on the spot to dictate them: but as they were never meant to be observed

\* Donato Giannotti, Lib. ii°, p. 89.

† When Matteo Dandolo was asked at Venice if Malatesta had played false to Florence, he replied aloud in the council of the Pregati, "*He has sold that city and that people, and the blood of those poor citizens, ounce by ounce, and crowned himself the King*

*of Traitors.*" If there were no other proof, his demands on Clement VII. for rewards which excited the indignation of that pontiff would be sufficient. (Vide *Varchi*, Lib. xi., pp. 254-259.) But Dandolo's observation would have applied also to the conduct of the Venetians themselves towards Florence.

further than suited his own objects Clement VII. had no difficulty in signing anything that came before him \*. The republic however fell decently, wrapped in the garb of freedom: her knell was tolled by the great bell which mournfully summoned her last parliament and then was broken: her last Seignory descended to the Ringhiera before the venerable palace of all her glory and all her crime; they called for the last time in bitter mockery, on the sovereignty of the people for the shadow of that power whose substance was departed; and then disdainfully returned to prove the difference between elastic liberty and leaden despotism †. Nor was Florence alone: by the coronation of Charles V. monarchy was spread far and wide over the Italian peninsula; a few individuals were exalted for their crimes and treachery, others allowed to vegetate, but the Italic spirit was broken, and though a few fragments occasionally glittered and still glitter amidst the general pollution, the rich and beautiful Italy has ever since remained a powerless mass, an interesting ruin, the shadow of something that *has been* in the history of the world!

Florence in particular exhibits a melancholy picture during her early moments of slavery, for as at the death of a dear friend we are at first so stunned as not to feel the full measure of our misery, in like manner was she struck down by the death of her dear-bought liberty. She soon awakened to the truth. We can scarcely describe or even imagine, says Varchi, the sadness, the terror, the universal confusion that pervaded Florence on the loss of her freedom! The arrogant victors frowned on and reviled the vanquished; the vanquished, now timid and appalled, cursed Baglione in silence but doubtful of consequences dared not even to lift their eyes against their adversaries: the young citizens now become conscious of their error and perceiving no remedy, remained sullen and dissatis-

\* Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 287.

† Ibid., Lib. xi., p. 256; Lib. xii., p. 298.



fied : the old, seeing both life and property in peril, and repenting too late of their maddening discord, were still more moody : the nobles became vexed and angry to find themselves scoffed and pointed at by the plebeians : the plebeians under excessive suffering consoled themselves by abusing the nobles : the rich were in deep and anxious thought about the means of saving their fortunes : the poor day and night intent on the mode of preserving themselves one and all from positive starvation : the citizens in general, now that the more generous spirit which before sustained them had departed, were depressed and in despair at the extent of their losses : the rural population infinitely more so, because nothing whatever remained to them : the religious orders felt shame at having deceived the laymen : the laymen lamented their having given attention to the priests : men were become extravagantly suspicious and circumspect : women beyond measure incredulous and mistrustful : each individual, in short, with downcast looks and fearful eyes appeared as if he were beside himself, and all universally pallid and discouraged, were in constant terror of every evil ; but not without great and fearful occasion \* ! The Balia † governed Florence for some months in its own name and according to ancient forms of Medician rule apparently without Clement's interference ; but there was no transaction small or great that he did not direct ; surrounding Florence with a belt of fire he drove her, scorpion-like, to destroy herself. The first act of the new government was to restore the house of Medici to all its former powers and privileges ; the next a restitution of the gonfaloniership and Seignory to their ancient form of bimensal election, Girolami being not only continued in office

\* Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 269.

† The Balia was composed of the gonfalonier (now deposed) Raffaello Girolami, Luigi della Stuffa, Ormannozzo Deti, Matteo Niccolini, Antonio Gualterotti, Filippo Macchiavelli, Lio-

nardo Ridolfi, Andrea Minerbetti, Ottaviano de' Medici, Zanobi Bartolini Salimbeni, Niccolo del Troscia, and lastly, the Pope's commissary and minion, the depository of all his secrets, Baccio Valori.

until the end of August but elected as one of the *Balia*, a filleted and crowned victim for future sacrifice! The Decemvirate of Peace and Liberty was abolished and the "Otto di Pratica" soon after restored: all other leading magistracies were changed or altogether ceased: forced loans severe taxation, peremptory extortions by the domiciliary visitors of a board expressly created for that purpose, and all unfairly exacted by exempting the *Palleschi*, showed plainly that former injuries were not to be cancelled by any lettered parchment however broadly sealed or religiously authenticated. And if no blood had flowed, if no exiles had followed, this retaliation might have been pardoned; but the High Priest of Christianity thirsted after blood\*!

The city was still closely beleaguered, all supplies were stopped because the Spanish troops in particular, hoped thus to increase internal discord and pecuniary difficulties, and being under no control afford themselves an excuse for plundering Florence †. Sixty-four hostages were placed in the Imperialists' power at various times all of whom might have escaped had not anxiety to save their property made them put confidence in the articles of capitulation. Money however came forth so copiously as to astonish even the Florentines and occasion a remark that if half the sum had been earlier produced they might still have preserved their liberty ‡. The citizens were all disarmed and against every agreement forbidden to quit the town: on the first of September most of the Germans were paid and departed; on the sixth the Spaniards followed, but after a furious battle with the Italian troops which probably saved Florence from sack and was

\* *Ammirato*, Lib. xxxi., p. 413.—*Varchi*, Lib. xii., pp. 270-1.

† *Ibid.*, p. 271.—*Malatesta's Letter to Clement VII.*, p. 281, *apud Varchi*, Lib. xii.—*Nerli*, Lib. xi., p. 246.

‡ There must of course have been a great deal of money, as there had been

great gains in the city, because almost all the money including the soldiers' pay, or at least a great proportion of what had been raised was spent within the walls or returned into the purses of the citizens. (*Vide Carlo Capello, Lettera lxxxii.*)

believed to be expressly fomented by Clement for that purpose\*. On the tenth Malatesta was peremptorily ordered away by the pope, Colonna having departed long before, and Lodovico de Lodrone with the German garrison of San Donato, the most humane and best of the Imperialists, took the military command of Florence.

The persecutions now began : Benedetto da Foiano had been already seized and sent captive to Rome by Malatesta in order to propitiate Clement VII. by the sacrifice of a bitter enemy, a man of great learning and ability, who had preached zealously and eloquently against him. Nothing could have been more satisfactory to that cruel pontiff : Benedetto was imprisoned in the Castle of Saint Angelo of which the Bishop of Cività, also a Medici, was governor ; but he, more compassionate than his race, endeavoured not only to soften the monk's confinement but to mitigate the pontiff's anger : all in vain ! Month by month and week by week his food, his necessaries, and means of cleanliness were gradually and at length daily diminished by Clement's order, until he expired in all the agonies of hunger, thirst, filth, disease and general misery ! Nor did his pious offer of confuting Luther's heresy out of the Holy Scriptures alone, avail him against the deadly vengeance of the priestly Medici †.

The Fra Zaccheria escaped in the disguise of a peasant ; Dante da Castiglione in that of a priest by the assistance of Stefano Colonna who would not suffer a man that had so bravely perilled his life in the cause of Florence to die by her executioner. His brother Cericio ; Bogia del Bene ; Giovacchino Guasconi, and Cardinal Rucellai all were equally fortunate ; but torture applied in more than full measure and by Clement's order to the most conspicuous members of the late government prepared the way for the axe and the block. The able and

\* Nerli, Lib. xi., p. 247.—Varchi, Lib. xii., pp. 277-279.

† Ammirato, Lib. xxxi., p. 416.—Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 275.

determined Carducci, the bold and intrepid Bernardo uncle of Dante, da Castiglione; the fierce and zealous Gherardi, Luigi Soderini, Giovanbatista Cei and Pier Averardo Giachinotti, all fell sacrifices to Clement's personal vengeance and the private hatred of his minions. Nerli attempts to justify these bloody executions on the score of unconstitutional and illegal acts while in power; but independent of the uncertainty of their having committed some of them they were all executive acts of a supreme government responsible to no power on earth but that of the Great Council; and moreover no exceptions appeared in the amnesty. They were pure unmodified murders, and committed after three months' silence\*! Thus passed the month of October: Raffaello Girolami, who whatever might have been his failings was at least true to his cause, only escaped decapitation for perpetual imprisonment in the tower of Pisa because he had lent the finger-ring of saint Zanobi, who was of his family, to cure a disease with which Don Ferrante Gonzago's son was about that period afflicted! He soon died, they said of chagrin, but really as was generally believed by poison. Zanobi Bartolini bribed Malatesta who with Gonzaga saved him in consequence of his recent conduct; many others escaped but were condemned and their property confiscated †. The great Michelangelo Buonarroti who by his strenuous and able exertions in fortifying San Miniato had made himself peculiarly obnoxious, expected no mercy, more especially as it was reported to Clement although falsely, that he had proposed to demolish the Medician palace in Via Larga and turn its site into a square to be called "*La Piazza de' Muli*" in derision of that family! During the last few days of the siege therefore he kept out of sight and on its final termination concealed himself in the house of an intimate friend: his own residence was strictly searched by the official minions, even

\* Nerli, Lib. xi., pp. 250-1-2. — Varchi, Lib. xii., pp. 275, 277, 295.—  
Ammirato, Lib. xxxi., pp. 414-15.

† Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 289.

to the chimneys and privies, and much wonder was created at his disappearance. Many a long day did he thus lie hidden until Medician taste overcame pontifical anger and he not only promised this illustrious fugitive a free pardon but the employment of his artistical talents if he would only show himself, and commanded that not a hair of his head should be touched. Thus assured Michelangelo ventured forth, and more from fear than fancy (for he had long quitted his chisel) executed those beautiful and magnificent statues that still adorn the "*Sagrestia nuova*" of the Florentine church of San Lorenzo \*.

Batista della Palla was cruelly tortured and then incarcerated at Pisa where like Girolami he was murdered to hinder the King of France from demanding his liberation, as Gonzaga was prevented from doing for the former! Donato Giannotti preserved his life with great difficulty through the intercession of friends but under rigid conditions of banishment: Salvestro Aldobrandini was similarly protected by the efforts of Caterina de' Medici and Baccio Valori, who was one of the least cruel although the most powerful of all the Palleschi. He governed Florence despotically until Clement hearing from Ottaviano de' Medici of the citizens' universal disunion and envy of both Valori and Guicciardini's authority, sent the Archbishop of Capua to rule instead; the Balia was then enlarged and Baccio Valori made president of Romagna†. The Seignory, now an empty name, was nominated for November and December, and assumed official honours under the gonfaloniership of Simone Tornabuoni Senator of Rome: persecution still continued, especially against those who had taken any part in burning the villas: most of them had escaped; but Benedetto Ciofi and Lionardo Sacchetti were arrested; the former lost his head, the latter his liberty, and finally expired in a dungeon: some were already dead but their name was attainted and their property

\* Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 293.—Vasari, vol. xiv., p. 146.

† Nerli, Lib. xi., p. 253.—Varchi, Lib. xii., pp. 289-91.

confiscated. About one hundred and fifty citizens were banished for three years to distant places as a first step to further persecution, and at the termination of their exile when the hopes of home came thick upon them they were driven in prolonged exile to places still more remote, wild, or inconvenient, until hunted to despair they as was intended broke their rules, became declared rebels, and had an unmitigated sentence of death and confiscation of property pronounced against them \* !

Clement had taken an early opportunity to remove Caterina de' Medici from Florence where as yet he would suffer none of his own family to reside : his vengeance worked through second causes ; he knew exactly what instruments would suit him and endeavoured to conceal from the world his immediate part in the bloody scenes and wide-spread persecutions which he commanded. He wished men to believe that the war had been between the nobles and plebeians, (meaning by the latter term all of whatever rank that opposed him) not between himself and the city †. The ostensible rulers previous to Capua's arrival, were Baccio Valori, Francesco Guicciardini, (whose brother Luigi governed Pisa with extreme cruelty) Francesco Vettori, and Ruberto Acciaiuoli ; all base and willing tools of a vindictive bastard : they made the scaffold run with blood, they confiscated the possessions of innocent men, broke all treaties, glutted their own vengeance, restored church and confiscated property without any remuneration, and with a false appearance of clemency drove many unoffending families into exile for more certain and leisurely destruction ! These and others with them were the men, who thus extending the sweets of vengeance over a term of years, remained still unsatiated ; who overwhelmed their victims with a heavy and partial taxation, who disarmed the citizens under the penalty

\* Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 303.

† Nerli, Lib. xi., p. 248.— Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 311.

of death accompanied by frightful persecutions; and to preserve this reign of terror coerced them by a band of those very soldiers who had been carrying fire and sword throughout their afflicted country! These were the immediate instruments of papal vengeance; but their own private hate, their rapacity, and unbounded ambition spurred them on bravely to the task and made them even exceed, not the cruelty, but the low and cunning policy of Clement. Men were banished by wholesale for the purpose of being *bought and sold like cattle to enrich the tyrants\**, and amongst those, O shame to genius! Francesco Guicciardini shone conspicuous above his fellows †! He advised Clement, who was in no need of such council, to inculcate many citizens deeply in all the rigours of his rule in order to bind them more firmly to his cause by the odium they would excite; nor was he the only evil counsellor: many more advised and instigated the too willing pope to unrelaxing cruelty, and not satisfied with urging this in plain prose, Niccolo de' Nobili a grave and distinguished doctor of laws, vomited forth his intemperance in the form of miserable sonnets beseeching Clement to go on, and punish and rid Florence of every Piagnone as an enemy to him the city and the public good ‡.

Notwithstanding this agreement which for the time suited the passions of both, it by no means followed that the Palleschi were prepared to establish a Medician dynasty in Florence; Clement at least did not feel thus sure of them although he was resolved they should stand or fall with his family therefore sent young Alessandro to the imperial court to urge a final arrangement of Florentine affairs: Charles was however in no hurry; he was as anxious for a settlement of religious

\* It was literally so; men were sentenced to exile and imprisonment on purpose to be bought off by their friends without regard to guilt or innocence, but as private vengeance dictated.  
 † G. Cambi, tom. xxiii., pp. 79 to 95.

—F. Nerli, Lib. xi., p. 352.—Guicciardini, Lib. xx., cap. i., p. 15.—Segni, Lib. v., p. 305, &c.—Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 310.—Sismondi, vol. xii., p. 96.—Lettere di Principi, vol. iii., p. 124. ‡ Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 310.

differences by a general council as Clement was for that of Tuscany and never ceased urging it: but the pontiff's illegitimacy was an indistinct yet insurmountable bar to any such assembly; he dreaded deposition; his cruelties at Florence which were universally execrated, would have facilitated this, and aware of these terrors the Lutherans with covert malice continually demanded a general council\*.

Besides this Charles probably wanted to see a little more into the character of that son-in-law whom he was about to employ for his own objects in the government of Tuscany, wherefore nearly a year was allowed to elapse ere Alessandro, who had been created Duke of Civita Penna, was sent to trample more firmly upon the necks of the Florentines. Meanwhile that unhappy people through Clement's orders were visited by fresh sorrows and fresh exiles at every change of magistracy so that even the terrible persecution of 1434 would scarcely have surpassed it had not a universal cry of Italian indignation echoed beyond the Alps and reached the distant emperor. Charles instantly put a stop to it; but to inculcate more citizens in these disgusting severities, load them with universal odium, and so bind them to the car of the Medici as Guicciardini advised; Clement even in the beginning of October added a hundred and thirty-six members to the *Balia* as *Arruoti*, and thus united this council took the name of the "*Balia Maggiore*" or Senate, and subsequently formed the basis of the "Council of Two Hundred" hereafter to be noticed; it succeeded the Great Council with all its powers but was completely subject to the pontiff †.

Arezzo by the help of Gonzaga's Spaniards was reduced to a reluctant obedience, for she wished to get free from Florence and had already offered herself to the emperor: Siena by the same army was compelled to receive her exiles at Clement's hands with a Spanish garrison to protect

A.D. 1531.

\* Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 330, &c.

† Ibid., pp. 315-320.



them, for Fabio Petrucci was dead, and by force alone could the pontiff expect to maintain his ascendancy over that republic. It was also determined to lay the iron hand of despotism more heavily on Florence and rivet her chains with a citadel: as a preliminary step a "*Board of Five*" was created to superintend the fortifications in general for one year, and a new tax was levied on each house for the purpose, but the actual building of this citadel belongs to a later period. Another board was named for the remission of taxes in arrear by which two classes benefited: the rich and powerful who feeling themselves beyond the reach of legal molestation were intentional defaulters, and the really indigent who could not by any possibility pay their contributions: both were allowed to compound from time to time, and so the poor being relieved and the great favoured, while a small sum rolled into the treasury and new places ministered to the craving of hungry partisans, this measure was not so unpopular as some others of that distressful period. Amongst these the arms bill already noticed became preëminently obnoxious and even terrible. A decree went forth of the "*Otto di Guarda e Balìa*" ordering arms of every sort to be delivered up within a given time, with certain exceptions, under the penalty of 1000 florins and the offender's house being given over to public plunder. As a vast proportion of the people had been armed during the siege the quantity thus received at the palace was almost innumerable: still there was not sufficient to satisfy the apprehensions of government or accord with the information brought by the swarms of spies who infested every crevice of the city; namely, that the finest coats-of-mail, the most splendid corselets, and the richest suits of armour were still concealed by the citizens. Whereupon decree after decree was promulgated commanding the most rigid search to be made, and the penalty of death to be inflicted on all without distinction who should be found disobedient!

Such terror overcame the citizens after the passing of this sanguinary law that quantities of arms were secretly cast into the Arno, and in the mornings every market, public place, corner, and low-built wall glittered with abandoned weapons and rich armour, the last sad fragments of Florentine liberty. So general and deep was the terror that none dared touch or even look at these relics, nay the early passengers shunned them like infected things as they glistened in the morning light, and fearfully turned away their steps lest they should be seen by the officers who were continually prowling about to pounce on those hapless citizens most worth sacrificing to their vengeance or rapacity.

Under this authority every spy and government miscreant with the pretext of searching for arms entered and plundered what houses they pleased; occasionally carrying forbidden weapons along with them, and pretending to discover these fatal implements in the dwelling they dragged its owner before the tribunals, or if he was absent, took legal possession of the premises and after making an inventory of everything denounced him as a culprit. In proceedings so barbarous all those suspected persons under the general denomination of "*Piagnoni*" suffered most cruelly, and Ser Maurizio of Milan the chancellor or secretary of the "*Otto di Balìa*," but in reality their master, proved himself equal to the most dreaded of the ancient podestàs from Agubbio. He was probably a disciple of Don Antonio de Leyva; or if not, he proved at least that the Spaniard's example was not unheeded: with a terrible countenance, a rough and insulting tongue, and a heart of stone, he was cruel in his acts, more cruel in his examinations, and most cruel in his decisions: torture was his nourishment, and he quaffed it deep; his presence, his very sight was shunned as an ill omen and often as certain destruction. Not satisfied with the fiendish acts of his myrmidons he ordered arms and armour to be clandestinely introduced into certain houses during the night season and thus

entangling his victims made examples so terrible that all Florence shuddered and men were even fearful of keeping a common ferruled stick or any other piece of pointed iron or walking-staff, nay the very merest utensil that could by an indefinite stretch of fancy assume the appearance of a weapon was avoided. And these, says Varchi, are no rhetorical flourishes, but what many a man and woman still alive can well remember! Such were some of the blessed consequences of Pope Clement VII.'s restoration to his native country!

Nor was this all; the plague which appeared and disappeared during the siege had been again spread by the German detachment from San Donato; working silently through the autumn and winter it broke out with increased virulence in the spring of 1531, and as no ground had been tilled or seed sown, the prospects of this oppressed, starving, and persecuted people were dark and indescribably mournful\*.

Two months had now passed beyond the period named for the emperor's decision about the new Florentine constitution without his having yet shown any disposition to declare himself on this subject, or even on the marriage of Alessandro de' Medici with his daughter: Clement became impatient, and the Balia by his command but in their own name, under the gonfaloniership of Raffaello de' Medici who from his office was one of them, on the seventeenth of February 1531 decreed as follows. That in consequence of the well-known virtues, life, and manners of the illustrious Duke Alexander of Medicis son of Lorenzo late Duke of Urbino, and for the sake of acknowledging the many and great benefits as well temporal as spiritual received from the illustrious house of Medici, his excellency should be received into the Balia and notwithstanding any legal disabilities simultaneously exercise all the offices of state even the supreme magistracy, and vote in them and preside at his pleasure notwithstanding any law or custom to the contrary †. This was a

\* Varchi, Lib. xiii., pp. 351-354.

† Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 324.

vast stride over the neck of the people from the days of Lorenzo who in all the plentitude of power and talent never ventured to become Gonfalonier of Justice against the long-established laws and customs of the commonwealth and died under the required age without ever having enjoyed that office ! It was the first and most important step to the future principality ; yet amidst the wreck of freedom, even in the very citadel of his power, twelve adverse votes proved to the tyrant Clement that as many noble hearts either execrated his cruelty or still beat warmly for liberty\*.

The ruin occasioned by a restitution of church and rebels' property without any compensation was fearful amongst large classes of the community, for tempted by low prices and public faith they had expended the savings of a whole life in such investments : even those who had lost their all by the enemy's ravages were denied redress, while public debtors out of whom anything could be extracted were seized on with avidity by the ministerial harpies : this was followed by a wide-spread and crushing impost of no less than 160,000 florins, levied with infinite rigour and the usual partiality †. To secure the power of continuing such acts twenty-four "*Accoppiatori*" were selected, according to the old Medician policy, for superintending the scrutiny ; they were chosen for one year with the faculty of self-continuance, and as they controlled the whole government even to its smallest branches by their powers of rejection they were studiously culled from the flower of Medician parasites ‡. Although the name of "*Accoppiatori*" is, according to Varchi, as old as 1415 yet the elder Cosimo first brought this engine into serious and permanent action as a piece of state machinery,

\* Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 325.

† Ibid., p. 323.

‡ Their names were, Luigi della Stufa, Ormanozzo Deti, Matteo Niccolini, Francesco Guicciardini, Antonio Gualterotti, Filippo Macchiavelli, Girolamo Capponi, Ruberto Pucci, Ruberto Acciaiuoli, Andrea Minerbetti, Palla

Rucellaj, Giovanni Corsi, Francesco Serristori, Matteo Strozzi, Jacopo Gianfiglazzi, Bartolommeo di Filippo Valori, Ottaviano di Lorenzo de' Medici, Luigi Ridolfi, Agostino Vettori ; and, for the minor trades, Michele del Cittadino, Niccolo del Troscia, Bernardo del Tovaglia, and Angiolino Angiolini.

after his restoration in 1434. At that epoch and before the institution of the Great Council the Seignory and all other magistrates were chosen by lot, and Cosimo fearful of a Seignory (at that time absolute as being without appeal) which might servè him as he served others, instituted the "Accoppiatori" for the express purpose of selecting staunch partisans to fill the various purses whence the several magistracies were drawn by lot for a series of years; the number of such purses amounting sometimes to seventy, but varying at each scrutiny according to the designs of the ascendant faction. This scrutiny was always a tedious operation, because every citizen's name to the number of some thousands was separately put up and his efficiency discussed; but the present one on account of the plague, was not terminated until January 1532, and the Accoppiatori having complete power to fill the reservoir which supplied every state magistracy from the Balia downwards, were lords of the republic, but slaves of the Medici. Other changes in the various corporate trades, the Court of Mercanzia or Admiralty, and the Court of Appeals, were made with a similar object by the Balia, all tending to consolidate and extend the penetrating influence of absolute Medician authority\*.

About this time Ippolito de' Medici being convinced of Clement VII.'s intention to sacrifice his superior and as he imagined, nearer claims on the family greatness to the more favoured Alexander whom he detested, determined to attempt Florence ere the latter could quit the imperial court which was then in Flanders. Spurred forward by rage and jealousy he suddenly left Rome unknown to Clement and pushed on rapidly towards Florence in hopes of creating a revolution in his own behalf: as the least unpopular of the race he perhaps might have succeeded had he not stopped a night on the road, which allowed a courier sent after him in great haste from Rome, to

\* Varchi, Lib. xii., pp. 341-3.

anticipate his arrival, and Baccio Valori following soon after with large promises on the part of Clement he was finally persuaded to return quietly on the twenty-seventh of April and give up the enterprize. This young cardinal was the son of Giuliano de' Medici by a lady of Urbino and at this time about twenty-one years old: beautiful in person, agreeable, with a quick and clever understanding, he united great affability to extreme grace, and natural liberality. Being himself both learned and accomplished he patronised arms and letters and was celebrated accordingly; but he was also light, vain, inconstant, and easily excited to act against his own judgment by the influence of designing companions: although ambitious, still no great purpose moved him, and he was more sensual than intellectual in his general objects. Arms were his natural inclination, not the church; and notwithstanding the numerous benefices given to him by Clement he was always dissatisfied with his condition; this coupled with an excessive hatred of Alexander caused subsequent acts of hostility in conjunction with the Florentine exiles\*.

The emperor's delays, his eagerness for a general council, and the consignment of Modena and Reggio to the Duke of Ferrara all exasperated Clement and made him contemplate with extreme pleasure the French monarch's reopening hatred, if not his negotiations and final alliance with the Turks against that monarch. At length Alexander quitted the imperial court with all the honours due to a future son-in-law, and on the fifth of July 1531 accompanied by Charles's nuncio Giovanni Antonio Muscettola proceeded from Prato to Florence where the latter formally communicated his master's pleasure to the citizens. By this the Florentines found themselves readmitted to imperial favour and all former privileges on condition that Alexander of Medicis were acknowledged chief and duke of the republic, and his children after him; and in default of heirs the nearest male

\* Varchi, Lib. xii., pp. 344-7.

descendants of Cosimo and Lorenzo di Giovanni di Bichi de' Medici\*. Any contradiction or resistance to this decree subjected Florence to the forfeiture of all her privileges and national independence with final devolution to the empire: yet it did not in point of fact do more than confirm and preserve by hereditary succession the authority of "*Preposto*" or chief of the republic which the Balia had already conferred upon Alexander, without any alteration of existing forms †.

Nevertheless all, and more than all of that undefined and floating power which the house of Medici had hitherto enjoyed from corrupt influence was now for the first time concentrated into a solid and acknowledged right and incorporated with the constitution. The imperial bull was read by the public secretary Francesco Campana after Muscettola's address, and answered by the gonfalonier Benedetto Buondelmonte in an abject grovelling speech unworthy even of a Medician parasite. The "Proposti" of the Colleges, the "Captains of Party," the "Otto di Pratica," the "Otto di Balia," the "Conservators of the Laws," the officers of the Mount, the "Massai di Camera," the "Six of the Mercatanzia," the "Procuratori delle Fortificazioni" and the Grand Balia, then successively advanced, and in the name of their respective magistracies reverently touched the imperial bull with the right hand, and lifting their "*Cappucci*" or head-gear with the left in token of deep respect, accepted and promised obedience to the august decree. No mention was made in this edict of the preservation of Florentine liberty, wherefore many, even of the Palleschi, swore fealty to their new sovereign with a heart less cheerful than their countenance when they saw the leading article of capitulation utterly and contemptuously neglected. This ceremony being finished, a formal completion, delivery, and public registration of the act

\* Segni says that Muscettola came first to arrange the government, and Alexander some time afterwards.—He was a *cotemporary*; Varchi and other *cotemporary* writers all Florentines say they came together! Where is truth? † Nerli, Lib. x., p. 258.—Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 355.

was made, and according to party writers amidst universal satisfaction. The duke then took his seat as "Proposto" of the Seignory and for form-sake proposed the distribution of alms to some distressed convents; afterwards returning to his palace he ordered the liberation of certain prisoners, and as a matter of course bonfires and illuminations filled the town, the event says Varchi being celebrated "with incredible joy and incredible sorrow!" Night then closed in, dark and silent, and the destiny of Florence was accomplished\*!

Next morning the Gonfalonier and Seignory of the Florentine Republic repaired to the Medician palace to attend a doubtful offspring of the race that built it, once their equals, now their lords, and for ever their tyrants: here the overture to this new drama was rehearsed, for before they could even gain an entrance into any chamber preparatory to a personal audience, they were allowed for a considerable time to pace the outward hall at their leisure amidst half-hidden scoffs and laughter from the courtiers†! But they moreover committed a great error in believing, if they ever did believe, that either Clement or Alexander would be content with any authority short of despotism, even in appearance: the pope was determined to exalt his kinsman to the highest pinnacle of greatness; he was a favourite, and the Holy Father had as good reason to believe him his own temporal son as that of Lorenzo, if indeed he could be claimed by either and were not really the offspring of a common muleteer who shared the favour, or was the lawful husband of his mother at the same period. This woman it is said was unable to decide between the muleteer and the Medici, but as the vengeance of Alexander seemed likely to exceed that of the pontiff himself, he was fondly hailed as his own and had both his deeds and authority previously sanctified by the approbation of the Church‡. Alexander fearful of the plague which still de.

\* Nerli, Lib. xi., p. 258. — Varchi, Lib. xii., pp. 261-2.

† Ibid., p. 363.

‡ Ibid., Lib. xiii., p. 8.



vasted Florence, returned to his provisional residence at Prato and thence repaired to Rome, so that the Archbishop of Capua administered the government until the end of October when the former returned to wither all Florence by his presence. But before this, even as early as the eighth of September, one of the first shocks was given to ancient democratic institutions in an order not to reëlect the sixteen Gonfaloniers of Companies. Considered by itself the abolition of this always youthful and generally turbulent magistracy, was more beneficial than otherwise; all writers seem to agree that its good qualities were far overbalanced by its defects, and that with the cry of "*Liberty in danger*" these gonfaloniers, its appointed defenders, became themselves some of the greatest tyrants of the state, often overpowering the Seignory and carrying everything by violence. For this reason Giannotti strongly recommended their suppression in his project of reform addressed to Niccolo Capponi, and probably about this very time re-addressed it as already mentioned, to Zanobi Bartolini\*.

But taken as an index to coming events this blow was fearful, and proved moreover the altered power of the Medici when with a single word from afar they were able and could afford to sacrifice one of the most efficient engines of their ancient authority: for nothing, it may be remembered, brought them more numerous or more obsequious adherents than the faculty of packing the colleges when after the pestilence they were made the channel to higher honours †. Exemption from the trouble of conciliation, the diminution of magistracies; a thing intrinsically beneficial; and the prevention of any legal assemblage of citizens under those ancient and popular banners, were the immediate purposes fulfilled by this startling decree. The twelve Buonomini were still allowed to stand, but with

\* Nerli, Lib. xi., pp. 258-9.—Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 364.—Giannotti, Lettera a N. Capponi, tom. xxiii., p. 145, Delizee degli Erud. Tos.—Giannotti

della Rep. Fior., Lib. ii., cap. vii.

† Giannotti della Rep. Fior., Lib. ii., cap. vii.

far more limited functions and only in conjunction with other magistracies ; and to show their gratitude for all these benefits, including more and excessive taxation, Francesco Vettori and Palla Rucellai were despatched as ambassadors extraordinary to the imperial court in the name of all the citizens of the Florentine republic (for they still retained this appellation) to assure his majesty that being dissatisfied with having only thanked him by letter, they wished now to express their gratitude more fully by the mouth of their representatives for his immeasurable beneficence in having given to them as chief of the republic, so distinguished a person as Alexander of Medicis ! The ambassadors then entered into a long panegyric of that prince's virtues, of the general satisfaction produced by his government ; delights which would ever last, a government which would be ever respected, both from his own most excellent qualities and from respect to the hand that gave him ! They afterwards proceeded to vilify in the most contemptuous terms the whole state of popular rule as one which had ever detested the imperial greatness in Italy, and as highly lauded that of the Medici which had on the contrary rejoiced in and supported every extension of imperial power. Such was Florentine sycophancy ! "and although they well knew," says Varchi, "that Charles was not a man to be thus duped, and that he was perfectly aware of their falsehoods, they nevertheless, as is the custom of statesmen, shot at random and by palpable lying endeavoured to accomplish their objects" \*. A few days after this embassy left Florence, Benedetto Buondelmonte was nominated by Clement's command ambassador to himself at Rome, and being a restless active and devoted slave of the Medici, but endowed with considerable sagacity, he was chosen as a fitting instrument for carrying out the pontiff's ambitious intentions on behalf of Alexander. These were fast ripening ; all the autumn and winter had been spent

\* Varchi, Lib. xii., pp. 365-6.

with the leading Paleschi in discussions on them in the pope's cabinet while in Florence a large and powerful body of citizens tired of war and tumult, not of riches and ambition, and disgusted with popular rule, were ready to embark in the same boat and receive any form of government the Medici might condescend to propose. The mass of people were however still sullen and gloomy with suppressed anger; broken in spirit and subdued by misfortune; their leaders were butchered, ruined, or exiled, their means entirely destroyed, and they could now only practise a patient resignation, or stand and mourn as mutes before the dark portals of Florentine liberty.

In March 1532 Clement finally disclosed his intentions. Feeling sure of the emperor from his anxiety to prevent a union of the Medici with France, (a marriage between the Duke of Orleans and Catharine having been under discussion since the previous November)\* and knowing that Florence was at his mercy, he boldly resolved on making Alexander its absolute duke and establishing a principality as well in name as in attributes. Yet Clement although ever prompt to evil, always shrunk, if he possibly could, from its odium; he shot, but hid himself; and in this instance intended that so monstrous a proposition should come from the people themselves or at least from those who nominally represented them. To accomplish this, one of his first steps was to destroy the high dignities of Gonfalonier and Seignory, now mere ciphers but still dear and venerable in the public eye. With such views he had written to the leading Paleschi demanding their opinions on that subject and on the best form of government to be established: his covert aim was well understood, and though all secretly resolved to second him, none were willing to cast the first stone at their common country; wherefore with expressions of unbounded submission accompanied by numerous plans of government he was humbly entreated to open his mind more distinctly and all his

\* *Lettere di Principi*, vol. iii., p. 123, Letter from Clement to Francis.

desires would be accomplished. None of these pleased him, because none as it would appear came directly to the point except Guicciardini, and he only to discourage the *immediate* establishment of a principality. Guicciardini's letters and "*Discorso*" on the Florentine government are addressed to the Archbishop of Capua through whom his opinion was demanded, and apparently written from Bologna of which he had recently been made Governor: they are remarkable for an acute unscrupulous turpitude well adapted to the odious character and passions of Clement and the rancour of faction; plausible but really unsound, impolitic, and more disgraceful to human nature than the treachery of Malatesta or the more open and reckless hatred of the pontiff himself.

Acknowledging that the difficulty of cure is somewhat lightened by a thorough acquaintance with the disorder, it is still far from easy, he says, to find a remedy that while it salves one part may not injure another. Affirming the unmodified hatred borne by the greater part of Florence to the Medici he assumes that it can never be subdued by kindness; and that the exhaustion of the city and excessive cost of maintaining the Florentine dominion, which from privileges and exemptions to subject places fell principally on Florence, prevented the adoption of many remedies otherwise available and evidently, as he hints, of the harshest description, but which in the then debilitated condition of Florence might ruin industry when on the contrary it required the utmost encouragement to prevent a complete dissolution. But where this did not interfere everything should be revolutionized and no pity or mercy shown to the adverse faction, as being things both useless and unreasonable towards those who only wanted the power to become even more mischievous than before. On the contrary it became necessary to gather partisans by involving as many as possible in the same measures and thus attaching them, not from love, but for the sake of their own security and fear of the enemy! The

friends of Clement he said were few, but in a situation of great influence and well aware that they could not remain a day in Florence without the Medici; for their case was now very different from that of the same faction in 1434, who had only private and particular enemies who for the most part were extinguished in the course of twelve or fifteen years; but the existing Palleschi had an entire people for their foes and the young more bitter than the old, so that there was cause of fear for a century to come; and this imperiously called their most anxious attention to secure themselves in power whatever might be its character. He did not trust much to the stability of friends unless bound down, not by affection alone but by fear of others; for men acted from passion and imprudence and when dissatisfied madly flew to what often proved their ruin, or else became cold and careless about everything. Wherefore to satisfy and secure adherents no respect was to be paid to anything except what might weaken the national resources and therefore weaken the ruling power which simultaneously controlled and was nourished by them. The Palleschi were few and it became necessary to augment their number by the addition of influential citizens, looking more to quality than quantity because of the difficulty in satisfying a multitude. To secure old friends and make new ones was not easy; pledges and subscriptions were insufficient; but public honours and emoluments would succeed if distributed in such a manner as to render the receivers so odious to the community that they should be forced to believe themselves in danger from a popular government! Were public honours and emoluments sure to be distributed under Alexander with equal skill and judgment to those of the elder Medici, less thought would be necessary; but as this could not be expected from his youth other more certain measures became requisite. A principality Guicciardini thought would not increase real security or power, and was one of those things that required time for its effectual establishment, and

certain occasions, and a gradual ripening, and a proportioning of the members to the head, and the creation of a feudal nobility; because any sudden assumption of exclusive power would gain few adherents, and how such a thing could be immediately accomplished without proving mischievous to industry and disordering the revenue he could not conceive. In these difficulties he therefore recommended a clean sweep of all effete councils, and in their place a Balìa of two hundred citizens composed exclusively of partisans or those who might be bought; and from these to choose a senate of seventy or eighty citizens as the principal member of state government, with permanent salaries to each in order to make them so universally hated as never to get over it! He would ultimately elect these for life, but in the first instance only for two or three years to control them and facilitate the dismissal of any that might not show themselves prompt and open adherents of government. He recommended marked distinctions of rank, and prospective advancement; because where no distinction existed there could be no satisfaction: these things he expected would gain friends and heal (that is corrupt) everything, and if they failed all further prospects would be gloomy. Public poverty was against them, wherefore reductions in other sources of funds were recommended and even supplies from the pope himself, but not directly for this purpose, because the payments should necessarily be made by the citizens in order to render placemen still more odious! If public office and honours were discreetly bestowed he maintained that it would be more effectual than a distribution by lot because the former would involve a personal favour; and as partiality could never be overcome it was better to prevent rivalry between friends. He wished a restricted scrutiny but sufficiently wide to induce citizens not to relinquish the payment of those taxes necessary for the enjoyment of public office, and above all he urged this rule of action, "*Never to bestow the government favour on any but*

*a partisan, excepting those only who might be necessary to make a particular use of:*" on all others favours would not only be thrown away but become self-injuries.

He cares little and says less about the abolition or alteration of the Seignory, but still thinks that its rank and honours attracted some; and whoever ruled should endeavour to preserve the power of pleasing men, not alone with honours and emoluments but also with hopes and expectations, and all those alluring baits that cost the ruler nothing. Whatever is to be done, he repeats in another letter to the Archbishop of Capua, should be done quickly, and that which *he* would be most pleased with, "*whatever might be its nature,*" would be that which gave most stability to the house of Medici: none of the Paleschi could exist without it, all were of this belief, and every other opinion and consideration merged in this absorbing sentiment. He then urges Clement not to think of withdrawing himself from Florentine affairs (which he seems to have affectedly threatened in a pet\*) as it would be destruction to his house, and to act according to his own will though it differed from the views of others, for he might be assured that with all the variety of opinions there was one unanimous wish of pleasing him, because such was the interest of his whole party in Florence †. Somewhat perplexed at the backwardness of his friends in not at once saving him from the necessity of speaking out more plainly but on the contrary urging him to do so, he sent for Filippo Strozzi to Rome on other pretences where he met Jacopo Salviati, Benedetto Buondelmonti, Ruberto Pucci, Bartolommeo Lanfredini, besides other leading men who frequented the pontiff's ante-chambers; amongst them the two Florentine cardinals Ridolfi and Salviati often assisted at these discussions,

\* It would appear from Guicciardini's letters that Clement, dissatisfied at the backwardness of the leading Paleschi to propose his views as coming from themselves, threatened to withdraw himself altogether from Florentine

affairs: but one and all requested him only to make known his will and they would obey.

† Lettere di Principi, vol. iii., fol. 123-127.— Guicciardini al Arcivesc. di Capua.

but Guicciardini, Valori, and many more Palleschi transmitted their written opinions. Buondelmonte an intimate friend of Filippo Strozzi declared to him that then was his time for recovering Clement's favour, (lost through his conduct in 1527) by consenting to all his wishes, and that the contrary would endanger him. Filippo who was an Epicurean and cared little about any form of government as long as his pleasures were unrestricted, between alarm and heedlessness agreed to everything and entered deep into this conspiracy with the pope, Cardinals Salviati and Ridolfi, Pucci, and lastly Jacopo Salviati, who though with them was not entirely of them. This cabal resolved that the existence of two ruling powers in one state, was preposterous and inconsistent, wherefore it followed that the Seignory should be abolished and Alexander become absolute lord of Florence. Jacopo Salviati alone boldly opposed this act; he would not hear of an absolute prince or a citadel: nearly related as he was to the Medici he wished them to rule the republic, but like their ancestors as preëminent citizens not masters. He bade Clement remember his own popular government in the time of Leo and afterwards; "then," exclaimed Salviati, "there were no guards, no citadels, no disarming of citizens; all went well in consequence of his own just and benevolent rule: the only real reform was public affection; the strongest fortress, the safest government was the satisfaction benevolence and contentment of the people; and these might be acquired, he added, by an impartial administration of justice and a plentiful market: then nothing need be feared; no guards, no citadels, no glittering of lances, the instruments not of rule but of tyranny, which served rather to offend others than defend ourselves and gave more suspicion to subjects than safety to princes. Then turning to Strozzi he exclaimed "*Filippo, Filippo, thou dost not speak thy real thoughts, or if thou dost, verily thou thinkest evil.*" And afterwards when Strozzi was advocating



the erection of a fortress he solemnly and prophetically said ; “ *Let Philip beware ! God grant that in now designing the erection of a citadel he may not be designing the grave in which he will himself be buried.*” After this Salviati was called no more to these secret councils, but speedily fell from court favour, and great as he was, immediately saw all the parasites drop from him ! Yet surely Francesco Guicciardini must have envied him\* !

Jacopo Salviati was decidedly the most liberal and honest of the Palleschi : attached to the Medici by family ties and personal benefits, and to their Florentine ascendancy from weariness of national discord and a conviction that close aristocratic government was the only remedy, he had uniformly supported them as ruling citizens but opposed their despotism ; nor did the injury he received from the outbreaks of popular government ever, as it would seem, induce him to deviate from moderate counsels or check the honest expression of his opinion. He had great influence at court ; but notwithstanding all his efforts Clement adhering to his object wrote as already noticed to Guicciardini, Matteo Strozzi, Francesco Vettori, Ruberto Acciaiuoli and other citizens, artfully and indirectly endeavouring to draw from them an apparently spontaneous declaration of his own well understood but as yet unpublished wishes. Most of them affected ignorance of his meaning but all professed obedience to his will when once declared, until which time they shunned the odium that such an act would bring upon its authors ; public hatred already lay heavy on them, and the boiling indignation of the citizens now anxiously awaiting their doom was already hard to bear. Alexander and his chief counsellor Niccolo de Schomberg Archbishop of Capua were in great trepidation between Clement’s delay and the Palleschi’s determined silence until he had spoken out more plainly †.

The first decided breach of this anxious state was Guicciar-

\* Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 370.

† Nerli, Lib. xi., pp. 259-61.

dini and Valori's arrival at Florence followed by Filippo Nerli : the last on leaving Rome about his own affairs was desired by Clement to inform those citizens with whom he conversed on the subject, "that his life approached the eleventh hour and "that his firm resolution was to leave the government of "Florence secure in his own family. Wherefore," added he, "tell those citizens who favour such rule that in this they run "the same risk as our house, and that they must design it in "such a manner that what happened in 1494 and 1527 may "never again befall our race and we alone be expelled while "those who enjoy with us all the offices of state remain unmolested in Florence as they then did. It therefore becomes "necessary that things should be properly arranged, and in "such manner, that if we should lose the state both we and "they must depart together ; and thou wilt say openly to those "citizens, and in a manner which they cannot misunderstand, "that such is our most firm will and determination. As to "other things we shall be contented, as is but just and reasonable, that they shall be settled so as to allow of the friends "who will share our fortunes enjoying those public benefits "which each has a fair right to expect" \*.

This was no ungrateful office to Nerli who went zealously to work in demonstrating, as well as he could, not only the utility but necessity of the case : he was answered "That the affairs of "Florence were now come to such a pass that the Paleschi "neither would nor could oppose themselves to Clement's "wishes ;" and that his holiness must have been well aware from past events, especially from what they had recently accomplished against their antagonists, that they were now entirely dependent on him and his family for power, fortune, and even the being allowed to live in Florence with security : that the certainty of the state being in his hands was their only reliance ;

\* Nerli, Lib. xi., p. 261.—Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 371.

that he was free to establish that form of government which best pleased him, and that they had only to recommend the city to his care, themselves to his favour, and finally beseech him to give a more distinct explanation \*. Thus encouraged Clement despatched Antonio Guiducci to the archbishop with full instructions about his object ; then followed Ruberto Pucci as a feeler amongst the citizens ; afterwards came Filippo Strozzi, who signified Clement's firm determination to Vettori, Matteo Strozzi, and several other leading gentlemen, and then began the revolution †.

On the fourth of April 1532 the Balia empowered the Seignory to nominate twelve citizens, including the gonfalonier Giovanfrancesco de' Nobili, with full authority for one month and the power of prolonging it if necessary, to alter the Florentine constitution ‡. There was no need of more time ; the Guicciardini, the Vettori and the Valori were much too zealous to waste any in so congenial a task, wherefore meeting on the twenty-seventh of April they soon fulfilled the pontiff's wishes by at once annihilating the ancient Seignory after two hundred and fifty years' duration ! Their next act was by augmenting the Great Balia to create a council called ever after "*The Two Hundred*" although from the present addition of eighty-five names selected by Alessandro de' Medici it exceeded that number. From this was chosen a "*Senate*" or Council of Forty-eight Ottomati above the age of thirty-six, which had the power of filling up its own vacancies. This senate was invested with all the authority of the Balia, the appointment of the great offices of state, the duty of legislation and of imposing taxes, or in other words with despotic

\* Nerli, Lib. xi., p. 262.

† Nerli, Lib. xi., p. 262. — Varchi, Lib. xii., p. 372.

‡ They were Francesco Guicciardini, Francesco Vettori, Baccio Valori,

Ruberto Acciaiuoli, Matteo Strozzi, Ruberto Pucci, Agostino Dini, Jacopo Gianfigliuzzi, Giovanfrancesco Ridolfi, Palla Rucellai, Giuliano Capponi, and the Gonfalonier.

authority, but so managed as to concentrate every power in the ducal person, for without his will nothing could be proposed; without his sanction nothing became law. Private petitions and appointments to inferior offices were placed in the hands of the "Two Hundred" after some previous discussion in other magistracies. Alessandro de' Medici was declared prince of the state and government, with the title of "*Doge of the Florentine Republic*," and hereditary succession secured to his heirs male according to primogeniture in compliance with the imperial decree. Four counsellors of state were chosen quarterly from the senate by twelve Accoppiatori belonging to the same body and holding that office for the same period. These counsellors were to replace the Seignory in all its functions of honour and take precedence of every other magistracy. The duke himself, or his lieutenant, replaced the gonfalonier of justice and became president of every court and council; without him nothing could be proposed, nothing finished; he was the alpha and omega of this cabinet, as of the whole republic, and all the Seignory's authority however acquired, whether by law custom or otherwise, devolved on these ministers, three of whose votes were sufficient to carry a question. To do more honour, as was said, to the senate, and cabinet council, but really to strike the barb of despotism deeper into every magistracy, it was decreed that some of their members should form a part of each tribunal in the city, and for that of the "Buonomini" one senator at least became necessary; one-third of this court was to be taken from "The Two Hundred" and the remainder as formerly from each quarter. The "*Proveditori*" or "*Procuratori del Comune*" (for they are differently named in different authors) were all to be members of the "Two Hundred"; and four, that is one-third of them, senators. In this way the senators and members of the "Two Hundred" were more or less sharply dotted into

every magistracy, and as unpaid service was no longer an honour, permanent salaries, according to Guicciardini's counsel, varying from four to six florins a month, were given to the "Otto di Pratica," the "Otto di Balìa," the "Capitani di Parte," the "Buonomini," the "Provveditori" and the "Conservatori:" the "Consiglieri" and "Accoppiatori" having none. But although there were not any regular salaries before this period except to the captains of party whose pay was now increased, there were still certain fees and perquisites, and a full measure of small patronage and corruption to answer the same purpose and cause such places to be eagerly coveted.

Civil affairs, exclusive of what before appertained to the state and which the Seignory alone administered, were thus divided: all civil actions between parishes or communities, or between the community and private individuals, as well as those between the people and their chiefs, officers, and rectors of all kinds, came before the "Otto di Pratica" for decision. All cases of fraud, force, and outrage which before were determined by the Seignory now came under the "Otto di Balìa;" all suits of the indigent poor which the Seignory also settled were referred to the conservators of the laws: many other's formerly belonging to the Seignory now also came, under general heads, before the Pratica which was also given jurisdiction in those causes where subject places had a chartered right to be judged by the Seignory. The order established after the Duke of Athens' expulsion in 1343 of choosing magistrates equally from each quarter of the city, was now abolished and every distinction between major and minor arts annihilated. In this manner were the vestiges of ancient freedom brushed like cobwebs from the republic and the machinery of despotism reduced to comparatively few and very simple wheels. On the first of May 1532 the last gonfalonier and priors of the Floren-

tine state after two centuries and a half of vigorous if not glorious rule, retired from the scene\*: their names were Giovan Francesco de' Nobili; Luigi di Piero Guicciardini; Bongiani Antinori; Jacopo Berlingheri; Antonio Ricasoli; Gasparri dal Borgo; Domenico di Cegia; Giuliano Scala; and Raffaello Pucci, with their notary Giovambatista Vivaldi; and their post was immediately filled by the four first counselors of state, Roberto Acciaiuoli, Princivalle della Stufa, Filippo Strozzi and Luigi Ridolfi. This state revolution was then publicly proclaimed and received with cold and measured acclamation; it was at first graced with some slight relaxation of the exiles' condition and then all was silent, the Florentine republic had disappeared for ever! †

A melancholy sullen discontent pervaded Florence, for besides this national degradation Alexander became her lord at a period of intense suffering, and brought no rays of sunshine to cheer the general gloom: the plebeians, most of the populace, the artizans, all who lived by manual labour were sad and complaining; food was incredibly dear, work scarce, and masters impoverished: plague, war and famine had withered the very roots of industry, and the last had not even yet ceased its inflictions: every trade languished: some, such as the building and silk trades, required the support of government, for silk-weavers were no longer to be found in Florence; wherefore a decree issued for permitting this manufacture throughout the provinces and also its return free of duty to the capital. The citizens had lost their cattle, their harvests, their farm-houses and their villas: their farms were devastated, their labourers dead or dispersed; no trade during eleven months of siege had

\* Giov. Batist. Adriani, Stor. di suoi Tempi, Lib. i., p. 7.—Caubi, Del. Erud. Tos., tomo xxiii., pp. 114-116. Nerli, Lib. xi., p. 268.—Varchi, Lib. xii., pp. 372-7, and Lib. xiii., p. 28.—  
 Leggi e Bandi di Toscana, Provisione, 4th April.—Ordinazioni, 27th April, 1532.  
 † Varchi, Lib. xiii., p. 377.—Nerli, Lib. xii., p. 269.

enlivened Florence, no tillage had broken up its lands; but instead thereof, tax after tax in rapid and unmitigated order drew the people's life-blood from their hearts\*. Thus downcast, with here a father, there a brother, and again a son in exile, fetters, or perhaps a proclaimed rebel, and every moment in terror of more burdens,—for everything is mortal but taxation,—their houses and workshops were desolate, they dared not speak; and so far from opening new sources of trade or restoring the old, even those which had still lingered through accumulated misfortunes were now discontinued, and ruined villas and churches and convents received the once opulent Florentines. Many citizens, as is said, and it gives a more vivid picture of the time; purposely assumed this garb of poverty and even of utter destitution, thus choosing rather to suffer present hardships and live on other people's charity than be legally rifled by the government. Nor were the Palleschi much more satisfied: believing they were to have a companion they had given themselves a master, and now saw their error: they fancied that Alexander, satisfied with their acknowledgment of his superior title and dignity, would leave them essentially free; but they were mistaken. The prince young as he was had a clear understanding and excellent parts; and being instructed by the wily Clement and counselled by Capua looked keenly into everything and had everything referred to himself alone. Another cause of sorrow was to see the ancient palace of the republic deserted and the seat of government transferred to that of the Medici: the latter too was ever thronged with citizens, suitors, magistrates, and all the dread machinery of power, but especially by a strong body-guard of foreign horsemen, an unwonted sight in Florence and the more formidable from their carrying a novel sort of lance or partisan with a broad steel sharp-cutting head of nearly four feet in length, which scared the peaceable inhabitants.

\* Varchi, Lib. xiii., p. 30.

This terror was not diminished by the insolent conduct of a foreign garrison which under Alexander Vitelli outraged the citizens' families by their unbridled licentiousness and unnatural debauchery. Vitelli had been carefully selected from amongst all the Italian Colonels because the Pope believed that an insatiate feeling of vengeance for his father Paulo's death would sharpen his hatred towards the citizens! And such was the spirit with which Clement VII. resolved to establish a Medician dynasty on the ruins of Florentine liberty!\*

Thus perished the Florentine republic after a duration of more than four centuries from the death of Matilda: with much crime and many virtues we see a perpetual stream of mental force and energy pervading all, and marking its character so sharply as to leave deep traces in the succeeding monarchy which required all the tyranny of an able and unscrupulous monarch to efface. Its turbulence vindictiveness and ambition, occasionally relieved with high flashes of virtue and honesty, are conspicuous, because the bold, the able, the aspiring, and the reckless, commonly lead and convulse republics, and absorb the voice of history, but the mass of virtue and mediocrity, which through the press now make themselves heard, were mute in the annals of ancient commonwealths. Yet there are numerous traces in Florentine story that lead to the belief of this class having had great influence in the community; like ballast, lowly placed and seldom noticed it kept the vessel steady when her sails and rigging and all her upperworks were riven and reeling to the storm. But now fixed in an iron grasp the thousand energies of her former vitality crumbled into nothingness, yet not at once or without a struggle: all native force and originality of character gradually gave way, the nation became royal property and finally took the rank, character, and complexion of its sovereigns, who nominally independent were

\* Varchi, Lib. xiii., pp. 1-5.



mere vassals to more powerful states. The first monarch outraged and corrupted it by extreme licentiousness ; the second crushed it under a long, stern, and unmitigated despotism ; the third trampled upon it with all the confidence of hereditary power, and being thus fully prepared one weak infatuated tyrant melted their remnant of character in the crucible of an aspiring hypocritical and all-pervading priesthood\*.

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COTEMPORARY MONARCHS.—England, Scotland, France, Spain, Sicily, Naples, the Pope, Empire, and Constantinople, unchanged.

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\* Cosimo III. (Vide *Galluzzi, Stor. Gran. Ducato*, Lib. viii., cap. x.) as will be seen hereafter.

END OF VOL. IV. AND BOOK II.

LONDON

BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

4098 14