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FLORENCE









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The World's Famous  
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FLORENCE

BY

CHARLES YRIARTE

11

In Two Volumes

Volume 1.

MERRILL AND BAKER

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A.





# FLORENCE.

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## INTRODUCTION.

ITALY in the thirteenth century carried on and brought to its crowning point the work of civilization which France in the twelfth century had started by means of the crusades, the establishment of communal franchises, and the foundation of the University of Paris. The symbol created by the genius of Lucretius, where the successive labor of generations is represented by running-men passing their torches from hand to hand, had never been realized with so much grandeur; the sacred torches had fallen from French hands, and had been picked up by Italy, in whose grasp they emitted a light which dazzled the whole world.

Rome, notwithstanding the Barbarian invasion, the schism, and the exile of the Papacy, still retained the recollection of her glorious past, brought even more vividly before her by the superb monuments which had withstood the ravages of time and of man. But even Rome, like the rest of Italy, acknowledged the superiority of Florence comparable to Athens itself, and all the cities of Italy did homage to her genius,

for she, together with Siena, had been the first to make the onward move. In the course of a century, from Dante and Giotto to the first of the Medici, from the two Pisani to Brunelleschi, Donatello, and Alberti, Florence reached the summit of human thought and the zenith of plastic beauty. While at the very moment when it seemed as if she must exhausted by the efforts which resulted in the birth of the Renaissance, she was about to produce the two human beings, Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo, who in the domain of Art bring most nearly home to us the divine origin of our poor humanity. We must go back to Greek Art and to the age of Pericles for another such epoch in the world's history; and to form some idea of the revolution which was then brought about, we must revert to the advent of Christianity, which founded modern society upon the ruins of the old world.

It will be my endeavor to trace, as I proceed, the causes, direct and indirect, of this unquestioned superiority of Florence over the other cities of the Peninsula. To the sum of human knowledge which constitutes the trading capital of humanity, Florence contributed the largest share, and she further and above all possessed that gift and privilege of plastic beauty, just as some of God's creatures have the privilege of gracefulness. There was a period in her history when everything that her artists touched turned to gold. Their works were instinct with the

profound faith that inspired them, and their consummate strength and skill were masked by the gracefulness of their finish. Even to this day the marbles, frescoes, and manuscripts produced during this brilliant epoch in Florence, or by Florentines, retain a rare and unique individuality, an undefinable something made up of nobility, grandeur, calm strength, and sober elegance. Our eyes are attracted at a street corner, under a porch, in a gallery, or on the walls of a convent, as the case may be, by some object which stands out in such relief that the surrounding objects are, so to speak, obliterated. This is because the soul of Florence has passed into the inspired work: we recognize the sign by which all the works of the fifteenth century in Italy are marked, as we breathe the soft and subtle perfume which they exhale.

This superiority of Florentine Art has been everywhere felt, and all Italy was subject to its peaceful yoke as we are to-day. From Papal Rome, where the illustrious pontiffs of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries gathered about them the artists of Florence and the humanists of Tuscany, to the condottieri who wore the purple at Milan, Urbino, Ferrara, Mantua, Rimini, and Bologna, all the rulers of Italy sought to assemble a court composed in the main of illustrious Florentines. If they wanted to erect a cathedral or church, to cast an equestrian statue of some famous soldier, to write the history of some great city, or to

train the heir to a principality, it was to Florence that they turned their attention. Florence was the focus, the school, and the laboratory of human genius, and though there were other centres of intelligence—each northern town being in the fifteenth century a miniature Athens—Florence predominated over them all.

There are three distinct periods in the history of Florence. From the second half of the thirteenth to the end of the fourteenth century she was struggling for existence, and torn by the conflicting passions of her own citizens divided by hereditary feuds. She attempted to establish liberty, but only succeeded in paving the way for an Athenian form of tyranny which had genius for its excuse and the majority of the citizens for its accomplices. Yet amid these incessant struggles of Guelphs and Ghibellines, and in spite of continual disturbances, the work of elaboration was ever going on, and has been a cause of astonishment to all the historians of that period. In France the English invasion and intestine struggles had extinguished civil life, and had put back the progress of humanity; but in Tuscany the flower of the Renaissance grew and bloomed in blood, unfolding itself in all its beauty at the dawn of the fifteenth century. This was the second and most brilliant of the three periods: that which was adorned by Cosimo, Father of his Country, and by Lorenzo the Magnificent; by savants, such as Marcilio Ficino, Politian,

Pico della Mirandola, Cristoforo Landino, Baccio Ugoni, Rinuccini, and the two Acciajuoli; by artists, like Brunelleschi, Michelozzo Michelozzi, Donatello, Leo Battista Alberti; and by men of political genius, such as Leonardo Bruni Aretino, Machiavelli, and Carlo Marsuppini.

At the time of the siege of Florence (1530), the splendor of this period was at its apogee, but with the exception of Galileo, who was destined to discover fresh truths, all the great innovators were in their graves. Michael Angelo upon his bastion, fortifying Florence and defending San Miniato, is symbolic of the genius of Florence struggling for independence and freedom against Charles V. When the city opened her gates the Republic was doomed, and the days of her greatness were numbered with the past.

The sixteenth century was not a barren one. Tumultuous, full of life, and with a tendency to extremes, it was more turbulent than the fifteenth; and ever eager to learn, it gave birth to a vast number of works, devoid, however, of the ardent faith, the conscientiousness, and the infinite depth which marked the preceding era. John of Bologna, with his martial air, Benvenuto himself, who may be looked upon as a condottiere who had by some accident found his way into the career of Art, and who, for all his fine ways, was an artist to the core, with all the qualities and defects of his age, cannot make us forget the gentle Desiderio, the tender Mino, and Donatello, about

whose works there is always something novel, distinctive, and grandiose.

No one will feel surprised when I say that it is the second period, from the thirteenth century to the fall of the Republic, which has been the subject of my predilection. It seems to have come to be understood within the last twenty years that, with the exception of two or three great figures which are the synthesis of human genius, and which shed their lustre over the early part of the sixteenth century in Italy, humanity disclosed nearly all its secrets from the time of Dante to the death of Michael Angelo and of Leonardo da Vinci. While if contemporary chroniclers have exhausted all that there is to say concerning the great literary and philosophical characters, the history of Art is only just dawning. Benozzo Gozzoli, Lippi, Memmi, Pollaiuolo, Piero della Francesca, Botticelli, Baccio Baldini, Pisanello, Finiguerra, Benedetto da Maiano, Michelozzo, Desiderio, and their contemporaries have been but little known in modern times, and their works not familiar even in their native places.

The period which begins with the first Grand Duke of Tuscany, Cosimo I., and finishes with John Gaston, was not devoid of glory for Florence. If the individuals are less famous, and if a sovereign like Lorenzo the Magnificent is replaced by one plunged in crime like Cosimo, there was an impetus acquired, a traditional greatness, a flow of sap which con-

tinued to produce flowers and fruit. The last prince of this race had a glimmer of intellectual genius, a desire to learn, a spark of sacred fire, and a certain sense of what was due to posterity which induced him to bequeath to his country Art treasures testifying clearly to his magnificence, his judgment, and his taste. Now and again, even during its decline, may be seen some sudden flicker of the Florentine genius about to be extinguished; and the period of the decadence of Florence with the Academy of the Cimento would pass muster for the Renaissance of some benighted peoples.

The genius of Florence was incarnate in the Medici; it has therefore been necessary to write the history of these merchant princes, who had the honor of twice giving their name to the century in which they lived: with Cosimo and Lorenzo at Florence, and with Leo X. at Rome. After having related the history of the Medici, I have sketched the movement known as the Renaissance, endeavoring to explain why Italy was the country of its birth, and have comprised in this essay biographies, summary in their character but derived from the most trustworthy sources, of the leading personages in philosophy and literature.

The principal monuments of Florence give us an insight into her civil life, for at that period the characters of men were reflected with great distinctness in their works. In this remarkable city, where were

born all the great ideas upon which are based the glory, the prosperity, and the experience of modern society, the Palazzo Vecchio—to take only this one building, of which D'Azeglio has said that it is a magnificent preface to the annals of Florence—fittingly symbolizes, by its rugged exterior and splendid ornamentation within, the dual character of an epoch in which the body was hardy while the mind was refined and eager for knowledge. The history and art of Florence are in her streets; and to walk about her squares, and to visit her churches and palaces, is equivalent to reading the chronicles of the city from the twelfth to the sixteenth century.

Art necessarily occupied a large place at Florence, for the city was at once a museum and a temple. I have, therefore, treated the arts from their very beginning, that is the Etruscan period, to their decadence, in chronological order, describing the genius of each artist and the position which he held, rather than attempting to give his biography.

I do not retract what I said in my book on Venice, when I described the Frari, and the San Giovanni and Paolo monuments as the most splendid which had ever been erected to the memory of man, not even excepting those of the Vatican, of St. John Lateran, and of Santa Maria del Popolo: but while those at Florence, erected in the middle of the fifteenth century, are plainer and less pompous, they are more human and more touching, and Leopardi himself, with the in-



instincts of an artist, bent the knee to Desiderio and Donatello. Michael Angelo is more grandiose and inscrutable, stirring the imagination and inspiring a sort of religious terror with those enigmatic figures which seem to be carrying on in the obscurity of the tomb "the inward dream never to be completed;" but with all his genius he lacked the infinite candor, the angelic softness, and the exquisite chasteness of these sculptors of the fifteenth century. They remind us of Greece, where flowers were scattered over the graves, giving an impress of gentle repose and peace to death, and stripping it of its sinister characteristics. The philosopher and the cardinal whom Rosellino and Desiderio respectively have chiselled upon the marble sarcophagus seem to be sleeping peacefully, and their faces only reflect the calm and the beatitude of the blessed who know eternal truth.

I need not say that it is impossible to describe within the limits of this book the whole history of Florence, I can only endeavor to give the essence of it. Those who do not know the city may perhaps be tempted to visit her, while those who have been so fortunate as to dwell within her walls will, I venture to hope, be carried back in memory to her, and evolve from the darkness of recollection the living and bright reality.

As it was necessary to make a choice from a vast mass of matter, which would have filled ten volumes, I have divided the work into several sections, begin-

ning with the *History of Florence* and the *Renaissance Movement*, and going on to the *Notable Personages* and to *Art* itself. This is not the whole of Florence, but it gives, so to speak, the soul of the great city which has been the victim of one of the greatest historical movements of our day—the Unity of Italy.

Florence has a strong claim upon our affections, for she is the mother of all those to whom the intellect is more than the body; and her streets and palaces are a fruitful source of study and instruction. Rome is grander, and appeals more strongly to the imagination; Venice is more strange, more unique, more picturesque; but Florence is more indispensable than either of them to humanity. She has given birth to Dante, the divine poet; to Michael Angelo, the “man with four souls;” and to Galileo, the blind man who could read in the darkness the secrets of the universe. If Florence disappeared from off the surface of the globe the archives of human thought would lose their most famous documents, and the modern Latin race would go into mourning for its ancestors.

## CHAPTER I.

## HISTORY.

OF the many conflicting opinions as to the origin of Florence, the one which seems to have the greatest weight of evidence in its favor is that it is Etruscan, or at all events that it owed its creation to the *débris* of the last Etruscan cities conquered by the Romans. It absorbed those colonists whom the Greeks called Tyrrhenians, but whom the Romans named Tuscans, and who, three centuries before the foundation of Rome, established in the heart of the peninsula a powerful kingdom extending from Pisa to Tarquinium, between the shores of the Mediterranean and the foot of the Apennines. Although Machiavelli, in the first chapter of his "Storie Fiorentine," represents Florence as being a Roman colony, built by the cohorts of Sylla, modern science holds to the opinion that the town on the banks of the Arno was originally a city formed by emigrations from Fiesole, that cradle of so many artists, from whose heights the eye commands so grand a prospect.\*

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\* According to one account, Catiline after conspiring against Rome fled to Fiesole, whither the Romans, under the consuls

Sylla, the proconsul, embellished the city, but about the middle of the sixth century it suffered greatly at the hands of the Goths and Vandals, who descended at that time like a plague upon Italy. For about the space of two hundred years little or nothing is known of Florence, but during the comparative peace and order of Charlemagne's rule she once more emerged from obscurity and began to take a prominent place among the Roman colonies in Tuscany, of which, however, Pisa was at that time the most important.

In the year 1010 the hitherto rival cities of Florence and Fiesole formed an alliance, and the two coats of arms were blended to symbolize the union. Florence abandoned her white lily and Fiesole her blue half-moon, so that the new device was simply a shield divided in the middle, the red field of Florence occupying one side and the white field of Fiesole the other.\*

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Metello and Fiorino, followed and fought him. Fiorino was killed on the shores of the Arno, and Julius Cæsar, after avenging his death by laying siege to and destroying Fiesole, built a city on the spot on which he died, called Fiorenze, in memory of him. Another tradition makes the name a corruption of Fludentia, because it stands at the junction of the Arno and the Mugnone; while still another ascribes its origin to the great number of flowers which grow in that region.

“Alfine gli abitanti per memoria  
Porch 'era posta in un prato di fiori  
Le denno il nome bello onde s'ingloria.”

\* The lily, however, continues to this day to be used as the

The arms of the Republic underwent further changes at each great event in her history (although the standard displayed from the "Caroccio" in time of war was invariably the red and white field adopted in 1010). This accounts for the different coats of arms carved on the façades of some of her public buildings. We find, for instance, the word "*Libertas*" on a blue field, the device of the Priors of the Arts, which was adopted at the close of the twelfth century, when Florence threw off the imperial yoke. The golden keys crossed on a blue ground, bestowed on the city in 1265 by Clement IV. An eagle trampling

emblem of the city. There are various legends as to its origin. The most common one states that when the Florentines were being sore pressed by an army of Barbarians on Sta. Reparata's Day, October 8, 405, the saint suddenly appeared on the battlefield, holding in her hand a blood-red banner with a white lily on it, and turned the fortunes of the day. The Florentines, in grateful remembrance of this incident, adopted the white lily on a red ground as their coat of arms. Another account tells how in the days of Numa Pompilius a crimson shield fell from Heaven into Rome and was adopted as the "*insegna e arme*" of the city. The Romans subsequently bestowed this "*insegna*" upon all the cities founded by them, as Perugia, Florence, Pisa, and the Florentines, in allusion to Fiorino and the name of their city, added the white lily as an "*Intrasegna-insegna frapposta ad altra nel campo dell' arme gentilizie.*"—Villari *Chroniche*, p. 22.

In 1250 the red lily on a white field was adopted. When, the Guelphs having obtained the upper hand, the Ghibellines were driven out of the city, the latter retained the white lily, and added the double-headed eagle of the Empire.—See Dante, *Divine Comedy*, Paradiso, Cant. xvi.

a dragon under foot, also bestowed by Clement IV., the Guelphs adding the small golden lily later. The golden lilies on a blue field, with a golden file, adopted when Charles of Anjou assumed the government of the city in 1267. And the shield divided perpendicularly, with golden lilies on a blue field on one side, and red stripes on a golden field on the other, the arms of Robert of Anjou, King of Naples, appointed Lord of Florence in 1313.

During the last half of the eleventh century Florence was ruled by the Countess Matilda. This celebrated woman was the last representative of the powerful house of Canossa. Her mother, Beatrice of Lorraine, had inherited Tuscany, Liguria, part of Lombardy, Modena, and Ferrara, and Matilda, an ardent supporter of Hildebrand (Gregory VII.), put herself and her vast possessions at the disposal of the Pope, bequeathing everything she had to the Holy See at her death, which occurred in 1115. The Emperor denied her right so to dispose of her lands, claiming them as fiefs of the Empire, and thus a large part of Italy was drawn into the struggle between "those two halves of God, the Pope and the Emperor," which was destined to distract her for centuries, and convert that beautiful country into a vast battlefield. Florence, however, always keen and wary, contrived to hold aloof, and quietly occupied herself in strengthening her own hands and building up a system of self-government, so that in due course

of time she was able not only to resist the demands of the various imperial representatives sent to her by Henry IV. and Frederick Barbarossa, but to adopt a very independent tone in her dealings with the Popes themselves. As early, however, as 1177 civil discord broke out among her citizens. Many of the powerful nobles living in the neighboring country or "contado" had been subdued by the Commune, their castles destroyed, and they themselves forced to take up their abode in the city, where, for some time at least, they were excluded from the privileges of citizenship and all share in the Government. Thanks to this policy a strong "opposition" party was formed, composed of these immigrant nobles, several powerful families, with the Uberti at their head, who had been kept out of office, and all the other malcontents, from whatever cause, who happened to be in the city. They rose against the Government, and for two years the city was the scene of continuous broils and faction fights.

In 1184 Frederick Barbarossa, temporarily reconciled with the Holy See, visited the city in person. The nobles, who had gotten the worst of it in their struggle with the people, made a formal complaint to him, with the result that Florence, by way of punishment, was deprived for a short time of her jurisdiction over the "contado." Party feeling ran high, and it needed but a trifling incident to kindle into flames the smoldering embers of mutual distrust.

In the year 1215 a betrothal took place between a

member of the powerful family of Buondelmonte and a daughter of the Amadci. As the former was riding through the city one day he was suddenly accosted by a lady of the house of Donati, who reproached him bitterly for allowing himself to be drawn into an alliance in every way unworthy of him, declaring that she had always intended to bestow her own daughter upon him, having reserved her for this very purpose, and concluded by pointing out the maiden in question, who had followed her mother to the street. No sooner did the bridegroom-elect set eyes upon her than, captivated by her extraordinary beauty, he threw honor and prudence to the winds and announced his intention of marrying her forthwith. Great was the indignation of the Amadei when news of the insult reached them. A meeting was held of all the relatives and adherents of the family, who bound themselves by an oath to avenge the slight; and on Easter morning, lying in wait for the youthful bridegroom, they dragged him from his horse near the Ponte Vecchio and murdered him forthwith. The whole city at once flew to arms, those whose leanings were towards the Guelphs siding with the Buondelmonti, and the rest, forming a Ghibelline party, with the Amadei at its head. And thus were those names of evil omen imported into Florence, where they became the rallying cries in a struggle which century after century deluged the city with blood, led to the exile of the greatest of her



children, and made her an easy prey to foreign powers.\*

By the middle of the thirteenth century Florence, Pisa, Siena, Arezzo, and Pistoia were firmly established as independent communes, and Florence had engaged in numerous wars, directed chiefly against her neighbors, the Sienese, with whom, however, a treaty of peace was signed in 1235. In 1248 the Emperor Frederick II., who was carrying on a fierce struggle with Pope Innocent IV., treacherously incited the Ghibelline leaders—the Uberti—to rise, hoping to strengthen the Imperialists in Italy by stirring up party feuds. The Ghibellines were successful, and the Guelphs driven out, some taking refuge in the upper Valdarno and others intrenching themselves in the fortress of Capraia in the lower Valdarno, where the Ghibellines, aided by reinforcements sent by the Emperor, attacked and eventually overcame them. The Ghibellines, left in undisputed power, carried things with so high a hand that before long popular discontent broke out. As soon as the news of their discomfiture at Montevarchi, on October 20, 1250, reached Florence the people assembled, and meeting with little or no resistance, proceeded to

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\* Guelph was derived from Welf, and Ghibelline from Waiblingen, a castle belonging to the Emperor Conrad. They are said to have been first used in the battle of Weinsberg in 1140, in a struggle between the Welfs of Altdorf and the imperial line of Hohenstaufen.

establish a new form of Government. Thirty-six *Caporali di Popolo*—six for each of the six wards of the city—were appointed; a *Capitano del Popolo* to represent the people, as the Podestà\* became from henceforth more and more the accredited representative of the nobles, and, like him, appointed for but one year, and, to balance these two opposing parties in the Government, twelve *Anziana* (elders) *del Popolo*, two from each ward. The population was formed into a military organization under the command of the *Capitano*, the city being divided into twenty armed companies, each with its banner and Gonfaloniere; and the ringing of the bell hung in the Tower of the Lion, by the *Capitano*, was to be the signal for the people to assemble. This civil and military form of Government, so rapidly and quietly constructed and adopted by the Florentine people, was the foundation upon which was built the liberty and strength of the Republic.

The Ghibellines were cowed for the nonce, and the exiled Guelphs returned. For ten years the new Government lasted—a period of great prosperity, as witnessed by her rapid growth in wealth and power.

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\* The office of Podestà was created in the year 1207. The city was then governed by six consuls and a Senate, and with a view to obtaining impartiality in the administration of justice it was determined to appoint a "foreigner"—*i.e.*, some one from another city—to preside over the civil and criminal courts for the space of one year, with the title of Podestà, and full authority to convict, pass sentences, and execute judgments.

In 1252 the gold florin was first struck. Then came the disastrous battle of Montaperti—in September, 1260—when the Guelphs were utterly defeated by an army of Ghibellines collected at Siena by Farinata degli Uberti. So great was the slaughter that Dante speaks of it as having dyed the waters of the Arbia red.

“Che fece l'Arbia colorata in rosso.”

—Inferno, Canto x.

Florence came near paying with her very existence on that occasion for the discord she had let loose among her children, and to Farinata degli Uberti is due the honor of having saved her from total destruction, for when at the conference of the Ghibelline leaders, which took place at Empoli after the battle, it was suggested to raze the turbulent city to the ground, he alone of all present interposed in her behalf, and to such purpose that the infamous project was abandoned.

Another brief period of peace ensued, the people, excluded by the Ghibellines from all participation in public affairs, devoted their surplus energies to the extension of trade, and commerce received so marvellous an impetus that the foundations were laid of many great private fortunes, and the commonwealth increased enormously in wealth and importance. Manfred, the friend and ally of the Ghibellines, having been defeated and slain in February, 1266, the Guelphs began to reassert themselves, and by the

following November had managed to gain control of the city, from whence they sallied forth from time to time on victorious expeditions, directed against the surrounding cities, towns, and villages, where Ghibellines were known to have taken refuge.

In October, 1278, however, both parties having grown weary of strife, Pope Nicholas III. was requested to mediate between them, and accordingly dispatched Cardinal Latino to represent him, with the result that peace was concluded, and from henceforth the name of Ghibelline is but little heard in the annals of Florence. Then began a period of extraordinary prosperity; arts and industries flourished to a surprising extent, and Florence took the first place among all the Tuscan communes. Florentine merchants enjoyed the highest reputation for integrity throughout not only Italy, but the entire world. Magnificent buildings were erected by order of the commune, and also by private enterprise, while architecture, literature, and art were represented by such men as Arnolfo di Cambio, Dante, and Cimabue. After the death of Frederick II., in December, 1250, an interregnum had occurred in the Imperial succession, and when, in 1281, Rudolph of Hapsburgh endeavored to recall the Tuscan communes to their allegiance, it was found that they had grown completely beyond the Imperial control, while the Guelph party being pre-eminent, the support of the Pope could be relied upon.

Portrait of Dante from the Fresco in  
the Bargello

Giotto









In 1282 an important change was made in the form of government. Among other means taken by Cardinal Latino to establish a lasting peace between the factions had been the substitution of a body composed of fourteen citizens—eight Guelphs and six Ghibellines—for the *Anziani*. It was now enacted that *Priori delle Arti* should be selected, one by each guild, to be its president, and that three of these, that is, one from each of the three powerful Guilds of the Calimala, the money-changers, and the woollen-cloth merchants, should be appointed to be at the head of the Government. Before long the “fourteen” were abolished altogether and the priors increased to the number of six. The council thus formed was the nucleus of the celebrated body of the Signoria, the office of Gonfaloniere being created in 1293.

. In 1289 a great battle was fought at Campaldino, in which Florence and the Guelph Government achieved a signal victory over the Aretines, aided by exiled Ghibellines. Dante, then about twenty-four, took part in this battle, and Vieri de' Cerchi behaved with great gallantry.

The peace which now seemed to be so firmly established was, however, destined to be of short duration, and before long the old quarrel broke out with increased violence under new party names.

The most powerful family of Pistoia was at this time the Cancellieri, but these numerous descendants of a common ancestor, who had had two wives, had

quarrelled among themselves. The whole city was divided, those espousing one side taking the name of *Bianchi*, after one wife, and the others styling themselves *Neri*.

In 1300 Florence, thinking to mend matters, took the government of the distracted city into her own hands, and conceived the unfortunate idea of banishing the chiefs of both factions to Florence, with the result that all the friends and connections of the *Bianchi*, with Vieri de' Cerchi at their head, at once espoused their cause, while the *Neri* had as powerful a following, with Corso Donati for their leader. Thus was Florence once more torn by internal discord, the old Guelph party siding for the most part with the *Neri*, and the Ghibellines with the *Bianchi*. The former, fearing that the others were getting things too much into their own hands, determined to apply to Pope Boniface VIII. to settle the dispute. He accordingly summoned Vieri de' Cerchi to Rome, counselled him to become reconciled with his enemies—Messer Corso Donati in particular—and promised him his favor and protection if he would do so. But Vieri would have none of it, declared that he was not at enmity with anyone, and returned to Florence, leaving the Pope greatly incensed against him and his party. The so-called "Ordinances of Justice," instituted in 1293 by Giano della Bella, a powerful Guelph leader, only served to arouse opposition and discontent, being drastic measures directed chiefly

against the nobles of whatever party. The office of Gonfaloniere was created at the same time, as one of the means of enforcing the "ordinances."

A skirmish that occurred during the popular festivities on May Day, 1300, between the youths of both factions, set the whole city in an uproar. The Guelphs again applied to the Pope for aid, and Cardinal Acquasparta was sent to Florence in the quality of Papal Legate. In June, as the city guilds were going in procession, headed by their consuls, to the church of San Giovanni,—it being the eve of the festival of that saint,—a party of nobles belonging to the *Neri* suddenly attacked them, shouting, "We are the ones who gained the victory at Campaldino, and you are keeping us out of all the offices and emoluments of our city!" In order to quell the disturbances the Priors—Dante being one at that time—decided to banish for a certain period some of the leaders of each party. The *Bianchi* left at once, but the *Neri* resisted, and a plot was formed, with the connivance of the Legate, to introduce an armed force from Lucca into the city. The Signory, however, getting wind of it, put a stop to the whole thing, and forced the conspirators to leave. Whereupon the Legate, seeing no hope of establishing certain "reforms" in the government of the Republic, upon which he had set his heart, departed in dudgeon, and Florence was placed under a Papal interdict.

The Emperor Henry VII. died in 1313, but not-

withstanding this severe blow the Ghibelline party, under Ugucione dell' Fagginola, won the battle of Montecatini against the Florentines in 1315, and were again victorious in 1325 at Altopascio, under the notorious Castruccio Castracane of Lucca.

In 1342 the Florentines, feeling that affairs were in a very bad way indeed in their city, invited Gauthier de Brienne—styled Duke of Athens by reason of some shadowy claim to that title—to hold the office of Captain and Protector of the People for one year, and also to be Captain-General. The duke was given the same salary, privileges, and authority as his predecessor, but showed himself to be such a tyrant and despot that before many weeks had elapsed the Florentines were anxious to be rid of him. This, however, proved no easy matter, and it was not until he had held office nearly a year and a number of plots against his life had been defeated that he and his supporters were finally driven out.

The absence of any one holding supreme authority led to a renewal of popular agitation, and the form of government was continually changing, first the people, and then the nobles getting the upper hand—the *Grandi* and the *Popolani*, or the *Popolo grasso* and the *popolo minuto*.

In the midst of all these troubles a terrible scourge fell upon Florence. In 1348 the plague coming from the East ravaged the city, destroying, according to Machiavelli, a hundred thousand persons, and indi-

rectly inspiring Boccaccio with a work which is generally looked upon as his masterpiece. A body called the "*Capitani di Parte Guelfa*" had been instituted in 1267, and had gradually come to wield an almost unlimited power, two leading families, the Albizzi and the Ricci, being rivals for the foremost places in it; and we find Salvestro de' Medici now appearing in the office of Gonfalonier, and as the favorite and leader of the people.

By the spring of 1378 the tyranny of the rulers had become intolerable, the popular discontent waxed greater and greater, finally culminating in the outbreak termed the "*Ciompi Revolution*," in allusion to the *ciompi*—wooden shoes—worn by the artisans who took part in it. Before the close of July the people had gained their ends. Michele di Lando, a wool comber, who for about the space of twenty-four hours had absolute control of the Government, used his authority to hold an election of members for a new Signory, and enforce other measures by which order was restored.

The fifty years that elapsed between these events and the rise of the Medici family to power were at once stormy and brilliant. When the inevitable reaction against the popular government came, the Albizzi succeeded in obtaining the ascendancy, and in 1382 their long oligarchical government began. There was, as a matter of course, plenty of civil strife, but with it all Florence succeeded in carrying

on foreign wars of aggression, in enlarging her territory, and in increasing her commerce. The prevailing system of taxation was, however, a cause of great discontent, especially among the lower classes, on whom it bore most heavily. When at last, through the efforts of Giovanni de' Medici, a reform was effected in 1427 the gratitude of the people knew no bounds, and the foundation was laid of that influence and popularity upon which the Medici family afterwards built up their enormous power.

From the death of Giovanni, which occurred in February, 1429, up to within a few years of the fall of the Republic—a period covering about a hundred years—the history of Florence is practically the history of the Medici family, which I am about to trace from its origin to the height of its greatness, and its final decline.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE MEDICI.

THE origin of the Medici is purely Florentine. As early as 1215 we find a certain Buonagiunta de' Medici appearing as one of the councillors, and the name constantly reappears in the annals of that early period. The first, however, to occupy a prominent place in history, and rise high enough above the level of his fellow-citizens to foreshadow that this merchant family was destined to give Tuscany her future sovereigns, was Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici, whose election in 1421 to the office of Gonfaloniere, while it caused much satisfaction among the people, did not fail to arouse great uneasiness among the rulers. Niccolo da Uzzano pointed out clearly to his associates the danger of thus placing power in the hands of one who not only came from a prominent and ambitious family, but himself possessed wealth and mental attainments far above the ordinary. Giovanni was, however, far too sagacious a man to endanger his position by any overt act. He kept his ambition in check, devoted himself to the accumulation of enormous wealth, effected a reform in the method of taxation—being the author of the famous Catasta

—and died, deeply regretted by all classes, on the 28th of February, 1428.

Machiavelli has left a portrait of him which all writers of history have accepted. He was very charitable, seeking out the poor in order to relieve them. Affable to all men, he was never a candidate for posts of honor, and yet they were showered upon him. He was only to be seen at the Government palace at such times when the public weal demanded his presence. Of a pacific disposition, he did all in his power to avoid war. Careful of the public money, his main object was to increase the revenues of the State. In public office he distinguished himself by his benevolence. Without being absolutely eloquent, he was gifted with rare intelligence. Sedate and even melancholy in appearance, he was amiable and cheerful in his relations with others. Born in 1360, he was twice elected Prior, once Gonfaloniere, and once a member of the War Council of Ten. He was married to Piccarda Bueri, by whom he had two sons, Cosimo and Lorenzo. He lived to see these two sons grow up and develop habits of great activity, both mental and physical, and to find that, while liberal and generous, they sought to increase the family inheritance and make it useful to the State.

At his death Giovanni was interred in the sacristy of the Basilica of San Lorenzo, which he had employed Brunelleschi to restore at his expense. He had not, however, the satisfaction of witnessing the



completion of this edifice, which was to be the pantheon of his family, though the work was carried on by his two sons. His tomb is situated in the centre of the Sagrestia Vecchia, where, five years later, his wife was laid beside him. It is only after looking through all the original correspondence of these merchant princes, as I have done, that one can appreciate their lofty intellect, their flexibility, and varied attainments. There was nothing doing in their day in which they had not some share, or which came foreign to them, whether war, public office, diplomacy, politics, art, or literature; and, above all, they were endowed—gifted politicians that they were—with peculiar affability towards men of low degree, did they but possess any real merit.

Warmth of heart and the power to kindle enthusiasm in others were their special attributes, as may be gathered from passages in some of the letters still preserved in the “Archivio di Stato” of Florence, under the title “Lettere Innanzi il Principato.”

#### COSIMO THE ELDER.

During his father's lifetime Cosimo had taken part in public affairs while still engaged in the business of his house, and as he had a reputation for unusual intelligence, combined with rare prudence, he was on several occasions selected to undertake the most delicate missions, as, for instance, when he represented the Republic of Florence at the Council of Constance,

when the claims of Baldassare Cossa—John XXIII.—to the Papacy were set aside. There is a curious incident in this connection which testifies to the proud attitude assumed by the Republic towards the great powers, including the greatest of them all—the Papacy. After his deposal by the Council, Cossa fled in disguise—it is said accompanied by Cosimo—but having been discovered and taken, he was confined by order of the Council, in Heidelberg Castle, where he would no doubt have remained for the rest of his life had he not paid a large sum of money as a ransom and promised to do homage to his rival on his knees. This ceremony took place in Florence with much pomp and circumstance. Martin V. then restoring him to favor, he was appointed Cardinal-Bishop of Frascati and permitted to pass the brief remainder of his days in peace at Florence, where his death occurred in January, 1418. Donatello and Michelozzo Michelozzi were instructed to erect a tomb worthy of one who had been “Pope and prisoner of a Pope.” A splendid monument was accordingly raised, which may still be seen, in the Baptistery of San Giovanni, on the right of the high altar. But the inscription provoked the wrath of Pope Martin, who had never quite forgiven the Florentines for a doggerel about himself which the little boys had shouted through the streets on the occasion of his last visit, and he imperiously demanded that the words “quondam papa” should be erased, to which the

Signory returned the disdainful reply : “ Quod scripsi scripsi.” It is sometimes alleged that Pope John, out of gratitude for the many services rendered him by Giovanni and Cosimo de’ Medici, bequeathed them large sums at his death, but this has been disproved by the publication of the Medicean Archives, among which are documents showing that the Pontiff actually died in debt to the house of Medici.\*

Giovanni lived long enough to initiate his sons into public life, but Cosimo ranked higher than his father, and laid the foundation of the fame of his family. He married the daughter of Count Bardi, and when he became head of the house his influence and credit increased every day. He did not exercise any official authority in the strict sense of the term, but that moral supremacy, to which the public gave voluntary adhesion, and which became the hereditary privilege of this illustrious family, was in his case very marked.

The Government at that time consisted of a Council of Priors, presided over by a Gonfaloniere, appointed for a period of only two months, in order that power might not remain permanently in the hands of any one party. This precaution against tyranny was rendered useless, if not by the devices of the Medici, at all events by the extraordinary influence which they exercised over the masses. They had so multi-

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\* See Archivio Storico Italiano. (Vol. iv., page 433, Documenti, i., ii., and iii.)—Napier’s Florentine Hist.

plied their good deeds, had made such an intelligent use of their wealth, and had managed their patronage so well, that every one felt his hands to be tied, and unconsciously, perhaps, surrendered at discretion. With this class the public weal was identified with the private interests of the Medici. If at the elections Cosimo, Lorenzo, and their children, nephews, and more distant relatives did not gain the vote for themselves, partisans of their family were returned. In course of time a powerful party of the Florentines came to look upon the Medici as the natural depositaries of power, as a nursery garden of politicians indispensable to the public welfare.

It will easily be understood that they had made many enemies, and Rinaldo degli Albizzi, who was leader of the opposite faction, contrived in the autumn of 1433 to obtain control of the Signory about entering into office, so that on September 7th Cosimo was cited to appear before that body at the palace. Acting against the advice of his friends he obeyed the summons, and was forthwith consigned to a prison within the walls of that building.

The historian who resides at Florence, and the man of the world who always likes to compare monuments with history, and to see if documents tally with oral statements, may still picture to themselves, by visiting in the tower of the Old Palace the prison called the Alberghettino, the scene which was enacted there in 1433, when Cosimo, placed under the charge

of Federico Malvolti, exchanged the splendor of his father's palace for the gloomy and confined residence to which he was consigned by his enemies. Machiavelli says that, for fear of being poisoned, the son of Giovanni, who was soon to be called the "Father of his Country," refused all food for four days, and subsisted on a crust of bread.

He was shortly afterwards banished, taking refuge first at Padua and afterwards at Venice. He was not the only victim of the Signory, his brother Lorenzo, with all the other Medici and their principal partisans, being likewise obliged to leave Florence.

Cosimo was at that time forty-six years of age, and we know that during his exile he interested himself in art, science, and literature, and that while at Venice he applied to some of the eminent artists who were destined to become illustrious in his service for designs for the buildings which he purposed some day to erect. It was evident that in exiling him the Florentines wished to get rid of a citizen whom they deemed too powerful, and that, as in the case of Aristides, they were tired of hearing him called the Just. This was only a prudent step, no doubt, on the part of those who were anxious to preserve the Republican form of government; but the people are always ready to accept a certain degree of servitude, and are easily aroused to enthusiasm for those who seem born to command. Before a year had elapsed

they began to murmur and demand the recall of Cosimo, who had not conspired against his country, and who, while in exile, still sought to embellish and to render it more prosperous. Pope Eugenius, then at Florence, threw the weight of his influence in with the Medician party, and by the force of the reaction—which is one of the characteristic features of popular government—Cosimo was recalled. Then was witnessed the singular spectacle of a whole city going out to greet one who was neither a conqueror nor a chosen ruler, but merely a man who had peacefully exercised a constant influence, and whose moral authority, not guarded by any decree or law, was as effectual as any recognized and legal power.

From this time forth the Republic ceased to exist in reality, though not in name, for that was maintained for a long time, Cosimo being styled the Father of his Country; but the Medici dynasty was practically established, and the people paid willing obedience to a family whose “manifest destiny” was so plainly indicated. The date of their return (1434) marks virtually the end of the Republican epoch.

Cosimo was then in his prime, and he lived for thirty years after his return from exile. Reading with care the history of Florence, it will be seen that these thirty years were the most prolific in regard to intellectual culture and the development of art. Lorenzo the Magnificent reaped the harvest, but history must ascribe the merit of it to Cosimo the Elder.

The mere recollection of this memorable epoch makes the heart beat faster, and the hand which would fain depict it cannot but tremble. One must go back to the days of Pericles to find so lofty a flight in every branch of literature, science, and art. Countless books have been written about the Renaissance, and no effort has been spared to trace out its origins, and to show by what combination of circumstances this sublime efflorescence of human genius was brought about. There are indeed apparent and immediate causes, but the movement had been long in preparation, and the two preceding centuries remarkably rich in artistic productions.

Cosimo, besides those literary tastes which led him to gather around him the greatest thinkers, philosophers, and poets of his day, also took a strong interest in architecture, and had a practical knowledge of art; it is to him that we owe San Lorenzo, the church and convent of St. Mark, the monastery of San Verdiana, the monastery of San Gerolamo upon the heights of Fiesole, where the Gerolamite hermits assembled, until it was suppressed by Clement IX., and the abbey of San Bartolomeo and San Romolo for the canons of the Lateran. At Mugello, his favorite residence until Careggi was built, he reconstructed from its very foundations the convent of Bosco a Prati, and in each of these religious houses he took care that there was a library of MSS. Countless was the number of private chapels built at his expense, such as the

Noviziato at Santa Croce ; and those in the convent of Agnoli belonging to the Camalduli Fathers ; in the church of the Servi ; and that of San Miniato al Monte. When to these are added the gift of all the ornaments, furniture, and utensils necessary for celebrating public worship, it will be seen what immense wealth the house of Medici must have possessed.

Giovanni himself lived in great state, but his son outdid him in splendor. San Tommaso in Mercato, the first residence of the Medici, was abandoned for the splendid palace in the Via Larga. During his lifetime he had four summer residences in the neighborhood of Florence : Careggi, which still exists, Fiesole, Cafaggiuolo, and Trebbio. He kept up the state of a prince rather than of a private individual, and his charities were far reaching, for he founded an asylum at Jerusalem for needy pilgrims, and employed his leisure time while exiled at Venice in founding a library of MSS. in the monastery of the canons of San Giorgio.

All the subsequent doings of the Medici are well known, and I have had in my hand the account-books of the expenses of all these buildings ; these historic documents, which are now of great value, being preserved in the State archives of Florence. They are called the "Libro di Ragione," and it was in them that the steward kept a debtor and creditor account of all that he paid and received. During the lifetime of Giovanni alone the expenditure under this



head amounted to five hundred thousand gold crowns, and even this enormous sum did not make any appreciable difference in the ever-growing fortune of the house. It will, of course, be well understood that Giovanni himself, the founder of the house, did not amass all this wealth, his inheritance from his father being a very considerable one; but his business as a money-changer, carried on upon an immense scale, had increased it very much. As far back as the fourteenth century the Medici had sixteen counting-houses in different cities of Europe, and they had also contracted for the taxes and excise of the Republic, so that a very large profit accrued from all these transactions, conducted with a scrupulous honesty which had established their credit upon very solid foundations. Moreover, they carried on a banking business, and it was to these operations—not always very profitable, because they sometimes lent money to those of their fellow-citizens who could not pay the interest, or even what they had borrowed—that they owed their immense popularity. This generosity may, however, not have been wholly disinterested, and several contemporary writers, Varchi among them, have denounced their liberality as being all a sham, and have said that Giovanni founded the influence of his family upon corruption, and bought his way to supreme power.

Be this as it may, Giovanni and his two sons became bankers to kings, and lent money to sovereigns

who sought to possess themselves of dominion. Edward IV. always said that it was thanks to them that he wore the crown of England.

For such a man as Cosimo, with children worthy of himself—animated by a liberal and generous spirit, a warm-hearted and intelligent patron of arts, science, and letters, circumspect and daring by turn, as occasion requires—there need be no limit to success. He possessed, moreover, that most powerful of all engines for travelling along the road to power—boundless wealth. The name of Medici, like that of Mæcenas, became in future ages the synonym for an enlightened patron of literature; and if this family did not absolutely initiate the extraordinary movement which, starting from Florence, spread throughout Italy, they supported it with such ardor and profound conviction that they gave their name to the century, so that one now speaks of the “age of the Medici” as of the “age of Pericles.”

Cosimo, in his position, might, had he so desired, have espoused some Italian princess, or even the daughter of a sovereign house; but he had the tact to marry a Florentine, the daughter of Count Bardi; and he adopted the same course with his children, marrying his eldest son Piero to Lucrezia Tornabuoni, and his other son, Giovanni, to Cornelia degli Alessandri. His brother Lorenzo died comparatively young, without having occupied a very prominent place in the State; but as he left a son, Piero Fran-

cisco de' Medici, the family divided into two branches—the elder, of which Cosimo the Father of his Country was the head, and the younger, issuing from Lorenzo, second son of Giovanni Averardo di Bicci.

It was Cosimo who built the Medici Palace, now called the Riccardi Palace, as a family residence. Machiavelli has described his death in the villa at Careggi, and has left a flattering portrait which brings out the principal traits in his character. After enumerating his endowments, his undertakings, and splendor of life, he praises him for having always preserved, both in public and private, so simple a demeanor that he might easily have been mistaken for the humblest of his fellow-citizens. He led for the most part a very laborious life, but during his latter years allowed himself some mental relaxation, and leaving the management of his business to the Tornabuoni, the Benci, the Portinari, and the Sassetti, whose fortunes he had made, surrounded himself with men of letters, and artists. He was the personal friend of Donatello and Michelozzo, of Marcilio Ficino, of Cristoforo Landino, of Giovanni Cavalcanti, of Bartolomeo and Filippo Valori, of Baccio Ugolini, of Giovanni, Pico, and of Leone Battista Alberti.

He had not, it may be admitted, the high intellectual culture of Lorenzo the Magnificent, but it was enough for a Medici to be, as regards comprehension and enthusiasm, on a level with those who produce

and create. Moreover there are extant letters of Cosimo the Elder which show that he was an ardent student. In one of these he writes to Marcilio Ficino : "I came to Careggi yesterday as much for the purpose of improving my land as of benefiting myself. Come to see me as soon as you possibly can, and do not forget to bring with you divine Plato's treatise on 'The Sovereign Good.' You ought ere this to have translated it into Latin. There is no research to which I would devote myself more zealously than to that of truth. Come, then, and bring with you the Orphean lyre."

This is not the only proof of his enthusiasm for literature. In the shrubberies and woods of Careggi he spent the hottest hours of the day in learned discussion with the great writers and philosophers whose names we have quoted. A profound admirer of Gemistas Plethon, the Greek philosopher who upheld the doctrines of Plato, and whose tomb I discovered at Rimini, Cosimo determined to found a Platonician school, and he placed at the head of it Marcilio Ficino, a man of profound intellect, a great thinker, a great writer, and a Christian philosopher, who declared that the proofs of the Divinity were to be found among the pagans, as the Fathers of the Church in his day were not sound. Marcilio was the son of Cosimo's physician ; and beneath the trees of Careggi, and in the rooms of that summer residence, there assembled an areopagus composed of the human-

ists who paved the way for the literary Renaissance in Italy.

The death of Cosimo the Elder was very touching. He had been unhappy in his private life, for Giovanni, the son whom he liked best, had died young, and Piero, nicknamed *Gottoso*—so deformed and debilitated was he by gout—became too infirm to bear the burden of public affairs. Cosimo, therefore, found his sole consolation in literature. Still, he lived to see his grandson Lorenzo, the son of Piero, grow up, and at the age of sixteen this lad showed signs of the ability which made him the greatest man of his day. Cosimo, however, never got over the death of Giovanni, and as he was being carried one day in his chair through the magnificent rooms of the Riccardi Palace he was heard to murmur, “Too large a house for so small a family.” Cosimo died on the 1st of August, 1464, at Careggi, just outside Florence, and he was buried in the basilica of San Lorenzo, at the foot of a marble column. The traveller who visits the church and pauses before the high altar will be standing upon a circle of inlaid marble bearing the inscription, “Cosmus Medices—Hic Situs est—Decreto Publico—Pater Patriæ.”

PIERO I. (NICKNAMED THE GOUTY.)

(1416–1469.)

Piero the Gouty, who was never popular, survived his father five years, and died at the age of fifty-

three, his ill-health preventing him from taking an active part in public affairs. As his brothers Carlo and Giovanni had predeceased him, the only brilliant representative of the race of the Medici was his son, Lorenzo, who gave early promise of his distinguished abilities. At Cosimo's death Piero on the advice of Diotisalvi Neroni, a trusted friend and councillor of his father, took a step which made him very unpopular. He had a list of his debtors made out, and sought to recover the sums standing against their names, but as Cosimo had never claimed these moneys, which in many cases had been advanced without any intention of having them repaid, his right was called in question and his popularity gone. For all that he was a thorough Medici, and in many respects a very interesting character. Following the example of Cosimo, he retained the services of Marcilio Ficino, and published at his own expense the five volumes of Plato which the latter had translated into Latin. It should be borne in mind, too, that he founded a chair, in which Marcilio gave lectures on the great Greek philosopher to large and enthusiastic audiences. There was quite a fever for study, and it is difficult for us, absorbed as we are in the commonplaces of politics and in the dreary round which dampens all generous ideas and extinguishes all noble aspirations, to conceive the enthusiasm which took possession of the people of Florence. Marcilio Ficino suspended before the bust of Plato, as above the altar

of a church, a lighted lamp. Francesco Sacchetti tells us that on one occasion an admirer of Dante took the tapers which were burning upon the altar of the crucifix, and placed them before the poet's bust, saying, "Accept them, for you are more worthy of them than He." The whole city was a prey to delirium, but delirium of a most generous kind.

Boccaccio was the earliest reader of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in the original, and he translated them into Latin with the assistance of a Greek residing in Calabria. Petrarch, who did not know Greek, but who had read the Latin translation, preserved the originals as a relic. The movement in favor of Hellenism was started by the Greeks who came to the Council of Florence, and Piero's son vulgarized the poets and historians of antiquity by forming the famous library of manuscripts which in course of time became the "Laurentiana."

During the reign of Cosimo the Elder, Niccolo Niccoli spent all his fortune in purchasing manuscripts, and Cosimo, remarking how well versed he was in antiquities, took him into his employ, and opened a credit to enable him to buy whatever seemed to him worth having. It was he who discovered the remaining works of Ammianus Marcellinus, Cicero's "de Oratore," and the *Lubeca Pliny*. He had converted his house into a public library, and any one was allowed to go in and read, copy, or translate, while those who wanted advice on any

point connected with their studies received all the assistance in his power. At his death he left eight hundred manuscripts, valued at eight thousand gold florins, which Cosimo, with his usual liberality, purchased and presented to the monastery of San Marco, which occupies so prominent a place in the history of Florence. By his wife Lucrezia Tornabuoni, Piero had two sons, Lorenzo and Giuliano, and by his own express desire he was buried without pomp in the Sagrestia Vecchia of San Lorenzo. His sons Lorenzo surnamed the Magnificent, and Giuliano, built him a superb tomb near the entrance to the Lady Chapel. Andrea Verocchio, the sculptor of the equestrian statue of Colleoni\* and the "Child and the Dolphin," was employed on its execution. It consists of a porphyry sarcophagus resting upon a marble slab supported by bronze tortoises, and decorated with foliage of the most exquisite workmanship.

#### LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT.

(1448-1492.)

Camilla Lucrezia Tornabuoni, the mother of Lorenzo the Magnificent son of Piero, has left behind her a reputation for great prudence, resolution, and dignity, some of the stories which are related of her reminding one of the mother of the Gracchi. She was as highly educated as any woman of her time, and

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\* See chapter on Verrochio.



the number of works dedicated to her prove how much interest she took in literature. Piero and she had selected, as tutor for their son Lorenzo, Gentile of Urbino, afterwards Bishop of Arezzo. He was succeeded by Cristofero Landino; and Argyropulus, a learned Hellenist who had taken refuge at Florence after the fall of Constantinople, taught the boy Greek and the philosophy of Aristotle. Marcilio Ficino, the friend of his father and the son of his grandfather's physician, instructed him in the doctrines of Plato.

The precocity of Lorenzo had struck every one, and at the age of sixteen he was so intimately versed in political affairs that he was deemed ripe for a diplomatic mission. He was first sent to Pisa, to receive Frederick, son of Ferdinand King of Naples; then to Rome, where Pope Paul II. took a great fancy to him; to Bologna, in order to strengthen the ancient alliance between Florence and the Bentivoglios; to Ferrara, in order to gain over the Este family; to Milan, where he stood godfather to a son of Duke Galeazzo Sforza; and to Venice, where he kept himself informed as to the doings of the Republic, which was always ready to take hostile action against Florence. In 1466 a conspiracy formed against him and his father, who was to have been put to death while being carried in his litter from Careggi to Florence, was discovered and crushed, some assert through the vigilance of Lorenzo. Acciaiuoli and Diotisalvi Ne-

roni at once fled, and the rest of the conspirators being exiled, fined, or admonished, the Medician party was left in complete power. On the death of Piero there followed a comparatively peaceful epoch of development for arts and literature. Lorenzo was at the head of this movement, forming his magnificent collections and founding libraries. Always surrounded by the leading personages of the time, he devoted all his leisure to literary pursuits, and it was at this period that he carried on those discussions in the woods of the Camaldulæ with Cristoforo Landino, Rinuccini, the two Acciajoli, Leo Battista Alberti, and Marcilio Ficino, anent the charms of a contemplative life, which gave rise to the *Disputationes Camaldulenses* of Landino.

Full of enthusiasm for literature, Lorenzo was himself the author of numerous sonnets, odes, religious and other poems of sufficient merit to place him among the foremost poetical writers of his day. His *Canti Carnavaleshi* are sometimes called the earliest examples of the modern satire in the Italian language. He was very partial to what were then called "triumphal displays," the various tableaux in which were designed by himself, and the execution intrusted to the greatest artists of the day. No pains were spared to make these fleeting representations, in which antiquity was revived for an hour, as perfect as possible. The painters decorated the chariots and designed the costumes, the sculptors had the modelling

of the groups, horses were caparisoned in the skins of lions, tigers, or elephants, beautiful women were adorned with the emblems of the pagan divinities, and poets commented on these compositions, and described the figures in the triumphal processions. Parts in it were taken by such men as Alemanni, Ruccelai, and Nardi; and a Medici or a Strozzi would spend fabulous sums in converting his fancy into reality for an hour. The corporations, at that time so powerful, united in the effort to make these "triumphs" succeed, and men learned in antiquity, like Politian and Marcilio Ficino, were asked to do their part towards gratifying the partiality of the Florentine people for these allegories.

I have searched in vain for some pictorial record of the wonderful fêtes given by the Medici and other wealthy citizens of their day; but the art of engraving, by which they might have been preserved to us, was not then in existence. It was not until the close of the fifteenth century that a few painters, whose very names have been forgotten, began to reproduce on canvas contemporaneous events; these pictures, which enable us to form an accurate idea of the costumes and festivals of the time, and of Florentine life in the fifteenth century, being very scarce. It is only in Paolo Ucello, or upon the marriage caskets, of which South Kensington Museum possesses a fine collection, that we catch a few glimpses of what public and private life was at that period. We know by

a casket in the Academy of Fine Arts at Florence what an aristocratic wedding was like, and the frescoes by Benozzo Gozzoli in the Riccardi Palace enable us to form an opinion of the deportment of the day ; but a plastic record of life in Florence anterior to 1450 is rarely to be met with. The only insight into the inner ways of the inhabitants is that which is to be gained from the manuscripts of the beginning of the century, the embossed reliefs on caskets, and a few rare specimens of contemporary art. With these exceptions all is antique. Piero della Francesca, Pisanello, Pollaiuolo, Paolo Ucello, Benozzo Gozzoli, and Matteo da Pasti have recorded with chisel, pen, or brush some incidents of every-day life, trifling at that time, but of surpassing interest now ; and this is all we know. Botticelli, Lippi, and Memmi, engrossed in allegorical studies, tell us nothing of their own time, closely as their style is identified with it.

We are more fortunate as regards literature, though without illustrations to accompany them the many narratives of these contemporary writers carry little meaning with them, interesting as are the works of Boccaccio, Francesco Sacchetti, Jacobo Passavanti, Giovanni Villani, Poggio Bracciolini, and Niccolo Niccoli.

The sixteenth century abounds in documents, and there are as many as twenty illustrated works representing festivals and "triumphs." Yet, interesting as these are, they have not the raciness of the fif-

teenth century, and one cannot help regretting that it is impossible to convey a precise idea of the singular customs which then prevailed.

The narrative of a Florentine triumph, designed by Andrea Dazzi—reader of Greek and Latin to the academy of the city—the cost of which was borne by the Del Diamante Company, is still extant. Dazzi suggested three chariots representing Youth, Manhood, and Old Age. The artists who designed the chariots were Raffaello delle Vivole, La Carota, and Andrea del Sarto; while the costumes and figures were designed by Piero da Vinci, the father of Leonardo, and Bernardino di Giordano. The first chariot bore the motto: “We shall be;” the second, “We are;” the third, “We have been.”

Lorenzo the Magnificent, like all the citizens of that day, belonged to a corporation; he was president of his, the “Broncone,” and he commissioned Japo Nardi, a very learned man, to design him six chariots, so that the festival might be a more imposing one.

Pontormo was the painter who executed this design. The first chariot, drawn by oxen, represented the Golden Age with Saturn, Janus, the double-faced, seated in front of the Temple of War, the door of which was closed, holding the key of the temple, and trampling Discord under foot; then came semi-nude shepherds crowned with flowers, mounted on tigers and lions. Then came Numa carrying the religious

books, all the orders of priesthood, the augurs, the haruspices, and all the pagan liturgy, with the material for offering up sacrifices.

Titus Manlius Torquatus followed upon a triumphal car drawn by eight horses, preceded by senators with lictors and fasces. Behind him Julius Cæsar triumphant, in a car drawn by elephants, surrounded by all the imperial court, and followed by the peoples whom he had vanquished. Cæsar Augustus represented in the cortège the "Triumph of the Poets," some of whom, crowned with laurel and mounted upon winged horses, personified their native province, while each carried the works he had composed. The sixth car was that of the Emperor Trajan, accompanied by the doctors of the law and the imperial legislators. The car of the Golden Age, carved by Baccio Bandinelli, brought up the rear. Lastly, upon a golden terrestrial sphere, a figure representing Discord was writhing in convulsions; while a naked infant, glittering with gold, represented the Youth of the nascent Golden Age. The chronicler adds that this beautiful child, the son of a baker, who had doubtless served as a model for some of Donatello's and Desiderio da Settignano's sculptures on the tombs in Santa Croce, caught cold and died soon afterwards.

Upon another occasion Lorenzo the Magnificent celebrated the "Triumph of Bacchus;" but the only description of this masquerade we have is the lines which he composed for the occasion, his theme being,

“Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.” The *canti carnavaleschi* of that day, it may be stated, were very often full of buffoonery and ribaldry.

The Florentine people were never tired of these festivals, and every variety of subject was brought into requisition. On one occasion a group of artists, who were in a gloomy vein, after having celebrated the “Triumph of Life,” determined to represent the “Triumph of Death.” In the midst of the carnival, when all was joy and mirth, and the streets and balconies were filled with eager spectators, a chariot, painted black, with death’s heads and cross-bones picked out in white, and drawn by black buffaloes, was paraded through the streets, a black skeleton, with a scythe in its bony hands, being enthroned upon coffins. The chariot halted at each street corner, and a suite of mourners and lugubrious phantom figures chanted in a mournful key to the accompaniment of funeral trumpets :

“Fummo gia come voi siete :  
Voi sarete come noi :  
Morti siam come vedete :  
Cosi morti vedrem voi.”

“We were as you are, you will be as we are ; and as you see us dead, so shall we see you dead.” It may easily be imagined what consternation and terror this caused the timid women and children in the crowd, while the more sceptical indulged in sinister jokes.

Vasari has given a long description of this singular device, the invention of which he ascribes to Piero de' Medici, the father of Lorenzo. It was Pontormo, once more, who was commissioned to design the chariot, which, in order to lend more reality to the scene, was followed by a number of men (supposed to be dead) on horseback, the leanest and the most cadaverous-looking that could be found having been selected for the occasion. These were followed by naked mutes, carrying a torch in one hand, and in the other a large standard with skull and cross-bones.

Vasari was himself intrusted with the preparations for another "triumph," all the details of which, including the monuments and temporary altars, the chariots, the allegorical figures and the dresses, were designed by him. All his original drawings have been preserved in an album, which is in the print-room of the Uffizi Gallery, where I recently examined it in the company of Chevalier Carlo Pini, the librarian, whose premature death has been so universally regretted. Lorenzo was unquestionably the greatest of the Medici family, the true Mæcenas of his day, and even before the "Principato," when only called as first citizen to fill a post from which he could at any moment be displaced, he put himself at the head of the intellectual movement, and became the centre and the protector of art and literature. He was the intimate friend of Donatello and Michelozzo Michelozzi, and by their advice formed unrivalled collec-



tions of pictures, statuary, antique stones, gems, goldsmith's work, and sumptuous furniture, fitting out the Riccardi Palace with the most valuable and most perfect specimens of each. Every article in this collection bore either his arms or his initials. There are porphyry vases now in the possession of Baron Davilliers of Paris which unquestionably formed part of it.

Passionately fond of architecture, Lorenzo worked himself with the most noted architects of his day, and they always found his opinions worth listening to. He was equally zealous in the cause of literature, and founded, first at San Marco and afterwards at San Lorenzo, a school of copyists, whose duty it was to reproduce ancient manuscripts. The Laurentian Library, designed by Michael Angelo, and added to by Vasari, is a witness to the zeal of the Medici for the advancement of learning.

Lorenzo spared no effort to gather around him learned men of all countries. He reopened the University of Pisa, paid the professors, took upon himself the cost of additional buildings, provided them with books, and dispatched Giovanni Lascari to the East with an unlimited credit to make fresh purchases. It was a plain citizen who did all this, and it seemed as if the whole of Florence was centred in his person. Strange to say, ambassadors were accredited to him as to a sovereign, even when he was only an individual member of the Council of State ;

and a hundred different circumstances combined to increase his personal authority, which made itself felt as a mere matter of course. The Emperor of Germany; King John II. of Portugal; that great patron of literature, Matthias Corvin; and Louis XI. himself, that astute politician and prince, who paved the way for French unity by his abasement of the feudal lords, corresponded with him, it may be said, as with an equal, for he received, without any intermediary, their ambassadors and their messages. I have examined, in the State archives of Florence, all the letters which go to make up the Medici *Carteggio* before and after the "Principato," and it is most instructive to see in what familiar terms the highest personages in human history carried on discussions with a private individual.

The historian Guicciardini has left a description of Florence in the prosperous year of 1490, when the city, in the enjoyment of peace under the tranquil rule of Lorenzo, seemed to have reached the summit of its splendor. He depicts Tuscany as being enriched from mountain, to valley and plain by the peaceful and orderly labor of its prosperous inhabitants; the State as being calm in the knowledge of its strength, in no fear of servitude either from Rome or the Empire, and successful in attaching to itself those neighboring cities which were formerly hostile and independent; princes as coming from all parts of the world to visit the city and do homage to the

Medici and the eminent citizens who were gathered around them ; and the extraordinary advance of civilization in every department of the national life. He depicts for us a people supple, skilful, well gifted, and so devoted to art that each street was a museum in itself, and a class of artists who had an inborn taste like the Athenians in the time of Pericles, and who seemed able to create without bodily fatigue or mental effort marvels which move and fascinate us even now. And there can be no doubt that this unparalleled prosperity was due to Lorenzo de' Medici, who carried on the work of his ancestor Cosimo, the peacemaker of Italy and the moderator of the Republic.

#### PRIVATE LIFE OF LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT.

It is interesting to investigate the character in private life of this remarkable man. His intimates and associates at Careggi and Camalduli have given him his place in history, and Politian asserts that none of them were his superiors as regards subtlety of argument and soundness of judgment. He was somewhat caustic, it has been said, and his epigrams have remained famous ; but, with all his undisputed authority, he was endowed with a generosity which impelled him to make future provision for the many gifted men who, absorbed by intellectual work, had failed to put by anything for their old age. He has been accused of being a devotee of pleasure, of acting a double part—of being, that is, very austere in his public

capacity and a pleasure-seeker in private, though able at a moment's notice to revert to business. His father had married him while still very young to Clarice Orsini, of an illustrious Roman family, and the ceremony was performed on the 4th of June, 1469. The marriage was not one of the heart, for Lorenzo recorded it as follows in his diary: "I, Lorenzo, have taken in marriage Clarice, daughter of Jacob Orsini; or rather, she was given to me in marriage, and the wedding was celebrated in our house on the 4th of June, 1469." But this coldness was soon changed into a lasting and perhaps passionate affection, for on the 22d of July the same year he writes to her from Milan, "I am doing all I can to hasten my return. It seems as though we had been separated a thousand years."

Clarice bore him four daughters and three sons: Peter, born in 1471; John, in 1475; and Julian, in 1478. Their education was confided to the famous Politian, to whom he gave a very handsome villa at Fiesole. The last named, in his correspondence, gives a flattering description of this residence, and in writing to Marcilio Ficino, who was at the foot of the hill with Lorenzo at Careggi, he asks him to come up to Fiesole, and as an inducement says that he can give him some capital wine from his own vineyard.

Clarice Orsini died so suddenly in 1488 that Lorenzo was prevented from being present when she drew her

last breath, but he seems to have felt her loss very much. Less fortunate in his own affairs than in public life, Lorenzo, far from increasing his fortune, lost a great part of it. In the first place, he acquired the surname of Magnifico from the profusion with which he spent money for the encouragement of art and architecture; and though his ministers and stewards ought, by the exercise of care, to have made good his losses, they only widened the breach, and the time came when Florence, out of gratitude to the most illustrious of her children, was obliged to assist him. Lorenzo then made a thorough change in the conduct of his affairs, and instead of investing what little remained to him in commercial speculations, he purchased land and founded agricultural colonies in the districts of Prato, Pisa, and Val di Pesa, which brought in a more certain income than that derived from commerce. In 1480 Lorenzo succeeded in establishing a Council in which the absolute power of the Commonwealth was concentrated. It was composed of seventy citizens appointed for life and all completely under his influence, so that from henceforth he held undisputed sway over Florence.

I have said nothing about the most formidable, though not the only conspiracy hatched against him—that of the Pazzi, which broke out on the 26th of April, 1478, in the church of Santa Maria del Fiore, and cost his brother Giuliano his life. Battista Frescobaldi likewise made an attempt on his life in the

Carmine Church ; and Baldinetto da Pistoia tried to assassinate him in a villa outside of Florence. Lorenzo was once wounded, but the would-be assassins all paid the penalty of their crimes.

He was, however, such a sufferer from gout, that at the age of forty his health broke down, and he lived but a few years longer. Politian, describing his last moments, says that all the nerves were shattered, and that the seat of the mischief was in the intestines. Lorenzo was taken ill at Florence, but he had himself carried to the Careggi villa, where all his friends gathered about him and entertained him with their clever talk.

It is said that among the last visitors to his bedside was one whose name was already becoming famous throughout Italy. This was Girolamo Savonarola ; and there are two very opposite accounts—one by Burlamachi and the other by Politian—of what passed at the interview between Lorenzo and the fierce monk. Burlamachi asserts that Lorenzo humbly asked the father's absolution for three faults for which he felt great remorse.

The first was the sack of Volterra, whose women and children were cruelly used by the soldiers, for which he was responsible, as he had promised that their lives should be spared. The second was his having appropriated the marriage portions of the young girls, to which act must be ascribed the going astray of many women who were thus thrown with-

out resource on the world. The third fault was the reprisals made after the Pazzi conspiracy, by which many innocent persons were put to death.

Savonarola reminded the dying man of the inexhaustible mercy of God, but insisted upon his making amends for each of these faults as far as possible, to which Lorenzo agreed. Before leaving, however, he declared that in order to obtain the divine favor, Lorenzo must restore to Florence her lost liberty and re-establish popular government; whereupon, according to Burlamachi, the sick man turned over on his bed and refused to hear any more.

Politian's account is very different. According to him, Lorenzo, feeling his end to be near, sent for a priest and confessed to him. The priest—who had been sent for, instead of coming of his own accord, as Burlamachi asserts—said, on leaving the sick chamber, that he had never seen a dying man show so much courage, presence of mind, and clearness of intellect. At nightfall the holy sacrament was brought, and Lorenzo rose to receive it; having taken it on his knees, he went back to bed and spoke a few words of encouragement to his son Piero, who was the only person with him. One Piero Leori, a celebrated doctor of that day, who had been sent for at the last moment, came in just afterwards, and, according to Politian, asked for some precious stones, which he wanted to pulverize and mix with a potion.

Politian administered the medicine, and Lorenzo, recognizing his voice, said, "What, is that you, dear Angiolo?" pressing him to his bosom. Politian was obliged to go out of the room to give free course to his grief, and on his return Lorenzo again noticed him and asked after Pico della Mirandola. He insisted on his being sent for, and Lorenzo, clasping him to his breast, declared that he should "die happier for having seen such a dear friend. I only wish that I could have lived to complete our library." Savonarola then came in, and Politian makes no allusion to any recriminations, speaking of the monk as if he had been gentle and forbearing, and saying that when he left he gave them all his benediction.\* The room gradually became crowded, and while all the others were overcome Lorenzo remained perfectly calm. When his medicine was administered, and he was asked if it was pleasant to the taste, he replied, "As pleasant as anything can be to a dying man." He died with his eyes fastened on the crucifix, and Politian speaks in glowing terms of his liberality and magnificence, of his constancy in adversity, and of his modesty in good fortune.

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\* Even Politian does not say, however, that Savonarola pronounced absolution. Prof. Pasquale Villari considers that the account given by Burlamachi is the true one, and cites a number of authorities in support of this opinion. See "Hist. of Girolamo Savonarola and of His Times." By Pasquale Villari. Book I., Ch. IX. Note.





The Duomo, Cathedral of S. Maria del Fiore

Scene of the Pazzi Conspiracy







## GIULIANO DE' MEDICI.

(1453-1478.)

## THE PAZZI CONSPIRACY.

Assassinated in cold blood at Santa Maria del Fiore when only five-and-twenty, Giuliano was, like Lorenzo, a son of Piero il Gottoso; and he, too, was born to command. Like all who die young, he leaves behind him kindly recollections, and Politian gives the following sketch of him: "He was tall, with broad shoulders, a well-developed chest, strong, muscular; well built on his legs, and endowed with more physical power than a man can need. His eyes were a deep black, his complexion very dark, like his hair, which he wore brushed back from the temples. A fine horseman and a good shot, he was also an adept at gymnastics and all kinds of games, while, in gratifying his fondness for the chase, he did not know what fatigue and hunger meant. He was high-minded and firm in his judgment, with an instinctive fondness for all that was elegant, and a decided taste for poetry. He has left behind a few verses in the vulgar tongue on grave subjects, but light literature formed his favorite reading. Very ready-witted, extremely urbane, and with an unmitigated contempt for falsehood, he did not readily forget an injury. He was particular as to his dress, but not to the extent of being a fop. He had a manly carriage, and, while full of respect for his elders, was very considerate to

those beneath him. All these qualities made him a general favorite, and his death was looked upon as a public calamity."

It is said that some days after the conspiracy which put an end to his life, one of his most intimate friends, Antonio de San Gallo, went to Lorenzo the Magnificent, and made a confession to him. Giuliano had formed a liaison with a young girl of the Gorini family, by whom he had had a son. Lorenzo, after having received his evidence and ascertained the truth of it, took this child under his care, and he afterwards became Pope Clement VII. There is not in the whole history of Florence a more dramatic episode than that which is known by the name of "the Conspiracy of the Pazzi." We have two contemporary narratives which are historic landmarks: one in Latin, written by Angelo Politian, the other in the vulgar tongue by Machiavelli. Dandolo, in his splendid essays on "Florence down to the Fall of the Republic," declares that Machiavelli's narrative is spoilt by the tone of spite that underruns it all, whilst Politian's, on the other hand, bears the impress of favoritism. In Machiavelli the facts are perhaps more clearly set forth, and he it is whom I have taken for my authority. I now give the true causes of the conspiracy, according to Machiavelli, which, in 1478, nearly cost Lorenzo de' Medici his life. Pope Sixtus IV., angry with the Medici for the assistance they had lent to Nicolo Vitelli and other barons of the Romagna, had

taken from Lorenzo the charge of the treasure of the Holy See in order to invest it in the hands of a certain Pazzi, a man of a noble Florentine family, of good position, and owner of a bank at Rome. This Pazzi was the last survivor of three brothers who had left children. One—Guglielmo—had espoused Bianca, the sister of Lorenzo de' Medici; Francesco, the other nephew, had for some years lived at Rome; while Giovanni, the third, had chosen as his wife the daughter of Buonromei, a man of immense wealth, of whom she was the sole heiress. All this fortune would then in the course of things come to Giovanni's wife, but a relative appearing upon the scene claimed a share of the property.

A lawsuit followed, and the daughter of Buonromei lost all that she had inherited from her father; and the Pazzi detected in this decision the influence of the Medici, Giuliano himself expressing to his brother Lorenzo the fear that by grasping at too much they would lose all. Lorenzo, however (we must remember that it is Machiavelli who is speaking), elated with youth and power, imagined that he might do what he pleased; while the Pazzi, on the other hand, strong in the possession of wealth and a high social position, were fully determined not to put up with so gross an injustice, and sought means for a speedy vengeance. The first to act in the matter was Francesco, by far the most energetic and sensitive member of the family. He declared that he was

determined to recover that which he had already lost or else to lose all. He passed nearly all his time at Rome, out of hatred to the Florentine Government, and whilst there contracted a close alliance with Girolamo, Count of Riario, the Pope's nephew. They interchanged confidences on the subject of their mutual animosity against the Medici, till they began to conspire and think out by what means they could change the form of government. The conclusion they arrived at was dramatic: the death of Giuliano and Lorenzo alone would enable them to arrive at their end. They did not doubt but that the Holy Father would lend his aid, provided, however, it was made clear to him that the end was well defined and easy of accomplishment. They next confided their scheme to Francesco Salviati, Archbishop of Pisa, an ambitious prelate, who had suffered much at the hands of the Medici family. Salviati readily joined the conspiracy; but they had a far more difficult task in enlisting the services of Jacopo di Pazzi. This was, however, finally accomplished, and another Jacopo, son of the celebrated Poggio, two others of the Salviati—the one a brother and the other a connection of the Archbishop, Bernardo Bandini, and Napoleone Franzesi, energetic, young, courageous, and devoted to the Pazzi, joined, as also did Giovanni Battista da Montesecco, Condottiere in the Papal service, together with Antonio da Volterra and a priest named Stefano. Rinato de' Pazzi, an able and thoughtful man, who



foresaw the dangers of such an enterprise, refused to listen, and did all he could to dissuade them from their project. The Pope had placed Raffaello Riario, a nephew of Count Girolamo, at the college of Pisa, and whilst there he was promoted to the Cardinalate. The conspirators invited the Cardinal to come to Florence, with the idea that his arrival would serve as a screen to the execution of their project. The Cardinal did in fact arrive, and was received by Jacopo de' Pazzi. The first suggestion was to get rid of the Medici during the visit that they would no doubt pay to the illustrious stranger, but they failed to put in an appearance. It was next proposed to give a banquet on Sunday, April 26, 1478, and assassinate the two brothers at table, but hearing that they would not be there, another plan had to be hastily substituted. They would kill them even in the cathedral, where they could hardly fail to be present at divine service on the occasion of the attendance of Riario. Lorenzo was assigned to Montesecco, while Francesco de' Pazzi and Bernardo Bandini were to attack Giuliano. Montesecco, however, rejected this arrangement at once, on the ground that he had not sufficient courage to commit so great an act of sacrilege in a church. This was one of the causes of the failure of the enterprise. There was no time to lose, and there was no other course than to leave the business of assassinating Lorenzo to Antonio da Volterra and the priest Stefano, both equally incapable and

spiritless men. This decision once arrived at, the moment of the elevation of the Host was fixed on as the signal.

After the death of the Medici the Archbishop and Poggio were to occupy the palace, where the Signoria, either of their own free-will or by force, were expected to give in their adherence to the conspirators. The hour has arrived; we are in the temple with the thronging multitude. The divine service has commenced, but Giuliano is not here. Francesco and Bernardo, who are to assassinate him, go to his house in search of him. How deeply must their murderous intention have sunk into their minds when they could go and seek out their victim in his own palace, and bring him to the place of execution! It is even said that Francesco, feigning symptoms of the greatest affection, felt his enemy in order to make sure that he did not wear a coat of mail. At the church they took up their positions on the right and left of Giuliano, and when the moment arrived Bandini, with one vigorous blow, ran him through the breast. The victim only made a few steps forward, and then fell dead. Francesco threw himself on the body, and striking blindly and madly, inflicted on himself a deep wound. From the other side Antonio and Stefano attacked Lorenzo. They only succeeded, however, in inflicting a slight wound in the neck. He defended himself with vigor, assisted by those who surrounded him. Bandini, however, with his knife stained with Giuliano's blood,

then turned his weapon against Lorenzo, and finding Francesco Nori, a creature of the Medici, in his way, felled him with one blow. On this the partisans of the Medici surrounded Lorenzo and hurried him into the sacristy, when Polignano closed the bronze doors. As it was thought probable that Stefano's blade had been poisoned, a young man in the sacristy itself offered to suck Lorenzo's wound. A general terror and consternation prevailed in the church. As soon as the news spread through the city, the citizens came in arms to escort Lorenzo to his palace, avoiding the route taken by those who were carrying his brother's corpse. Salviati, however, accompanied by a band of thirty, had already arrived to occupy the palace, and, leaving most of his companions in the antechamber, entered the hall where the Gonfaloniere was sitting. But his expression and agitated manner at once aroused the magistrate's suspicion, and the latter, rushing from the hall, encountered Poggio, whom he seized by the hair and put under arrest. Those present protesting, their arms were taken away, and all those who had accompanied Salviati upstairs were either killed or thrown out of the windows. The Archbishop, the two Salviati, and Poggio were hung. The others, who had remained below, had forced the guard and installed themselves in the ground-floor, so that the citizens who had congregated at the sound of such an uproar could afford no aid to the Signoria. Meanwhile Francesco de' Pazzi and

Bandini had had time to consider matters, and seeing the failure of the plot, the latter took to flight, whilst the former was for making one last effort. Wounded though he was, he yet mounted his horse and tried to rally the people to him in the name of liberty ; but the blood he had lost soon rendered him incapable of action. He was compelled to lie down on a couch, bidding Jacopo take his place. Aged and feeble as the latter was, he mounted his horse to make a last attempt, and entering the square, summoned the people to his aid in the name of liberty—a word that had long since become meaningless in Florence. No one joined him, and the only answer to his appeal was a shower of stones from the Signoria, confined in the upper story of the palace. Jacopo was now in despair, and seeing that the people were opposed to him, that Lorenzo was alive, Francesco wounded, and the attempt hopelessly frustrated, he tried to save his own life. Followed by a few men, he escaped from Florence in the direction of the Romagna.

Meanwhile the whole town had flown to arms. The old palace was soon retaken, and nearly all the conspirators were captured or put to death. Francesco was dragged naked from his bed, and hung by the feet alongside the Archbishop. The only one of the Pazzi whose life was spared—and that through the intercession of his wife—was Guglielmo, the brother-in-law of Lorenzo. Rinato, who had re-

fused to join in the conspiracy, had withdrawn to his villa, but while attempting to escape in disguise was discovered and brought back. Jacopo was arrested when crossing the Apennines by some of the inhabitants of those parts, who, despite his prayers, refused to kill him, but conducted him back to Florence, where he was condemned to death in company with Rinato. Four days later his body was taken from the family vault in which it had been buried and thrown into a ditch outside the city walls; from thence it was disinterred afresh, dragged through the city, and thrown into the Arno.

He was a man of vicious habits, but his charitable deeds had made him very popular. On the Saturday before the conspiracy he paid all his debts, settled his accounts, and took care that no claim should be left outstanding. Montesecco was beheaded, and Napoleone Francesci only escaped the same fate by flight. Bandini never halted till he had crossed the frontier into the Turkish states, but the Sultan handed him over to the Florentines, who put him to death in the following year. Guglielmo de' Pazzi was banished, and his cousins imprisoned for life in the tower of Volterra. When all the conspirators had been tried the obsequies of Giuliano were celebrated with great pomp. He left a natural son named Giulio, for whom, as Pope Clement VII., the highest honors and the deepest calamities were in store.

To perpetuate the recollection of this event Botti-

celli was commissioned to paint the effigies of all the conspirators upon the façade of the palace of the Podestà, now called the Bargello, which faces on Via Ghibellina, just as the enemies of Cosimo the Elder, grandfather of Lorenzo and Giuliano, had been represented there by Andrea del Castagno, hung by their feet, a circumstance to which the painter owed his nickname of "Andrea degli Impiccati" (Andrea of the hanged men). This extraordinary painting, which would be of priceless value now, was destroyed in the course of the many restorations of the Bargello. Orsini, a skilful modeller in wax, made, with the help of Verrocchio, three life-size figures, representing Lorenzo defending himself against his assassins, but they, too, have disappeared.

We possess, however, a medallion by that gifted artist Antonio Pollaiuolo, representing on one side the murder of Giuliano, with the choir of Santa Maria del Fiore at the moment of the elevation of the Host, and the profile of the victim with his name, *JVLIANVS MEDICES*, and the inscription *LVCTVS PVBLICVS*, while on the reverse is the same choir, and in the foreground Lorenzo escaping from the daggers of the assassins, and above the profile of Lorenzo, with his name, *LAVRENTIVS MEDICES*, and the inscription *SALVS PVBLICA*.

This is the more interesting historically as showing what, in the time of Cosimo the Elder and Lorenzo, was the shape of the original choir built by Arnolfo.

THE THREE SONS OF LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT  
AND THE RETURN OF THE MEDICI.PIETRO  
(1471-1503).GIOVANNI  
(1475-1521).GIULIANO II.  
(1478-1516).

Having consolidated his fortune by attention to agriculture, Lorenzo left his son Pietro in a very comfortable position, but the latter soon embarked upon a career of pleasure and took little interest in the affairs of State. At the same time he was rather despotic in his views, and attempted to govern independently of the Signoria.

The death of Lorenzo had placed Ludovico Sforza, uncle of the nominally reigning Duke of Milan, in a very precarious position; he accordingly invited King Charles VIII. of France to interfere in Italian affairs, and the latter, entering Lombardy with upwards of thirty thousand soldiers, advanced upon the Tuscan frontier. Pietro de' Medici, remembering the brilliant part played by his grandfather under similar circumstances, imagined that he could achieve a like success, and accordingly, without consulting the Signoria, set forth, a self-appointed ambassador, to the French camp. Charles received him with much courtesy, but asked for some guarantee of his good faith, whereupon the weak-minded Pietro actually ceded to him the fortresses of Sarzana, Sarzanello, Pietra Santa, Leghorn, Librafatta, and Pisa.

Great was the indignation in Florence when this ignoble transaction became known. The Signoria

made no attempt to disguise their displeasure, while the people assembled beneath the balconies of the Medici Palace uttering loud complaints and threats. An accredited embassy, headed by Savonarola, was at once dispatched to Charles's camp, but even the eloquence of the fiery monk could not avail to undo the mischief. On their return to Florence Piero Capponi induced the people to rise in revolt against the Medician tyranny. Pietro took flight, going first to Bologna, where Bentivoglio accorded him a very cool welcome, and from thence to Venice, where, his reception being likewise far from friendly, he deemed it safer to withdraw for a time at least, from society and lead as retired a life as possible.

On the 17th of November, 1494, the King entered Florence and took up his residence in the Medician palace. Negotiations were now opened, but Charles found his haughty demands resisted with so much spirit and determination by Capponi and Savonarola that he judged it more prudent to modify them. An agreement was finally reached by which Florence undertook to pay a fine of 120,000 gold florins, 50,000 to be paid at once and the remaining 70,000 at an early date; and shortly afterwards the King withdrew with his forces.

It was upon this occasion that the Medici Palace was first sacked, the splendid collections formed by Cosimo, and added to by Piero and Lorenzo, being either destroyed or stolen.



After the departure of the French, Florence busied herself in establishing a new government, which, under the advice of Savonarola, took the form of a great council, composed of a thousand or more citizens.

The years that followed were stormy ones; the city was torn by factions, the rival parties only uniting in a common desire to regain possession of Pisa. In 1497 Pietro de' Medici made an unsuccessful attempt to enter the city with an armed following. He subsequently took service under Louis XII., and was drowned by the upsetting of a boat loaded with artillery on the river Garigliano, together with some of the King's suite. He was only thirty-two years of age, and his wretched existence and miserable end are in striking contrast with the life and death of his father.

By the year 1502 affairs had reached such a pass in Florence that it was felt by all that some change was imperatively demanded, and in August of that year Pietro Soderini was appointed to the office of Gonfaloniere for life instead of two months, the usual term, his unblemished character and the fact of his having no children to awaken ambitious designs in his breast, being the reasons adduced for bestowing this important office upon him.

But that warlike Pontiff, Julius II., had other views for Florence, and exasperated at the manner in which the Republic had withheld any active assistance in his war with the French, and her refusal to depose Soderini and reinstate the Medici, he now determined

to accomplish his ends by force. On the 21st of August, 1512, the alarming news reached Florence that the Viceroy Raymond de Cordova was advancing with a large army, and accompanied by the Medici. On the 29th he took Prato by assault, and there was a renewal of all the horrors of Brescia. News of this disaster reached Florence in the middle of the night. Soderini fled, an act that has been stigmatized by Machiavelli in four well-known lines. Ambassadors were dispatched to treat with the Viceroy and Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici, and an agreement was entered into that Florence should pay a hundred and forty thousand ducats and admit the Medici "as private citizens"—an airy subterfuge that probably deceived no one. By the middle of September Giuliano had assumed the conduct of affairs with as much assurance as though the right to govern were hereditary and Florence a fief of the Medici family, though he so far kept up an appearance of popular government as to go through the form of consulting the *Balià*, a council formed of forty-eight citizens, almost all of them creatures or clients of his own.

On the death of Julius II. Giovanni de' Medici was elected Pope under the title of Leo X., and Giuliano removed to Rome, where he was made *Gonfaloniere* of the Church and Captain-General of the Papal forces, leaving his nephew, Lorenzo, son of Pietro, to govern Florence.

Giuliano de' Medici had married, a year before his death, Philiberta, the sister of Philibert and Charles, Dukes of Savoy, but he left no issue by her, though he was known to have had one illegitimate son, Cardinal Hippolytus, of whom several portraits by Titian are still extant.

Giuliano had received from François I. the duchy of Nemours, which at his death reverted to the French crown. He was not an unworthy representative of the Medici as regarded cultivation and intellect, and when in exile at the Court of Urbino he availed himself of the opportunity to establish an intimacy with the brilliant residents in the Montefeltro capital. The celebrated Cardinal Bembo introduces him as one of the speakers in his dialogues on the idiom of Tuscany. He died of fever, only seven-and-twenty years of age, on the 17th of May, 1516, in the abbey of the canons of Fiesole, which was built by his ancestor, and to which he asked to be carried when taken ill. His remains rest in the new sacristy of San Lorenzo, and he has been immortalized in marble by one of Michael Angelo's greatest works.

#### LORENZO II., DUKE OF URBINO.

(1492-1519.)

Pietro, drowned, as mentioned above, in the Garigliano, had married Alfonsina di Roberto Orsini, and left a son named Lorenzo, who is known in history by the title of Duke of Urbino, but he, like his uncle

Giuliano and most of the Medici family, died very young, being only seven-and-twenty. It has already been said that Giovanni, brother of Pietro, and a son, like him, of Lorenzo the Magnificent, had been elected Pope with the title of Leo X., and it was he who carried the cultivated tastes and the splendor of his family to Rome, and who gave his name to the century in which he lived, as his ancestors had in their day done in Tuscany. While he strengthened the influence of his family at Florence, Leo X. made Rome the centre of Italian politics. Having seized the duchy of Urbino, he invested the sovereignty of it in his nephew Lorenzo by a Papal Bull. This nephew was not deficient in courage nor in spirit, but his overweening pride and arrogance had excited the ill-will of the Florentines, while his claim to the throne which had been given him was from the outset disputed by Francesco della Rovere, the rightful prince.

He died young, leaving by his wife, Madeleine Jean de la Tour, daughter of the Count of Auvergne and of Boulogne-in-Picardy, no male heir, but a daughter, the sole legitimate descendant besides the Pope, of the elder branch of the Medici, who became Queen of France. This was Catherine de' Medici, wife of Henri II. and mother of three French kings and of a Queen of Spain.

The death of Lorenzo without a male heir led to a great revolution in the history of Florence. The elder branch of the Medici was practically extinct,

the two other branches were very jealous of each other, and all the ambitious projects which Leo X. had formed for his family seemed destined to be brought to nought. There remained, however, three illegitimate Medici of the branch of Cosimo the Elder. First there was Giulio, the natural son of Giuliano murdered in the Pazzi conspiracy; then Hippolytus, natural son of Giuliano, Duc de Nemours; and Alexander, who was a son either of Lorenzo II. or of Giulio.

All three were destined to be famous, and they might all have claimed the succession, for we know that illegitimacy was not regarded in the fifteenth or sixteenth century as a bar to a throne. The first, Giulio, became Pope Clement VII.; the second, Hippolytus, rose to the purple; and Alexander was the first Duke of Florence.

It is singular that Michael Angelo should have immortalized by his genius the two least distinguished of the Medici, for while the graves of Lorenzo the Magnificent and Cosimo the Elder are merely covered with slabs upon which their names are graven, the Dukes of Urbino and Nemours sleep their last sleep in tombs erected by the great artist.

#### CARDINAL HIPPOLYTUS.

(1511-1535.)

Giulio, Cardinal de' Medici, when he became Clement VII., instead of attempting to transfer

power from one branch of the Medici to the other, and to exclude the natural sons, followed the example of John de' Medici (Leo X.), and as he had more faith in the ability of Hippolytus than in that of the others, he selected him to rule Florence, appointing Silvio Passerini, Cardinal de Cortona, to govern for him during his minority. Passerini failed to please the friends and enemies of the Medici alike. This was the period when the French king, on bad terms with Charles V., claimed the inheritance of the duchy of Milan. Rome was threatened by Charles V., and then invaded and sacked by the Constable of Bourbon, Clement VII. being imprisoned in his own castle of St. Angelo. On the 17th of May, 1527, the Florentines expelled the Medici for the third time, all their property being wrecked and destroyed. A brief period of liberty ensued for Florence, but with a fresh turn of events Clement made peace with his late enemies and a league was formed to reduce Florence and enforce the return of the Medici. The city was fortified by Michael Angelo, and held out for nearly a year against the imperial army under the Prince of Orange, being finally forced to capitulate through the treason of Malatesta. Hippolytus, seeing that Alexander was to be preferred before himself, made an attempt to forestall him and gain possession of Florence, but his plan was frustrated, and he was induced to return to Rome. He did not live long enough to profit much by the return of his family

to power, for he died when only four-and-twenty, and it was surmised that Duke Alexander had a hand in his death. Benedetto Varchi gives the following kindly description of him: "He was handsome and pleasant-looking, very well informed, full of grace and virtue, and affable to all men. He took more after the generous and benevolent disposition of Leo X. than after the avaricious and narrow-minded Clement VII. He liked to gather round him men distinguished in art, literature, and war, and he treated them very liberally. Having come into an income of four thousand ducats, he made a present of it to Francesco Maria Nolza, a noble of Modena, who was very devoted to literature and a great linguist." He was scarcely fitted to be a cardinal, but when it was known that Alexander had been selected to assume power he made up his mind to follow the traditions of Leo X., and sustained the splendor of his uncle. He formed a suite, clad in brilliant armor, of Turks, Arabians, Tartars, and Indians, and got up jousts and tournaments. He had been a cardinal for three years when, after the Turks had made a raid up to the walls of Vienna, he was sent as legate to the Emperor of Germany. He made his entry into Vienna with all the pomp of royalty, and an escort of eight thousand horsemen, and it was upon this occasion that he donned a military costume, and continued to wear it after his return home. It was after this that Charles V. had an interview with the Pope

at Bologna, bringing a Hungarian escort with him. Titian was then at Bologna, and painted a portrait of the Emperor. He also painted two portraits of Hippolytus, who formed part of the Pope's suite, one in a Hungarian costume, and the other in that of an Italian warrior with the delicately wrought cuirass. Hippolytus headed the party in opposition to Duke Alexander, and resented so openly the accession to power of one whom he regarded as his rival that when he died at Itri in 1535 it was generally believed that he had met with foul play.

ALEXANDER DE' MEDICI,

FIRST DUKE OF FLORENCE.

(1510-1537.)

This brings us to the capture of Florence, which, bravely defended by the citizens, had been betrayed by Malatesta Baglione. Feruccio, the last hope of the Republic, had fallen, and a treaty was made with Gonzaga, the able captain who had succeeded the Prince of Orange in command of the Imperial troops. The conditions of the treaty were as follows: "A regular government to be established within a period of four months, it being always understood that liberty was to be preserved; the Medici to return, together with all who had been exiled in their cause; Florence to pay a ransom of 80,000 gold crowns."

Here, again, a pretence was made of respecting the legal independence of the Florentines. The partisans



of Clement VII. insisted upon the formation of a council of twelve citizens, and recognizing in Alexander, son of Lorenzo of Urbino, "high moral qualities, and recognizing, too, all the good done by his family," he was made a member of the Balia, though a special clause excluded him from the supreme power. The Emperor, who had determined to substitute a monarchical for a popular form of government, would not agree to this, and he had Alexander, to whom he intended to marry his daughter, proclaimed chief of the State, with the title of Duke, with remainder to his heirs male in the direct line.

The celebrated bell, "Martinella," in the ducal palace, which for two centuries had called the citizens to arms in defence of their liberties, sounded the knell of the Republic on the 26th of July, 1531, when Alexander entered the city amid the acclamations of his adherents.

Even this did not satisfy Clement VII., who was anxious that his nephew's authority should extend throughout Tuscany, and the reformers of the State which his orders and will had created changed the basis of government, suppressing both the Signoria and the Gonfaloniere, who was the representative of the people. All traces of communal liberties were destroyed, and Tuscany, together with Florence, became for once and all a monarchy.

Alexander was a man of considerable abilities, with the instincts of a statesman, a ready tongue, and a

good education. He was, however, as we know from the historians of his time, very dissipated in his habits; but for all that Tuscany might have been very happy under his rule if it had not been that the younger branch of the Medici were conspiring against what they deemed a usurpation. Alexander had only been five years on the throne when, on the 6th of January, 1536, Lorenzo, his cousin, a descendant of the rival branch, who had become his adviser as well as his companion in debauchery, inveigled him to come and see him about some love intrigue, and murdered him in his bed.

Duke Alexander had married Margaret of Austria, the natural daughter of Charles V., and though he had no children by her, he had adopted a boy and a girl—Giulio and Giulia. He was the last Medici of the elder branch, and then came the turn of the younger branch, which was first represented in power by Cosimo I.

#### THE YOUNGER BRANCH OF THE MEDICI.

JOHN DE' MEDICI, SURNAMED OF "THE BLACK BAND."

The first of the Medici, Giovanni de Bicci, had left two sons, Cosimo surnamed the Elder, and Lorenzo, who were the founders of the family. Having given above the history of Cosimo's branch, I may resume that of the younger branch, which was called to power in the person of Cosimo I., after the murder of Alexander I., Duke of Florence. Lorenzo, brother

of Cosimo, was the father of Piero-Francesco (1431-1477), who was also assassinated; and Francesco left two sons, Lorenzo and John, and each of these two in turn had a son. Lorenzo's son bore the name of Lorenzo-Francesco, and his brother's that of John, the latter being the celebrated "John of the Black Band," who is the first notable character of the younger branch.

John deserves a biography, not less for his own individual merits than for the fact that he became the progenitor of princes—his son Cosimo becoming Cosimo I., Lord of Florence, and later on assuming the title of Grand Duke of Tuscany, founder of the second branch of this dynasty. Though at baptism he received the name of Lodovico, he is known to history under the name of John, later on to become the famous captain so beloved by his troops.

His mother was Catherine Sforza, daughter of the famous Galeazo, Duke of Milan. His father died young, and the widow, cherishing his memory, resolved that in name at least her husband should live again in the person of her son. This warrior of the future experienced the very peculiar fortune of being brought up, till he became a young man, in female garb; his mother, in fact, surrounded by the snares and temptations of the Medici, entertained many fears for the life of her son and heir, and took the precaution of withdrawing him from the dangers of the world by immuring him in a convent. This young lady,

as she was supposed to be, naturally protested against the costume she was forced to adopt, and her dreams were of nothing but battles; she was always organizing sieges and assaults, and gave great promise of immortalizing the name of the Medici. John made his *début* in arms under Leo X. in Lombardy.

He soon gained the titles of "Invincible" and the "Great Devil." The Republic sorely needed a valiant arm, and he was made captain. When the league was organized, he assumed the command in Lombardy, and passed, on the advice of Clement VII., into the service of Francis I. One day, near Borgoforte, whilst commanding his troops, he received a wound from a crossbow just below the knee, within an inch or so of the wound he had received a short time before at the ever-memorable battle of Pavia. The greatest hopes had been entertained concerning him, but death claimed him in his twenty-ninth year, cut off, like so many of the Medici, in the flower of life. He was a keen warrior, and of the most extraordinary personal valor; in every skirmish he was eager to hazard his life, never allowing any one else to be beforehand where danger threatened. Till his time cavalry had always decided the fate of battles, and the Italian infantry, which was quite eclipsed by the Spanish foot-soldiers, considered at that time the finest in the world, occupied a very secondary position. John, however, had trained it to such a pitch that it became invincible, as the Spaniards ever found, and

he inspired his troops with feelings which might almost be termed fanatical. In the day of battle, and when the time arrived for distribution of booty, he ever left them the material advantages, and contented himself with the glory. He died at Mantua; on the day of his death, his troops, clothed in black, took for their ensign the funeral flag; and so posterity has known him under the name of "John of the Black Band."\* He had married one of the Salviati, by whom he had a son, who afterwards became Grand Duke of Tuscany under the name of Cosimo I.

## COSIMO I.

FIRST GRAND DUKE OF TUSCANY.

(1519-1574.)

Cosimo was only seven years old at his father's death, and his youth was a very troubled one. Pope Clement VII., a Medici of the elder branch, looked upon him with suspicion as a competitor for the throne likely to press forward his claims to the detriment of the natural sons of the branch protected by the pontifical court. But his mother, Maria di Jacopo Salviati—a woman as full of prudence as she was of energy—watched over him with jealous care, sending him first to Venice with his tutor, and concealing him at her villa of Cafaggiolo or Trebbio, whence she brought

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\* "Le Bande Nere." His troops were so called on account of their black armor.

him back to Tuscany. Now and again she would spend several months with him in some secluded part of Italy, in the hope that the fact of his existence would be forgotten. Young Cosimo in time became as intelligent as his mother, and when Duke Alexander was selected by the Balìa to assume the reins of government, he unhesitatingly did him fealty, and took the position of an ordinary subject.

On the 6th of January, 1536, the Duke was murdered by Lorenzino, who, according to the treaty made by the Balìa with the Pope and the Emperor, should have succeeded him, as being his nearest relative; but the magisterial council declared him to be unfit, and elected Cosimo in his stead.

From the very first the position of Cosimo was a most difficult one. Threatened by Bologna on the one side, and Rome on the other; with the exiles (backed even, secretly, by Pope Paul himself) plotting from without, and a large portion of the citizens disaffected, the outlook in the beginning of the year 1537 was a gloomy one. Hostile factions were as implacable as ever, and the Strozzi were recruiting soldiers and hoping to profit by the disturbances which they were fomenting. Cosimo, however, kept a cool head, and learning in July that the exiles had entered Tuscany at the head of an armed force, he sent Vitelli to meet them. In the battle that ensued Cosimo gained a complete triumph, the enemy was routed, and Vitelli returned to Florence with his victorious troops and a

number of illustrious captives. Many of the latter were executed, and Filippo Strozzi having died in prison, either by his own hand or Cosimo's orders, the Duke remained in undisputed power.

Cosimo was not merely Duke of Florence, for he had subjugated the whole of Tuscany; and in order to consolidate his power and secure it from future attacks, he fortified nearly all the towns and strengthened the existing strongholds. The fortresses of San Martino at Mugello and of Terra del Sole date from his time. He gave many proofs of his courage and ability, and having captured Siena on St. Stephen's (the pope and martyr) day, he instituted an order of chivalry, and while conciliating the Court of Rome by his determined destruction of the Turkish vessels which infested the coast, he gained the favor of the nobles by conferring upon them this illustrious order.

His position thus consolidated, Cosimo I. was at leisure to foster the civilization of his subjects and the development of the arts, which flourished best in time of peace. He was very fond of literature, and studied almost daily the works of Tacitus, two of his first enterprises being the restoration of the Universities of Pisa and Siena. He established and endowed the Academy of Florence, and that of La Crusca which was already in existence he enlarged and enriched. It was during his reign that the art of printing was brought into general use at Florence, and he

had in his own palace a printing press, from which were turned out nearly all the works of Torrentino, so celebrated in the history of Florentine typography. He was something of a chemist, too, and is believed to have been among the seekers for the philosopher's stone, but he made several practical discoveries in his laboratory, including certain secrets for cutting precious stones and for dissolving metals by the use of oxides and herbs. In this he was only following the example of Lorenzo the Magnificent, who has been erroneously described as the restorer of the glyptic art in Italy. The Jubinal collection in Paris contains a very beautiful box of tools with the Medici arms, made beyond question in the first half of the sixteenth century, which was evidently used by Cosimo in his various experiments. It appears that he was very fond of experimenting on porphyry so as to make it soft enough for the chisels, and that for this purpose he steeped his tools in the juice of certain herbs. He confided his secret to Francesco Ferucci, alias Cecco del Tadda, who carved the porphyry statue of Justice which crowns the column on the Piazza della Santa Trinita. Cosimo was an unfailing patron of the artists who devoted their attention to the sculpture of marbles of different colors, in which the contrast of color brought the work into special relief. Francesco Ferucci carved for him four medallion figures, which are still to be seen in the Uffizi Gallery, and Benvenuto Cellini, who did



a great deal of work for him, used porphyry for the handsome bust after the antique in which the features of the Grand Duke are preserved to us. This was not, unfortunately, the greatest epoch in Florentine history. Art was already beginning to decay, and with the exception of Giovanni da Bologna and Cellini, it had no better representatives than Baccio Bandinelli, Tribolo, Ammanati, and Vincenzio Danti. Donatello, Benedetto da Maiano, Desiderio, and Mino had been dead for more than a century, and Vasari was the most prominent of the architects, but the epoch was none the less a remarkable one, being, so to speak, the last flicker of the flame which had cast so vivid a light over the whole of Italy.

It was Cosimo I., or rather his wife, who purchased from the Pitti family the celebrated palace, now the property of the Crown, in which has been formed the world-renowned gallery of pictures.

In order to connect the palace with the Uffizi Gallery, which he had just had built by Vasari for the tribunals and civil courts, Cosimo asked the author of the "Vite" to erect a corridor, carried over the arcades of the Ponte Vecchio. He also connected the Uffizi Gallery with the old palace in which he resided, and it was at his request that Ammanati erected the singular fountain at the corner of the ducal palace, for which Benvenuto Cellini made a tender. Ammanati was a really great artist, as will be seen when we come to treat of Florentine sculp-

ture, and it was he who built the Ponte alla Trinita, which has such a fine span over the Arno.

Cosimo, sustaining the traditions of his family, went far towards making a new city of Florence. Buontalenti, Giovanni da Bologna, Montorsoli, Religiosa Serrita, Vincenzo Danti, Tribolo, Jacopo da Pontormo, Angiolo Bronzino, Zuccherò, and Giovanni Strado were in his employ, and decorated the palaces and monuments which he built. To him Florence owes the Boboli Gardens, and many of her piazzas, bridges, fountains, and statues, and his name is engraved on many a commemorative stone in the principal streets.

Science and literature were still held in honor, and although the greatest Italian names had disappeared, the memory of them still remained. Cosimo completed the Libreria Laurentiana, commenced by Michael Angelo in the cloisters of San Lorenzo at the request of Pope Clement VII., but never completed. He turned his attention also to agriculture, and endeavored to reclaim the tracts of waste and barren land around Pisa. He was a patron of botany, and appointed to the professorship of Pisa one Luke Ghini, whom he instructed to form a botanical garden at Boboli. Then, again, in order to facilitate legal proceedings, which were unduly lengthened by the absence of any careful record of previous cases, he instituted the "Archivio Generale," in which deeds, classified by the names of the families to whom they

belonged, and of their notaries, were deposited, so as to prevent any disputes as to the rights of succession.

Cosimo was very partial to pomp of every kind, including jousts and tilting matches, and after the capture of Siena the first thing he did was to form a mounted troop of a hundred nobles, selected from among the most proficient in riding, fencing, dancing, and tilting. He did the same at Florence, and his reign witnessed a revival of the splendid Triumphs organized by Lorenzo the Magnificent. There was not, perhaps, so much delicacy of outline and conception, but these Triumphs, representations of which are preserved to us in prints and engravings which would form a library of themselves, were conducted upon an even more lavish scale. Moreover, as to all these qualities he added that of a legislator, it is not too much to say that Florence and Tuscany, if they surrendered their liberties, secured through the strength and authority of Cosimo a peaceful and assured protectorate. He acted with the full consciousness of his power, building churches, combating the heresy which was then beginning to spread in Germany, joining forces with Rome against the Turk, and receiving from Pope Pius V. the title of Grand Duke, with the purple and the diadem. Charles V. sent him the Golden Fleece, but history says that the honor was bestowed more upon the wealthy Medici who had lent him money than upon the sovereign ruler of Florence.

Cosimo was a politician and legislator of no little talent, but it is well known now that most historians have kept back the truth as to the depravity of his private life. History has recorded his public acts, and by glossing over his crimes and vices has made him famous, but it is only too true that in a fit of passion he slew his two sons, Don Garcia and Cardinal Giovanni. Their mother, the Duchess Eleanora, was so horror-stricken that she died, and it was given out at Florence that the putrid fever, then prevalent at Pisa, had carried off all three of them. It is supposed, too, that Cosimo I. is responsible for the murder of Sforza Almini, a gentleman of Venice, who had spoken of him as the author of these crimes.

The first wife of the first Grand Duke was Eleanora of Toledo, the daughter of Don Pedro of Toledo, Viceroy of Naples, by whom he had seven sons and three daughters. After he had been the indirect cause of their mother's death, he married Cammilla Martelli, the daughter of an illustrious Florentine house, whom he had seduced, and by whom he had had an illegitimate daughter, Virginia, afterwards the wife of Don Cæsar of Este. It was at the injunction of Pius V., who had received from Cosimo a confession of all these crimes, that he contracted this second marriage; but his wife, though she appeared at Court, never took the title of Grand Duchess. Cosimo died on the 21st of April, 1574, of malignant fever at his country house, Costello, and besides his bust by Cel-

lini, we have an equestrian statue of him by Giovanni da Bologna, erected twenty years after his death, on the Grand Ducal Square. The pedestal is adorned with several bas-reliefs representing episodes in his history. There are also many portraits of him, mostly by Bronzino, among them a panel picture in the gallery of Princess Matilda Bonafaste, in which he is surrounded by his sons.

## FRANCESCO I.

(1541-1587.)

Called upon to succeed Cosimo I., Francesco, the eldest son, had undergone a ten years' apprenticeship to government under his father, and was therefore ripe for the exercise of power. He possessed many high qualities, being of a pacific disposition, devoted to art, and enough of a builder to leave his mark upon Florence. During his reign flourished Bernardo Buontalenti and Giovanni da Bologna, the last great artists of the Renaissance period, and he was himself an adept in the art of stone engraving, which was very much developed and improved at Florence about this time.

At the end of the sixteenth century Florence was at peace, and Francesco I. built the Pratolino at a cost of 782,000 gold crowns, giving free course to his fondness for gardens, fountains, and summer-houses. It was Francesco who founded the Uffizi Galleries, which contain so many masterpieces of

painting and sculpture. The varied imagination of Giovanni de Bologna was allowed full scope in the decoration of the Boboli Gardens, and it was at this date that were carved the Giant representing the Apennines which stands in the Pratolino, and the famous Sabine group under the Loggia of the Lanzi.

Francesco married, in 1565, Joanna of Austria, daughter of the Emperor Ferdinand and sister of the Emperor Maximilian, by whom he had three daughters and a son, Philip, all of whom died excepting Mary, who, by her marriage with Henry IV., became Queen of France.

The salient feature in the private life of Francesco was his passion for the famous Bianca Capello, who eventually became Grand Duchess of Tuscany. Francesco has been represented as sensuous and ferocious, but it seems to me that his defect was rather weakness of character, and when he found that Florence was at peace he left the conduct of affairs to his ministers, concentrating his attention on pleasure and art. He was a very well-read man, too, giving his patronage to printing and literature, his correspondence with Aldo Manucio and Ulysses Aldrovandri, the great printer, being still extant.

Very strange is the episode of Bianca Capello, who, eloping at night from her father's house, eventually finds her way to the Court and becomes Grand Duchess. The story has been told in every book upon Venice, but there are some incidents in it re-

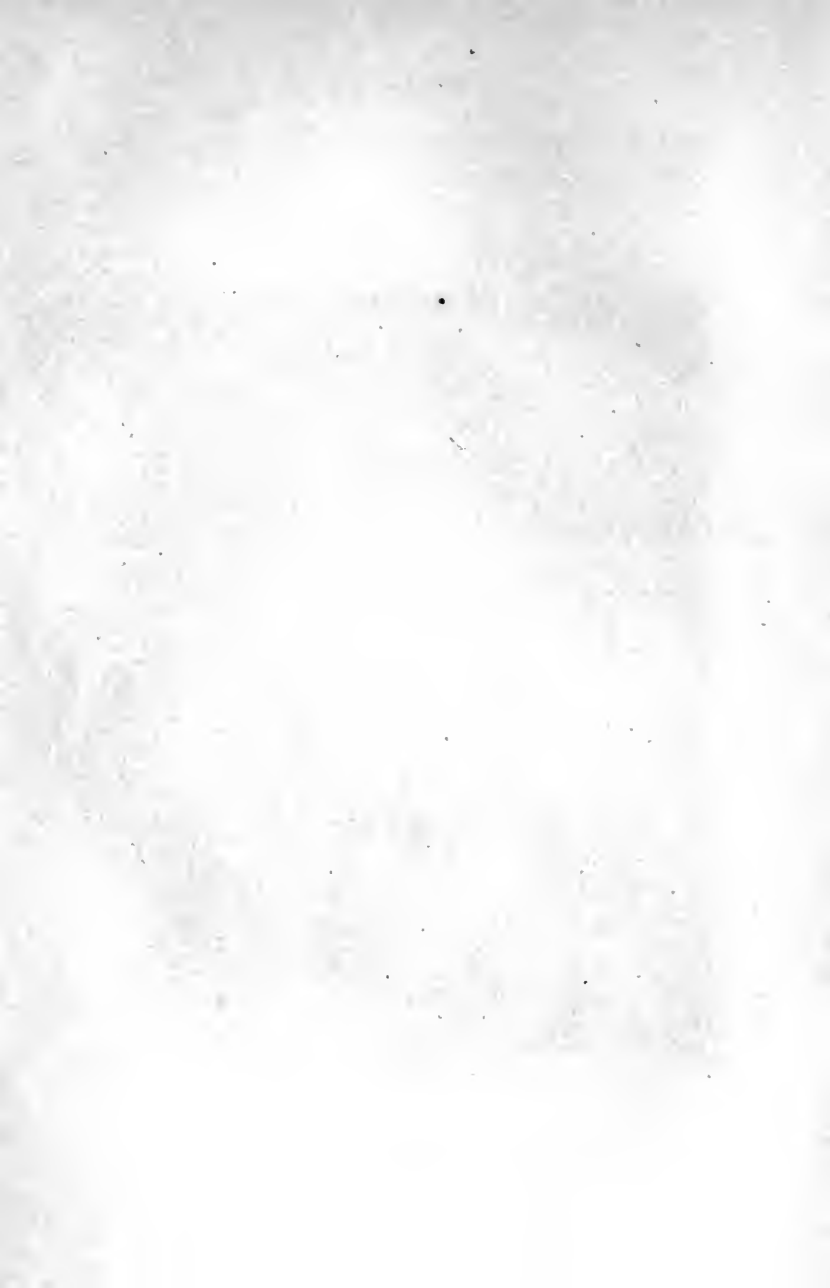
Portrait of James O'Connell

*Portrait of Bianca Cappello*

*Bronzino*







lating to Florence which will be worth narrating here. Barthelemi Capello, a patrician, was the father by his wife,—one of the Morosini family,—of a daughter named Bianca, born in 1548. Barthelemi, having lost his first wife, remarried, and his second wife, Lucrezia Grimani, who was very young, bestowed little care on Bianca. The latter from her balcony one day espied a young gallant, Pietro de Zenobio Bonaventuri, who was looking at her with evident admiration. He often came to the window, and from exchanging signs they got to exchanging letters, and at last she agreed to meet him. As he was only on a visit to Venice from Florence, Bianca fled with him (28th November, 1563) to the latter city, where they were married, and it was during her husband's lifetime that Bianca, who had acquired great notoriety by her elopement, made the acquaintance of the Grand Duke Francesco. The husband shut his eyes to their intimacy, and was given a post in the grand ducal household; and as he himself led a somewhat irregular life, an opportunity was taken of inveigling him into an ambush, which resulted in his death. There is no positive proof that Francesco had any share in the crime; but at all events the coincidence is suspicious, for Joanna of Austria was dead, and there was no longer any obstacle to his union with Bianca, a widow. Francesco asked the Senate of Venice to give her to him in marriage, and they were so anxious to secure the friendship of the Grand

Duke of Tuscany that they readily assented, though her name had been erased from the *Libro d' Oro*.

The marriage fêtes of Bianca Capello created a great sensation, and they are described in a pamphlet which has been lent to me by the heirs of the late M. Firmin-Didot, and several engravings from which have been reproduced. The Silver Wedding of the Emperor of Austria, the anniversary of which was celebrated at Vienna with great pomp under the superintendence of Makart the painter, gives us some idea of what these pageants were like, but during the Italian Renaissance they had an intensity and a piquancy not to be met with anywhere else. When Lucretia Borgia entered Rome she was followed by two hundred ladies on horseback, magnificently dressed, and each accompanied by the cavalier of her choice. Lorenzo wrote, just before one of his Triumphs, to the Pope asking for the loan of two elephants, which he wanted to introduce into the procession, and the Pope, as he had not any of these animals, sent him two leopards and a panther.

The fêtes to celebrate the marriage of Bianca Capello were among the most splendid ever given, and though others may have been more sumptuous in after-times, they did not possess the same stamp of elegance which was peculiar to the age when artistic taste reached its zenith in Italy. Each of the principal groups in this pageant was a masterpiece. Bianca's car was drawn by lions, but to all the others

were harnessed horses dressed up in skins of wild animals, or so disguised as to resemble griffins and unicorns; or buffaloes covered with elephants' skins. Naked men and women had their bodies painted with gold, in order that they might represent the deities of Olympus; and all Florence was mad with excitement in greeting a prince to whose defects they were ready to close their eyes.

The husband and wife were only united for seven years, and they both died on the 19th of October, 1587, at an interval of only a few hours, in their villa at Poggio Caiano. It was always supposed that they had both been poisoned, but Litta, a very trustworthy historian, in his "Genealogies of Italian Families," puts these suspicions into words. His version is that Bianca intended to poison her brother-in-law, and that her husband accidentally partook of the tart which she had prepared, and that she, when the truth dawned upon her, poisoned herself in despair. He adds that when Cardinal Medici, for whom the tart was intended, came in, and learnt what had taken place, he put his back against the door and would not let any one enter until he was assured that husband and wife had both breathed their last.

A document, however, which goes far towards exonerating Bianca of this charge is a letter from Vittorio Soderini to Silvio Piccolomini, in which he says, "The two bodies were opened before burial, and Baccio Baldini and Leopoldo da Barga assured me

that in both cases there were the same signs of corruption in the liver and lungs. Bianca Capello had been dropsical for more than two years, and a large quantity of water was taken from her body. The common people believed that both had died of poison, but these stories are all untrue, and those who are the most likely to know think that they died a natural death."

It is said that the body of Bianca was buried in the paupers' grave at San Lorenzo, instead of in the tomb of the Grand Dukes, while the remains of Francesco I. were laid beside those of his first wife, Joanna of Austria; but some assert that Bianca too was privately interred with her husband. Leaving, as has been said, only one daughter, Marie de' Medici, the future Queen of France, Francesco was succeeded by his brother Ferdinand. There are several portraits of Bianca both at Venice and Florence, the best being those in the Pitti Palace.

#### FERDINAND I.

(1551-1609.)

The son of Cosimo I. and Eleanora of Toledo, who succeeded Francesco I., found Tuscany too small for him, and this prince, who had the instincts of a conqueror, was the first of his family since the fifteenth century who endeavored to make his influence felt beyond the frontiers of Italy.

There are two distinct phases in the career of

Ferdinand. Brought up for the Church, he was made a cardinal, and lived in a monastery at Rome, with all the pomp that became one of his family.

Resolute and haughty, he was more feared than liked at the Vatican, though he had tact enough to exercise a considerable influence over the Sacred College, and it is even said that in questions of the first importance his opinions carried as much weight as those of the Pontiff himself. While wearing the purple, his undertakings were necessarily of a peaceful character, and he concentrated his attention upon what we now call "Missions." Combining, in the true spirit of a Medici, a zeal for intellectual research with his religious propaganda, he fostered the study of the Oriental languages, setting up at his own cost a printing-press in Oriental characters, and organizing foreign missions to which he attached young students, who came back to Rome and founded a college in which they taught Arabic, Sanscrit, and Hindustani. He also had translations made of philosophical, medical and mathematical treatises from the Arabic, and distributed them in all directions. Fond of display, amid all his peaceful occupations he followed the example of his ancestor, Cardinal Hippolytus, and had a large escort of cavalry. The Pope on one occasion having threatened to imprison him in San Angelo, Cardinal Medici took the bull by the horns, and came to seek audience of the Pope with a cuirass under his robe, and when the Pontiff angrily declared

that it was in his power to deprive him of the hat which symbolized the dignity of Cardinal, Medici replied that if he lost his hat he should substitute for it the iron crown.

Having succeeded his brother as Grand Duke, he began by according a liberal patronage to art and literature, encouraging such men as Ammirato and Gabriel Chiabrera, building the Ferdinand College at Pisa, and that singular chapel within a church (the Medici Chapel in San Lorenzo), which is so profusely decorated with marbles and precious stones, but which testifies rather to lavish expenditure than to refined taste. If this chapel had been built a century earlier, when Brunelleschi, Bramante, Alberti, Michelozzo, and Michael Angelo were alive, it might have been the most magnificent in the world, erected as it was close beside the Sagrestia Nuova, where the twin figures of "Day" and "Night," of "Dawn" and "Twilight," kept watch over the tombs of Lorenzo and Julian.

Though Ferdinand I. has had the credit for the building of this chapel, it was not the work of a single reign, but at the same time it should be added that there is no doubt as to his having helped the architect, Matteo Nigretti, to draw the plans. Francesco I., however, had conceived the idea of a Pantheon of this kind, and later on the members of the Medici family were buried one under the high altar, another in the old vestry, a third in the new chapel,



and so forth. In this connection a singular story, too well authenticated to be passed lightly over, is current. It is said that the Emir Facardino, who claimed descent from Godfrey de Bouillon, and who, full of hatred for the Ottomans, had gone to Italy, and been received by the Medici, had persuaded them that it would be easy to lay hands upon the tomb of our Saviour and bring it to Florence, where a temple worthy of Christianity might be built to receive it. Ferdinand accordingly constructed a sepulchre in the Chapel of the Princes, and when the design fell through the sepulchre was, perforce, converted into a Pantheon for the Medici family.

I repeat this, though perhaps it is without foundation; but still the reader of Giovanni Mariti's "History of Facardino" (Livorno, 1787) will perceive that he places some amount of credence in it. The only objection against it is that the journey of the Emir to Florence dates from 1604. However, be this as it may, the chapel was built, and that, too, at a cost of twenty-two million crowns; and when one sees it, it is easy to understand that there was nothing exorbitant in the price. Its solid grandeur is very imposing, whilst the actual materials used are of the most precious description; it is, in fact, one mass of gold, marble, and solid stone. From the floor to the cupola the distance is sixty yards, and there is a marked disproportion between the statues of the last of the Medici, the work of John of Bologna and

Tacca, which stand in the niches, and this extraordinary monument. Beneath the floor is a crypt containing the coffins in which the bodies of the various members of the Medici family repose. Magnificent equestrian statues were often erected at Florence at this period, one of the finest being that which Ferdinand, who had a great taste for sculpture, raised beside the fountain of the Ammanati in the square of the old Palace to the memory of his father, Cosimo I.

His own statue, which is that of an equestrian cast in bronze by Tacca, is a magnificent work of art, and stands in the square of the Annunciation. It was erected by his son, Ferdinand II. Pisa and Leghorn are indebted to him for many of their monuments. At Florence he continued that work of adornment which his father and brother had commenced. His external policy was marked by a certain spirit of adventure, for this was the time when so many incursions were made by the Turks and African corsairs, who, crossing the Adriatic, bombarded the towns on the coast, Otranto for instance, which was destroyed, and has never recovered from the blow inflicted on it by the Porte.

Charles V. took his fleet to Algiers, Bona, and the coast of Morocco, the chevaliers of the order of St. Stephen, instituted by Cosimo I., taking part in this attack against the infidels. Ferdinand fitted out a number of cruisers, and from pure love of glory sailed with his fleet for Bona, his enterprise receiving the

support of the Pope. He won several victories at sea, and many portraits of him are extant in naval uniform. He distinguished himself on land, also, by sending troops to the Danube in order to relieve the Emperor, who was being harassed by the Turks. A careful inspection of the scutcheon at the base of his statue on the Piazza Annunziata shows that he had altered the "Imprese" of the Medici of the elder branch, and adopted the swarm of bees and the motto, "Majestate tantum." The most striking allusion to this part of his career is to be seen at Leghorn, where he took ship, and where still stands a marble statue representing him in military uniform, with three Turkish slaves in chains at the base. This statue is by Tacca, the greatest sculptor in Florence during the seventeenth century.

Ferdinand cannot be charged with excessive pride, nor with any such blood-guiltiness as tarnishes the memory of several of his ancestors. He died at the age of fifty-eight, on the 7th of February, 1609, and was succeeded by Cosimo, the only son born of his marriage with Christine of Lorraine.

#### COSIMO II.

(1590-1621.)

The son of Ferdinand was very delicate, cared more for the arts of peace than for military enterprise, and was fond of poetry, music, theatrical and equestrian spectacles. Jousts and tournaments were held almost

daily, and the literary men of the day were constantly inventing entertainments, which were carried out by painters and skilled workmen. Upon one occasion a large square was converted into an inland sea, over which ships floated to represent the capture of Bona and the landing of the troops. A record of all this is to be found in the *concetti* of the time, which, however, are so exaggerated that it is difficult to distinguish between what is true and what is false. These later artists had not so much genius as their predecessors, and though their love of art was equally profound, they seem to have lost something of the spirit of manliness, and their touch something of its firmness. Their mincing and effeminate method was very different from the masculine and austere lines with which their ancestors were content; and, with its complicated and contorted designs, led to the creation of the singular school which afterwards made disciples everywhere. The death of Giovanni da Bologna left Tacca the sole representative of the great sculptors, while architecture was represented by Giulio Pasigi, and painting by Cigoli, Passignani, Christoforo Allori, and Rosselli. The sun was fast setting, and another twenty years bring us to the decadence of art in Florence.

Cosimo II., however, had the honor of befriending Galileo; he recalled him from Padua and appointed him "philosopher and mathematician extraordinary," in return for which his name has been handed down

to posterity in the dedications of a number of the great astronomer's works, the latter likewise giving the title of "the Medici stars" to the four satellites of Jupiter discovered by him while sweeping with his telescope the azure of the Florentine sky.

His reign was short, but not inglorious; succeeding to the throne in 1609, he died in 1621, leaving by his wife, Maria Maddalena of Austria, a son, Ferdinand, who was only ten years of age at the time of his father's death.

#### FERDINAND II.

(1611-1670.)

Tuscany was thus governed by a regency, and though the time was past when a revolution was to be apprehended, the economic effects of this ten years' minority were very unfavorable. Christine of Lorraine, the grandmother of the young prince, was still alive, and she acted as co-regent with his mother. Badly advised, and too proud to sacrifice their own ideas, the effect of their ten years' rule was to impoverish the State for a very long time. They took upon themselves to carry on the grain trade of Siena, and by their unskilful administration ruined the whole province. They were liberal to prodigality, and the result was that the country became so impoverished that pawnshops were opened in Florence for the first time. In the meanwhile the young prince was on his travels. After a stay in Rome he went to Prague, and

thence all through Germany. In 1628, having attained his majority, he returned to Florence, and commenced his rule.

He married Vittoria della Rovere, and the early years of his reign were very peaceful, though they were darkened by a visitation of the plague, which had not appeared in Tuscany for several centuries. The young sovereign displayed great courage in helping to stamp out this terrible scourge; but he was not animated by any martial spirit, and on the death of the Duke of Urbino, in 1631, he incurred the displeasure of his subjects by his half-hearted opposition to the claims which the Court of Rome advanced.

He was, however, compelled to give his aid when his brother-in-law, Farnese, marched his forces through Tuscany in order to recover Castro and Ronciglione, which had been unlawfully seized by the Pope. After so many years of improvident administration, Tuscany was not very well prepared for a heavy military expenditure, and Ferdinand II. lost what little popularity he had gained during the epidemic by the increase of taxation which was rendered necessary. He enjoyed a high moral credit abroad, and the House of Medici had acquired a prominent place in what we should now call "the European Concert," by the mere fact of having given two queens to France, in the persons of Catherine, wife of Henry II., and Marie, wife of Henry IV.

Very moderate in his views, and animated by a religious spirit which never degenerated into fanaticism, Ferdinand acted as intermediary between Alexander VII. and Louis XIII., and was instrumental in the signature of the Treaty of Pisa, which probably prevented the recurrence of the cruel invasions of preceding centuries. His reign may be regarded as the close of a period not inglorious in art, for Pietro Tacca was still alive, painting was represented by Giovanni da San Giovanni and Pietro de Cortona, while Stefano della Bella, a gifted designer, composed the fêtes and the public rejoicings which were still in vogue. Ferdinand also devoted much attention to the embellishment of towns, and to the improvement of the seaports, notably of Leghorn, and he made a determined effort to suppress the corsairs of Tunis.

The name of Ferdinand is, however, most honorably associated with that of Galileo, whom he seems to have befriended as far as lay in his power.

The great astronomer having been accused to Pope Urban VIII. a member of the Barberini family, was summoned, when seventy years of age, to appear before the tribunal of the Inquisition, upon the charge of having maintained a theory contrary to that of the Church. The Tuscan Court followed the progress of the trial with keen interest, but in the end Galileo had to be given up. After sixteen days of imprisonment he was allowed to live in his own house and

drive about the city. But fifty days later he was again arrested, and this time informed that unless he abjured his errors he would be sentenced to imprisonment for life. It was then, according to a story which seems to be as baseless as it is well known, that the illustrious Galileo knelt in submission in the church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, concluding his forced recantation with the words so often quoted "*Pur se muove.*"

He was subsequently permitted to reside in the Medici Palace on the Trinita di Monte, and later to remove to Siena, where he remained for several months in the Palace of the Archbishop.

Ferdinand II. finally procured permission for him to return to Florence, where he passed the eight remaining years of his life in peace.

The epoch was undoubtedly an intellectual one, for Ferdinand's natural bent was literary, and he had also acquired some celebrity as a chemist. There is another of the Medici family, however, who must not be passed over without notice, and this is Cardinal Leopold, who made himself famous by his love of study, and his patronage of all those who had distinguished themselves in science, literature, and art. This sufficed, in a country like Florence, to give a great impulse to intellectual pursuits. The love of natural science had already been manifested by the earlier Medici, to whom we owe many valuable discoveries, and the sojourn of Galileo had stimulated



the zeal of those who were studying physics and mathematics, for he founded a school, and left behind him pupils such as Niccolo Aggiunti, Evangelista Torricelli, and Vincenzo Viviani.

This movement received the support of Ferdinand, and of his brother the Cardinal, the latter of whom founded the celebrated Cimento Academy, which became such a focus of intellectual splendor. The light was about to be extinguished, but there was a final flicker, and those who lived in Florence then might have seen a grand duke working in his laboratory, with the aid of his brother, a prince of the Church, and of Viviani, at experiments made to see whether mercury could not be rendered malleable.

Ferdinand undoubtedly made some useful discoveries, and he deserves the credit of bringing out several useful publications, and of assisting men whose researches were likely to be of service to the cause of science. It was at the gatherings in the grand ducal palace that the foundation of the Cimento Academy was decided upon ; its career was short, though brilliant. The first meeting was held on the 19th of June, 1657, the assembly taking for their crest a retort and three crucibles, with the motto, "Provando Riprovando." The meetings were held at the Pitti Palace, and the members, only nine in all, were the Grand Duke, Cardinal Leopold, the brothers Paolo and Candido del Buono, Alessandro Mascili, Vincenzo Viviani, Francesco Rede, a celebrated patrician

of Arezzo of whom we have a fine bronze medallion, Antonio Uliva, Giovanni Alfonso Borelli, Count Carlo Renaldini, and Count Lorenzo Magalotti, who acted as secretary. But these nine academicians, who, patronized by the Grand Duke, held their sittings at the palace, could command plenty of money, and by means of secretaries who were salaried by the Grand Duke, they carried on a correspondence all over Tuscany, and kept the lamp of learning alight. In 1666 were published "Essays in Natural Experiments," dedicated by Cardinal Leopold to the Grand Duke Ferdinand.

The intention was excellent, but these savants could not agree, and that jealousy which is too often inseparable from intellectual superiority led to so much discord that Borelli, one of the most brilliant of the academicians, withdrew from the Court, and even from Tuscany, taking with him Uliva and Renaldini. The Cimento lived only ten years.

It may be said of Ferdinand II. that on the whole he was a great man, and among his claims to celebrity are his presents to the Uffizi Museum, his gifts to it including several pictures which he had inherited from the Della Rovere family, such as Titian's celebrated Venus in the tribune-room. His brother the Cardinal, who had a great love for the antique, bought the famous "Hermaphrodite," the "Etruscan Chimera," and the beautiful bronze idol, all of which are in the Uffizi collection.

## COSIMO III.

(1642-1723.)

Brought up at the Court of Ferdinand II., Cosimo III. was educated in a good school, but, endowed though he was with good natural gifts and qualities, which might have made a distinguished man of him, he did not employ them aright. He inherited from his mother a certain tendency to asceticism, and he is perhaps the only Medici who was anything of a fanatic.

It has been said that the journey which he made through Europe during his father's lifetime was more like a holiday tour than the travels of a young prince eager to see and learn. He was accompanied by Count Maggalotti of the Cimento, but the companionship of that learned man was not so profitable to him as it should have been.

The life-long ambition of Cosimo III. was to play a leading part among the sovereigns of Europe, but he had neither the talent nor the energy for it. He was fond of distinctions, titles, and the pomp of the Court, and to shed fresh lustre upon his throne he would have made any sacrifice. As the Emperor of Germany was pressed for money, Cosimo, by a loan which was never repaid, obtained from him the right to substitute the prefix of "Royal" for that of "Most Serene" Highness. Florence at this period was the foreigner's paradise, for Cosimo was always ready to

receive them with great splendor, in the hope of getting a great name for himself abroad. He was very generous, and made sumptuous presents to his ministers and to other sovereigns.

The Court of Rome profited largely by his liberality, and he gave so much to the Jesuits and missionaries that he was more than once embarrassed for money with which to pay his own troops. Large sums were also spent on religious buildings. Struck by the fact that several of the religious congregations had lost the austerity for which they were formerly noted, Cosimo sent to Spain for some Franciscan fathers from St. Peter of Alcantara to found two monasteries in which the discipline should be stricter. From the French Trappists he also got several brothers, who formed the nucleus of the Trappist monastery of Buonsollazzo on the Mugello. He attended divine service three times a day, and took much to heart the religious lukewarmness of the Florentines, who cared more for the externals of worship than for the ideal which is the aim of the pious.

He pensioned and assisted many authors of religious books; and Giuseppe Brochi, who wrote a life of Florentine saints and good men, being unable to canonize him, includes him in the list of "Venerables."

In spite of these tendencies, Cosimo III. did not practise the Christian virtues of resignation and tolerance. An Italian by birth, with no admixture of foreign blood, seeing that his mother was a Princess

of Urbino, he would have liked to substitute for the pleasures and dissipations so dear to the grand ducal Court the austere gravity of Spain.

Cosimo had married during his father's lifetime Louise Marguerite, daughter of Gaston d'Orléans, brother of Louis XIV. of France, and by her he had two sons, Ferdinand and John Gaston, and one daughter, Anna Maria Louisa, who married William, Elector and Count Palatine. This daughter, at her husband's death, returned to Florence, where she died in 1743, being the last representative of her celebrated house. Louise of Orleans entertained, however, the most bitter feeling of dislike towards her husband, and never rested until she succeeded in getting back to France, where she took up her residence in the Convent of Montmartre, but spent a great deal of her time at Court. There are several portraits of her taken in the religious garb, with the convent and heights of Montmartre in the background. The memoirs of the seventeenth century are full of details of visits paid to this abbess of royal blood, who, with her dowry and an allowance of forty thousand gold crowns guaranteed by the Court, was enabled to keep up no little state.

Cosimo, as soon as he was separated from his wife, thought about marrying his son Ferdinand, and when he was five-and-twenty he obtained for him the hand of Violante Beatria, daughter of Duke Ferdinand of Bavaria. The marriage was an unhappy one, and

ended in an immediate separation, Ferdinand leading a very dissolute life and dying in 1713. The other son, John Gaston, whom his father did not like, had been sent away from home, and was married to a German princess, the daughter of Philip of Neuburg, who was the heiress of her father's principality. He lived in Bohemia on the property belonging to his wife, a very singular woman, who made his existenee so intolerable that he left her in Germany and went to live elsewhere. This completed the ruin of the house of Medici, and did away with all hope of an heir being born to the throne.

Cosimo, however, had a brother in the Church, whom he induced to put off his rank as cardinal and marry, in the hope of perpetuating the dynasty. At the age of five-and-forty he married Eleanora Gonzaga, the daughter of the Duke de Guastalla, but he died two years afterwards, leaving no issue, and so all the plans of Cosimo came to nought.

It cannot be said that his reign was altogether an inglorious one. Cardinal Leopold survived his nephew two years, and if the Cimento Academy was broken up, there remained in existence a society devoted to art, science, and literature; physics, medicine, natural history, and botany were still flourishing; and though Cosimo had other things to attend to besides the encouragement of intellectual progress, he did not allow them to interfere with it. Francesco Redi, Averani, Gualtieri, Piero Antonio Micheli, and Giam-

battista Nelli belong to this epoch. The laboratory and the astronomical observatory of the Pitti Palace were still in full working order, purchases were made of instruments such as the Brugens telescope at Dresden, the first pneumatic machine was brought from Leyden, and experiments as to the action of the sun's rays upon gems and hard stones were carried out. The prince provided out of his private purse a pension for Micheli, whom he looked upon as the first botanist of the day.

Then, again, the Apatisti, a purely literary society, was founded in the room of the Cimento, and the study of languages, poetry, and eloquence was brought into fashion again by Benedetto Averani, the two Salvini, Menzini, Filicaia, Canon Mozzi, Govi, Father Politi, and Lami, to mention only the most celebrated. The fine arts were to all intents and purposes dead, earnest as were the efforts made to revive them. Cosimo III. had made over to the Uffizi Gallery all the masterpieces derived from the Della Rovere inheritance, and all that Cardinal Leopold had collected in the Pitti Palace became national property, this being the time when the gallery of antiquities acquired that priceless treasure, the Venus de' Medici, brought from Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli, with many other statues and objects of price.

Cosimo III. was deficient in greatness of soul and generosity. He was vindictive, not to say cruel; and it is said that having found out that the great geom-

eter, Lorenzo Lorenzini, the author of the "Exercitatio Geometrica," kept up a correspondence with the Grand Duchess Louise d'Orléans when she was living in Paris, he kept him twenty years in a dungeon in the tower of Volterra. He was short-sighted enough and intolerant enough to refuse permission to the Huguenots who were driven from France by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes to settle in the marshes outside Pisa, and thus was lost an opportunity for reclaiming them and for founding a prosperous colony, as in England, Holland, and Brandenburg.

John Gaston, his son, and the last of the family, succeeded him in 1723.

#### JOHN GASTON.

(1671-1737.)

While heir-presumptive the last of the Medici showed great intelligence, and much was to be expected from him. He was kind, generous, very fond of study, and in other respects richly endowed by nature. Always associating with men of learning and great attainments, he studied many branches of literature, among his most intimate friends being Benedetto Brasciani, Giuseppe Averani, Enrico Noris, Lorenzini, Father Salvini, and Magliabecchi, the founder of the Uffizi library. He spoke German, French, Spanish, and English, and was a master of several dead languages. Fond of bodily exercises, he was a fine horseman and a practised tilter ;



and he was also a good musician and an accomplished draughtsman.

This is the stuff of which a good sovereign is made, but his father, who had no great affection for him, styled him "the learned doctor of the Medici family." The coldness which had always been shown him in his youth kept him away from Florence, and his marriage with the daughter of Philip of Neuburg so changed his character and tastes that those of his compatriots who came to see him could not recognize in him the brilliant young prince who had been the hope of the Tuscan crown. He gradually lapsed into habits of indolence and vice, and his Court fell beneath the influence of abject creatures, in whose society he lost all sense of the responsibilities of his rank and station.

Having left his wife in Bohemia and returned to Florence, where he received an allowance in keeping with his rank, he did not attempt to maintain appearances or to stand on etiquette, becoming a tool in the hands of his valet, Giuliano Dami. This was his mode of life when he was called on to succeed his father, and he made no change, allowing his favorite to govern him. He was good-natured, but it was the good-nature of indolence rather than of temperament; and he remained shut up in his palace, where he passed his time in sensual indulgence.

Holding entirely aloof from affairs of State, his subjects did not even know him by sight; and those

who wished to have an audience of him were obliged to suborn his valet. During the fourteen years of his reign he was not present more than two or three times at the Ministerial Council. This being the case, the head of each administration was supreme in his own department, and, strange to say, the affairs of Florence were not any the worse managed during this period.

As John Gaston's habits and pleasures were inexpensive, the royal treasury began to fill very rapidly. In one of his lucid intervals this prince insisted upon a reduction of the public debt and of the taxation which fell so heavily upon the people. Upon another occasion, prompted by good advice, and perhaps in some measure by his early instincts, he determined to employ the surplus arising from his disuse of the etiquette and ceremonial which were formerly maintained, in enriching the public collections with valuable jewels, pictures, statuary, and works of art of every description. His sister, Anna Maria, the widow of the Elector, after her return to Florence in 1717, also gave all her pictures of the Flemish school to the Uffizi Museum, and by her will, dated April 5, 1739, she bequeathed all the statues, pictures, and curiosities which belonged to her as sole and legitimate heiress of the Medici family, to Florence, having previously made a special agreement (October 31, 1737) to this effect.

Gaston also founded several almshouses for the

poor, and gave away money very freely, so that if his reign was not a very brilliant one, it may at least be said that he possessed some of the qualities which one expects to find in a prince. He was a queer mixture of virtue and vice, but at his death the people remembered only his goodness and the generous use which he made of the money that might have been spent upon pomp and show.

His death occurred on the 9th of July, 1737, and was followed soon after by that of his sister, the grand ducal throne falling to the Lorraine branch of the Hapsburgs. The last of the Medici was dead, and the family which during three centuries had given Tuscany so many great politicians and a few crowned monsters, was extinct. The first of them were the most illustrious, giving to their century the title of "The Age of the Medici." It may be said of them that they crushed liberty and claimed power as a right; but at all events they did much to compensate for their usurpation. The great period of Florentine history is over, and the narrative might even have stopped short at the death of Michael Angelo, but it was as well to follow to its decline the Medici family.

The eighteenth century is almost a part of contemporary history, and during this time Florence enjoyed comparative prosperity under the Lorraine dynasty, though the days of bold initiative were over. No fresh monument was added to the list, but much

was done in the way of embellishment and improvement. The muse had folded her wings, and the love of ease militated against the birth of any new genius. The Florentine people preserved, however, their respect for the past, and were not incapable of admiring the *capi d'opere* on the Piazza della Signoria. In relating, as I have done, the story of Florence from the first of the Medici down to John Gaston, we get a general knowledge of how the city came to hold so high a place in history. Much might be said about modern Florence as well, but this is not the place for such a study, dealing as I am with the art of past ages. Before considering which, however, I will endeavor to show how it was that Florence became the cradle of the Renaissance.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE RENAISSANCE.

IT is often asked how it came to pass that Florence, rather than any other Italian city, enjoyed the distinction of reviving in Europe the cultivation of thought, of inspiring it with a sense of the beautiful, of giving the signal for progress in every branch of human knowledge, and of maintaining for so long a period the supremacy over all the other cities in the peninsula. In other words, what, it is asked, were the causes and origin of the Renaissance ?

It is no easy matter to analyze very accurately so vast and complex a movement ; for if, on the one hand, there is something logical and natural in this wonderful development, the country in which it took place must have possessed certain precious gifts which seconded it, and there must have been in the soil which gave birth to it a fertility which contributed to the abundance of the harvest. Study and economy were not the only factors ; there was a certain amount of intuition and good fortune which defies analysis. The mildness of the climate, the charm of the atmosphere, the native grace with which surrounding objects are enveloped, and an admixture of elegance

and attractiveness, all told in favor of the movement. The co-efficients are manifold; some direct and permanent; others indirect, remote and fleeting.

It will be my endeavor to explain them briefly in the course of a rapid review of the intellectual and artistic movements.

In his interesting book on the Renaissance, Burckhardt, in the chapter entitled "The Renaissance of Antiquity," says, "The social conditions of the time would have sufficed of themselves, without the aid of antiquity, to have raised the Italian nation to a certain degree of maturity, just as it is certain that most of the substantial innovations then introduced into public life would have taken place without the same aid."

If this assertion were correct—and I venture to take exception to it, especially as regards literature and art—we should have to eliminate one of the causes hitherto considered as among the most powerful, and to regard the elaboration of this great work as due solely to Florentine genius and the political and social conditions of the time. It is only fair to add, however, that Burckhardt acknowledges that antiquity gave to literature and art a coloring all their own, which may easily be traced in form, if not in substance.

The renovation, it must be said, made itself manifest in all directions. Not only was there a return to intellectual culture, inspired by the discovery of

ancient works of literature and philosophy, but it seems as if the lost sense of plastic beauty had been recovered at the same time.

The constant struggle for independence, for the liberty of association which was the most powerful lever in the might of Florence, for the political autonomy of the city, and for the possession of communal rights, kept all the citizens interested in public affairs, compelling high and low alike to put forth a certain amount of activity, intellectual as well as physical, and impressing them with a sense of personal responsibility. From an early age each citizen of Florence belonged to some group and became the soldier of an idea, being liable to be summoned at a moment's notice to the defence of his banner and of the disregarded rights of his corporation.

All this tended to create originality and independence of character, and to excite a spirit of individualism. The power of a democracy, manifold as are its dangers, has this good side—that it does not impose a common yoke on all, and does not put any other limit on individual ambition than that of the individual's capacities and energy. Upon the other hand, there was an apparent incompatibility between the constant political agitation which prevailed during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and the germinating of fruitful ideas and the development of a nascent civilization. This is a point to which I shall often have occasion to refer, though it is per-

haps impossible to define the precise causes of it. How was it that the Renaissance succeeded in taking root amid these constant struggles, instead of being choked at its birth? How came it that while Pisa, Siena, and Perugia were being deluged with blood, artists and thinkers were able to work in peace?

Not only in Florence, but throughout Italy—in Venice with its Senate and Grand Council, in Milan with the Sforzas, in Mantua with the Gonzagas, in Ferrara with the Estes, in Urbino with the Montefeltros, in Rimini with Malatesta, in Naples with Robert and Alfonso, and at the Vatican with the Popes—was this phenomenon manifested; and while neighboring states were at war with one another, poets, painters, and philosophers followed their peaceful pursuits, and even tyrants, as they were called, did not disdain to compete for the laurel crown.

The true reason of it all lies in the fact that Italy did not have to make the same effort as the other nations of Europe to escape from the state of torpor into which all had sunk in the Middle Ages. It would be no difficult matter to write a history of the five or six centuries which followed the invasion of the Barbarians; but this period, dark as it was throughout the rest of Europe, was not without its glory for Italy. The monuments with which Rome had covered the land were still standing: she still existed, like a fire of which the smouldering embers alone remain, and which no savage incursions could



quite extinguish. All her triumphal arches, baths, votive columns, pantheons, amphitheatres, and temples still raised their heads, though entwined with creepers, which gave a new and additional beauty to these old ruins, showing how great must once have been that grandeur, the remembrance of which comes powerfully back to us in every moment of quiet reflection. It was the connecting link between Italy of the past and new Italy. The grandeur of the past could but raise hopes for the splendor of the future. Greece, which had been subdued and then exacted vengeance by imposing her intellectual yoke on her fierce conqueror, was something more than a mere geographical expression, a vague ideal, a land of sentiment, in which at one period human thought had enshrined itself. It was for the Italians a living reality, a friendly and neighboring land, which they could see far away on the horizon of the Adriatic sloping shorewards with its pale blue hills. Each day ships arrived from the Hellespont, their sails full in the breeze and edged with red, recalling in shape and color the ships of antiquity. The South of Italy was down to a recent period known as Magna Græcia, and colonized by those who had come from the opposite shore, and there flourished in Calabria and other parts of Sicily a civilization of which traces are to be found everywhere. If Christianity had proscribed everything which recalled paganism, the traditions at least remained, and every day further traces of civilization

were discovered in proportion as this chosen race was found to have established itself in the most remote villages. These two influences—the Latin and the Greek—had conjointly saved Italy from total ruin from an intellectual point of view; and the Florentines were more open than any of their neighbors to the influences of culture for the most industrious and gifted of the colonies founded in the peninsula before the Romans, had left upon the soil of that country evident traces of their existence, not to speak of art monuments which are even still worthy to be compared with those of Greece or of Florence in the fifteenth century.

When Italy had been conquered, Theodoric, Charlemagne, and Lothaire did not fail to encourage intellectual progress and anything which made for civilization. In the eighth century was promulgated Lothaire's edict, in which, following the traditions of Charlemagne, he provided for the formation of schools at Pavia, Ivrea, Cremona, Turin, Florence, Termoli, and Vincenza; and there was spiritual light even in the darkness of the tenth and eleventh centuries. The monks of the Abbey of Monte Cassino furthered this development of learning by copying Aristotle, Demosthenes, Cicero, Horace, Virgil, and Lucretius; and throughout the whole of Southern Italy the Latin poets were read in the Roman amphitheatres, while in the Forum of Trajan men of letters would read extracts from the classic authors to the Senate, who

conferred on the most successful competitor a floral crown and a cloth of gold. The Latin tongue, which was in itself a means of civilization, being as it were the key to the lofty conceptions and writings of the ancient authors, was in pretty general use during the first part of the Renaissance, and sermons were preached in Latin in many of the Tuscan churches. Nor was respect for ancient literature the monopoly of a sect or of a religious body; it was an article of popular faith. A proof of this is given us at Mantua, where the statue of Virgil was decorated with flowers, like the altar of a god; and at Brindisi, where the poet's house was shown to strangers with legitimate pride. Dante, in the thirteenth century, acknowledged Virgil as his master in the line—

“Tu se'lo mio maestro e lo mio autòre;”

and he also did much to extend the knowledge of Homer, Horace, Ovid, and Lucanus, and of the greatest Greek writers of their day.

But the influence of Rome was predominant over Dante, and he regarded the inhabitants as his ancestors, “the Roman people being,” to use his own expression, “the first-born of the Italian family.”

The Latin tongue had never been lost, though it had been corrupted by the admixture of barbarisms. Two men of genius, Petrarch and Boccaccio, endeavored to revive the Greek language, and their efforts were not altogether in vain. Petrarch jealously pre-

served a MS. of Sophocles in the original Greek, which he could not read, and it seemed to him as if the letters, of which he was unable to understand the meaning, emitted rays of light full of fascination. It had been given him by Léonce Pilate, a pupil of Bernardo Barlaam, a Calabrian monk sent to Avignon as an ambassador to the Pope, and who was one of the promoters of the study of Greek in the West.

Boccaccio, more fortunate than Petrarch, was able to read the Iliad in the original with the help of a Latin translation, and having in 1360 received Léonce Pilate into his house, he induced the Signoria to establish a public professorship for him to explain the Iliad, the Odyssey, and sixteen of Plato's Dialogues.

This is a date to be remembered, for the secret of the superiority of Florence in the plastic arts is certainly to be found in the study she gave to the ancient monuments, while her intellectual superiority is not less certainly due to the discovery and diffusion of the MSS. of ancient writers. The manifestation of the genius of Dante, though he expressed himself in the vulgar tongue, was in a measure brought about by these influences seemingly so remote.

It may naturally be asked how it came to pass that while in the reign of Augustus Greek was spoken at Rome, even by women who prided themselves on their intellectual superiority, that language fell into disuse, and was soon unknown to all save a select

few. The influence of Greek philosophy and literature in Italy continued to increase under the Antonines; Marcus Aurelius wrote his "Maxims" in Greek, and two centuries later the Emperor Julian used it in preference to his own language in his defence of Polytheism.

The heaviest blow to Greek influence in the West was dealt by Christianity previous to the Barbarian invasion. The superb temples built in honor of the three thousand divinities, "among whom there was not a single atheist," and the charm of the writings of the great heathen authors, testified too strongly to the unquestionable superiority of ancient genius to be left intact. Temples were destroyed, images were broken, the gods were proscribed; and the intellectual level of society had sunk so low that no one rose to protest against this destruction of monuments of art and of Greek literature. The imagination reels at the thought of these holocausts offered up on the altar of the true God, the more so as it was not the outcome of sudden violence, as when the Arabs invaded Asia, but a methodical system not less fatal in its results. A few elevated minds may have risen superior to prejudice, and found the practice of the new creed not incompatible with an admiration for Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Xenophon, Aristotle, and Plato; but St. Jerome himself, though he did not commit their writings to the flames, would not read them. The work of destruction was completed by

the official and infallible judgment of the Holy See, for in the Council held at Carthage all prelates were forbidden to read the heathen writers, and from that time all intellectual relation between Greeks and Latins was at an end, the Greek tongue, in which so many immortal works had been written, soon becoming unintelligible.

The transfer of the Roman Empire to Constantinople was followed by the Barbarian invasion of Italy; but Greek literature found a temporary home at Ravenna, on the shores of the Adriatic, the last refuge of the power of the Roman Emperors, from Theodoric, King of the Goths, whose intellectual qualities were far above those of his followers.

A few of the successors of St. Peter also extended their patronage to Greek literature, and a hundred years after Theodoric's day the Roman schools which had been closed during the invasion were reopened. The Church, however, still regarded the language and literature of Greece as tending to heresy, and the Latin tongue, which alone was taught, had become too corrupted by Barbarian idioms for the study of its literature to be general.

While the West was thus relapsing into darkness, it is interesting to see how far the East had preserved the precious patrimony handed down to it.

In the fourth century of our era the separation took place, and Constantinople became the scene of religious quarrels and heresies, the Greeks imitating

the conduct of Christian bishops, and destroying in their turn the manuscripts of Menander, Diphilus, Apollodorus, Philemon, Alexis, Sappho, Corinna, Anacreon, Mimnermus, Bion, Alcman, and Alcæus, in the interests of religion. There remained a few historians of talent, commentators, geographers, and doctors, but not a single poet of note, and the decadence of literature followed close upon the political collapse.

A similar scourge to that which brought about the downfall of civilization in the West was about to complete the work of destruction in Greece. In the twelfth century the Arabs took possession of all the Greek colonies in Asia and Africa, and their invasion led gradually to the suppression of the Greek tongue, the use of which was confined to Greece strictly so called.

It was not, however, the Caliph Omar who burned the library of the Ptolemys, for this had already been done by the soldiers of Cæsar, and the Serapeum, which had escaped when Alexandria was captured by the Roman general, was sacked by Theodosius. It may even be argued that, setting aside the substitution of the Koran for the Bible, and the suppression of the Greek tongue, the Arabs under Haroun-el-Raschid played a civilizing part. But there was worse to come; and when the Ottoman Turks, having vanquished the Arabs in Asia, advanced upon Europe and threatened even to dislodge the Greek

language from the islands in which it had found a last refuge, it was Christianity which came to the rescue. In order to atone for the destruction of the ancient authors, it brought to the West the writings of the Church Fathers, and Greek became the liturgical tongue of the Eastern Church. When the whole territory had fallen beneath the yoke of the Mussulmans, the West became a refuge for those exiles, who may truly be called the real initiators of the Renaissance.

Before the capture of Constantinople, which dispersed the last of the Greek savants, the Byzantine emperors, threatened by the Turks, endeavored to make friends in the Latin world, and to bring about a conciliation of the Churches. In a Council held at Vienna in 1311, anxious to create a bond of union between the two Churches, the Bishops ordered that Latin should be taught in a certain number of Italian towns. Upon the other hand, the monks of the order of St. Basilus, who were established in Calabria, employed Greek in their liturgy, and were much interested in effecting the reconciliation of the Eastern and Western Churches, while they were among the most hearty promoters of the study of Greek.

The Calabrian monk, Bernardo Barlaam of Seminara, who acted as teacher to Petrarch, had been one of the intermediaries between the two Churches, and this explains his presence at the Papal Court at Avignon. The first public chair of Greek was founded



by his pupil Pilate at Florence in 1360, at which time, as we find from Petrarch's letters, there were not ten people in Italy who could read Homer, even in the Latin translation.

Soon after this Manuel Chrysoloras came to seek the succor of Italy against the Turks, and was persuaded to occupy the chair left vacant by Pilate. He lectured at Milan, Paris, and Rome; wrote a Greek grammar; and having found in Palla Strozzi (1372-1462) a liberal patron, who would help him to propagate his ideas, got from Constantinople as many Greek manuscripts as he could, and revealed to the West the works of Plato and Plutarch, the politics of Aristotle, and the geography of Ptolemy.

It was Florence that gave the first impulse to the study of Greek by the creation of the chair occupied by Pilate in 1360, and from that date the progress was very rapid. Guarini of Verona succeeded Chrysoloras, and when Cosimo the Elder had driven Strozzi into exile, he continued to encourage the study of Greek. Leonardo Bruni Aretino, another pupil of Chrysoloras, translated Aristotle's "Ethics," the "Discourses" of Æschines, and the "First Punic War" of Polybius, while Niccolo (1363-1437) created a new science—that of philological criticism. The Florentines were not content with possessing the mere texts, but did their best to have them in their primitive accuracy and to make the most out of them. Thus we reach the zenith of the movement, brought about by

the presence of the many Greeks who came to attend the Council at Florence, and afterwards by the emigration which followed on the capture of Constantinople by the Turks. George of Trebizond, Theodorus Gaza, Argyropulos, Gemistes Pletho, and Aurispa (who himself brought back to Florence, from his journey in the East, 232 Greek manuscripts), preceded Marcilio Ficino and the Academy of Plato, which held its meetings in the Careggi Gardens under the presidency of Lorenzo the Magnificent and Politian.

Before showing how Florence carried all Italy with her, and giving an idea of what the movement was in Florence itself when that city reached its apogee under Lorenzo, we must cast a look backwards at the parallel influences which had their place in the composition of Florentine genius. It is necessary to mark also how the vulgar tongue was slowly evolved; composed like a bouquet of flowers of the choicest and most appropriate expressions from the various dialects of Italy, and forming the new language in which Dante, in the thirteenth century, wrote his immortal poem.

The constitution of an exarchate at Ravenna, which lasted until the eighth century, caused Byzantine influences to predominate throughout Tuscany; and though it is difficult to say precisely how far they prevailed in literature, we have the clearest evidence of their existence in the plastic arts. In the baptis-

tery of San Giovanni, one of the most ancient monuments of Florence, the ornamentation of the ceiling is unmistakably Greek, reminding one of the mosaics in the tomb of Galla Placidia at Ravenna and the beautiful mosaics of San Vitale, where the Empress Theodora, painted like a courtesan, and the Emperor Justinian, are represented in the midst of an Oriental Court, composed of eunuchs, Nubians, and Persians. It was Cimabue, the first leader of the Florentine school, who shook off the yoke of Byzantine influences, and brought the artists of his day back to the study of nature.

In sculpture Niccolo Pisano and other natives of Pisa led the way, though it is only just to add that they took their inspiration from national art, and learned much from the sarcophagi of Pisa, which had been carved two centuries before the Christian era by the Roman sculptors of whom Strabo wrote in such eulogistic terms.

The art and the science of the Arabs, their unrivalled taste, and their thorough though limited workmanship, also exercised an unquestionable influence on the movement. Masters of Italy from the ninth to the eleventh century, they could not fail to impress something of their style and characteristics—their love of color, their liking for rich materials and complex decoration—upon those with whom they were in constant communication at all the ports of the Mediterranean.

The Arabs were especially fond of richly chased armor, delicately wrought jewels, brilliant enamels, embossed leathers, and elaborately caparisoned horses; and, accustomed to camp life, they were wont, even in times of peace, to trace the images of war; thus the jousts and tournaments for which Italy became famous derived much of their splendor from the imitation, conscious or unconscious, of these Arab pageants.

The House of Swabia, when it had claimed the throne of the Roman Cæsars, never exercised more than a nominal and intermittent authority over Italy, and its genius differed so fundamentally from that of the Tuscans that the traces which it left behind it were very faint. Personal energy of character, however, has always had great influence in Italy, and the remarkable cultivation of Frederick Barbarossa's descendant, Frederick II., had a wide-spreading effect. His reign was the prologue of the Renaissance, and he probably had something to do with the tendency shown by the Florentines to shake off all religious influence in the work of civilization. He leaned to the side of the Arabs rather than of the Romans, and this sufficed to raise an accusation of atheism against him. He founded the University of Naples in 1224, spoke Italian, French, Greek, and Arabic, was a poet and a dandy, and was so exempt from prejudice that he admitted Arabs, however poor, to his Court if they were distinguished in literature or science. His

secretary was a Mussulman, his doctor a Spanish Jew, and his metaphysician an Englishman, Michael Scotus. The spirit of tolerance which he displayed is one of the distinctive marks of the Renaissance, and this was why the movement was held in suspicion by a few extreme sectaries.

The Normans, who had gained possession of Magna Græcia, driving out the Byzantines and Saracens, capturing Messina, Catania, and Palermo, and founding dynasties in Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily, siding at one time with the Pope and at another with the Emperor, were beyond doubt a valiant race; but they were less apt to receive than to impress upon others any intellectual influence. The singular monuments which they have left at Lucera, Canosa, and Venosa do no more than attest to the reality of the conquests made by Roger, Robert Guiscard, the sons of Tancred of Hauteville, and the heroes of "Jerusalem Delivered," and it is evident, when one examines the shape and character of these works of art, that those who reared them were dominated by the influence of what they had seen among the Arabs whom they had been combating in the East. The Normans made no attempt to alter the course of the civilization, higher than their own, which they found in these provinces, and it must be said to their credit that they left the holders of the soil in possession of their legal rights, the two races living side by side in perfect peace; so much so, that when they were suc-

ceeded by Frederick II. the Arab civilization was found intact.

The troubadours, driven from France by the crusade against the Albigenses, also had some influence upon the genius not only of Italy, but of Florence. This is proved by the frequent imitations of their works, and the language of Florence teemed with expressions and idioms borrowed from the tongue of Provence.

Three sovereigns of Southern Italy wrote poems in that tongue, and the troubadours also inculcated upon the Italians a chivalrous regard for the female sex, and that predilection for fine-drawn arguments which later degenerated into the *Concetti*.

These are the main influences and the various causes which brought about the Renaissance, and apart from them all the rest is due to the peculiar genius of Florence, to the national temperament, and to circumstances of race and politics. Much might be said, too, of the gradual formation of the vulgar tongue, and of its employment as the universal vehicle of thought throughout Italy when it came to be used by Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and the many other great writers who preceded Machiavelli, Guicciardini, and the learned men who discussed antiquity with Cosimo and Lorenzo beneath the wide-spreading trees of Careggi.

## CHAPTER IV.

## ILLUSTRIOUS FLORENTINES.

I MUST now, turning aside from the Renaissance movement, say something about the men who contributed the most towards its development, not only in Florence and throughout Tuscany, but at Rome as well, whither many of them were summoned by the popes in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

I will only speak of those who were born in Florence itself, though to many who were natives of other parts of Italy that city was a second home. Upon the other hand, it will be seen that a native of Tuscany, Leonardo da Vinci, who takes rank with Dante and Michael Angelo, was almost a stranger in his own country, which possesses none of his greatest works, and he is even claimed as one of their own by another school. The name of those men of genius, exclusive of the artists, who gave Florence her unrivalled position, is Legion, beginning with Dante and ending with Galileo. The most illustrious were Petrarch, Boccaccio, Marcilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, Machiavelli, Brunelleschi, Politian, Alberti, Savonarola—that is to say, historians, poets, artists, and philosophers—while inferior to them in talent, but

still worthy of mention as having taken part in the great movement of the time, are Coluccio Salutati, Passavanti, Giovanni Villani, Franco Sacchetti, Bonaccorso Pitti, Poggio Bracciolini, Agnolo Pandolfini, Traversari, Alamanni, Benivieni, Burchiello, Rinuccini, Acciaiuoli, Panormita, Pulci, Cristoforo Landino, Guicciardini, and the grand secretaries of the Republic, Leonardo Bruni and Carlo Marsuppini. I will endeavor to describe the special characteristics and individual part played by each one of these in the mighty movement of his age.

The most illustrious thinkers and writers of the fifteenth century remain, so to speak, unknown, so far as their fleshly representation goes, for very few portraits were painted in those days. The beautiful but stern face of Dante was, however, handed down to posterity by Giotto in a fresco unfortunately so dimmed by age and blurred by an inartistic restoration that the features are very indistinct. There is a fresco of Pico della Mirandola as a child by Luini; and Alberti, who was the friend of many of the medallionists, lives in the likeness of him by Matteo da Pasti; in another at Rimini, over the tomb of Sigismund Malatesta; and in two bronzes, one presented to the Louvre Gallery by His de la Salle, and the other in the Dreyfus Collection.

The great medallionists of the fifteenth century have transmitted to us the features of Cosimo the Elder, Lorenzo, and of several other members of the



Medici family, and there are still extant some very perfect busts by Benedetto da Majano, Mino da Fiesole, Desiderio da Settignano, and Benvenuto Cellini. But from contemporary art in the strict sense of the term, from which one would prefer to have the portraits of all these celebrities, there is but little to be derived. The fifteenth century cannot, as I have said, boast of any portrait painters except Piero della Francesca and Pollaiuolo; though fifty years afterwards, when the art of printing, recently discovered, favored the spread of learning, a few artists illustrated the biographies which were published. The sixteenth century gives us a wider choice of subjects, the Pitti and Uffizi Palaces containing many pictures by contemporary masters, those by Bronzino being almost entirely confined to the Medici family; while a careful search of the principal collections, museums, and libraries in Europe reveals likenesses of the most celebrated masters and artists of the day.

## DANTE.

(1265-1321.)

Dante, as is well known, died in exile, and the monument afterwards erected to him by the people of Florence in the Pantheon of Santa Croce does not contain his bones; while the tomb at Ravenna in which he is buried was only built after his death by a Venetian, the provveditore of Ravenna, as an homage to the greatest of Italian poets. Cacciaguida, whose

name is recorded in the history of Tuscany as having taken part in the Crusade of 1147, had a son Alighieri, and he in 1265 became the father of the future author of the "Divine Comedy."

An ancient custom prevailed in Florence of celebrating the coming of May every year—a subject treated by many of the miniature painters of the time, under the title of "Primavera." On May-day the whole city kept holiday. The maidens, arrayed in white and with the May blossoms in their hands, formed long processions and danced on the sprouting grass, the young men joining in the pastime; and while the first day of summer was dedicated to the Virgin, the return of fine weather and the budding of the flowers was celebrated after the ancient rites. It was on a May-day that Alighieri took his son to the house of a neighbor, Folco de Portinari, who had invited all the children of his friends. Here it was that he met Beatrice, then only nine years of age, gay and beautiful in her childish fashion, and he received her image into his heart with so much affection that it never again departed from him. Eighteen years afterwards he wrote the "Vita Nuova," and Beatrice had died in the flower of youth. Full of melancholy, oppressed by persecution, and surrounded by enemies, he collected his thoughts about him to record the recollections of the beautiful vision in which she appeared to him "clothed in noble crimson," simple, candid, and gentle. He tells us how to

look at her made a man pure and good, and this youthful passion shed its influence upon his whole future life.

Dante lost his father in childhood. He studied under the celebrated Brunetto Latini, the secretary of the commune and the author of the "Tesoro" and the "Tesoretto." At eighteen the poetic instinct awoke in him, and later he wrote that strange love-dream of which Beatrice was the heroine. He related his dream to several of the master-poets of the day, some of them, such as Guido Cavalcanti and Cino da Pistoia, replying to him in kindly and encouraging terms, while one or two, including Dante da Majano, treated him as moon-struck, and advised him to take a dose of hellebore.

From 1283 to 1289 Dante wrote almost incessantly, conscious of his own powers, and having already, we are told, conceived the plan of the work which was to immortalize his name. But he was oppressed by melancholy, often retiring into the convent of the Benedictines, and meditating, to all appearance, the assumption of holy orders. Political disturbances, however, called him back to practical life, and as this was a time when it was necessary for a man to side with one or other of the contending factions, he enrolled himself beneath the banner of the Guelphs, and in 1289 was present at the battle of Campaldino and the victory of Arezzo.

Veri de Cerchi, the captain of the Florentine horse,

before the engagement became general, decided that twelve picked men should attack the enemy, and as those who took part in this attack were almost certain to fall, he named first himself, then his son, and then his two nephews, calling upon "those who love their country to come forward and prove it by making up the required number." A hundred and fifty men volunteered, and among these was Dante.

Upon the 9th of June, 1290, Dante, then five-and-twenty, received the tidings of the death of Beatrice. The thought of her had sustained him in life; she was his pole-star and hope; but though the blow was a terrible one, he bore it in silence, only giving expression to it six months afterwards in the canzone, "*Anima mia che non ten' vai?*" As his heart did not, much to his surprise, cease to beat, he devoted himself to the study of philosophy and theology, making himself familiar with the Greek and Latin authors, and for the next two years we know that he was engrossed in literary labors to the exclusion of politics. In 1292 he married Gemma dei Donati, to whom—though strangely enough her name is never once mentioned in his poems—he became very much attached. In the year of his marriage he renewed his connection with public affairs, was elected to the Government Council as Prior in 1300, sent in the following year on an embassy to Boniface VIII., and becoming involved in one of those revolutions which favored now Guelph and now Ghibelline, incurred, in

the year 1302, the penalty of exile. Now began his nineteen years of wandering through Italy, staying first with Bartolommeo della Scala at Verona, then at Padua, and then at Castelnuovo, where he acted as mediator between Malespina and the Bishop of Luni. It was then that he tasted the bitter bread of exile, as he says; but he did not suffer in silence, and it was at this period that he wrote the "Convito" and the discourses known as the "Vulgare Eloquio." Broken-hearted, and yearning with love for Florence, his ungrateful country, he cannot reconcile himself to the thought of living away from her, and with a mingling of hope and despair he weeps and almost implores that he may be allowed to return.

It seemed at one time as if his prayer would be heard, and he hoped to hasten its fulfilment by dedicating one of his works to the Emperor Henry VII.

In January, 1311, Robert, King of Naples, was proclaimed King of Italy, but the Guelph cities refused to recognize him, and Tuscany and the Romagna joined in a league against him. The Florentines allied themselves with Lodi, Cremona, Brescia, Milan, Pavia, and Piacenza, and it took the King six months to establish his power. He captured Piacenza, Cremona, Brescia, and Pavia, handing them over to governors, who showed them no mercy, and then proceeded to subjugate Tuscany. It was at this critical period that Florence opened her gates to most of the exiles, but the exclusion of the leaders

dashed all Dante's hopes to the ground. He was then at the Court of the Polentas at Ravenna, with Guido Novello, as we know by the date of a canzone on the death of the Emperor Henry VII., dedicated to Guido.

In 1314 he was at Lucca, as the guest of Ugucione della Faggiuola, and it was there that he forgot his ideal passion in the arms of a lady named Gentucca.

It was an ancient custom that on the festival of St. John certain criminals should receive their pardon, offering themselves to the saint, candle in hand, and paying a fine. A strenuous attempt was made to induce Dante to end his exile in this way, but to the foolish priest who conducted the negotiation he made the indignant reply :

“Is this how I am to be recalled to my country after three lustres of exile ? Is this to be the recompense of my innocence ? Is this the reward of my continued labor and study ? Far from a man familiar with philosophy be such base cowardice ! This is not how an exile should come back. Another way might surely be found which would not derogate from my fame. But if by this way only can I enter Florence, never again shall I see it. And what then ? Shall I not still see the sun and the stars, and ponder the sweet truth, without first giving myself in ignominy to the Florentine people ? No ; I would not do it if I were starving.”

When he made this answer he was at the Court of

Uguccione, driven from which he found an asylum with Can Grande della Scala at Verona. This was the most celebrated Court in all Italy, and it was the refuge of artists and poets from all parts, for whom Can Grande had built a spacious convent, with shady gardens and cool cloisters. Over the door of each room Can Grande had painted some symbol characteristic of the inmate—military trophies for the condottieri and captains; a palm-branch, symbolic of hope, for the exiles; an olive-branch for the monks; and a Mercury and Pallas for the artists. Dante was glad to take his place among them, and, with Gherardo di Castello, became one of the most honored guests of Can Grande, but the latter's unprincipely mode of jesting causing an estrangement, the poet went to Ravenna and settled at the Court of Guido Novello, close to the Franciscan convent now called Forte Braccio, in a house belonging to the Signore da Polenta. He had with him his sons Giacomo and Pietro, and his daughter Beatrice. Guido Novello was a friend and comforter to him during this bitter period of exile, when he knew that the last chance of revisiting his country had gone. Every day he repaired to the convent of St. Francis, and it is almost certain that towards the close of his life he enrolled himself among the brethren of that order. In 1321 he died, full of honors, at Ravenna, and the lord of Polenta pronounced his funeral oration and decked his tomb with a wreath of laurel. The mon-

ument at Santa Croce is, as I have said, merely erected to his memory, his bones lying at Ravenna, in a tomb which was built in 1483, by order of Bembo, the father of the cardinal of that name, the architect being Pietro Lombardi, one of the greatest of Venetian artists. The small façade is of a later date, having only been built in 1780, by the architect Morigia of Ravenna, under the direction of the Cardinal-Legate Valenti Gonzaga. To this cursory biography of a man whose genius seems almost superhuman, and whose name is linked with that of Homer in the memory of man, may be added a few lines on his works. I am fain to confess that after one-and-twenty journeys in different parts of Italy I am still not familiar enough with the language to be a good judge of the sublime expressions and the depths of beauty which characterize the "Divina Commedia." Yet even through the imperfect interpretations of the best translators one can grasp the lofty conceptions and the alternations of fierce passion and tenderness which run through its stanzas.

Dante discloses himself to us in three different aspects. At first he sings of the morning of life; and, stricken with gentle melancholy at the sight of Beatrice, he utters his amorous lay in sonnets and cantos. At her death his spirit soars much higher, and then it was that he wrote his great book entitled "Della Monarchia," a learned treatise on constitutions, in which, with an admixture of social and theo-



logical science, he discoursed on the origin of power and of society. The poet of the "Rime" and the "Vita Nuova," which are the most graceful, youthful emanations from the tenderest soul and the greatest genius of modern times, disappeared in the austere thinker trying to define the limit between the power of the Emperor and that of the Pope.

Until Dante's time the Italian, or vulgar tongue, as it was called, was only used by the Tuscans for business communications, and by common people; but the poet, by his use of the popular idiom, proved that the loftiest ideas and the noblest thoughts could find expression in it as well as in Latin. This was the language in which he wrote the "Convito" as well as the "Vulgari Eloquio." Sent as ambassador to Rome, the Papal Court left an indelible impression upon his mind, and it was at Rome that he wrote the first stanzas of the "Divina Commedia," the recollections of his early youth bringing back the life-blood to his heart, and evoking the radiant image of his Beatrice.

While not attempting to bring into relief the infinite depth and tenderness of this great work, I would fain point out the methodical manner in which it is written. Thus, all the characters are taken from real life, though Dante intends them to be allegorical, and the events in which they take part express the ideas by which they are actuated. The work is divided into three parts—Hell, Purgatory, Paradise—

each containing a mystical teaching, the purport of which is explained by the poet himself in the letter which he wrote to Can Grande della Scala, dedicating the work to him out of gratitude for his hospitality.

Upwards of three thousand commentators, beginning with Boccaccio, Jacopo della Lana, and Grandenigo, have endeavored, with more or less success, to expound the meaning of the poem; but the most trustworthy exposition is that of his son Jacopo, who may be supposed to have known more about his father's views than any one else. The best likeness of him whom Guido da Polenta styles the "altissimo poeta" is probably that in the dim frescoes of the Bargello.

GIOVANNI VILLANI.

(1270-1348.)

The history of Florence may be said to have commenced with two writers, Dino Compagni and Giovanni Villani, both born in the second half of the thirteenth century.

Villani was a merchant by profession, and, like Dante and so many others, he went to Rome in the year 1300, at the time of the indulgence which had been decreed by Boniface VIII. He was so impressed by what he saw that he determined to write a book about his native city, and in the preface he says that "the city of Florence, the daughter and handmaid of Rome, being destined for great fame, it is meet to set forth all that relates to her origin, and

thus, by the grace of Jesus Christ, in this year 1300, I, safely returned from Rome, did begin to compile this book in the fear of God, and of the blessed John, my patron (saint)."

Villani was the director of the mint (*La Zecca*) at Florence, and he had three times been a member of the Signoria, and five times ambassador to different states. He had occupied all kinds of posts, having had the superintendence of the erection of the ramparts of Florence, and having been selected to negotiate peace between Florence and Pisa, and afterwards between Lucca and his native city; while, when fighting against the famous *Castruccio*, he was made prisoner and detained as a hostage by *Martino della Scala*. He was a partisan of the *Guelphs* and a devoted son of the Church, though at the same time an advocate for communal rights; but he was less successful as a banker-merchant, his house, like those of the *Acciaiuoli*, the *Bonaccorsi*, the *Cocchi*, and the *Corsini*, having been involved in the disasters caused by the failures of the *Peruzzi* and the *Bardi*. He was completely ruined, and, in accordance with the corporation laws then in force, underwent a long term of imprisonment at Florence.

His chronicles throw no little light upon the economic side of Florence during the fourteenth century, and he may be described as the first of the political economists, one passage in his works telling us of his wish "to let posterity have some conception of the

wealth of the community, and of the causes which led up to it, so that in future men of knowledge may be able to increase the prosperity of Florence." He died of the plague in 1348, and his brother Matteo, an economist like himself, went on with his history.\*

## PASSAVANTI.

(1297-1357.)

"Specchio della Vera Penitenza" ("Mirror of the True Penitence")—such is the singular title of Jacopo Passavanti's work, which became, from a philological point of view, one of the most remarkable exemplars of the Italian language. It has nothing to recommend it in the way of imagination, for it is little more than a compilation from the Fathers of the Church, but it was no small achievement, in the first part of the fourteenth century, to express in the scarcely formed vulgar tongue the various shades of thought in a style at once pure, elegant, and graceful. These are the saving qualities of Passavanti's work.

He was of a noble Florentine family, and at the age of twenty joined the Dominican order at Santa Maria Novella, and soon gained a celebrity for learning and virtue. So high were the hopes entertained of him that the fathers sent him, in accordance with

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\* Matteo also died of the plague in the year 1363, and the history was continued by his son Filippo, the precise date of whose death is not known.

The Great Cloister Church of  
S. Maria Novella  
Frs Giovanni de' Carpai

PASAVANTI.

(1881-1887.)

... "The Great Cloister, Church of S. Maria Novella" ...

*The Great Cloister, Church of  
S. Maria Novella*

*Fra Giovanni da Carpi*







the custom of the day, to complete his studies at the University of Paris ; Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch being among the foreign celebrities who sojourned there. Passavanti, on his return from Paris, taught theology at Pisa, Siena, and Rome, and after attaining to the highest dignities in his order, and becoming in succession Vicar-General of Florence and Bishop of Monte Cassino, he died on the 15th of June, 1357.

He was best known to the Florentines as Prior of Santa Maria Novella, and he it was who commissioned Memmi and Gaddi to paint the famous frescoes in the church of that monastery where his bones are laid. An interesting quotation, as showing the place which Passavanti's "Specchio" occupied in the literary history of the sixteenth century, is extracted from the writings of the critics who were called in 1573 "the deputies for the revision of Boccaccio's 'Decameron.'" These remarks are as follow : "There was a certain Jacopo, a brother of Santa Maria Novella, about ten years Boccaccio's junior, who, in 1351, that is, about the same time as the 'Decameron,' published a treatise on 'Penitence' in the Latin tongue, which treatise he translated himself, and partly recomposed, into the vulgar tongue. His manner is very similar to that of Boccaccio ; and though he does not seem to make any attempt to be playful or amusing, the style is not devoid of delicacy. The language, too, is, for the time, pure, appropriate, sedate, and ornate, without

being pretentious, and the work is unquestionably calculated to charm those who read it."

Passavanti, like so many other authors, is no longer read; but it is astonishing to find how many of his ideas have been appropriated by the most eminent writers, and his "Specchio" is more amusing, in the ordinary sense of the word, than the title would lead one to infer. Most of the anecdotes with which it abounds refer to events in Paris, and there is much good-humor about the worthy monk, who urges upon his readers an introspective examination of their consciences.

#### PETRARCH.

(1304-1374.)

Vaucluse, to use Petrarch's own expression, is the "Transalpine Parnassus" of the poet; and the recollection of him is still as vivid in the ancient "county" of Avignon as in his native Tuscany. He was born at Arezzo, which, small as it is, has given birth to so many men of genius, on the 20th of July, 1304, and he came into the world at a time when his country was torn by faction, and when several of her most illustrious children were in exile. His father, who held the appointment of Notary in the Florentine Rolls Court, was a friend of Dante, and, proscribed like the latter, took refuge at Pisa, where he sent his son to study at the University. The death of Henry VII., which put an end to the last hopes of the exiles and inspired Dante with so splendid a canzone, led to

the final exile of Petrarch's father, who took up his residence at Avignon with the Papal Court of Clement V.

While the University of Montpellier was already celebrated, the south could boast at that time of those Courts of Love at which the Provençal poets met in friendly rivalry. Petrarch's father looked upon the study of law as the surest road to fortune for his son, and it is said that finding him on one occasion absorbed in Cicero, he took the book and cast it into the fire. Those who are predestined to be famous in letters are not, however, to be thus deterred, and Petrarch drank so deeply of the ancient writers that in his "Triumph of Fame" he calls Virgil, Cicero, and Seneca "the eyes of our language" (*questi son gli occhi de la lingua nostra*).

A brief sketch of his life will not come amiss before explaining by what strands he is connected with the genius of Florence, and fixing his place in the history of her literature: below Dante and above Boccaccio. His father, adhering to his resolve to make a lawyer of him, sent him from Montpellier, where he had spent four years, to the University of Bologna; here he studied first under Giacomo Andrea, and then under Cino da Pistoia. He was left an orphan at twenty, and his fortune having been squandered by his executors, he was obliged to return to Avignon, where he then gave himself up to his favorite studies.

He was twenty-three when he made the acquaintance of Colonna, Bishop of Lombez, whose affection for him exercised a very great influence upon the whole of his future career; and it is at this period, too, that began to dawn the passion which directed the course of his whole life, and inspired him with the sonnets by which he is known to us. Petrarch remains for posterity "the lover of Laura," and the fountain of Vacluse has become the shrine of this affection, not less touching and ill-starred than that inspired by Beatrice, but more real and more vivid. It was under the influence of this stormy passion that Petrarch made his way through the south of France to Paris, Flanders, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, exhaling in all directions his amorous burden, like a bird stricken by a dart; and scattering his verses by the wayside.

Petrarch, however, was a citizen of the world, and he was of too practical a turn of mind to isolate himself in the ethereal Platonism which animates some of his writings. Pope John XXII. was intent upon restoring Rome to the Holy See, and Petrarch, inflamed by the idea of a fresh crusade, wrote the ode to the Bishop of Lombez which begins with the splendid invocation, "O aspettata in ciel," and in 1335 he wrote some magnificent Latin verses on the same subject to Pope Benedict XII.

But the image of Laura still haunted him, and he could not bring himself to settle anywhere. Colonna,

having become a cardinal, induced him to come to Rome, but he soon returned to Avignon, and went to reside in solitude at Vacluse, leading a life of asceticism, and devoting himself wholly to the ideal figure of her upon whom all his thoughts were fixed. It was there that he wrote those sonnets and odes, which soon made him famous throughout Italy, and worthy to be compared with Dante himself.

In 1340 his name had become so celebrated that the Roman Senate invited him to return to that city and receive the honors of the Capitol, while the Chancellor of the University of Paris, which at that time enjoyed a world-wide celebrity, offered him similar honors on the banks of the Seine.

Petrarch repaired to Italy, first visiting Naples, where Robert of Anjou, a friend of literature, was surrounded by a Court composed of poets and men of learning. It was at Naples that he became intimate with Boccaccio, to whom he addressed such touching letters instinct with friendliness. Upon the 8th of April, 1341, he went up to the Capitol, twelve young Roman princes preceding him and reciting some of his finest compositions. Having reached the altar, he received the laurel wreath and the garlands of flowers woven by patrician hands. When he had received them, he laid them with reverence upon the altar, as much as to intimate that he owed his success to Divine favor, and after the ceremony was over he returned to Avignon, without casting one look behind.

The year following, as the Romans had commissioned him to make known their wishes to the Holy Father, Clement VI. appointed him Prior of Migliarino, in the diocese of Pisa, and he intrusted him with a mission at once confidential and perilous, to Naples, where the Holy Father claimed the regency. But the Princess Joan, a granddaughter of King Robert, who has left behind her a very bad reputation, would not listen to his representations, and he returned to Avignon, after a brief stay at Parma. He was, in his retreat, still accessible to the influence of generous ideas, and when Rienzi endeavored to restore the republic at Rome, Petrarch sent him his congratulations, and did not allow even the assassination of Cardinal Colonna to estrange him. But the phantom of a restored republic faded away with the death of Rienzi; and it was just about the same time that Laura was stricken down by the plague of 1348, which Boccaccio has depicted in such sinister colors.

The death of Laura, which inspired his most tender sonnets and filled him with such lasting sorrow, could not occupy his whole heart, and his duties as a man and a citizen were not forgotten. After a short visit to Louis Gonzaga at Mantua, in the country of his beloved Virgil, he wrote a letter to Charles IV., entreating him to restore peace to Florence; and in 1350 he was enabled to return there, spending some time with Boccaccio, and visiting his native Arezzo, where he had become a stranger. The plague drove

him from Florence, and in company with Boccaccio he visited Venice. As one by one his friends died and left him more solitary, his life became more austere and laborious. At Ferrara, where he went to see the Prince, he fell ill, and on getting better he took up his residence at Milan, where he passed the next nine years as the guest of the Visconti. In 1362 he settled at Padua, and in 1369 retired to the little village of Arqua, where on the 18th of July, 1374, he was found seated in his library with his forehead resting on a book. Death had overtaken him in this attitude of study so typical of his whole life. He was buried with great pomp, Francesco de Carrara acting as chief mourner, while all the nobility followed his coffin. He is buried in front of the door of the church at Arqua, and by his will he bequeathed all his valuable MSS. to the Republic of Venice, and left a small sum to his friend Boccaccio. Petrarch derived much of his inspiration from Dante, and there is a very great resemblance between the "Rime" of the former and the miscellaneous pieces from the latter's "Convito." In Petrarch's case his finest inspirations, those which go straight to the heart and keep the writer's name alive in future ages, are dictated by his passion for Laura, and he derived from his study of the ancient authors a clearness of style and a limpidity of thought which were in favorable contrast with the mysticism and obscure allegories of Dante. He assimilated the language, and was, in

spite of a few solecisms, a faultless Latin writer, having the fluency of Cicero, and writing prose like a poet—with a wealth, that is to say, of imagery. He was so well endowed, too, with the art of imitation that his writings may easily be mistaken for those of the poets at the end of the Empire, and in some instances he goes so far as to copy the very groundwork and method of certain Roman writers. His “Consolations” take one back entirely to antiquity, and in bidding a friend bear up under adversity he calls to his aid all the examples furnished by Roman history. He was richly endowed, no doubt, in imagination, but having been intimately mixed up in the practical affairs of his day, he has derived all his illustrations from contemporary life, or from facts testified to in the works of ancient authors.

Petrarch, in his wanderings, saw France during the fourteenth century in the hands of the enemy. He resided at Avignon, Montpellier, Bologna, Paris, Cologne, Naples, Genoa, Rome, Parma, Florence, Venice, Padua, Milan, and Prague. He was the friend of kings, the guest and correspondent of popes, and the pensioner of great nobles. He took part in various political combinations, and his reveries extended over many fields. He was more a man of letters than a devotee; and though a canon, a bishop, and a prior, he held such broad views on religion that he was the friend of Boccaccio, whom he gently chided, however, for the tone of his writings, exhort-



ing him to be more guarded in his expressions. When he wrote on religious subjects he, like Marcilio Ficino at a later date, referred for his facts to the philosophers and rhetoricians, and quoted Cicero and Seneca in preference to Holy Writ. He was impelled by a longing for solitude to reside at Vacluse and Arqua; but withal he was a man, and was moved by human ambition, and though he bore his triumphs with modesty, he was none the less eager in his pursuit of them. He was, in fact, more of a sage than a saint. He was endowed with a certain breadth of mind which prevented him from being held in bondage by the dreamy views of his age, and which kept him free from the errors of astrology and the prejudices of the time. He had no mission as a political partisan like Dante, having broader views and being less of a sectarian than the latter, and this enabled him to look down upon the human *mêlée* from the observatory to which he had ascended, and to watch the varying phases of the combat with disinterested eyes. At what he deemed the appropriate hour he wrote letters in behalf of justice to pontiffs and to emperors, speaking freely and impartially to the rulers, spiritual and temporal.

Eager for knowledge and study, he grieved that he could not read Homer in the Greek text, writing to Sygeros, "Your Homer lies dumb by my side; I am deaf to his voice, but still the sight of him rejoices me, and I often embrace him."

It has been asked whether the Laura who held so large a place in the life of the poet was a fiction or a living reality. She has been identified by some with Laura de Noves, daughter of Audibert de Noves, and she was already married when Petrarch saw her for the first time in the church of St. Claire at Avignon. He fell in love with her at first sight, and for twenty years preserved this passion in his heart as a fruitful source of inspiration. He loved her as one loves at twenty—with enthusiasm, candor, and chastity. He was three-and-twenty the day he first met her, and he had already assumed the priestly garb. As time went on his passion became more ardent, but she gave him no encouragement, and after an absence he returned to Avignon only to experience the same disappointment. Laura died of the plague in 1348, and he bewailed her loss in verses which are more profound, passionate, and truly beautiful than those in which he extols “her serene eyes, her beautiful angelic mouth, full of pearls, roses, and gentle words.” Some of the early “Rime” are rather mincing, but there is the accent of deep sorrow in the “Sonnets,” notably in the splendid lines:

“Morta colei che mi faceva parlare

“E ch'è si stava de pensier mie' in cima.”

In his despair he determined to abandon the world, and he wrote upon the fly-leaf of his Virgil the oath to fly from Babylon and to cut himself adrift from

all worldly ties. But, as M. Ghébart remarks in his "Origines de la Renaissance," "gifted writers like Petrarch do well not to deprive the world of their eloquence, their irony, their sagacity, and the resonant echo of their genius."

#### ACCIAIUOLI (NICCOLÒ).

(1310-1365.)

The name of this family, though it was not indigenous to Tuscany, is a very common one at Florence. One branch of it settled in that city during the fourteenth century, and on the 12th of September, 1310, Niccolò, who was destined to be the glory of his house, was born there.

His principal field of action was Naples, whither he had gone as tutor to the young Prince Louis of Tarentum, son of Catherine of Valois, the widow of Philip, Prince of Tarentum.

Faithful to his employers, he shared the vicissitudes of the Court of Naples during the time of Queen Joan I., whom he accompanied to Avignon, and when Louis of Tarentum espoused her, Acciaiuoli had them crowned at Naples, and was appointed by the Queen Great Seneschal of the kingdom; this being the highest dignity to which he could aspire.

Driven from her Court by the King of Hungary, wandering from place to place, and ever in danger of some fresh disaster, the Queen was saved by Niccolò, who presented himself to the Florentines,

and implored their help for the granddaughter of King Robert of Naples, who had been their faithful ally.

Endowed with great energy and matchless dexterity, he raised an army and coped with the condottieri, who thought they had an easy prey. But the resources of the Court were exhausted, and the army, being kept waiting for its pay, went over to the enemy. Acciaiuoli died in 1365, and his biography was written by Matteo Palmieri, the Apostolic Secretary.

BOCCACCIO.

(1313-1375.)

Boccaccio may be regarded as the first classical prose writer of Italy, and to him belongs also the distinction of fully revealing to the Tuscan people by his commentaries the genius of Dante.

I do not know upon what ground Dandolo, the author of the "Æsthetic Guide to Florence," makes his statement as to Paris having been the birthplace of Boccaccio, for the generally accepted belief is that he was born, as asserted in the *Osservatore Fiorentino*, at Certaldo in 1313.\* His father was a merchant, and it was against his wishes that his son embarked upon a literary career. Very well read in the ancient authors, he gave his preference to the vulgar tongue, and the first Italian author whom he read, and whose

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\* In "Il Filocopo," Boccaccio writing of himself in the character of Caleone, mentions Paris as his birthplace.

works he soon got to know by heart, was Dante. From him he derived his highest and best inspirations, including the substance of the eloquent speech which he delivered under the Duomo on the day that he vented his malediction on Florence for having closed her gates upon the most illustrious of her sons. The speech is still extant, and well deserves the reputation which it gained at the time.

He happened to be at Naples at the time when King Robert was receiving Petrarch with so much pomp. He made the poet's acquaintance, and learnt to admire and respect him, retaining until the day of his death a filial regard for him. Boccaccio, in his early days, was a thorough gallant, and having fallen in love with the daughter of the King of Naples, he gave utterance to his passion in one of his greatest works, "La Fiammetta," on the title-page of which he inscribed her name. He made but a brief stay at Florence, whither he was summoned by his father during the reign of the mad Duke of Athens, returning at once to Naples, where he enjoyed the favor of two queens, or of two daughters of queens, whose literary tastes were very highly developed. The death of his father brought him back to Tuscany, and he made Florence his permanent residence. It was there that he received Petrarch on his way to the jubilee at Rome after a separation of twenty years, and he set himself to recover for the exiled poet his rights of citizenship and his paternal inherit-

ance, which had been confiscated when his father, like Dante, was driven into exile. Boccaccio succeeded in obtaining from the Signoria a decree restoring this property to Petrarch.

There are two distinct individualities in Boccaccio, and yet Frenchmen and many other foreigners persist in estimating his character by the first part of his life only, associating his name with all that is sensuous and light. This may hold true of him while he was at the Court of Naples, and while he was composing amorous poetry in honor of his royal patroness; but after the year 1360 he devoted himself to more serious study, and followed in the wake of Accursi, the great jurisconsult, seeking the companionship of the learned Greek philosophers from Byzantium who flocked to Florence, and even assuming the priestly garb. This conversion was mainly the work of Petrarch and of a Carthusian monk, and he might possibly have renounced writing altogether if it had not been for a remarkable letter in which Petrarch dissuaded him from giving up the composition of poetry, and urged him to use his pen to instil admiration for the beautiful, useful, and good.

It is certain, at all events, that he led a contemplative life during the last few years of his existence, devoting his whole thoughts to God, to the salvation of his own soul, and to his books. The death of Petrarch in 1374 affected him so deeply that he declared that he should not long survive him; and, as

a matter of fact, he died the following year. The will of this once brilliant courtier was a model of humbleness. He bequeathed to Bruna, the daughter of his friend Ciango de Montemagno, "a wooden bedstead, a feather-bed, a pair of good sheets, a small table upon which he was wont to take his meals, two table-cloths, two towels, and his monk's robe lined with purple." He bequeathed two holy images to the church of San Giacomo at Certaldo, where he died, and all his manuscripts to Martino da Signa, on condition that he allowed any one to take a copy of them. This comprised the whole fortune of the whilom favorite of the Court of Naples.

His tomb is not at Santa Croce, where one would expect to find it, between those of Dante and Machiavelli, but at Certaldo, where he had spent the last two years of his life. It has suffered many vicissitudes, too, having first been moved to make room for the organ, while in 1783, owing to a mistaken interpretation of the Grand Duke Leopold's decree as to burials inside of churches, the bones of the illustrious writer were removed from the coffin and deposited elsewhere. Filippo Villani has left a description of him which tallies very closely with the bust at Certaldo, and which, as we have every reason to believe, is correct. According to this description, the lips were half-parted with a smile; he was stout, and had a fresh complexion. The nose was rather flat, and though he had no pretensions to manly beauty, there

was an air of good-humor upon his pleasant face. It is the likeness, in short, of the poet of the "Decameron" rather than of the philosopher of later years which the artist has left to us.

'But a better insight into the character of a man is to be gained from the private correspondence in which he gives free expression to his thoughts; and when Francis, the son-in-law of Petrarch, announced to Boccaccio the latter's death, he wrote him a letter in Latin which shows how accessible his heart was to pity and veneration, and how deeply he was affected by his friend's death.

"My first impulse," he says, "was to come and weep with you over our mutual loss, and say a last farewell to our mutual father, but for the ten years that I have been lecturing in public upon Dante's 'Commedia' I have been afflicted with an infirmity which, though not dangerous, to a great extent paralyzes my movements. When I received your letter I wept all the night long, not out of sorrow for this worthy man (for the virtues with which he was endowed are a sure guarantee that he has entered into eternal happiness with his God), but because his death leaves me like a ship at sea without a pilot. Amid the agitation of my soul I thought of your anguish and of that of the worthy Tullia, your wife and my sister. As a Florentine I envy Arqua, which, hitherto obscure, will now become famous in the world's history. The traveller, as he sails along the Adriatic



on his way from the distant East, will look towards the Euganean hills, and will say to his companions, 'It is at the foot of those hills that rests Petrarch!' Oh, unhappy country, which will not hold the ashes of so illustrious a son! Thou hast not deserved this good fortune, for during his lifetime thou didst nothing to attach him to thee. Perhaps thou wouldst have done so had he been a worker of treason, and sullied with crime, or devoured by ambition and envy." A constant study of these favored epochs of literature may possibly make one feel all the more distaste for the foolish politics of the hour, and cause one to undervalue one's own epoch; but certain it is that the mind dwells fondly upon the names of such men as Dante, Boccaccio, Michael Angelo, and Donatello, who were as lofty in character as in genius, and the nobility of whose disposition pulsates through their writings.

Boccaccio was the first writer of romance, properly so called; the "story" and the poem in octavo in the vulgar tongue being his creation. To him we owe "Ameto," "Il Filostrato," "L'Amorosa visione," and "Il Ninfale fiesolano," poetic compositions of his youth, which have often been copied since, and which have served as types of a school. Of these the "Fiammetta," written in 1344, is regarded as his greatest work, while his "Life of Dante" was the first biography of the poet of the "Divina Commedia." He also wrote "The Genealogy of the Gods,"

“Illustrious Women,” and “Illustrious Unfortunates,” as well as a treatise upon mountains, forests, and rivers. If we consider the period at which this was written, we see how much he was ahead of his age as regards mythology, geography, literature, and philology. He was far advanced in years and near his end when he began the commentaries on Dante and the “*Divina Commedia*,” and was accorded the privilege of occupying the pulpit of Santa Maria del Fiore, the people of Florence flocking to the church in crowds to hear the eloquent revelation of the beauties of a work which, notwithstanding the commentaries of Dante’s own son, still remained obscure for the multitude.

It was upon one of these memorable occasions that he so fiercely stigmatized the crimes of the preceding generations of Florentines, making the vaulted roof of the Duomo ring with his indignant tirade: “Oh, Florence! what madness impelled you to drive out the most glorious of your children, one the like of whom no other city could ever hope to possess. What greater victories, and triumphs, and supremacy can you boast of? Your riches are uncertain, your beauty fragile and fleeting, your elegancies idle and frivolous; it is only those people, who judge more of appearance than reality, who can regard them as being glorious. Do you set great store by your merchants and your goldsmiths, by the ancient lineage and the celebrity of your great families? Unnatural

mother that you are, open your eyes and behold your misdeeds, and may remorse and repentance lay hold on you! Your Dante, your son, died in exile, and it was you who sent him into banishment. His remains rest in foreign ground, and you will never see him before the last day. He treated you with filial respect, for he might have deprived you of his works, as you did not treat him with due honor. Yet, in return for his inspired writings, you deprived him of his right of citizenship. He was banished forever, and yet he remained a Florentine, preferring his native place to all the cities of Italy. Ask that his bones may be surrendered to you; pay this last mark of respect to his mighty shade, and even if you do not feel any remorse, take this step in order that the burden of reproach may be less heavy upon you. Ask that his ashes may be restored to you; and though I am certain that you will be refused, you will at least have shown that you are not altogether a stranger to feelings of pity. But it is perhaps a vain hope which I hold out to you, for the dead can neither feel nor understand. Dante will not emerge from his last resting-place at Ravenna, from that necropolis in which so many illustrious dead are buried; and Ravenna, which knows the value set on her hospitality, knows, also, the value of the treasure which she possesses. The whole universe keeps watch over the remains of the greatest and most perfect genius ever born, and you, Florence, are left face to face with

your ingratitude, while it is this foreign city which in future ages will reap the glory which ought to have been yours."

The most popular of Boccaccio's works, the masterpiece which is the heritage of every great writer, and which becomes, so to speak, the peg to which his celebrity is affixed, is the "Decameron." As regards imagination and style, it stands alone. It gives a complete and lifelike picture of manners and customs at Florence in the fourteenth century. It is an epitome of Florentine habits, each class of society being depicted with a master hand in its pursuits, its passions, its good qualities, its defects. It is a mirror in which each class finds its own image reflected, and though the work is of a licentious tendency, which makes it unsuitable for the young, this is only an accessory feature. The "Decameron" is a frame for the display of contemporary pictures, and one of the tales from it, the episode of Griselda, was selected by Petrarch to translate into Latin.

#### COLUCCIO SALUTATI.

(1330-1406.)

The honor of taking rank immediately after Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio devolved upon Salutati, whose mission it was to correct the texts of the Greek and Latin authors, to form libraries and academies, and to see that the manuscripts tallied exactly with the originals. He had the reputation of being

the most elegant Latin scholar of his day, and as Pope Urban V. was anxious to have him as Apostolic Secretary, he was compelled to take holy orders. Being a widower at the time, he seemed likely to rise to the highest dignities in the Church, but the Pope having removed the Holy See to Avignon, Coluccio, not feeling any decided vocation for a religious life, threw off his priestly robes and remained in Italy, where he soon contracted a second marriage.

As soon as it was known that he was free, several sovereigns and princes invited him to come and reside at their Court, but though he had acted as Chancellor of Perugia, and had gone thence to the Court of Rome, he was unwilling to leave Florence, where he had accepted, in 1375, the post of Chancellor, with the arduous task of conciliating the interests and appeasing the cravings of Guelphs and Ghibelines, and of the many Florentine families which were at daggers drawn with each other.

For thirty years Salutati discharged these duties with unquestioned authority, and he became the model secretary of the Republic, after whom Gianozzo Manetti, Leonardo Bruni, and Carlo Marsuppini shaped their conduct. The duty of corresponding with crowned heads devolved upon him, and he was equal to the task of upholding the interests of the country, of forming alliances in the hour of danger, and of averting perils of various kinds.

He occupied a very prominent place in Florentine

politics during the fourteenth century, and he possessed sufficient influence to take the lead in very important negotiations, as when at the time of the great Papal schism he wrote to Innocent VII. urging him to put an end to a scandal which threatened to be the ruin of the Church. The celebrated John Galeas Visconti, when ready to make war with Florence, declared that he dreaded the arguments of Salutati more than a great army. His manifestoes are abiding proofs of his political genius, just as they are masterpieces of literature and eloquence.

Politics, however, did not make him forget his fondness for literature, as was shown when Giuliano Sanseverino in the University of Bologna, and John de San Miniato, a monk of the Camaldoli order, at Florence, forbade their hearers to read the ancient poets and the profane writers of antiquity. It was in answer to them that he composed some Latin verses which were so much admired that he received, as Petrarch had done, the honors of a public demonstration. But before the laurel wreath could be placed upon his brows he had passed away, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, and from the account of his funeral at Santa Maria Novella which has been handed down to us, we learn that the ceremonial was the same as that afterwards observed at the obsequies of Leonardo Bruni and Marsuppini, the Gonfaloniere in office mounting the platform upon which the coffin rested, and placing upon the forehead of the defunct the

laurel crown. His "Political Letters" are regarded as his greatest work, but little of what he wrote has been published. The Latin poems which appear in the third volume of the "Illustrious Italian Poets" are well known, and his "Political Letters" have been edited in turn by Abbé Méhus and Lami, but they are far from being complete.

There is to be seen in the church of Fiesole the tomb of a bishop named Salutati, who died in 1466, and who very possibly may have belonged to the same family. This prelate, whose tomb is one of the finest creations of Mino da Fiesole, was famous as a jurisconsult, and he wrote several works on civil and canon law. A great favorite of Pope Eugenius IV., Nicholas V. continued to treat him with affection, and made him Bishop of Fiesole in 1450.

Some writers have attributed this handsome monument, which is such a credit to the church within which it is erected, to the first of the Salutati, but works of art possess the double merit of being beautiful in themselves and of becoming, in course of time, historical documents. The monument in question is signed and dated, so that there can be no question as to its having been carved by Mino.

FRANCO SACCHETTI.

(1335-1410.)

Racy, and at times rather loose in his stories, Sacchetti is not gifted with the same inventive powers

as Boccaccio, and he is more the reflex of others than a type by himself. But he has plenty of spirit, and it is evident that he shares with his readers the amusement which he is trying to make them feel. His "Tales" possess a considerable amount of interest from the fact that Sacchetti, who was much mixed up in the course of contemporary events, introduced into his stories characters taken from real life, gathering up anecdotes still fresh about Dante, Giotto, and other men of note. He brings them vividly before our eyes, and writers such as Vasari, Scipione Ammirato, and others still more celebrated, have been glad to make use of information derived from his writings.

He came of a very good family, having been a son of Franco di Benci d'Uguccione. He was connected with the Dante family, and was surnamed the Good (*il Buono*). His first literary efforts were in the poetical line, and he was classed among the imitators of Petrarch. He held public office at Faenza and San Miniato, was Captain of the Florentine province in the Romagna, Ambassador to Genoa, and Podestà at Bibbiena. It is believed that he wrote his "Tales" at Casentino. The copy which I have examined contains about 258, and he is not particular in the choice of a subject, so long as it is an amusing one, being racy to the verge of licentiousness. Some fifteen of them, however, are of a different character, the heroes being such men as Dante and Giotto, and



it is worthy of note that while several austere writers are immoral in their lives, he, with all his light and fanciful stories, is at bottom full of honesty and uprightness.

Sacchetti had three wives, all of illustrious descent; the first being a Strozzi, the second a Gherardini, and the third the daughter of Francesco di ser Santi Bruni, and for six-and-twenty years there was a fourth lady who inspired his poems, and to whom he dedicated his compositions. He had two sons; one, Philip, being a poet, while the other, Nicholas, was Gonfaloniere of Justice in 1419.

There is much to admire about him, for he was at once a patriot and a gentleman. His genial humor, as well as the incidents he related concerning the most noted men of his time, have kept his name alive. His public career was a successful one, and his writings are instinct with force and good-humor. He died at the age of seventy-five, beloved by his contemporaries, and his writings, extending from grave to gay, comprise Sermons, Letters, and a burlesque poem (of which a new edition was published as recently as 1819) called "La Battaglia delle Vecchie con le Giovane," the very title of which shows how amusing it must have been in the hands of a writer so gifted with humor. He was, little as he may have imagined such to be the case, both an artist and an historian.

## BONACCORSO PITTI

(1335-1425.)

Pitti is an ancestor of the great Pitti of the fifteenth century, after whom the royal palace at Florence is still named, and his reputation as a chronicler is well deserved. He may, indeed, be described as one of the originators in Italy of that form of literature, which, under the name of "Memoirs," is so much appreciated at the present time.

He belonged to the Neri and to the Pitti; that is to say, to a family which had always occupied a high position in the State, and which, by means of the wealth subsequently acquired in trade, became the equal of princes and a rival of the Medici.

His life was one long romance, and his adventures are comparable with those of Benvenuto Cellini, Casanova, and the Chevalier Eon. He became a type for the anecdotic history of the Florentines, and the real value of the memoirs which he has left is that they give us a realistic picture—making due allowance for exaggeration—of the life of a great number of Florentines at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

Fond of gaming and duelling, a libertine, adventurous, very well read, crafty, skilful in trade, quite capable of a serious demeanor when he pleased, full of ambition, activity, and courage, and with an aptitude for rising with the tide without allowing it to carry him off his feet, he played the most opposite parts, and

engaged in all kinds of business, while there was not a country in Europe which he did not visit at one time or another.

He was one of those many Lombards who during the fourteenth century went in quest of fortune all over the world. They combined trade and gambling, speculation and politics, ever ready to induce the public to make hazardous investments or to lend them money at a high rate of interest. Rolling in wealth one day, they lived like princes, while the next they could not muster the money to pay their hotel bill. Every now and then they returned to their country and took part in the struggle of parties, with the result that they often rose to power if they did not lose their lives in the fray. Bonaccorso went through all these adventures, and was famous for his gallantries in Bavaria. He gained the friendship of the Dukes of Orleans and Berri in Paris, when, in company with Bernardo da Cino, another financial adventurer of the same kidney, he went thither from Avignon, where they had been endeavoring to effect a reconciliation between the Anti-pope Benedict XIII. and Boniface IX. This forms a singularly interesting episode in his life, as he went through all sorts of vicissitudes at play, and fought a duel with Montluc. Nevertheless he succeeded in being looked upon as a man of genuine importance by the Florentines, who sent him to seek the alliance of the French King against the Duke of Milan; and in 1418 his

son Luca was in a position to be a freeholder, and to purchase the house and land of the defunct Roberto de Rossi for four hundred and fifty gold florins. This is the site of the great Pitti Palace.

Towards the close of his life, tired, in all probability, of scouring the world, Bonaccorso settled down at Pescia, which is the last place referred to in his memoirs, and it was there that he wrote the story of his life from day to day, his dashing style reminding one, as I have said, of Cellini and Casanova. He noted down every detail, and mixed with the happiest effect the anecdotes of his private life with the more important events of history. When the assassination of the Duke of Orleans, which was destined to exercise so much influence upon the course of French history, occurred (November 23, 1407), his diary contains the note: "I made a hundred gold florins to-day by a bargain in wool." He was at that time master of the horse to the Duke of Orleans.

In 1423 he was still captain at Castellaro in the Romagna, and by his orders seven inhabitants at Forli, who had schemed to open the gates of the city to the Duke of Milan, were beheaded.

His memoirs were not published until 1720, three centuries after he wrote them, the title being, "Cronica de Buonaccorso Pitti, con Annotazioni. Florence, 1720, in quarto."

## AGNOLO PANDOLFINI.

(1360-1446.)

Gifted with profound wisdom, Pandolfini is the type of the upright citizen who, so far from seeking honors, has them forced upon him. He was a genial writer and moralist, too, and his book, entitled "Il Governo della Famiglia," is one of the standard works in Italy. Tiraboschi and Quinqueni, who are nearly always trustworthy, do not speak of Pandolfini, doubtless because he was not a brilliant writer. But if he did not distinguish himself by any great action, his career was a useful and benevolent one. Born at Florence in 1360, and the son of a merchant who had made his fortune at Naples, he was, from an early age, independent, and being a man of considerable erudition and full of wisdom, he was twice elected to the Signoria, in 1397 and 1408; and was three times Gonfaloniere of Justice.

The Republic sent him on missions to Martin V., the Emperor Sigismund, and King Ladislaus, from the latter of whom he obtained the cession of the territory of Cortona, as an indemnity for the losses sustained during the Naples campaign. In 1414, 1420, and 1431 he occupied the post of Gonfaloniere, and he was invariably called upon to arbitrate between his fellow-citizens in their ever-recurring intestine quarrels. With the sagacity for which, as I have said, he was famous, he had foreseen the disasters of

Lucca, and had done all in his power to dissuade the Balia from entering upon that war. He was the friend of Cosimo the Elder, whose influence he constantly seconded, and when the latter was exiled, his protests brought about his recall. He was less successful in regard to Palla Strozzi, who was a relative of his wife's, and took his exile so much to heart that he withdrew from public life. He led a very peaceful existence at his villa of Ponte a signa (or Gangalandi), universally respected, ever ready to show hospitality to great and small, receiving the visits of sovereigns and pontiffs, and anticipating with a serene conscience the approach of death. It was here that he wrote his "Il Governo della Famiglia," in language as elevated as the ideas expressed in it. A very lucid summary of this book, though only extending over fifteen pages, is due to the pen of Dandolo.

LEONARDO BRUNI ARETINO.

(1369-1443.)

Leonardo Bruni, who is buried at Santa Croce, in the splendid tomb erected at the cost of the Florentine Republic by Bernardo Rossellino, was one of the revivers of Greek and Latin literature in the fifteenth century, and the sphere of his action was altogether pacific. His only connection with politics was when he was employed upon some conciliatory mission, or in rendering homage to some foreign sovereign or the chief of some neighboring state. He was famous for

his learning and eloquence, and his character seems to have stood as high as his learning.

Leonardo, born at Arezzo, was educated at Florence, just when the study of Greek was being brought into vogue by the influence of the savants who had come from Constantinople. He studied under Manuel Chrysoloras, and through the influence of Poggio he was appointed Apostolic Secretary to Pope Innocent VII., who was inclined to think him too young when he first saw him, though, on coming to cross-question him, he recognized the young man's great abilities. The successors of that pontiff retained him in their service, and he held the same post under Gregory XII., Alexander V., and John XXIII.

The Republic of Florence, anxious to secure a citizen of such merit, appointed him Chancellor, a post which he retained until the time of his death.

When the Council of Constance deposed John XXIII., Leonardo, looked upon as a rebel, fled with him on foot, incurring, during three days, dangers of every kind and great privations.

Like this pontiff, who died there and was interred in the baptistery of San Giovanni, in a superb tomb carved by Donatello, he found refuge at Florence, and in 1415, while in peaceful retirement at Arezzo, wrote the "History of Florence," a manuscript copy of which is to be found in every Italian library. This work produced a great sensation, and the Florentine Government sent him the freedom of the city

and settled upon him a pension, the reversion of which was to go to his children. It was then that he was induced to accept the post of Chancellor, and he died while in office, his conduct shedding an additional lustre upon this dignified post.

He was a man of noble demeanor and tried probity, his high character manifesting itself in every act of his life. All the foreigners who passed through Florence were anxious to make his acquaintance and pay him their respects, while upon one occasion a learned Spaniard, who had been presented to him, insisted upon remaining on his knees all the time that the audience lasted. He died suddenly in 1443, to the deep regret, not of Florence alone, but of all Italy.

The Republic intrusted the celebrated Gianozzo Manetti with the preparation of the funeral oration. The coffin was placed upon a platform on the piazza of Santa Croce, and Manetti laid a wreath upon the brow of the dead man, upon whose breast had been deposited a copy of his "History of Florence." Bernardo Rossellino, who had been instructed to erect the mausoleum, took this ceremony for his subject, and left behind him a work which is justly regarded as one of the most perfect ever shaped by human hands.

His native Arezzo, jealous of Florence, was anxious to rival her by rendering the last homage to his remains, but Florence would not part with them.

His works are very numerous, consisting for the



most part of translations from Latin and Greek manuscripts and historical works, though he also wrote several biographies, including those of Dante and Petrarch. The best account of this learned man, who interests us all the more because his image is brought so vividly before us by the chisel of Rossellini while so many other men of the fifteenth century are mere abstractions, is to be gained from the work of Abbé Méhus.

## POGGIO BRACCIOLINI.

(1380-1459.)

Poggio, born at Terranuova in the territory of Florence in 1380, sometimes called Poggio Fiorentino, from having been a Chancellor of the Republic.

His early studies were made at Florence, from which city he proceeded to Rome, where he was employed in the Papal Secretary's department. He remained there for half a century, continuously engaged in profound study and in the drawing up of Bulls and Briefs. He was deep in the confidence of successive popes, and employed upon missions of the most delicate nature. He was present at the Council of Constance, and whenever Martin V. and Eugenius IV. made a journey on Church affairs he formed one of their suite. Poggio, in one of his letters, says that he cannot remember having, during his fifty years' service at the same Court, remained a year in the same town.

His specialty as a savant was Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and he took advantage of his continued travels to unearth forgotten manuscripts, thereby rendering great service to literature. He travelled through the whole of Germany and Switzerland, visiting all the depositories of manuscripts, and often making valuable discoveries. He was seventy-two years of age when the Holy Father allowed him to go and reside at Florence, the Republic having induced him to accept the post of Chancellor. But he soon found that the duties which it involved were beyond his strength, and he retired from public life, writing at his retreat in the suburbs his "History of Florence," which embraces the events that occurred from 1350 to 1453. This work was in Latin, and it was his son Giacomo Bracciolini who translated it into the vulgar tongue.

The other literary achievements of Bracciolini are his translation into Latin of Xenophon's "Cyropædia" and of the first five books of Diodorus of Sicily. In the philosophical line he has left a work entitled "Historia Convivialis," and several moral treatises, including "Avarice, Nobility, the Wretchedness of Human Affairs," and "The Misfortunes of Princes and Vicissitudes of Fortune." Many of his Epistles and Orations have also been preserved, and they are all remarkable for the perfect Latin in which they are couched.

Poggio was very severe upon the savants of his

age, and being jealous, irascible, and always inclined to carp at others, he was constantly engaged in controversies, which were carried on in a spirit of violence of which we can scarcely form an adequate idea at the present time. It has been thought that he was animated by some special dislike for Francesco Filelfo, about whom he wrote four pamphlets, in which he accused him of all the evil deeds which a human being could well commit, but these are not so strong as the five pamphlets directed against Lorenzo Valla, the Hellenist and Secretary of the King of Naples, who translated the Iliad, and Herodotus and Æsop. Guarino of Verona was not spared, nor were the Bishop of Feltro, Jacopo Zeno, and the Duke of Savoy. So bitter was he that he vented his wrath upon communities, involving them all in one common condemnation. He was very learned, and had a European reputation, but for all that, hatred is the distinguishing characteristic by which he is known.

#### CARLO MARSUPPINI.

(1399-1453.)

Carlo Marsuppini and Leonardo Bruni cannot well be spoken of apart. They were contemporaries, both had the same career and much the same intellectual tendencies, and both had the good fortune to be handed down to posterity in the work of men of genius.

While Rossellino has enshrined to us the features

of Leonardo Bruni, Desiderio da Settignano has immortalized the name of Carlo Marsuppini by the monument in Santa Croce, which is opposite that erected to the former.

Gregory, the father of Carlo, was Governor of Genoa under Charles VI. From Genoa he came to Florence, where he acquired, in 1431, the rights of citizenship. Carlo was intrusted to the care of John of Ravenna, who encouraged him to study ancient literature. He chose the scholastic career, and was a candidate for the professorship of literature at the University of Florence. This post having been given to Filelfo, Carlo became his bitter enemy, and when the former was banished from Florence in 1434, he succeeded to the vacant post.

As his pupils comprised two nephews of Pope Eugenius IV., the latter, in return, appointed him Apostolic Secretary, and in 1444 he took the place of Chancellor of the Florentine Republic left vacant by the death of his compatriot, Leonardo Bruni. It was in this quality that he presented an address to the Emperor Frederick III., when the latter passed through Florence in 1452; the reply was made by Æneas Sylvius, destined to become one of the most famous of the popes, under the title of Pius II., and who was at that time secretary to the Emperor. Æneas Sylvius made an impromptu reply, and Marsuppini, who was expected to make a second speech in answer to this, was at a loss what to say. This

incident caused great excitement at the time, for Marsuppini was obliged to turn round to his neighbor Manetti, and ask his assistance. His real abilities do not appear, however, to have been called into question, for the famous Matteo Palmieri was instructed to prepare a funeral oration, and to place a wreath upon him after death, as had been done in the case of his predecessor.

We have no direct proof of his ability, for he left very few works behind him; but Poggio, whose excellent judgment is beyond all doubt, introduces Marsuppini as one of the characters in his dialogue "De Infelicitate," and both Flavio Biondo and Platina have spoken in very eulogistic terms of him.

His best-known work was a translation in hexameters of the singular poem attributed to Homer, "The Batrachomyomachie," the first edition of which was published in Parma in 1492. His letters, like those of Leonardo Bruni, are highly interesting, for he was in more or less frequent intercourse with the most celebrated men of the day. Many personal details concerning him are to be found in the "Vossian Letters" of Apostolo Zeno and in Vespasiano Fiorentino.

Those two tombs of Leonardo Bruni and of Marsuppini do honor to human genius, for Greek art itself has produced nothing more perfect, and if the names of the two men who are buried in them had not been kept alive by the merit of their own works

the sculptors who have carved their likenesses in marble would have immortalized them. Carlo Mar-suppini died at the age of fifty-four, and the funeral oration pronounced by Palmieri is still extant.

His name, together with that of Gianozzo Manetti and Leonardo Bruni, constantly recurs in the history of the little courts of the Romagna and the Marches, for he was continually being employed as an intermediary between the Vatican and the princes who were attached to the Holy See as Vicars of the Church, such as the Estes, the Montefeltros, the Malatestas, and even the Sforzas.

#### BRUNELLESCHI.

(1377-1446.)

As an architect Filippo di ser Brunelleschi deserves a place apart among the artists of his day, for he unquestionably comes first of the reformers who, in the beginning of the fifteenth century, substituted in place of Gothic architecture the ancient forms adapted to modern requirements. But it need hardly be said that so important a movement, destined to effect a complete revolution in its way, could not be the work of one man. A whole generation of thinkers and artists concurred to carry it through when once the idea was "in the air," to use a modern phrase, and when everything was tending towards its development. Dante himself was one of the pioneers, and Giotto, Orcagna, Arnolfo di Lapo, and John of Pisa

were, almost unknown to themselves, travelling in the same direction. Their style was more chaste than that of their predecessors; they had a clearer perception of their purpose and ideas, and having the courage to be simple in their designs at a time when the grotesque was still in fashion, they extricated, in their architectural conceptions, the shape and the line from among the mass of parasitical decoration which concealed the trunk and the branches of the majestic tree.

Brunelleschi still further accentuated the transition, while Ghiberti, Masaccio, Donatello, Mino da Fiesole, and Alberti, following in the same track, completed the transformation. The human countenance, still enveloped in the conventional primness, which was not without a grace of its own, gradually became more animated, the figure lost its stiffness, the body ceased to be motionless, and the eyes, hitherto closed to the light, flashed with all the warmth of passion and of life. The victory over marble was, in other words, won. These innovators in architecture, after having endeavored to adopt a middle course between their aspirations and the respect which they felt for their predecessors, eventually put their veto upon the original style, and instead of allowing the cathedrals to be enveloped in gloom, as they were in the Middle Ages, when sinister symbols and mysterious devices were all the fashion, they let in floods of light through their spacious porticos. The new style of

architecture expressed at once strength, nobility, and simplicity, a new system being created out of the elements of the old.

Simple, logical, and grand without effort, based solely upon the law of propositions and the mutual relation of different parts with each other, the new architecture, though evidently inspired by antiquity, had its individual grace and elegance, while its originality consisted in its being appropriated to the requirements of the country without any concession which was not compatible with the climate, the nature of the materials, and the customs of the time. Ornamentation occupied merely a secondary, almost an accessory position, being only employed in the new system to indicate the various members and the main divisions. At no time, it may safely be asserted, were the waters which issued from this source, and which gradually formed a torrent of genius spreading throughout Italy, more pure and wholesome than at the fountain-head. Lombardi, Leopardi, Bramante, and Fra Giocondo showed themselves to be gifted with elegance in detail, as they were full of force and grace in their conception. But they never recovered that chaste grandeur, characteristic of the beginning of the fifteenth century, which so commands our admiration as to prevent our doing full justice to the sixteenth century, rich as that also was in every branch of intellectual industry.

It is interesting to trace the process which led



Brunelleschi, the successor of Giotto, Arnolfo di Lapo, and Taddeo Gaddi, all devoted to Gothic art, to break openly with these tendencies and to strike out in a new direction, and this can best be done by describing briefly the circumstances of his life. He was born at Florence in 1377, and the date is an important one to remember, for it marked the passing away of the Middle Ages and the germ of the Renaissance. He arrived at manhood as the fifteenth century, of which he was destined to become one of the bright lights, was just dawning.

When one-and-twenty years of age Brunelleschi, who had objected to following the profession of notary, had already given striking proof of his capacity in mechanical constructions of every kind, and all further attempt to make him adopt any other career was abandoned. He entered the Goldsmiths' College, and was, like most great artists, enrolled among the adepts of this profession. The goldsmith's art was a very good school of training, requiring as it did inventive powers, elegance, a great dexterity of touch, and some knowledge of all kinds of drawing; while the qualities of the designer are called forth in the general composition, those of the sculptor in the execution of the figures, and those of the painter in the harmonization of all the colored parts.

His earliest and most intimate friend was Donatello, in whose society he passed all his youth, afterwards making a long stay with him at Rome, and travelling

with him both at home and abroad. After having executed several works of sculpture he made his *début* as an architect, and became engaged in various undertakings in and around Florence. It was during this first part of his life that he devoted his attention to the science of perspective with sufficient detail to be able to draw up all the rules, and make of them a guide for the instruction of his pupils and friends. It is even said that Masaccio derived his knowledge of this art from Brunelleschi. He did not, however, give up sculpture, and between the years 1398 and 1404 he carved that figure of Christ in Santa Maria Novella, which has become famous as having given rise to the misunderstanding between him and Donatello, whom he reproached with having given too material an expression to the Divine countenance.

In the beginning of the century the celebrated competition for the execution of the Baptistery gates was opened, the competitors being Lorenzo Ghiberti, Jacopo della Quercia, Simone da Colle, Francesco di Valdambrina, and Niccolo d'Arezzo.

There is a story told by Vasari, and it has never been controverted, that Ghiberti and Brunelleschi having been called upon to treat the same subject (the Sacrifice of Abraham), the latter spontaneously adjudged the prize to the former, a mark of generosity very characteristic of him. It is quite certain that, whether the story is true or not, Ghiberti was awarded the prize, and that he carved the gates, but it is in-

teresting to compare the two designs in bronze, which may be seen in the Bargello.

It was after this competition that Brunelleschi went to Rome with Donatello. On arriving there he withdrew from all external affairs, and with the proceeds of the sale of a small property at Settignano devoted himself to the study of her monuments. It is easy to conceive what ancient Rome was like in 1405, and with what transports of admiration it must have inspired two such artists as Brunelleschi and Donatello. They seem to have lived in a continual fever, making drawings, being present at all the excavations, and conducting some on their own account; spending whole days among the ruins, measuring palaces, temples, and baths, and endeavoring to discover the secret of their splendor. Brunelleschi gradually came to comprehend the principle of each of the orders of architecture employed by the architects of antiquity, reasoning out the use of the various forms, and restoring those parts which had been destroyed by time. Thus it was that he conceived the idea of discarding the contorted and complicated forms of the degenerate Gothic architecture of the day, and of adapting to the requirements of his own times those which had been employed by the ancients, though a man of so much taste and imagination was naturally desirous to make the various parts of his work harmonize, and to combine the new forms which he was anxious to employ with those adopted by his predecessors.

It was in the seclusion of the Eternal City that he elaborated his plan for the completion of Santa Maria del Fiore, the Duomo of Florence, which had been left unfinished since the death of Arnolfo di Cambio. It is quite certain that he had made a special study of the vaulted roofs of Thermæ and Pantheons, with the firm intention of immortalizing his name by finishing the cupola of Santa Maria.

Donatello having left him at Rome in order to carry out the many works which he had undertaken at Florence, Brunelleschi continued his studies with redoubled ardor, but having been attacked with fever, he also left Rome and returned to his native city. This was the time when the completion of the Duomo was being pressed forward, but the task of bridging over the immense space seemed an impossibility to most of the architects and engineers who were called in. The most ludicrous suggestions were made, and after a general meeting of the committee, Brunelleschi, thinking that his opinion was not received with sufficient deference, went back to Rome. The committee, however, induced him to return and give them the benefit of his advice.

His idea was that a competition should be opened to artists of every nationality, each one making a model, though he made no secret that his own plan would be that of an arch in one span. A great many of those who were present scoffed at the idea of such a thing, but the competition was opened in accord-

ance with his advice, and his model, the existence of which he had kept secret, was at last accepted. But a few months afterwards, Lorenzo Ghiberti, who had just obtained a great success by the execution of his famous "Gate of Paradise," was appointed his assistant, and Brunelleschi, who was much vexed at the interference, and who knew that Ghiberti had no aptitude for this description of work, resorted to a very ingenious stratagem for getting rid of him. He took to his bed, and pretended to be too ill to attend to the work. Ghiberti was soon involved in hopeless difficulties, and the committee compensating him for what he had done, left Brunelleschi to finish the work by himself.

This was the great achievement of his life, the one which has immortalized his name, and which has unquestionably exercised the greatest influence. Michael Angelo, as he looked up at Santa Maria del Fiore before he commenced the dome of St. Peter's, is reported to have exclaimed, "I will take you and project you into the sky."

His suggestion was an octagonal cupola resting upon a drum pierced with windows, which would serve the double purpose of letting in plenty of light and of lessening the weight. The artistic part of the work, the arrangement, the architectural lines, and the decorative combinations are equally interesting, and when one has lived at Florence long enough to go into the details of this work, one cannot but ad-

mire the grandeur of the lines employed by Brunelleschi, and the ingenious way in which he adapted to a Gothic building the new style which he had introduced. In order thoroughly to appreciate the grand general effects obtained by the men of genius who designed the curves of the Pantheon at Rome, of Santa Maria del Fiore, and of St. Peter's, one must contemplate on the horizon, from the heights of the Pincio or of Fiesole, these bold constructions as they stand out in the twilight, casting a bluish shadow upon the golden background of the setting sun.

Brunelleschi, being commissioned by the Pazzi family to build a private chapel in Santa Croce, erected a building which redounds very much to his credit, for it is elegant in detail and full of grandeur in its general effect. He employed the Corinthian style, and with the aid of Luca della Robbia obtained some very novel effects by applying to the decoration of the panels and ceilings the majolica ware discovered by the latter, the result showing how much a man of genius could make out of this art of glazed terracotta.

The interior of the chapel, to the decoration of which Luca della Robbia also contributed, is so vast and imposing that in 1565 four thousand friars met there, the privilege of using this chapel being accorded to the chapter of Santa Croce by the Pazzi family.

Clotiers of S. Croce, and Pazzi Chapel  
Brunelleschi

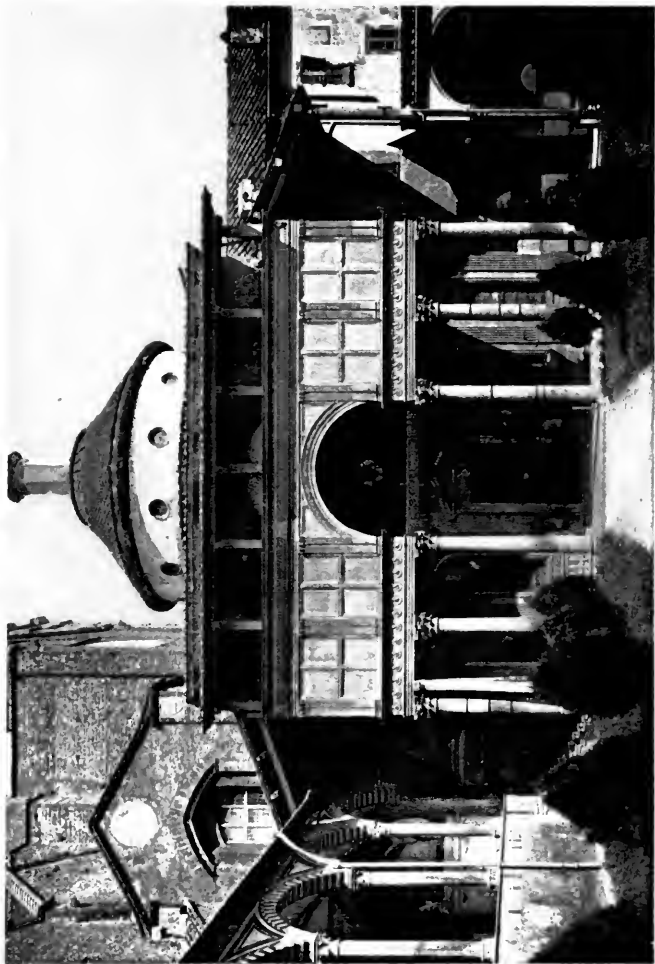
and the architecture of the time, which is not only a study of the human mind, but a study of the human body, a study of the human soul, which has been the work of the human mind, and which is the work of the human soul. The architecture of the time is not only a study of the human mind, but a study of the human body, a study of the human soul, which has been the work of the human mind, and which is the work of the human soul.

The cloisters were commissioned by the Pazzi family of Florence, and were designed by the architect Filippo Brunelleschi. The cloisters were designed by the architect Filippo Brunelleschi, and were commissioned by the Pazzi family of Florence. The cloisters were designed by the architect Filippo Brunelleschi, and were commissioned by the Pazzi family of Florence. The cloisters were designed by the architect Filippo Brunelleschi, and were commissioned by the Pazzi family of Florence.

The cloisters of the chapel, to the decoration of which Luca della Robbia also contributed, is so vast and so beautiful, that in 1505 four thousand francs were paid for its completion.

*Cloisters of S. Croce, and Pazzi Chapel*  
*Brunelleschi*







Brunelleschi was also the architect of the handsome portico in the Piazza dell' Annunziata which forms the façade of what in his day was called the *Ricovero dei Gettatelli* (or Foundling Hospital). The beauty and simplicity of these buildings, the sole richness of which consists in their elegance of shape, seeing that they are destined for such a humble purpose, can only be fully appreciated from the interior. The hospital of the Innocents was begun in 1421, the Council being stimulated to undertake the work by an eloquent appeal from Leonardi Bruni. On the 24th of January, 1444, it was opened and the management placed in the hands of the Guild of Silk Workers.

Filippo Maria Visconti sent for Brunelleschi to build him a fortress at Milan; and he was afterwards employed to erect the citadels of Vicopisano, Pisa, and Pesaro.

The church of San Lorenzo at Florence, which contains the tombs of the Medici, and was erected at the expense of Giovanni d'Averardo and of Cosimo, Father of his Country, is also his work. He had proposed to erect the Medici Palace upon a much more sumptuous scale than was afterwards adopted, but Cosimo deemed his plan too magnificent, and Brunelleschi, who had set his heart upon building for the House of Medici a palace of unparalleled splendor, destroyed his model. He began for the Scolari family the curious temple *Degli Angeli*, which was

never completed, as the money which had been set apart for it was spent on the Lucca war.

The Pitti Palace is also his work, and as the family for which he built had not the means of going on with it, Eleonora di Toledo, Duchess of Florence, wife of Cosimo, purchased it, and spent an immense sum upon its completion. It is a heavy building, and so many changes have been made by successive architects that it does not produce nearly the effect it should. In 1549 the Pitti Palace became a royal residence, and Ammanati added to it the handsome courtyard upon which the three inner façades look.

The services of Brunelleschi were now in request throughout the whole of Italy. In 1445 the Marquis of Mantua wanted him for the Signoria, while Francesco Sforza was treating with him for the fortifications of Pisa, and at about the same time he undertook the building of the Barbadori Palace and the Casa Giuntini at Florence.

Brunelleschi was the leading architect of the fifteenth century, and when he died on the 16th of April, 1446, he was buried in Santa Maria del Fiore, beneath that dome which he raised to such a height that from afar the traveller sees it as he approaches the city.

Buggiano, a sculptor of no great renown, carved the bust over his tomb, and the following inscription, composed by Marsuppini, shows in what esteem he was held by his contemporaries :

D. S.

“Quantum Philippus architectus arte Dædalæ valuerit ; cum hujus celeberrimi templi mira testudo, tum plures machinæ divino ingenio ab eo adinventæ documento esse possunt. Quapropter, ob eximias sui animi dotes, singularesque virtutes ejus b. m. Corpus XV kal. Maias anno MCCCCXLVI in hac humo supposita grata patria sepeliri jussit.”

It cannot be said that as regards the number of works executed, this great artist can compare with many of his compatriots, for, with the exception of the Pazzi Chapel at Santa Croce, he never had an opportunity of erecting a complete monument, and even this chapel is only an annex to the great church. But he was a forerunner, and so gifted with great inventive powers that it is not perhaps too much to describe him as the greatest man of his age in his own domain. Alberti, of course, played a great part, Leonardo da Vinci was a prodigy of genius, and Michael Angelo knows no rival, but Brunelleschi holds his own, and merits a prominent place in the Pantheon of Florentine celebrities. His ashes are not in Santa Croce, and it is meet that he should rest in Santa Maria del Fiore, the scene of his greatest labors and triumphs.

LEO BATTISTA ALBERTI.

(1404-1472.)

Alberti did not contribute so much as Brunelleschi to this renovation of the arts, but, like all those who

propagate the ideas of others by the pen, his influence was very considerable. Upon the one hand there are the silent and secluded artists, whose province it is to produce and to prove the reality of progress by marching in advance of their contemporaries, while, upon the other, there are the men of critical mind who, more closely identified with the movement of their time, while not idle themselves, draw conclusions from the works of others, and regulate the final laws of the new art in which they have been the fore-runners. Alberti belonged to this second category, and while putting the principles of Brunelleschi into practice, he brought them within the understanding of the whole world, and did much to propagate the new ideas. Leonardo da Vinci, Daniel Barbaro, Fra Giocondo, and Francesco Colonna carried on the same work, and to his well-known treatises, "*De re Ædificatoria*," "*De Pictura*," and "*De Componenda Statua*," added "*The Commentaries on Vitruvius*," and that strange book entitled "*The Dream of Polyphilus, or Hypnerotomachia*," which is such a curious mixture of truth and fancy.

The effect produced by the construction of the "*Temple of the Malatestas*" was very great, for it was no slight achievement at that date to regulate the laws and determine the tendency of architectural compositions, while it was an even more marked success, at a time when a man of genius like Brunelleschi had shaken off the fetters of ancient usage and struck out

a line of his own, to confirm the value of these principles by erecting a marble temple, all the architectural elements in which, while borrowed from antiquity, were modified and rejuvenated by the modern spirit.

A natural son of Lorenzo Alberti and of Margherita di Messer Piero Benini, Leo Battista expiated from his birth the ardor with which his family had plunged into a struggle against the Albizzi during the bloody contests between the two factions of black and white in the fourteenth century. His father and mother were exiled to Genoa, where he was born in 1404, and it was only in 1428 that, at the special request of Pope Martin V., the interdict which had led to the dispersion of this powerful family throughout Europe was raised. There were several branches of the family, Leo Battista belonging to that of Bernardo di Nerozzo (1388), who married first a Pazzi, and afterwards a Gualterio dei Bardi. The French Dukes Albert de Luynes and Chaulnes are descended from Caroccio di Lapo (1347), through Tommaso, born in 1409. Between the years 1408 and 1417 four of the Alberti were interred at Paris in the Vieux Augustins Church, and before the close of the century more than seventy members of this family had died in exile at Bruges, Viviers, Paris, Montpellier, Avignon, Genoa, Brescia, Mantua, Padua, Venice, Frioul, the Romagna, London, Flanders, and even in Cyprus, to which they were banished by a decree of the Balia.

The original text of the decree, or the "Provisioni," is to be found in Passerini, and the tenor of it shows how high party feeling ran. The first decree (1387) orders that two leaders of the family shall be exiled a hundred miles away from Florence, and debars all the other members of the family from the privilege of holding any magisterial office; in 1393 they are all made to suffer for a conspiracy which had been hatched by one of them; and in 1400 three of their relatives are put to the question in order to extort from them a confession of the latter's guilt, and then executed, the Grand Council deciding that all the Alberti, including those not yet born, shall be deprived of civic rights. In 1412 a reward of two thousand gold florins (£1800) is promised to the person who kills the four heads of the Alberti family at Florence, and half that sum to the slayer of any one Alberti, provided that he is not under eighteen years of age. If the slayer is himself in banishment he is to receive a full pardon, and if not, he is entitled to ask for the pardon of any two friends; while, for the remainder of his life, he is to enjoy the privilege of carrying arms. All the Alberti property was confiscated, and the chains which formed their blazon were removed from the walls of the churches, chapels, and palaces.

Such were the conditions under which Leo Battista was born, far from the land of his ancestors and his father's home. We cannot wonder, therefore, at the



tone of bitter suffering which pervades his letter to Brunelleschi when he speaks of his long exile, and his soul being fortified in the school of adversity. The Albizzi persecuted this family with unwearying hatred until the Medici began to get the upper hand, and it was not until 1428 that justice was done to one of them, this act of tardy clemency being completed in 1434 by Cosimo de' Medici, who reinstated all the Alberti in their property and ancient dignities.

The education of Leo Battista was of course affected by these circumstances, and he was trained in the midst of difficulties and struggles. He was very proficient in all equestrian exercises, and Muratori, in his "*Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*," represents him as being a great athlete at the Olympian games. He completed his studies at Bologna, and before he was twenty years old had published a Latin comedy entitled "*Philodoxeos*," which he signed "*Lepidus Comicus*." This device was so successful that Manuccio, a century and a half afterwards (1588), published it at Lucca as being by Plautus, under the title of "*Lepidi Comici veteris Philodoxeos, fabula ex antiquitate eruta*." It should be added, however, that a canon of Bamberg, Albert von Eyb, declared the comedy to be of modern origin, and to have been the work of Carlo Marsuppini. Poggio Bracciolini was the confidant of Alberti in this matter, and many years afterwards he revealed the secret to Lionel of Este. When Leo Battista was allowed

to return to Florence in 1428 he had already proved himself to be a man eager to ascertain and investigate every subject of human interest, of a generous disposition, endowed with the most varied gifts, and a worthy forerunner of Leonardo da Vinci. At first engrossed in the study of the law, he afterwards cultivated the exact sciences, physics, and the art of naval constructions, while with all this he practiced medicine, and it was only after having given proof of his proficiency in each of these branches that he settled himself down to literature. He wrote in Latin, but his Italian poems are still extant, and they give a complete contradiction to those who, during his day, asserted that he wrote in Latin to conceal the imperfections of his style in Italian. He introduced the Latin metre into poetry, and it was considered very venturesome at that time to treat elevated subjects in that language. Alberti would have remained famous even if he had not written anything more, for he had already acquired great celebrity as a physicist and an astronomer. The Alberti bolide (perfected a long time afterwards by Cook), used for measuring the depth of the sea, was his invention, as also were the *camera lucida* and several instruments which facilitated an exact observation of the stars.

It was, however, to architecture, which during the Renaissance necessitated the knowledge and the practice of all the other arts, that he owed his greatest celebrity, though he only took to it thoroughly after

he had gone through the multifold career described above. Deeply imbued with the love of antiquity, and well versed in the Latin and Greek manuscripts, with Vitruvius at his fingers' ends, and an enthusiastic admirer of the monuments discovered in Greece and Italy, he determined to familiarize himself with the remains of the grand imperial epoch. Biondo da Forli received him at Rome and presented him to Pope Nicholas V., and according to Palmieri and Vasari he played a very important part in the execution of the ambitious projects of this pontiff, who did more for the imperial city than any of his predecessors. Up to that time Bernardo Rossellino, the Florentine architect, had been given the supreme control over the works, but he was glad to attach Alberti to him, and henceforward nothing was done in Rome without their being consulted. Alberti was created a prelate, and invested with benefices which made him independent, and in 1447 he received the dignity of canon and the title of prelate of Borgo San Lorenzo and of San Martino at Gangalandi. Pius II. retained him at the Vatican, and made him Secretary of the Apostolic Letters.

It was during this period, with the monuments of antiquity before his eyes, and in the companionship of Biondo da Forli, the author of "Roma Instaurata," and the real creator of archæology, that it occurred to him that there was no reason why the classic forms should not be combined with those imposed by mod-

ern necessities. Alberti was thoroughly engrossed in this new architectural departure when Sigismund Malatesta asked him to come to Rimini, and confer with him as to the building of a temple. He accepted the invitation with the assent of the Pope, who was indebted to Malatesta for the way in which he had led the pontifical troops to victory; but, as he could not remain long, he left as *proto maestro*, or overseer, Matteo da Pasti, of Verona, who was a pensioner of Malatesta, and to whom we owe the excellent medallions of Sigismund and Isotta. This shows how varied were the gifts of most great artists during the fifteenth century. There is nothing to show that Alberti returned to Rimini after the inauguration of the Temple in 1450, but he had made himself a very great favorite with Sigismund, who desired that his medallion should be placed opposite to his own above his tomb.

The greatest works of Alberti, those which have insured his celebrity, were executed after his first visit to Rome. To begin with, he built St. Pancras for Cosimo Rucellai, and he then designed the beautiful façade of Santa Maria Novella. In conjunction with Brunelleschi, who had been commissioned to build the Foundling Hospital in the Piazza dell' Annunziata, he decorated the interior of the church of that name, preparing the designs for the tribune, the chapel, and the cupolas. It was during this period that he made his longest stay at Florence, living in

the intimacy of Lorenzo de' Medici, and making one in those celebrated gatherings in the Camaldoli woods with Ficino, Acciaiuoli, and Rinuccini. In addition to Malatesta, Rucellai, and Lorenzo de' Medici; Louis Gonzaga Marquis of Mantua, furnished Alberti with an opportunity of displaying his views in regard to architecture, intrusting to him the erection in that city of a basilica dedicated to St. Andrew, where repose the remains of Andrea Mantegna. Alberti availed himself of it, and St. Andrew's, like the Temple of Rimini, offers one of the earliest instances of the revival of classic architecture.

The princes of the houses of Este, Montefeltro, Gonzaga, Malatesta, and Medici, whose cause his family had espoused with great ardor, were all anxious to attach him to their service, but Nicholas V., Pius II., and Sixtus IV. almost monopolized him, more particularly the first-named pontiff, whose aim it was to change the face of Rome. He had requested him to erect fountains, squares, and oratories, and he was also anxious to roof in the bridge of St. Angelo so as to make a covered way to the Mole of Hadrian. It is easy, therefore, to understand that Florence, many as were the attractions she offered him after so long an absence, failed to retain him, and he settled definitely at Rome, where he died in the spring of 1472, as is proved by the remark of Matteo Palmieri, Apostolic Secretary to Sixtus IV., in his book "*De Temporibus suis.*" His ashes, which were tempora-

rily deposited in the church from which he took his ecclesiastical title, were transferred to Florence and placed in the family tomb.

Alberti had obtained an unrivalled position in his own line, his social rank helping in some measure to establish his fame. Moreover, all humanists occupied a higher place in the intellectual hierarchy than the ordinary artist, who was looked upon as a superior kind of mechanic. The whole history of Alberti may be gleaned from the various works which he has left behind him. In his "Trattato della Famiglia" he speaks with pride of his ancient lineage, and Machiavelli represents the Alberti as being "more like princes than private individuals." The hatred of the Albizzi seems to have known no abatement, and during the greater part of his life Leo Battista never went abroad without an escort of armed men lent him by Cardinal Alberti.

As an artist his conceptions were grandiose and noble, but in the details of ornamentation his style is rather hard, and in endeavoring to reproduce Attic elegance he occasionally mistakes meagreness for grace. His favorite motive in ornamentation was the palm copied from ancient tablets.

As a writer he was very erudite and capable of great eloquence, notably in the passage upon the tombs in his "De re Ædificatoria," while in his private correspondence his predominant characteristic was affable simplicity. Angelo Politian pronounced

his funeral oration, and Cristoforo Landino passed a glowing eulogium upon him in his "Commentary on Dante."

The features of Alberti are preserved to us first in the medallion by Matteo da Pasti, which has on the reverse a winged eye with the motto *Quid tum*, surrounded by a laurel wreath, and by the beautiful plaquette in the Dreyfus Collection. A replica of this plaquette, which was in the collection of the late M. His de la Salle, is in the Italian Renaissance sculpture-room at the Louvre, but it does not bear the initials of Leo Battista, though the most competent judges have been of opinion that it is his own handiwork.

The church of San Francesco da Rimini contains a third likeness of him, but this is only an enlarged reproduction of Matteo's medallion.

#### MARCILIO FICINO.

(1433-1499.)

Marcilio Ficino was the son of a skilful surgeon attached to the Medici family, who, though a native of Florence, had sent his son to the University of Bologna, because medical studies were much more advanced there than in any other city of the peninsula. Marcilio occasionally came to see his father in the Medici Palace, and having on one occasion been presented to Cosimo the Elder, he had the good fortune to make a favorable impression by his modest

demeanor and precocious erudition. Instead of devoting himself specially to the study of medicine, like his father, Marcilio developed a great fondness for philosophy, and learnt by heart all the principal authors. Cosimo, who was much pleased to find in him a disciple of the philosophy to which he himself was so warmly attached, kept him at Florence, gave him a lodging in the palace, facilitated the continuance of his study, and got his father to consent to his change of profession. In 1456, when only twenty-three years of age, he published "The Platonic Institutions," and Cosimo and Cristoforo Landino, both very competent judges, admired the work, but exhorted the writer not to read Plato in the Latin or the vulgar tongue, but to study Greek profoundly enough to be able to consult the original. The results of this study were the translation of "The Origin of the World," attributed to Mercurius Trismegistus, and the "Choral Hymns." We know from Tiraboschi, and also from the private letters of Cosimo, that Marcilio sang the hymns, accompanying himself on the lyre. Cosimo soon became so attached to his society that he gave him a small property near Careggi, a town house, and a small collection of Greek manuscripts beautifully ornamented with miniatures like those in the Laurentiana.

It was at this period that Cosimo was meditating the formation of the Platonian Academy, referred to in the chapter devoted to the Father of his Country,



and Marcilio, as has been said, was selected by him to organize this assembly, which met beneath the trees of Cosimo's garden at Careggi.

Piero de' Medici, at the death of Cosimo, showed him great favor, causing his manuscripts to be copied, advocating his views with great warmth, and arousing general enthusiasm both for himself and his protégé, by insisting upon his expounding his doctrines from the pulpit. It was from Florence, as is pointed out in the chapter on the Renaissance, that the study of Plato and the observance of his doctrines were spread throughout the whole of Italy, and even of Europe, and the initial credit of this is due to Marcilio Ficino, who was nominated by Lorenzo the Magnificent to a canonry in the cathedral of Florence, and to two rich benefices. This gave a fresh direction to his studies, and he turned his attention to theology, his familiarity with Plato enabling him in his sermons to draw from the writings of the Greek philosopher arguments in favor of the divinity. In this connection his doctrines were not much else than heathen as he drew a comparison between Socrates and Christ, and found an explanation for all the mysteries of the Catholic Faith in the works of Plato. His sermons soon became famous, but they appealed more to the intellect than to the heart, and were not, therefore, much appreciated by the common people.

Marcilio Ficino's private character was without blemish; he was affable, simple-minded, and gener-

ous, the few intimate friends in whose society he spent most of his time being passionately devoted to him, while the letters of Lorenzo to him breathe a spirit of enthusiastic attachment. He had, however, his moments of aberration, and it may be that towards the close of his life the constant study of the Platonic philosophy had in some measure affected his intellect. Thus, for instance, he was a fervent believer in the supernatural, and according to an anecdote quoted by Tiraboschi and his other biographers, believed in the doctrine of metempsychosis. Arguing one day with his disciple, Mercati, as to the immortality of the soul, it was agreed that whichever of the two died first should come and warn the other, and Mercati afterwards declared that on the day of Ficino's death a phantom horseman stopped at his door and exclaimed, "Michael, Michael, what I told you is true."

The reputation of Marcilio Ficino extended as far as Hungary, and the learned Matthias Corvinus pressed him to come to his Court, while Sixtus IV. wrote him an autograph letter, offering him a pension and a residence at the Vatican; but nothing would induce him to leave Careggi, where, for the matter of that, he was very well off.

The works of Marcilio are very numerous, but though they began to be published separately at Florence in 1489, the first complete edition is dated Venice, 1516, and that was put through the press four times. The nomenclature of all these works

would be very dry, and those who may care for full particulars may be referred to Tiraboschi and other specialist writers.

•  
BERNARDO PULCI.

(1425-1494.)

Pulci descends from a family of poets, and Bernardo, the eldest, was one of the ornaments of the Court of Lorenzo the Magnificent, endearing himself to the Medici by composing sonnets for them like a poet laureate. His first elegy upon the death of Cosimo the Elder won him the favor of Piero il Gottoso, and at the death of Simonetta, the beautiful mistress of Giuliano, whose portrait has been preserved to us by Sandro Botticelli, he wrote another elegy which would give a high idea of the deceased lady's qualities did we not know how ready Court poets always are to say complimentary things.

Pulci translated into Italian verse Virgil's *Bucolics*, and he has been credited with the poem "Morgante," which, however, was in reality written by his brother Luigi. This work does not give a very favorable idea of the prevailing morality; but it was read aloud at the literary gatherings, which resembled those at Careggi, and at which the pious Lucrezia Tornabuoni, wife of Piero, presided. It is, however, written in very chaste language, is full of interesting descriptions, and, with its vivid and dashing style cannot well fail to please. Bernardo Pulci had a wife,

Antonia, who wrote several dramatic pieces of the passion-play style, and the poet himself, at the close of his life, was curator of the Academy of Pisa, his connection with the history of literature not being traceable subsequent to 1494.

Besides Luigi, there was a younger brother named Luca, who lived at the Court of Lorenzo, and who has celebrated the great tournament of 1468, which is the only guide we have to the character of these splendid entertainments. He has left several other works, including the "Giriffo," a tale of chivalry, and "Il Driade d' Amor," a pastoral poem in four cantos.

Bernardo was the most famous of the three brothers at the time, but Luigi, as the author of "Morgante," has achieved the most enduring fame.

#### DOMENICO BURCHIELLO.

(139..-1448.)

Burchiello's name is often quoted by persons who have never read any of his poems. He was a barber by trade, and was doubtless one of those who helped to found the Barbers' Salon in Italy, a sort of club open to all the world, in which the latest news and gossip are retailed. A foreigner visiting Italy for the first time will be struck by the countless number of hairdressers' shops in which the modern Burchiello is awaiting his customers, and in the evening people meet there and converse, seated upon large sofas which are placed round the room.

Burchiello, a barber and the son of a barber, had his shop, in the first years of the fifteenth century, in the Calimara quarter, near the old market. He was so ready-witted and gay that his name became as synonymous for good-humor and quickness of repartee as that of Figaro did three hundred years later. Courtiers and townspeople repaired to his shop, and in the Medici Gallery may be seen a picture representing the establishment divided into two portions, in one of which customers were shaved, while the other was reserved for the regular frequenters, who chatted, or played, or recited verses when Burchiello's tongue was not going.

He wrote sonnets which passed through eight editions in various countries before the fifteenth century was over, though they are so fantastic and incomprehensible that it is difficult to understand what they mean: for all the learned commentaries of Varchi and Dona, Dandolo has no hesitation in pronouncing these sonnets to be unintelligible to those who do not understand the fishwife's vocabulary. The only thing to commend about them is that they are vivacious, and full of that fire which pleases the common people.

#### SAVONAROLA.

(1452-1498.)

Fra Girolamo Savonarola, monk of the Dominican order, was born at Ferrara on the 21st of September, 1452, and, though not properly speaking a Floren-

tine, he belongs to the history of that city, so prominent a part did he play in the politics and intellectual movement of his day. With the ardor of a Peter the Hermit and the unabated fanaticism of a tribune of the people, which cost him his life, he sought to weaken the influence of the Medici, and to maintain the Republican form of Government in Florence. He did not scruple to call upon the Pope to suppress abuses, and even endeavored to put a check upon his temporal power, and, like the austere reformer that he was, set his face against the prevailing ideas in regard to art and literature, considering them to be infected with paganism, and denouncing them from the pulpit on this ground. His eloquence, his enthusiasm, and his fire, his sombre genius, his boundless courage, and the matchless audacity and coolness which denoted an immovable conviction, made him one of the most remarkable figures in the history of Florence during the close of the fifteenth century, and the flames which consumed his body have formed a halo of martyrdom around his head, though there were those who professed to regard him as an impostor.

His father's name was Niccolò, and his mother was Elena Buonaccorsi, the family being of Mantuan origin. Austere and serious as a child, there seemed to be something in him which foretold a stormy career. His earliest studies were theology and philosophy, and his favorite author was St. Thomas Aquinas, though he wrote a few poems in his youth which are

still extant. He had his first vision at the age of two-and-twenty, when it seemed to him, one night, that a cold rain had penetrated to his very bones, and annihilated all the fermentation of youth, and allayed for ever the longings of the flesh. After this vision he went off to Bologna, without communicating his intentions to any one, and assumed the robe of a Dominican. He soon manifested his great gifts, and his superiors gave him the chairs of dialectics and metaphysics. He remained for seven years in Bologna, going from thence to Florence, where he at once took up his residence at San Marco, and made his *début* as a preacher in San Lorenzo during Lent. He failed, however, to make any impression upon the Florentines, who were formed in the school of Boccaccio and Marsuppini, and finding this to be the case, he resolved to confine himself in future to expounding Holy Writ. Having been sent by his superiors to preach in Lombardy, he returned to Florence at the request of Lorenzo the Magnificent, to whom Pico della Mirandola had described him as being a man of great promise, well versed in Holy Writ, and deserving of the highest interest.

In 1490 he commenced, in the church of San Marco, a series of lectures upon the Apocalypse, and basing his arguments upon the obscurity of this book, he declared that it foretold the immediate ruin of Florence, unless she reformed her ways. He called upon the Church to regenerate herself, and upon her

clergy to give up the licentious life which so many of them led, threatening them with the Divine vengeance in the sentence engraved on the medallion: "Gladius Domini super Terram, Ceto et Velociter." His preaching created a feeling of terror throughout Florence, but his threats of chastisement seemed to fascinate the people, and as St. Mark's was too small for the congregations which pressed to hear him, he preached the following year in the Duomo. For eight years he had the whole city at his feet, and when he came down from the pulpit on his way back to the monastery of St. Mark he had to be protected from the enthusiastic demonstrations of the ardent and impressionable crowd.

It is difficult at this distance of time to form an idea of what his eloquence was like, but it apparently was marked rather by energy and natural inspiration than by elevation of ideas and finish. As he went straight to the hearts of the people, there must have been a tinge of vulgarity which touched the instinct of the masses, and a certain tone of tenderness which had its effect upon the strongest, for upon one occasion the whole congregation burst into sobs, beating their breasts and manifesting their contrition in other ways. Savonarola was an extemporary preacher, but one of the congregation took down his sermons, and manuscript copies of them were widely circulated until the art of printing enabled them to be reproduced with a wealth of illustration.



In July, 1491, he became prior of St. Mark's. It was a custom in the convent that on the election of a new prior he should go and do homage to the civil authority. As Lorenzo de' Medici was an intimate friend of Pico della Mirandola, who was the sworn ally of Savonarola, it might be supposed that the latter would have conformed to the general usage; but instead of doing so he denounced the tyranny of Lorenzo, and accused him of undermining the liberties of the people. Lorenzo had on a previous occasion sent him a delegation composed of five or six citizens, begging him not to excite still more a people which had always been the sport of its own passions; but his answer to this was a fresh tirade, in which he announced the early death of the chief of the State. The fulfilment of this, as of some of his other predictions, gave additional force to his fervid declamations and mystic utterances. In the life of Lorenzo the details of Savonarola's visit to him on his death-bed are given in full, and need not, therefore, be repeated here.

With all his fanaticism Savonarola was a true patriot, and on more than one occasion he proved his devotion to Florence. When Charles VIII. was advancing on the city the Dominican monk went forth to meet him, and adjured him so vehemently in the name of God that the king was induced to adopt a more conciliatory policy. The speech which Savonarola made is included in his "Revelazioni." It is

true that Charles and his army were only gotten rid of through the fearless bearing of Piero Capponi combined with Savonarola's influence and the payment by the Republic of a large sum of money.

Savonarola was at one time very nearly being successful in his struggle against the Medici, for when Piero, the son of Lorenzo, had been exiled, he submitted to the Signoria the new form of government which, according to his views, would insure the supremacy of the people. It was at his instance that the first popular parliament was convoked in the Palazzo Vecchio, but, as I have shown in a previous chapter, it did not last long.

The political purpose which he was pursuing did not cause him to slacken his crusade against the Papacy. His constant theme was simony, the dissolute conduct of the clergy, the scandalous habits of the prelates, the cardinals, and the Pope himself, and the general looseness of ecclesiastical morals and discipline. The occupant of the Papal throne at that time was the infamous Alexander VI., the father of Cæsar Borgia, of the Duke of Candia, who was murdered by his own brother, and of Lucrezia Borgia; and as he felt these accusations to be true, and dreaded their effect when launched from the second city in Italy, he summoned the Dominican monk to Rome in order to reprimand him for his doctrines. Savonarola was able to excuse himself on the ground of ill-health from coming to Rome, and was as a matter of fact

obliged to renounce preaching and work of all kinds, and remain for some time in seclusion at San Marco.

But his silence did not last long, and when he again ascended the pulpit he spoke with even greater vehemence against the Pope, writing to all the sovereigns of Europe, and asking them to convoke a General Council for the deposition of the Pontiff, as guilty of crimes which he undertook to prove.

Alexander VI. offered him a cardinal's hat on condition that he would change the tenor of his discourses. Savonarola, however, treated the proposal with scorn, and made it the subject of a sermon in order to prove the charges of venality in connection with ecclesiastical offices which he had been preferring against the Court of Rome.

The city, however, was divided into two camps, upon the one side being the adherents of the Medici, who were the natural enemies of Savonarola, and who were styled the *Arrabiati*, while on the other were his partisans, known as the *Piagnoni*. The most fanatical of the latter were Fra Domenico da Pescia and Fra Silvestro Maruffi, the first named of whom succeeded Savonarola in the pulpit about 1496, and commenced a crusade against all kinds of profane objects, such as books, statuary, drawings, paintings, miniatures, jewelry, dress, musical instruments, and perfumes. The people of Florence were possessed of a frenzy, and condemned to the flames everything which was susceptible of exciting worldly thoughts,

or which was used for the adornment of the person. There was a wild outburst of fanaticism, and, with a blind fury reminding us of the Iconoclasts, priceless works of art were destroyed in that year, when for the first time the tolerance for which Italy had always been conspicuous was forgotten. It is strange to note that in the fifteenth century, under the rule of the Medici, books and works of art should have been consigned to the flames.

In Italy the Renaissance had never been in actual opposition to Christianity, for the revelation of the antique world to modern society did not come into collision with the great tradition of the Christian religion, which had constituted the strength of Italy. It was possible to venerate Plato, and even to keep a lamp burning before his bust as before an altar, without undermining the Catholic faith, as is proved by the many pious foundations of the day, and by the great liberality of the wealthy in employing the most famous artists to build churches and chapels.

A band of children was at this time formed by Fra Domenico, and dressed in white, the emblem of purity, they went round to the various houses and collected the objects which were anathema. This lasted throughout the carnival, and on Shrove Tuesday they were made into a gigantic bonfire on the Piazza della Signoria, Fra Domenico assembling the children in Santa Maria del Fiore, where he celebrated mass, and going with them from thence to San Marco, the boys

carrying red crosses in their hands, and wearing wreaths of olive-branches. In the flames which arose from the Piazza were consumed manuscripts of Boccaccio and Petrarch, priceless works of sculpture and of painting, and specimens of the goldsmith's craft, never so perfect as at Florence in the fifteenth century.

Burlamachi says that in 1498 the enthusiasm was so great that the ceremony had to be repeated, and that the procession of neophytes was headed by Savonarola himself, crucifix in hand. Burlamachi adds that, "Having reached the Piazza, they found the bonfire larger than before, among the articles in the holocaust being antique female busts of great beauty—busts of the beautiful Bencina, Lena Morella, Bina, Maria de Lenzi, by the greatest sculptors. There was a bust of Petrarch, adorned with gold and miniatures, which was worth fifty gold crowns, and a watch was kept over the bonfire to see that nothing was removed. When the procession arrived it drew up in a circle around the pyramid, which was sprinkled with holy water, amid the singing of hymns. Then came the captains of districts, who set fire to the bonfire to the sound of bells, trumpets, and other instruments of music, and amid the joyful exclamations of the people, who chanted the 'Te Deum.'"

About 1497 "The Triumph of the Cross" made its appearance, the greatest of his writings, and in the latter part of the same year Savonarola openly defied the Papal excommunication. A Franciscan

named Francesco da Puglia was at the head of the party which regarded Savonarola and Fra Domenico as heretics, and as the latter had the fanaticism to declare from the pulpit of St. Mark that the flames would have no hold on him or his master, the Franciscan took up the challenge.

A whole host of priests, women and children were so convinced that the fire would not burn Savonarola or his disciple that they were ready to follow them through the flames, when, on the 7th of April, 1498, the weird experiment was tried on the square in front of the Palazzo Vecchio. First came Fra Francesco da Puglia, followed by the monks of his order, without any show or ornaments, and then followed Savonarola himself, and the Dominicans in full ecclesiastical dress, and carrying the Host.

A long discussion arose as to whether the conditions were equal—whether the Dominicans ought not to wear the same plain robe as the Franciscans, and whether the Host which they carried with them might not afford them miraculous protection. While the argument was being carried on heavy rain fell and extinguished the flames; and this incident, which made the people suspect that they had been duped by two impostors, so discredited Savonarola that on the following Sunday the *Arrabbiati*, under the frivolous pretext of a disturbance which had occurred in another part of the city, attacked the convent of St. Mark, took it by assault, and dragged Savonarola and

his two followers—Fra Domenico and Fra Silvestro—to prison.

When once Savonarola was arrested there was no lack of accusations against him. He had already been excommunicated, and he was now charged with having preached without having the Divine revelation, and of having attempted to assemble a council for the reform of the Church without the authority of the Pope. The General of the Dominican order himself, Giovacchino Turriano, of Venice, and Monsignor Francesco Ramolino, afterwards Bishop of Sorrento, were commissioned to represent the Pontiff before the tribunal, which was composed of priests and monks. The result of the trial was a foregone conclusion, and Savonarola and his two associates were sentenced to be hanged and burnt on the Piazza della Signoria.

The execution took place on the 23d of May, 1498, which was Ascension Eve, and a curious picture of the sinister ceremonial is still extant. A tribune more than six feet high had been erected on the Piazza, where the Ammanati fountain had not yet been placed, in front of the ducal palace, and it was from there that the eight magistrates witnessed the execution. This tribune was connected with the stake by a sort of raised platform on trestles, and the condemned men were led up to it, and had the insignia of their order stripped from them before being led to the stake.

After being hung they were burnt to ashes, and

the fact that they had not uttered a word of repentance made a great impression upon the multitude. Savonarola was executed last. When he was brought to the ladder he cast a long gaze at the crowd; and it is said that when his body was cast in the flames the heat caused the right hand to move so that it seemed to be raised, as if in the act of benediction.

He was only five-and-forty at the time of his death, and he soon came to be regarded as a martyr, even by the Church; so much so, that when ten years later Raphael was painting the *Stanze* at the Vatican, he included among the doctors in the "Dispute on the Sacrament" the man whom the reigning Pope's predecessor had caused to be burnt as a heretic. At Florence his image was preserved as that of a prophet and a saint, and in most pictures he is represented with the halo of glory around his head. The most trivial articles which had belonged to him were regarded as relics, and his memory is so venerated that at the beginning of the present century, more than three hundred years after his death, people came on the anniversary of his execution to deposit flowers on the spot where the stake had been erected.

THE CHARACTER OF SAVONAROLA. HIS TENDENCIES. HIS INFLUENCE UPON LITERATURE AND ART. THE MEETINGS IN THE MONASTERY OF SAN MARCO.

Such is the true history of Savonarola, and it only remains to consider what were his real tendencies, and what was the end he had in view. He was one



of the most remarkable men of his time, and he has left an indelible impression upon the monastery of San Marco, which, though now deserted, preserves its air of monastic repose, and which is associated with the name of another famous monk, Fra Angelico.

While living in the seclusion of his convent the fame of his sermons brought him many illustrious visitors, and he received them in his humble cell, one of the first being Pico della Mirandola, the friend of the Medici, who entertained a high feeling of admiration for the sturdy monk. Then came Benivieni; Politian, so much attached to the antiquity which Savonarola held in abhorrence; Marco Finiguerra, the engraver; Bandini; the famous Sandro Botticelli; Lorenzo di Credi; and two of the Della Robbia family who had taken holy orders.

The favorite subject with Savonarola was the deleterious influence of paganism, which he ascribed to the study of the ancient authors. His idea was to extend the influence of religion to all human faculties and to all their outcome, and as he saw paganism gradually asserting itself in every branch of literature and art, he commenced an ardent crusade against it. The study of the Bible was his dominant passion, and he asserted that it contained everything that was necessary for the development of humanity. I have said above that in his earlier commentaries upon the Apocalypse he predicted in vague terms the French invasion and the disasters of Italy, and when this

prediction was realized the enthusiasm to hear him knew no bounds, the mountaineers coming down from the Apennines and sleeping under the walls of the city, so as to be sure of getting places to hear him the next day. The cloister of St. Mark being too small, it was in the Duomo, which would have accommodated all the population of Florence, that he thundered forth against the lukewarm (*tiefidi*), and endeavored to inspire them with his own ardent faith. His eloquence was not without its effect, for there was a considerable change made in the habits of the people, and a reaction set in against the simonies and loose discipline of the clergy. Savonarola urged that Tibullus, Ovid, Catullus, and all the philosophy of Aristotle should be proscribed, and he reminded the partisans of classic study of the schisms which had resulted in the disruption of the Empire and the entry of the Turks into Constantinople. His action was not confined to literature, for in politics he had contributed to the convocation of the first Florentine parliament, and in regard to domestic reform his principal tenets were, like those of J. J. Rousseau three hundred years later, the advantages of a natural education, of physical and moral education by the father and the mother, and of mothers nursing their infants themselves.

In regard to art, there can be no doubt that he was most successful in introducing a new order of things. Up to 1480 most of the subjects treated by painters

were taken from antiquity or inspired by it, and we have only to read contemporary works or examine pictures and statues to see what a large place is held by ancient fable and the mythology of Greece and of Rome. Savonarola reproached the Medici with having encouraged this movement and favored Naturalism, which is a word one would hardly expect to find used in the fifteenth century. Henceforward we find Filippo Lippi, Botticelli, Pietro della Francesca, and other painters representing the beautiful women of the day as Madonnas and saints, and this was undoubtedly due in some measure to the precepts of Savonarola. He denounced to the people the orgies of sensualism which were depicted in the frescoes, sculptures, and other decorations of the palaces, paving the way by his seven years of preaching for the holocausts in which so many matchless works of art were devoured.

The personal influence of Savonarola over certain artists has been demonstrated by historians of the time. Sandro Botticelli, for instance, was so affected by the repeated attacks of the Dominican monk that he abandoned painting for a time, and shut himself up in a monastery, though Lorenzo de' Medici afterwards induced him to return to his art. Lorenzo di Credi, orthodox though he was in his conceptions and his works, was as deeply affected as Botticelli, and passed the last years of his life in the convent of Santa Maria Novella. The great Fra Bartolommeo,

who combined the style of the most inspired masters with a profound faith, did not touch a brush for four years after the execution of Savonarola. Cronaca, the chronicler of the street and the studio, who set more store by his fluent pen and his eloquence than by his artistic gifts, could not sleep after he had heard several sermons, and was lost in admiration for the preacher. Giovanni della Corniole, a great cameo worker, spent a long time upon the production of a splendid portrait of Savonarola, which was placed in the Medici collection. Even Michael Angelo, austere and proud as he was, felt in some measure the great reformer's influence, for though he was only a child when Savonarola thundered forth his denunciations of the modern Babylon, they made such an impression upon him that he could repeat extracts from them years afterwards.

A certain school regarded Savonarola as an iconoclast, an accusation of which Villari has endeavored to clear him, as in his biography of the Dominican monk he asserts that the holocausts which I have described were only portraits of courtesans and books with obscene illustrations, and, to prove that he was not an enemy of letters, points out that he asked the Chapter of San Marco for permission to purchase the library of Lorenzo de' Medici, which was eventually known as the *Laurentiana*. Be this as it may, Savonarola, by prohibiting the study of the nude, which is the ever-fresh source of the beautiful in art, and by

maintaining the principle of Christian as opposed to pagan art, brought about a complete revolution, and put an end to the strange combats of Pollaiuolo, to the compositions taken from the Latin and Greek authors, to the strange allegories of Botticelli and Benozzo Gozzoli, and to the beautiful groups of statuary which one might suppose to be extracted from the quarries of Paros, and wrought by the pupils of Praxiteles.

It will readily be understood that this fanaticism, excellent as were the motives which gave rise to it, called forth the hostility of the Court of Rome, whose power it tended to undermine. The sack of San Marco was the first tangible act of hostility on the part of the *Arrabbiati* against the *Piagnoni*, as the followers of Savonarola were called, and that must have been a memorable scene when the Dominicans, succumbing under superior forces, were overwhelmed by their assailants in the church which was red with blood, and marched to their doom singing and praising God. One cannot visit that now peaceful retreat, which the recollection of Savonarola, Fra Domenico, and Fra Angelico renders so famous, without being reminded of all this ; and the cell of Savonarola, in which are preserved the portraits of Cosimo the Elder, of Benivieni, and of Savonarola himself, the manuscripts, the chair, the furniture, and the sacerdotal ornaments of the great monk, is assuredly one of the most interesting historical spots in Florence. In it we

have, so to speak, the records of history proved by facts, but for which they might be regarded as mere legends.

From this time forth religious subjects were invariably selected for painting and sculpture, and throughout Italy artists were at work upon portraits of Christ, the Virgin, the angels and prophets, and upon Bible scenes, until such men of genius as Titian and Giorgione discarded this conventional rule, and selected their subjects from the Greek mythology or the domain of pure fancy. Nowhere was the influence of Savonarola more profoundly felt than in the fine-arts, as his utterances had made a deeper impression upon artists than upon any other class.

#### THE BENIVIENI.

(1453-1542.)

Jerome Benivieni, though the youngest, was the most celebrated of the family, all the members of which were admitted to the intimacy of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and, as members of his Academy, were the friends and colleagues of Ficino, Politian, and Pico della Mirandola. Domenico, the eldest of the brothers, though gifted with great knowledge as a philosopher, was above all things a theologian, so much so that he was surnamed "Il Scotino," or the little Scot, after the gifted Michael Scotus of Great Britain. Professor of Dialectics in the University of Pisa, and afterwards Director of the hospital of Pescia, he was ap-



Fit Giuliano Sabonarda

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...might be regarded as  
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THE ACADEMY

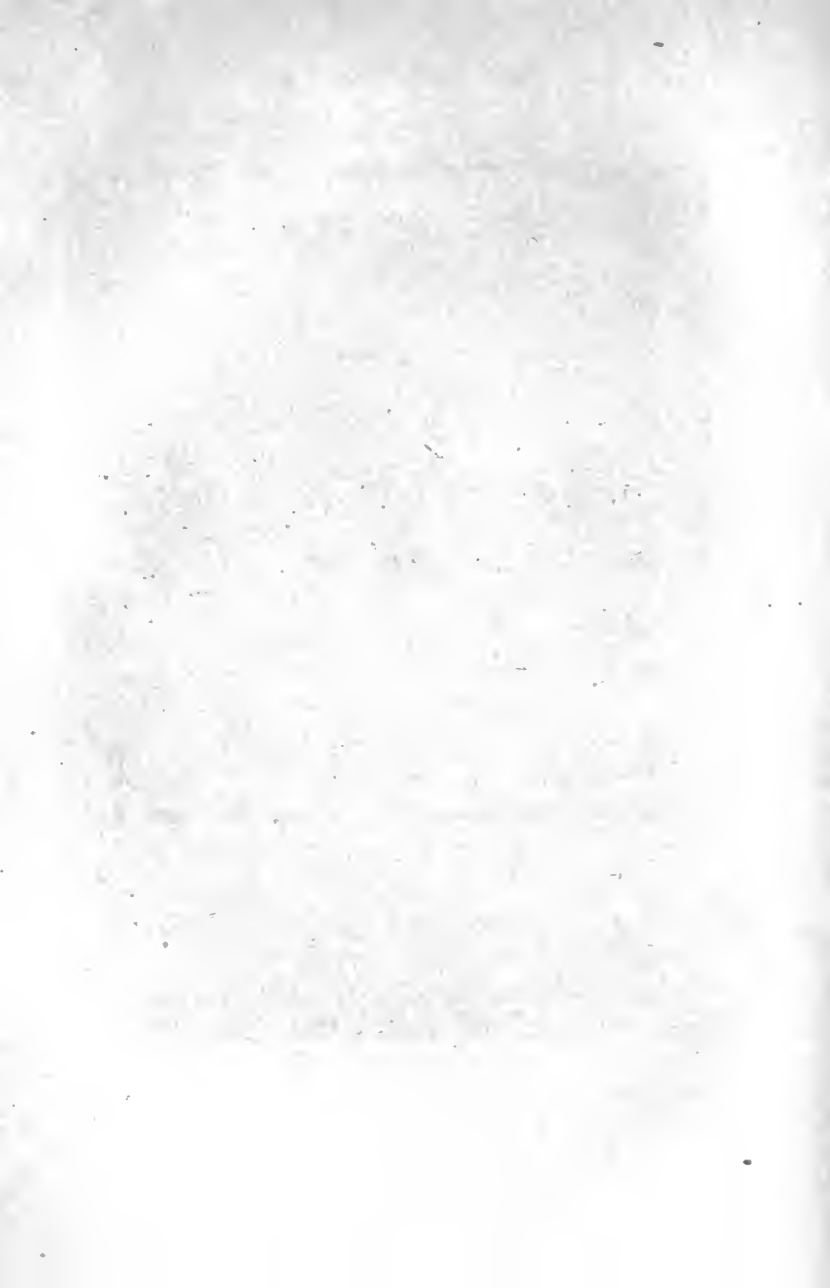
...the Academy  
...of Lorenzo the  
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...and Piero  
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...theologian, so much so that he  
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...of Great Britain. The

*Fra Girolamo Savonarola*





HIERONYMI FERRARIENSIS A DEO  
\* MISSI PROPHE TAE EFFIGIES \*



pointed by Lorenzo a canon of the basilica of San Lorenzo, and he always remained a fast friend of Savonarola.

Antony, the second brother, was both a man of letters and a doctor, as was often the case in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, notably with the brothers Ficino. He has left some technical works behind him, including a curious treatise on medicine, and his name disappears at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Jerome, the youngest of the three brothers, was born about 1453, and wrote a good deal of poetry, belonging to the Academy of Plato, and publishing verses on "Platonic Love" in Italian. An intimate friend of all the most gifted men of his time, he was the inseparable companion of Pico della Mirandola, who showed his confidence in Jerome by making him his almoner for the distribution of the moneys which he gave to the poor, and of the dowries for young girls who were reported to be worthy of this favor.

Pico has written a commentary on Jerome Benivieni as a preface to his "Love Sonnets," and he was so attached to him in life that he would not be separated from him in death, and was buried in the same tomb at San Marco.

Like his brother Domenico, he was a firm believer in Savonarola, and besides the defence which he wrote of the monk, he translated his works from Latin into the vulgar tongue.

## ANGELO POLITIAN.

(1454-1494.)

Politian, whose name is synonymous with deep learning, and who exercised a considerable influence over his generation, was born on the 14th of July, 1454, at Monte Pulciano, a small town in Tuscany celebrated for its excellent wine. His proper name, as would appear from a degree of doctor, the certificate of which is still preserved at Florence, was Ambrogini, the name by which he is familiarly known being derived from his place of birth.

Cristoforo Landino taught him Latin, and Andronicus, of Thessalonica, Greek; in philosophy he was the most brilliant of Marcilio Ficino's pupils, and as he was anxious to master the doctrines of Aristotle as opposed to those of Plato, he studied his writings under Argyropulos. His earliest work was a translation of Homer into Latin verse; but this did not bring him into any great notice, and the first success which he obtained was by writing some *Stanze* for the tournament got up by Giuliano de' Medici. It is scarcely credible that he should have written these verses, which were soon on everybody's lips, at the age of fourteen or fifteen, and it has been argued that the tournament was held not in 1468, but in 1473.

The death of Giuliano was a great blow for Politian, who wrote in Latin an account of the Pazzi conspir-

acy ; but Lorenzo intrusted to him the education of his two sons, Pietro and Giovanni, the latter of whom became Pope, under the title of Leo X.

When nine-and-twenty years of age, at a time when Florence was a centre of study for all Italy, Politian was called to the chair of Latin and Greek literature, and his lectures were thronged, for he was as eloquent as he was learned. As Lorenzo had sent him to Rome in charge of his son Pietro, who was received with great pomp by Innocent VIII., that pontiff requested Politian to translate Herodianus into Latin, and recompensed him with a gift of two hundred gold crowns. Politian, however, was above taking this present, for he had a private fortune of his own, and had been given a priory and a canonry in the metropolitan church of Florence, besides which, he lived at the expense of Lorenzo. He had formed a close intimacy with Pico della Mirandola, who had renounced his social position in order to devote his whole time to literature ; and these two friends, together with Giovanni Lascaris and a few others, formed themselves into a select literary group. Lorenzo placed the celebrated *Laurentiana* library at their disposal ; and it was from this period that dates the publication of the *Miscellanæ*, in which ancient literature received so high a meed of praise.

The teaching of Politian acquired so much celebrity that students from all parts of the world came to take lessons from him ; two or three of them after-

wards became professors in the Universities of Oxford and Oporto, and by the influence of John Texeira, Chancellor of the kingdom of Portugal, he was appointed historiographer to King John II., and instructed to write the annals of Portuguese conquest in the colonies. It was while preparing this great work that he died, before reaching the age of forty.

The most infamous calumnies were propagated as to the cause of his death, and a writer of some weight, Paolo Giovio, has not scrupled to adopt them as true. Other writers have reproduced his statements, but it is more pleasant to believe the assertions of those who attribute his premature death to grief at the death of his patron, Lorenzo, and the disasters which overtook his family. Pietro de' Medici, his pupil, had been driven from Florence, and the fortunes of the Medici were trembling to their base, when the poet took up his lyre to sing the plaintive melody "*Monodia in Laurentium Medicii*," in which he poured out his own grief and extolled the virtues of his lost protector. Bembo has cleared him of the calumnies to which Paolo Giovio gave currency, and Dandolo, who has already been referred to as the author of "*Florence Down to the Fall of the Republic*," has contributed to the same end by the discovery of a document written by the Dominican monk Ubaldino, who was charged by Savonarola to conduct his funeral in the convent of San Marco, where he had so often discoursed. In this document, which is entitled "*Ru-*

bertus Ubaldinus de Galliano Dominicanæ familiæ monachus, de obitu et sepultura domini Angeli Politiani," it is said that Politian died like a good Christian, and there is an allusion to the grief which he felt at the decease of Lorenzo and Pico della Mirandola. The fierce disputes between the writers of that day go far to explain these cruel insinuations, as has already been seen in the case of Filelfo and Poggio. Politian's bitterest enemy was one Giorgio Merula, of Alexandria, a professor at the University of Milan. When the *Miscellanæ* were published Merula found that they contained several ideas of his own, and opinions contrary to his as well, and he accordingly wrote a strong pamphlet, which, though not printed, was distributed throughout Florence. To this Politian replied with another pamphlet, in which he spoke of his adversary, under the pseudonym of Mabilius, in very cutting terms. The feud, however, was ultimately healed, and Merula became a warm friend of Politian before his death.

The influence of Politian upon his contemporaries was very great, his chief speciality, despite the halo of poesy which the publication of the *Stanze* had cast around him, being his intimate knowledge of the Latin and Greek authors. He wrote very little in the vulgar tongue, and with the exception of the *Stanze*, the only known works by him in Italian are a Canzone, which is transcribed in Crescimbeni's History of Literature, and a beautiful poem called "Orfeo."

He was without a rival in Greek, and wrote commentaries on most of the classic authors, his other works comprising Elegies, Epigrams, Miscellanies, a version of Herodianus, a eulogy of Homer, and twelve letters containing some valuable information about the literary history of the last half of the fifteenth century. He made a careful collation of most of the ancient manuscripts in the *Laurentiana*, and prepared the "Greek Paraphrase" of the "Institutes" of Justinian; the celebrated "Pandects" manuscript, which is preserved at Florence, furnishing him with much valuable information. Although a canon of the Church, he did not concern himself much about theology, and he is regarded as the real founder of the Italian Theatre, as he was the first to write dialogue for his characters. The works of Politian were first published by Aldo in 1498, and the best life of him is the biography published at Bergamo in 1747 by Sarassi, as a preface to his edition of the *Stanze*, though another good biography was published at Leipsic in 1736 by Mencken. Erasmus proclaimed him to be "a miracle of nature," but the miracle was so calumniated by the author of "Florentine Anecdotes," and by Vossius, on the faith of Paolo Giovio, that we have to fall back upon original documents, and upon the letters of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and of other contemporaries, to clear his memory. The evidence of Abbé Méhus, in his "Preface to the Life of Ambrose Camaldoli," alone suffices to show that



Politian died a nobler death than his detractors averred. He says, "Messire Angelo Politian, attacked by a violent fever, died after an illness of fourteen days, and, unfortunate even after death, malevolence would have it that he expired in a delirium caused by his passions. It is hard to believe that one so versed in Greek and Latin, in history, in antiquity, in dialectics, and in philosophy, had not more command over himself. It should be added that Pietro de' Medici, his pupil, had opened negotiations with the Pope for making him a cardinal just at the time that he was banished, that the death of Lorenzo was a great blow to him, and that he was involved in the same hostility which led to the expulsion of Pietro."

## PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA.

(1463-1494.)

Whenever an illustration of youthful precocity was sought by any writer at the close of the fifteenth century, the name of Pico della Mirandola, the young noble who abandoned his social position to devote himself to study, and who on one occasion offered to carry on a discussion upon every branch of human knowledge, at once occurred to him, and this name has become renowned, not only in Italy, but throughout Europe.

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola was the third son of Giovanni Francesco, signor of Mirandola and Concordia. His mother was almost as famous as he was,

and one of the greatest artists of the day represents, in a well-known work, young Giovanni in his mother's arms, as if to typify her tender care for an infant who gave so much promise, even from his cradle, of the knowledge which was to make him one of the wonders of his age. When only ten years old he made a speech in public, and read some of his own poetry. When he had mastered with surprising facility the instruction given him at home, he was sent to Bologna, where he studied philosophy and theology. Wealthy and independent, he determined to visit all the greatest universities in Europe, and instead of listening to the lectures of the most eminent professors, he was able to embarrass them by his questions, and argue successfully with them.

Unfortunately for his fame, the study of the Syrian, the Arabian, and the Chaldean languages led him to indulge in vague and speculative views, and in the unprofitable examination of the Cabala. He had formed a library of the Cabala, the catalogue of which, published by Gaffarel, is still extant.

He was not one of those modest scholars who love science for its own sake, and Nature, while lavishing her gifts upon him, had endowed him with a feeling of pride which impelled him to air those gifts before the world. Thus it was that in 1468 Pico della Mirandola, then in the plenitude of his faculties, arrived at the Court of Innocent VIII. with a list of nine hundred propositions, "De omni re scibili," which he un-

dertook to sustain in public debate against all the savants who chose to enter the field. As he was very wealthy he further declared his willingness to defray the expenses of all those who would make the journey. The list of propositions has been preserved, and it has been well remarked that the learning of any one who answered them all would not amount to very much.

The immediate result of this challenge was to raise up enemies for him among those whom he attempted to outshine, and thirteen of his propositions were denounced as being tainted with heresy. He, of course, had his answer ready, and his first argument was to prove that these very propositions had been sanctioned by theologians whose orthodoxy was unimpeachable. He turned the laugh against his accusers, who had made the blunder of representing the Cabala as a man who had spoken evil of Jesus Christ. Innocent VIII., however, condemned the propositions, and Pico left Rome for France, where he was held in great esteem. He was again denounced during his absence, and the Pope summoned him to appear before his tribunal; but though he did so, and had no difficulty in clearing himself, the mortification for him was very great.

This was the close of his public career, and having abandoned his titles and property in favor of his nephews, he lived in the intimacy of learned men at the Court of his friend Lorenzo the Magnificent, being

very regular in his attendance at the Academy of Plato, where Marcilio Ficino and Politian bore him company. He died in the prime of youth, at the age of thirty-one, having been preceded to the tomb only two months before by Politian. Charles VIII. entered Florence on the very day of his death, and the French King, who had received him at the Court of Paris, hearing of his serious illness, sent two of his physicians to him, but he had breathed his last before they could arrive. He died in the true faith of a Christian, bequeathing all his fortune to his servitors and to the poor of Florence.

His works comprised a poem upon the creation of the universe, in which he attempts to conciliate the Bible with the doctrines of Plato—a favorite theme in the fifteenth century; a scholastic treatise entitled “De Ente et Uno,” eight volumes of “Letters,” a commentary upon “Platonic Love,” a harangue upon “The Dignity of Man,” several pieces of poetry, and twelve books denouncing judicial astrology, the last named being looked upon as the most important of his many compositions. The only work of his in the vulgar tongue was his commentary of his friend Benivieni’s “Platonic Love.”

Pico della Mirandola, prodigy of learning as he was, and one of the most popular men of his age, did not as a writer make any great contribution to the sum of human knowledge, and his science was Platonic, and professed with a view to effect.

## MACHIAVELLI.

(1469-1527.)

Niccolò Machiavelli was born at Florence in May, 1469, his father, who was a judge, being called Bernardo, while the name of his mother was Bartolomea di Stefano Nelli. It was believed at one time that he was descended from a noble family which had given several marquises to Tuscany; but the truth is that his father, though well born and moderately rich, was not of noble descent. He was a native of Val di Pisa, and his property was at Montespertoli. These facts concerning the great political writer who has acquired a proverbial reputation for astuteness and perfidy are derived from Passerini and Pietro Fanfani.

It may be assumed that Machiavelli made a profound study of Latin and the Italian classics. At the age of five-and-twenty he was employed in the Government office which conducted the business relating to embassies and war, while four years later—in 1498—a decree of the Grand Council raised him to the rank of Second Chancellor. He had scarcely entered upon these new duties than he was promoted to be Secretary to the Council of Ten, and so able was his conduct of affairs that he held the post for fifteen years, though the ordinary tenure was only for a month.

In 1499 he undertook the first of a series of embassies, and in the hands of the Government of Flor-

ence appeared to be a docile and supple instrument. But while Machiavelli seemed to be only expressing the views of those by whom he was commissioned, he had been skilful enough to dictate the resolutions of those who sent him. The first important mission which he undertook was to King Louis XII. of France in 1500. In the following year he returned to fill his duties as Second Chancellor, though not for long at a time, as we find him first at Pistoia, then at Pisa, then at Siena, and then at Arezzo. In 1502 he accompanied Cæsar Borgia to Imola, and then throughout the Romagna and Umbria, when that Prince was engaged in reducing the rebel lords, Vitellozzo Vitelli, Oliveretto da Fermo, Pagolo, and the Duke de Gravina Orsini. It was during these different embassies, more military than diplomatic, that Machiavelli, constantly engaged in sieges, assaults, fortifications, and battles, directed his brilliant faculties to the study of war and the practical side of a military profession.

But a higher mission awaited him, and the soldier was soon merged in the diplomatist. At the death of Alexander VI., Florence took a deep interest in the election of a new pope, and was very anxious to impose her candidate upon the Sacred College. Cardinal Francesco Soderini was sent from Volterra to Rome, Machiavelli accompanying him as far as Val di Arno, and then proceeding on his own account to the conclave, in which he played a very important part.

In 1505 he was intrusted with the realization of

an idea which he had long been advocating, and which was destined to bring about a complete revolution in the constitution of Italian States. His plan was to substitute for the mercenary forces, upon the fidelity of which little reliance could be placed, and which, animated by no patriotic sentiments, often turned tail and fled, a national army composed solely of citizens.

In 1503, at a meeting of the Council, he urged the people to form an army, and contributed to the expenses of their equipment, and in 1506 he proposed the creation of a special magistracy, which was to form companies of soldiers, superintend their drilling and instruction, and take care that they were ready to march at immediate notice. This was his greatest work, and he was the moving spirit in the new magistracy, obtaining from the Council of Ten their sanction to the measures which he deemed necessary, and never relaxing in his efforts until he felt that the change had taken firm root. Mercenary armies were suppressed for good, and to Machiavelli is due the credit of substituting for them those national forces which are still the *ultima ratio* of civilized societies. The superiority of infantry over cavalry was another favorite theory of Machiavelli, whose views in regard to warfare have been embodied by Algarotti in a work entitled "The Military Science of the Florentine Secretary," and dedicated to Prince Henry of Prussia.

In 1506, while still busily engaged in his work of military organization, he was obliged to return to Rome and accompany Julius II. to Imola when the latter was attempting to subjugate Bologna. In 1507 he went to supervise the recruiting of foot-soldiers at Val di Tevere, Valdichiana, Chianti, and the valleys of the Elsa and the Cecina, and in the course of the same year he was sent as a delegate to Piombino and Siena.

At the end of 1507 he was sent to meet the Emperor Maximilian, who was about to enter Italy on his way to receive the imperial crown from the Pontiff, and as Florence had to provide a subsidy, Machiavelli was sent to settle the matter. He was six months on this mission, and he found time to write the "Ritratti delle cose d'Alemagna," the "Rapporto delle cose della Magna," and the "Discorso sopra l'Imperatore." There is no need to enumerate all the diplomatic missions upon which he was employed, for rarely has a public man been so constantly occupied, but amidst all this he seemed to be more specially engrossed by military affairs, and may, indeed, be regarded as the War Minister of the Republic, with all the practical knowledge and more than the deliberative ability of a great commander. The long and arduous struggle with Pisa gave him an opportunity of displaying his talents, and it may be said that the measures adopted to capture the city were suggested by him.



These almost permanent duties did not prevent him from rendering still greater services, and the post of Ambassador to the Court of France being vacant, he filled it for a short time in 1510, taking up his residence first at Lyons, and afterwards at Blois and Tours.

The fall of the Gonfaloniere Soderini which took place upon the 30th of August 1512, during his absence, was very prejudicial to him, for after the change of Government which followed he was deprived of his post both as Chancellor and Secretary of the Ten. A decree was even passed ordering him not to leave the place of residence assigned to him, and he was forbidden to attend the Signoria for a twelvemonth. Mixed up in a conspiracy against the Medici in 1513, he was imprisoned in the Bargello, and even put to the question, but Leo X., delighted at his election to the throne of St. Peter, had him set at liberty. There can be no doubt that he was tortured, but he met his punishment with the stoic courage of the men of old, and left behind him a curious sonnet written at the very time.

While his body was still crushed and bruised, he repaired to his humble villa near San Casciano, and there devoted himself to study, leading a peasant's life, playing bowls and backgammon with his neighbors, and showing great affability in his relations with them. His political career seemed to be over, and he worked very hard, writing for the Academy

of the Rucellai Gardens, the "Principe" (1513), "Discourses on the First Book of Livy" (1516-1519), the "Dialogue upon Language," and the "Seven Books of the Art of War" (1520). The "Life of Castruccio" was written at Lucca about the end of the same year. Under the principedom of the Medici he again returned into favor, but though he was employed upon several diplomatic missions he did not hold any permanent post, and it was under these circumstances that he came to write the "Storie Fiorentine," and the two comedies, *Mandragola* and *Clizia*, which were composed for representation before Leo X. Andrea del Sarto and Aristotle de San Gallo undertook the scenic arrangements, and the audience comprised cardinals and other dignitaries of the Vatican. Francesco Guicciardini, the great historian and the Governor of the Romagna, had these comedies represented at Bologna during the carnival of 1526, and the Venetians also were anxious to witness the performance of them.

Pope Clement VII., in 1526, called him back to activity by intrusting him with the inspection of the fortifications of Florence, the Pontiff foreseeing the possibility of the city having to sustain a siege; and Machiavelli having, with a number of military engineers, taken counsel as to the best measures to be adopted, made his report to the Pope.

The whole of that year was spent by him in negotiations with Guicciardini and the proveditore of

Venice at Cremona. He thus escaped the tumult caused by the conspiracy of the 26th of April, and went upon Guicciardini's behalf to Doria and Genoa in quest of a galley and some reinforcements. From Genoa he went to Leghorn, in the company of the Marchioness of Mantua, and he died at Florence on the 23d of June, 1527.

A letter from his son proves that Machiavelli died a poor man, and no wonder that he did, for his life was full of vicissitudes. While holding office, he spent his salary freely, and when he fell from power he did nothing to increase his fortune. In whatever light he is looked at, he is a genius, though a French writer has written a phrase which the Italians take in very bad part: "The misfortunes of Italy arose solely from the fact that she was capable of producing the Principe." There can be no doubt but that Machiavelli inculcated the odious maxim as to the end justifying the means, but it is equally certain that with him it was dictated by conviction rather than by perversity. He was a great patriot beyond all question, to say nothing of his being an incomparable artist and a gifted writer who has the true historical sense, and who has left political portraits which a Tacitus would not disown.

FRANCESCO GUICCIARDINI.

(1483-1540.)

Francesco Guicciardini is the classic historian of Florence during the Medici age, and whatever may

be thought of his work, as a well-informed contemporary and a writer of calm and moderate judgment he occupies a prominent place among the Florentine celebrities of his time.

He was born in Florence on March 6, 1483, his parents being Piero and Simona Gianfigliuzzi, and he came of a noble and illustrious family. Marcilio Ficino stood sponsor for him, and after a studious career as a boy, he was sent by his father, at the age of twenty, to Ferrara, in order that he might be kept out of the political quarrels which were constantly occurring in his native town. From the University of Ferrara he went to that of Padua, and after studying law there he returned to Florence, and was appointed in October, 1505, to a professorship. He did not devote his whole time to the law, in which he soon acquired no little celebrity, though he made a brilliant *début* at the bar and secured plenty of practice. It was upon the 14th of January, 1507, that he was affianced to Maria di Alamanno Salviati. His influence was so great that in the course of this same year the corporation of merchants appointed him consul, but he could not accept the post, as the law required that the holder of it must be thirty years of age. Henceforward, corporations, societies, charities, and religious communities sought his advice, but an unexpected event suddenly caused him to transfer his attention from civil to political affairs.

This occurred during the Holy Alliance between

the Pope, the King of Aragon, England, the Swiss, and the Venetians, Julius II. being very anxious that the Florentines, who were on friendly terms with Louis XII. of France, should join it. The Florentines were much embarrassed what to do, for they did not wish to offend either Louis XII. or the King of Aragon. Eventually it was resolved to send an embassy to King Ferdinand at Burgos, and Guicciardini was selected on the 17th of October, 1511. Upon the 19th of January following he started on his mission, his natural hesitation being overcome by his father, who pointed out to him what a great distinction it was for him to be employed in such a capacity at his age.

The year 1513 was marked by the grave events which followed the fall of the French in Italy after the victory of Ravenna, ten times more costly than a defeat, and on the 2d of September the Medici re-entered Florence in triumph. The Florentine Republic ceased to exist, and the only ambassador whose post was a permanent one was Jacopo Salviati, the resident Minister at the Vatican. Guicciardini asked to be recalled, and it was while waiting permission to demand a farewell audience of the King that he indited his "Ricordi autobiografici."

In October, 1513, he left Burgos for Florence, where he arrived on the 5th of January following, and in August of that year he was appointed one of the eight members of the *Balia*. His father had died

in the meanwhile, and the sad news was brought to him at Piacenza. After being for some time under suspicion, and having been refused all part in public affairs by Lorenzo de' Medici, Duke of Urbino, he succeeded in so completely allaying all distrust, that the latter, when starting on his campaign in Lombardy, appointed Guicciardini a member of the Council of Signori who were to act as regents during his two months' absence.

From this time forth he spent his whole life in the service of the Government, and in 1515 he was sent to Cortona out of compliment to Leo X., who stopped there on his way to meet François I., King of France, at Bologna. After this mission was over he was appointed Consistorial Advocate, and then Governor of Modena and Reggio, whence he was sent to Parma, and made Commissary General of the Papal army. During the war between François I. and Charles V., Guicciardini was employed to relieve the Milan exiles and to raise an army corps for the recovery of the duchy. An opportunity was afforded him of showing his abilities as a soldier, for the brother of Marshal Lautrec, who commanded the French, having tried to take Reggio by surprise, he forestalled the attack, and recalling Guido Rangone, who had been sent with his troops to Modena, frustrated the plan.

The two pontiffs who succeeded Leo X. confirmed him in his appointments, and Clement VII. made him President of the Romagna and Lieutenant-General

of the Pontifical army, with authority over the Duke of Urbino himself.

The entrance of the Constable de Bourbon into Rome, and the sack of the city by his troops, regarded as the greatest humiliation since the barbaric invasion, brought Guicciardini into disgrace, for Pope Clement VII., who was a prisoner in the mole of Hadrian, reproached him for not having staved off defeat. He accordingly withdrew into complete seclusion at Finocchieto, and wrote a Dialogue in which he confessed his errors and came to the conclusion that "human prudence is blind, and that we are in God's hands."

His disgrace was not of long duration. The Peace of Barcelona, signed by Clement VII. and Charles V., gave peace to Italy at the expense of Florence. Guicciardini was made Governor of Bologna, and at the Pope's death he took service under the Medici, urging Duke Alexander to crush the democratic element in the city. The dagger of Lorenzino, however, brought that prince's career to an early close, and the younger branch came to power with Cosimo I. Guicciardini, whose ambition grew by what it fed on, attempted to obtain a mastery over the young prince, but the latter, wily, like most of his race, availed himself of Guicciardini's advice to get rid of his enemies, and then cast him aside as a useless and possibly dangerous instrument.

Guicciardini withdrew in humiliation to his villa at

Arcetri, and it was there that he wrote his "History of Italy," dying, a year afterwards at the age of fifty-seven (May 27, 1540).

This history is his greatest work, and though the merits of it have been appraised in very different terms, M. Thiers, in his "History of the Consulate and the Empire," says of him that "he has related the events of his day, nearly all of which came under his own observation, with such a graphic pen, and with such profound judgment, that his history deserves a place among the most enduring monuments of human genius."

There are, however, many imperfections in his works, for if he is superior to Machiavelli as regards profundity of judgment and eloquence, he is inferior to him as regards the arrangement and style of writing. Like Machiavelli, he has left "Discourses on the First Decade of Livy," and he also wrote "Discourses upon the Changes and Reforms of the Governments of Florence," in which he displayed political sagacity of the highest kind.

His *Carteggio*, or collection of correspondence during his mission to Spain, his governorship of Modena, Parma, and Reggio, and his presidency of the Romagna; is remarkable for the profundity of judgment to which it testifies. He was Republican in theory, and to judge by his writings possessed a filial affection for Florence that caused his heart to bleed for her while she was in the hands of the stranger. He



cordially detested the priesthood and its influence, but by a singular anomaly he was the friend of princes and tyrants, and while denouncing the priests as impostors, he was the willing servitor of pontiffs. His political conduct was at total variance with his doctrines, and we must infer that he was consumed by ambition and the love of power. One of his dreams was an Italian federation under the supremacy of Florence, and Machiavelli, with his keen insight into the future, had also anticipated the now realized unity of the Peninsula. Francesco Guicciardini left no children, but he had a brother—Lodovico—who settled at Antwerp, where he married and had a son, also named Lodovico, who wrote the history of the Netherlands.

This Lodovico died in 1589, and his works, written in Italian, have been translated into German, Flemish, and French, among them being a "Description of the Netherlands," and "Commentaries upon the Events of Europe, and of the Netherlands in Particular, from 1529 to 1560." He had not the keen vision of his uncle, but his works are regarded as standard ones by the Dutch.

#### GALILEO.

(1564-1641.)

Vincenzo Galilei and Julia Ammanati of Pistoja in Tuscany, were the parents of Galileo Galilei, who was born at Pisa on the 15th of February, 1564. His introduction to science was through poetry, music,

and the plastic arts, but when he had once begun to study science he regarded the fine arts as no more than a relaxation from arduous labor. His father being anxious that he should become a doctor, he matriculated at the University of Pisa in 1581, and attended the medical lectures of Andrea Cesalpino, but having been accidentally led to study mathematics he acquired such proficiency in that science that in 1589 he was appointed professor at Pisa. Private misunderstandings induced him, however, to remove to Padua, where during eighteen years he filled the chair of astronomical sciences. Florence, in the meanwhile, was very anxious to secure his services, and Cosimo II. appointed him his philosopher and mathematician, supplying him with ample means for devoting himself to the speculative inquiries and costly experiments which his researches necessitated.

His astronomical studies involved him in persecution and suffering, for in propagating the system of Copernicus the theologians accused him of teaching doctrines opposed to the Bible, and a Florentine monk hurled against him from the pulpit the passage from the Acts of the Apostles, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" The noise of all this travelled from Florence to Rome, and the Grand Duke, who was obliged to show deference to the Vatican, advised Galileo to appear before the Inquisition and defend himself against such a false accusation. He arrived at Rome in 1615, but in spite of

the ability with which he argued that his doctrines were orthodox, he made no impression upon the tribunal, which had made up its mind to condemn him. He was, however, allowed to go free upon condition that he did not teach the doctrine of Copernicus, and it was subsequent to this that he wrote his "Dialogues," and submitted them to the censorship of the Vatican, obtaining the official sanction and printing them in 1632.

After an interval of seventeen years, from the time when Cardinal Bellarmino, in the name of the Pontiff, had forbidden him to propagate his doctrines, he was again summoned to appear before the Inquisition. He was not treated as an ordinary prisoner, and the Grand Duke, full of solicitude for his welfare, did all that he could to shield him from the possible consequences of the dreaded summons. He was lodged at first with the procurator-fiscal of the Holy Office, and then he was allowed to reside at the house of the Florentine ambassador, while at last he was permitted to go about the city upon parole. The trial lasted two months, and it ended in a retractation, followed by a sentence of imprisonment in the dungeons of the Inquisition. Urban VIII., however, commuted the punishment, and allowed him to live first at the Villa Medici, afterwards in the archbishop's palace at Siena, and finally in his own villa at Arcetri, near Florence. In 1637 he became blind, but he continued to give lessons to the many devoted students of science whom

he had gathered around him, seated on the terrace of the villa where he had spent so many nights watching the heavens. Fully resigned to his lot, and venerated as much for his misfortunes as for his genius, he received frequent visits from Cardinal Leopold and the Grand Duke Ferdinand. He died on the 18th of January, 1641, aged seventy-seven, and his body was interred with great pomp in Santa Croce, the monument erected to his memory being close to that of Michael Angelo. He was the inventor of the microscope, the thermometer, the sector, and the small hydrostatic balance. It has been denied that he invented the telescope, but in my previous work, "Venice," I have given the official report of the sitting of the Senate at which he made the experiments for which he received a pension from the Republic, already much indebted to him for his seventeen years' professorship at the University of Padua. The probability is, however, that he merely made a practical application of an invention due to Jacobus Mebius, an inhabitant of Holland, adapting the glasses made by the latter to tubes which enabled him to make astronomical observations. He also invented the pendulum, and in a letter to Lorenzo Redi, still extant, he explained how it might be adapted to clocks. His labors in the domain of astronomical science were almost boundless. He brought into clear relief the system of gravitation, explained the formation of the Milky Way, discovered the stars which accompany

Saturn, and having ascertained the existence of satellites to Jupiter, named them "Medici stars," and made a careful calculation of their periods. He was the first to discover the unevenness of the moon's surface, its diameter, and the great altitude of its mountains. He also pointed out the spots on the sun, and explained the character of them.

In physical science his researches were also very extensive, and he proved that a mote of straw and a piece of lead fall at an equal rate when the air is rarefied. The pneumatic machine was invented to prove this law of nature, and the demonstration was most convincing. He laid down the law as to the acceleration of weighty substances, and reduced to fixed and certain principles their descent along inclined planes. He devoted a great deal of time also to hydrostatics and to hydraulics, though the only treatise which he wrote about them is that comprised in some correspondence concerning the overflow of the river Bisenzio, near Florence.

In the course of a recent debate in the French Chamber of Deputies it was alleged that Galileo had never been persecuted, but Signor Domenico Berti has published an official report of his trial, with the documents preserved in the State archives at Rome.

After his first summons to Rome Galileo, as I said above, wrote the "Dialogue upon the two principal Systems of the World," those of Ptolemy and Copernicus, and this takes the form of a conversation in

which defunct personages, including one Salviati, a Florentine friend of Galileo's, discuss their own doctrines and those of their opponents, the conclusion (evidently dictated by fear of the Inquisition, which had acquitted him with a severe warning) being that it was best not to pronounce definitely as to the system of the world.

Three copies of the "Dialogues," which were printed at Florence, found their way to Rome, and being brought to the notice of Urban VIII., that pontiff manifested great displeasure, and summoned Galileo to appear a second time in Rome; failing which, "a doctor and a commissioner of the Holy Office would repair to Florence at his expense, have him arrested, and brought to Rome in chains." There can be no doubt that Galileo's courage gave way, and on June 22, 1633, he read his recantation in the church of Sta Maria Sopra Minerva. Three out of the ten judges, including the Pope's own nephew, abstained from signing the sentence, which, moreover, never received the Papal ratification.

The following is an authentic translation of the instructions for his trial:—"Galileo must be interrogated as to his intentions, under threat of torture *ac si sustinuerit*, be made to abjure at a plenary sitting of the Holy Office doctrines strongly tainted with heresy, condemned to a term of imprisonment at the pleasure of the Holy Congregation, and enjoined never at any future time, either by word or by writ-

ing, to say anything about the motion of the earth and the fixity of the sun, under pain of fresh punishment." It should be added that, notwithstanding all that has been written by Signor Berti, M. Mézières, and others, we have no certain proof as to whether or not Galileo was put to the torture; and M. Jules Loiseleur has recently argued, with much show of plausibility, that he was not. The words *ac si sustinuerit* may be used in either sense, for while one side applies them to the torture itself ("if he can bear it," argues Signor Berti), the partisans of Urban VIII. interpret them as meaning "if he persists."

The conclusion of the judgment runs: "And as it appeared to us that you had not spoken the whole truth, we, knowing your intention, have deemed it meet to make a rigorous examination of you (*rigorosum examen tui*), in which you have replied properly, leaving out of the question those things which you have confessed and those which have been deduced against you above relative to the said intention."

M. Loiseleur says that Galileo had not the stuff of a martyr in him, and that in all his answers he shows a spirit of ready submission. If so we must suppose that the famous exclamation, "E pur si muove," is only a legend; but whether we take the side of the Church or that of science, it is painful to think that this old man, whose life had been spent in the search after truth, should, when his frame was too weak to

endure physical torture, have undergone such moral torture as to repudiate the doctrines in which he had placed a lifelong faith.

OTTAVIO RINUCCINI.

(1550-1621.)

Ottavio bore a name which had already been made famous by Filippo Alamanno Rinuccini, who was one of the earliest academicians of the Ruccellai Gardens, and he claims the distinction of being one of the earliest composers of the recitative of the modern opera, or lyric poem. The name opera was not given until later, but in 1580, at the festivals to celebrate the marriage of Ferdinand, Grand Duke of Tuscany, with Princess Christine of Lorraine, he wrote the verses for five musical interludes, the subject being the victory of Apollo over the Python. In order to connect the various musical parts, composers went back to the melopœa of the ancients, and the name of "recital" is still given to it in Italy.

He made a further step forward in the "Pastoral of *Daphne*," which was represented in the Corsi Palace before the leading members of Florence society. He next wrote *Eurydice*, which he himself styled a "Tragedia per Musica," and this opera was given with great pomp and splendor at the marriage rejoicings of Henri IV. and Maria de' Medici.

Ottavio owed much to the patronage of this princess, who induced him to come to the French Court;



## ILLUSTRIOUS FLORENTINES.

but his new mode of life was so distasteful to him that he soon returned to Florence, where, in 1608, he wrote *Ariadne at Naxos* for the wedding of Gonzaga, Prince of Mantua, and the Infante Margaret of Savoy.

The form of these poems is perfect, and the verses go very well to music, while there is more passion and life in them than in the somewhat artificial compositions of Quinault.

Besides these lengthy works, Rinuccini composed some very clever Anacreontic odes in the Concetti style, and he was much appreciated in the best society of Florence for his ever-ready wit.

He was collecting his works, with the intention of dedicating them to Louis XIII. of France, at the time of his death, and his son, Piero Francesco, completed the task.

This brings to a close the list of the men who contributed the most to the propagation of the new ideas: for the seventeenth century belongs to the modern era, which cannot be treated of here. Moreover, the supremacy of Florence declined after the sixteenth century; and in the next chapter I shall speak of the art to which that supremacy was due.









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