

The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy

(Volume I)

by Jacob Burckhardt

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PART ONE THE STATE AS A WORK OF ART

Introduction

This work bears the title of an essay in the strictest sense of the word. No one is more conscious than the writer with what limited means and strength he has addressed himself to a task so arduous. And even if he could look with greater confidence upon his own researches, he would hardly thereby feel more assured of the approval of competent judges. To each eye, perhaps, the outlines of a given civilization present a different picture; and in treating of a civilization which is the mother of our own, and whose influence is still at work among us, it is unavoidable that individual judgement and feeling should tell every moment both on the writer and on the reader. In the wide ocean upon which we venture, the possible ways and directions are many; and the same studies which have served for this work might easily, in other hands, not only receive a wholly

different treatment and application, but lead also to essentially different conclusions. Such indeed is the importance of the subject that it still calls for fresh investigation, and may be studied with advantage from the most varied points of view. Meanwhile we are content if a patient hearing is granted us, and if this book be taken and judged as a whole. It is the most serious difficulty of the history of civilization that a great intellectual process must be broken up into single, and often into what seem arbitrary categories in order to be in any way intelligible. It was formerly our intention to fill up the gaps in this book by a special work on the 'Art of the Renaissance' an intention, however, which we have been able to fulfill only in part.

The struggle between the Popes and the Hohenstaufen left Italy in a political condition which differed essentially from that of other countries of the West. While in France, Spain and England the feudal system was so organized that, at the close of its existence, it was naturally transformed into a unified monarchy, and while in Germany it helped to

maintain, at least outwardly, the unity of the empire, Italy had shaken it off almost entirely. The Emperors of the fourteenth century, even in the most favourable case, were no longer received and respected as feudal lords, but as possible leaders and supporters of powers already in existence; while the Papacy, with its creatures and allies, was strong enough to hinder national unity in the future, but not strong enough itself to bring about that unity. Between the two lay a multitude of political units republics and despots in part of long standing, in part of recent origin, whose existence was founded simply on their power to maintain it. In them for the first time we detect the modern political spirit of Europe, surrendered freely to its own instincts. Often displaying the worst features of an unbridled egotism, outraging every right, and killing every germ of a healthier culture. But, wherever this vicious tendency is overcome or in any way compensated, a new fact appears in history the State as the outcome of reflection and calculation, the State as a work of art. This new life

displays itself in a hundred forms, both in the republican and in the despotic States, and determines their inward constitution, no less than their foreign policy. We shall limit ourselves to the consideration of the completer and more clearly defined type, which is offered by the despotic States.

The internal condition of the despotically governed States had a memorable counterpart in the Norman Empire of Lower Italy and Sicily, after its transformation by the Emperor Frederick II. Bred amid treason and peril in the neighbourhood of the Saracens, Frederick, the first ruler of the modern type who sat upon a throne, had early accustomed himself to a thoroughly objective treatment of affairs. His acquaintance with the internal condition and administration of the Saracenic States was close and intimate; and the mortal struggle in which he was engaged with the Papacy compelled him, no less than his adversaries, to bring into the field all the resources at his command. Frederick's measures are aimed at the complete destruction

of the feudal State, at the transformation of the people into a multitude destitute of will and of the means of resistance, but profitable in the utmost degree to the exchequer. He centralized, in a manner hitherto unknown in the West, the whole judicial and political administration. No office was henceforth to be filled by popular election, under penalty of the devastation of the offending district and of the enslavement of its inhabitants. The taxes, based on a comprehensive assessment, and distributed in accordance with Mohammedan usages, were collected by those cruel and vexatious methods without which, it is true, it is impossible to obtain any money from Orientals. Here, in short, we find, not a people, but simply a disciplined multitude of subjects; who were forbidden, for example, to marry out of the country without special permission, and under no circumstances were allowed to study abroad. The University of Naples was the first we know of to restrict the freedom of study, while the East, in these respects at all events, left its youth unfettered. It was after the examples of

Mohammedan rules that Frederick traded on his own account in all parts of the Mediterranean, reserving to himself the monopoly of many commodities, and restricting in various ways the commerce of his subjects. The Fatimite Caliphs, with all their esoteric unbelief, were, at least in their earlier history, tolerant of all the differences in the religious faith of their people; Frederick, on the other hand, crowned his system of government by a religious inquisition, which will seem the more reprehensible when we remember that in the persons of the heretics he was persecuting the representatives of a free municipal life. Lastly, the internal police, and the kernel of the army for foreign service, was composed of Saracens who had been brought over from Sicily to Nocera and Lucera men who were deaf to the cry of misery and careless of the ban of the Church. At a later period the subjects, by whom the use of weapons had long been forgotten, were passive witnesses of the fall of Manfred and of the seizure of the government by Charles of Anjou; the latter continued to use the system

which he found already at work.

At the side of the centralizing Emperor appeared a usurper of the most peculiar kind; his vicar and son in law, Ezzelino da Romano. He stands as the representative of no system of government or administration, for all his activity was wasted in struggles for supremacy in the eastern part of Upper Italy; but as a political type he was a figure of no less importance for the future than his imperial protector Frederick. The conquests and usurpations which had hitherto taken place in the Middle Ages rested on real or pretended inheritance and other such claims, or else were effected against unbelievers and excommunicated persons. Here for the first time the attempt was openly made to found a throne by wholesale murder and endless barbarities, by the adoption in short, of any means with a view to nothing but the end pursued. None of his successors, not even Cesare Borgia, rivalled the colossal guilt of Ezzelino; but the example once set was not forgotten, and his fall led to no return of justice among the nations and served as no

warning to future transgressors.

It was in vain at such a time that St. Thomas Aquinas, born subject of Frederick, set up the theory of a constitutional monarchy, in which the prince was to be supported by an upper house named by himself, and a representative body elected by the people. Such theories found no echo outside the lecture room, and Frederick and Ezzelino were and remain for Italy the great political phenomena of the thirteenth century. Their personality, already half legendary, forms the most important subject of 'The Hundred Old Tales,' whose original composition falls certainly within this century. In them Ezzelino is spoken of with the awe which all mighty impressions leave behind them. His person became the centre of a whole literature from the chronicle of eye witnesses to the half mythical tragedy of later poets.

Despots of the Fourteenth Century

The tyrannies, great and small, of the fourteenth century afford constant proof that examples such as these were not thrown away. Their misdeeds cried forth loudly and have been circumstantially told by historians. As States depending for existence on themselves alone, and scientifically organized with a view to this object, they present to us a higher interest than that of mere narrative.

The deliberate adaptation of means to ends, of which no prince out of Italy had at that time a conception, joined to almost absolute power within the limits of the State, produced among the despots both men and modes of life of a peculiar character. The chief secret of government in the hands of the prudent ruler lay in leaving the incidence of taxation as far as possible where he found it, or as he had first arranged it. The chief sources of income were: a land tax, based on a valuation; definite taxes on articles of consumption and duties on exported and imported goods:

together with the private fortune of the ruling house. The only possible increase was derived from the growth of business and of general prosperity. Loans, such as we find in the free cities, were here unknown; a well planned confiscation was held a preferable means of raising money, provided only that it left public credit unshaken an end attained, for example, by the truly Oriental practice of deposing and plundering the director of the finances.

Out of this income the expenses of the little court, of the bodyguard, of the mercenary troops, and of the public buildings were met, as well as of the buffoons and men of talent who belonged to the personal attendants of the prince. The illegitimacy of his rule isolated the tyrant and surrounded him with constant danger, the most honorable alliance which he could form was with intellectual merit, without regard to its origin. The liberality of the northern princes of the thirteenth century was confined to the knights, to the nobility which served and sang. It was otherwise with the Italian despot. With his thirst for fame

and his passion for monumental works, it was talent, not birth, which he needed. In the company of the poet and the scholar he felt himself in a new position, almost, indeed, in possession of a new legitimacy.

No prince was more famous in this respect than the ruler of Verona, Can Grande della Scala, who numbered among the illustrious exiles whom he entertained at his court representatives of the whole of Italy. The men of letters were not ungrateful. Petrarch, whose visits at the courts of such men have been so severely censured, sketched an ideal picture of a prince of the fourteenth century. He demands great things from his patron, the lord of Padua, but in a manner which shows that he holds him capable of them. "Thou must not be the master but the father of thy subjects, and must love them as thy children; yea, as members of thy body. Weapons, guards, and soldiers thou mayest employ against the enemy with thy subjects goodwill is sufficient. By citizens, of course, I mean those who love the existing order; for those who daily

desire change are rebels and traitors, and against such a stern justice may take its course.'

Here follows, worked out in detail, the purely modern fiction of the omnipotence of the State. The prince is to take everything into his charge, to maintain and restore churches and public buildings, to keep up the municipal police, to drain the marshes, to look after the supply of wine and corn; so to distribute the taxes that the people can recognize their necessity; he is to support the sick and the helpless, and to give his protection and society to distinguished scholars, on whom his fame in after ages will depend.

But whatever might be the brighter sides of the system, and the merits of individual rulers, yet the men of the fourteenth century were not without a more or less distinct consciousness of the brief and uncertain tenure of most of these despotisms. Inasmuch as political institutions like these are naturally secure in proportion to the size of the territory in which they exist, the larger principalities were

constantly tempted to swallow up the smaller. Whole hecatombs of petty rulers were sacrificed at this time to the Visconti alone. As a result of this outward danger an inward ferment was in ceaseless activity; and the effect of the situation on the character of the ruler was generally of the most sinister kind. Absolute power, with its temptations to luxury and unbridled selfishness, and the perils to which he was exposed from enemies and conspirators, turned him almost inevitably into a tyrant in the worst sense of the word. Well for him if he could trust his nearest relations! But where all was illegitimate, there could be no regular law of inheritance, either with regard to the succession or to the division of the ruler's property; and consequently the heir, if incompetent or a minor, was liable in the interest of the family itself to be supplanted by an uncle or cousin of more resolute character. The acknowledgment or exclusion of the bastards was a fruitful source of contest and most of these families in consequence were plagued with a crowd of discontented and vindictive kinsmen. This circumstance

gave rise to continual outbreaks of treason and to frightful scenes of domestic bloodshed. Sometimes the pretenders lived abroad in exile, like the Visconti, who practiced the fisherman's craft on the Lake of Garda, viewed the situation with patient indifference. When asked by a messenger of his rival when and how he thought of returning to Milan, he gave the reply, 'By the same means as those by which I was expelled, but not till his crimes have outweighed my own.' Sometimes, too, the despot was sacrificed by his relations, with the view of saving the family, to the public conscience which he had too grossly outraged. In a few cases the government was in the hands of the whole family, or at least the ruler was bound to take their advice; and here, too, the distribution of property and influence often led to bitter disputes.

The whole of this system excited the deep and persistent hatred of the Florentine writers of that epoch. Even the pomp and display with which the despot was perhaps less anxious to gratify his own vanity than to

impress the popular imagination, awakened their keenest sarcasm. Woe to an adventurer if he fell into their hands, like the upstart Doge Agnello of Pisa , who used to ride out with a golden scepter, and show himself at the window of his house, 'as relics are shown,' reclining on embroidered drapery and cushions, served like a pope or emperor, by kneeling attendants. More often, however, the old Florentines speak on this subject in a tone of lofty seriousness. Dante saw and characterized well the vulgarity and commonplace which marked the ambition of the new princes. 'What else mean their trumpets and their bells, their horns and their flutes, but "come, hangmen come, vultures!"' The castle of the tyrant, as pictured by the popular mind, is lofty and solitary, full of dungeons and listening tubes, the home of cruelty and misery. Misfortune is foretold to all who enter the service of the despot, who even becomes at last himself an object of pity: he must needs be the enemy of all good and honest men: he can trust no one and can read in the faces of his subjects the

expectation of his fall. 'As despotisms rise, grow, and are consolidated, so grows in their midst the hidden element which must produce their dissolution and ruin.' But the deepest ground of dislike has not been stated; Florence was then the scene of the richest development of human individuality, while for the despots no other individuality could be suffered to live and thrive but their own and that of their nearest dependents. The control of the individual was rigorously carried out, even down to the establishment of a system of passports.

The astrological superstitions and the religious unbelief of many of the tyrants gave, in the minds of their contemporaries, a peculiar color to this awful and God forsaken existence. When the last Carrara could no longer defend the walls and gates of the plague stricken Padua, hemmed in on all sides by the Venetians, the soldiers of the guard heard him cry to the devil 'to come and kill him.'

The most complete and instructive type of the tyranny of the fourteenth century is to be found unquestionably

among the Visconti of Milan, from the death of the Archbishop Giovanni onwards . The family likeness which shows itself between Bernabo and the worst of the Roman Emperors is unmistakable; the most important public object was the prince's boar hunting; whoever interfered with it was put to death with torture, the terrified people were forced to maintain 5,000 boar hounds, with strict responsibility for their health and safety. The taxes were extorted by every conceivable sort of compulsion; seven daughters of the prince received a dowry of 100,000 gold florins apiece; and an enormous treasure was collected. On the death of his wife an order was issued 'to the subjects' to share his grief, as once they had shared his joy, and to wear mourning for a year. The *_coup de main_* by which his nephew Giangaleazzo got him into his power one of those brilliant plots which make the heart of even late historians beat more quickly was strikingly characteristic of the man .

In Giangaleazzo that passion for the colossal which was common to most of the despots shows itself on the

largest scale. He undertook, at the cost of 300,000 golden florins, the construction of gigantic dikes, to divert in case of need the Mincio from Mantua and the Brenta from Padua, and thus to render these cities defenseless. It is not impossible, indeed, that he thought of draining away the lagoons of Venice. He founded that most wonderful of all convents, the Certosa of Pavia and the cathedral of Milan, 'which exceeds in size and splendor all the churches of Christendom.' The palace in Pavia, which his father Galeazzo began and which he himself finished, was probably by far the most magnificent of the princely dwellings of Europe. There he transferred his famous library, and the great collection of relics of the saints, in which he placed a peculiar faith. It would have been strange indeed if a prince of this character had not also cherished the highest ambitions in political matters. King Wenceslaus made him Duke ; he was hoping for nothing less than the Kingdom of Italy or the Imperial crown, when he fell ill and died. His whole territories are said to have

paid him in a single year, besides the regular contribution of 1,200,000 gold florins, no less than 800,000 more in extraordinary subsidies. After his death the dominions which he had brought together by every sort of violence fell to pieces: and for a time even the original nucleus could with difficulty be maintained by his successors. What might have become of his sons Giovanni Maria and Filippo Maria, had they lived in a different country and under other traditions, cannot be said. But, as heirs of their house, they inherited that monstrous capital of cruelty and cowardice which had been accumulated from generation to generation.

Giovanni Maria, too, is famed for his dogs, which were no longer, however, used for hunting but for tearing human bodies. Tradition has preserved their names, like those of the bears of Emperor Valentinian I. In May, 1409, when war was going on, and the starving populace cried to him in the streets, _Pace! Pace!_ he let loose his mercenaries upon them, and 200 lives were sacrificed;

under penalty of the gallows it was forbidden to utter the words *pace* and *guerra*, and the priests were ordered, instead of *_dona nobis pacem_*, to say *_tranquillitatem_*! At last a band of conspirators took advantage of the moment when Facino Cane, the chief Condotierre of the insane ruler, lay in at Pavia, and cut down Giovanni Maria in the church of San Gottardo at Milan; the dying Facino on the same day made his officers swear to stand by the heir Filippo Maria, whom he himself urged his wife to take for a second husband. His wife, Beatrice di Tenda, followed his advice. We shall have occasion to speak of Filippo Maria later on.

And in times like these Cola di Rienzi was dreaming of founding on the rickety enthusiasm of the corrupt population of Rome a new State which was to comprise all Italy. By the side of rulers such as those whom we have described, he seems no better than a poor deluded fool.

Despots of the Fifteenth Century

The despotisms of the fifteenth century show an altered character. Many of the less important tyrants, and some of the greater, like the Scala and the Carrara had disappeared, while the more powerful ones, aggrandized by conquest, had given to their systems each its characteristic development. Naples for example received a fresh and stronger impulse from the new Aragonese dynasty. A striking feature of this epoch is the attempt of the Condottieri to found independent dynasties of their own. Facts and the actual relations of things, apart from traditional estimates, are alone regarded; talent and audacity win the great prizes. The petty despots, to secure a trustworthy support, begin to enter the service of the larger States, and become themselves Condottieri, receiving in return for their services money and immunity for their misdeeds, if not an increase of territory. All, whether small or great, must exert themselves more, must act with greater

caution and calculation, and must learn to refrain from too wholesale barbarities; only so much wrong is permitted by public opinion as is necessary for the end in view, and this the impartial bystander certainly finds no fault with. No trace is here visible of that half religious loyalty by which the legitimate princes of the West were supported; personal popularity is the nearest approach we can find to it. Talent and calculation are the only means of advancement. A character like that of Charles the Bold, which wore itself out in the passionate pursuit of impracticable ends, was a riddle to the Italians. 'The Swiss were only peasants, and if they were all killed, that would be no satisfaction for the Burgundian nobles who might fall in the war. If the Duke got possession of all Switzerland without a struggle, his income would not be 5,000 ducats the greater.' The mediaeval features in the character of Charles, his chivalrous aspirations and ideals, had long become unintelligible to the Italians. The diplomatists of the South. when they saw him strike his officers and yet keep them in

his service, when he maltreated his troops to punish them for a defeat, and then threw the blame on his counsellors in the presence of the same troops, gave him up for lost. Louis XI, on the other hand, whose policy surpasses that of the Italian princes in their own style, and who was an avowed admirer of Francesco Sforza, must be placed in all that regards culture and refinement far below these rulers.

Good and evil lie strangely mixed together in the Italian States of the fifteenth century. The personality of the ruler is so highly developed, often of such deep significance, and so characteristic of the conditions and needs of the time, that to form an adequate moral judgement on it is no easy task.

The foundation of the system was and remained illegitimate, and nothing could remove the curse which rested upon it. The imperial approval or investiture made no change in the matter, since the people attached little weight to the fact that the despot had bought a piece of parchment somewhere in foreign countries, or from some

stranger passing through his territory. If the Emperor had been good for anything, so ran the logic of uncritical common sense, he would never have let the tyrant rise at all. Since the Roman expedition of Charles IV, the emperors had done nothing more in Italy than sanction a tyranny which had arisen without their help; they could give it no other practical authority than what might flow from an imperial charter. The whole conduct of Charles in Italy was a scandalous political comedy. Matteo Villani relates how the Visconti escorted him round their territory, and at last out of it; how he went about like a hawker selling his wares for money; what a mean appearance he made in Rome, and how at the end, without even drawing the sword, he returned with replenished coffers across the Alps. Sigismund came, on the first occasion at least, with the good intention of persuading John XXIII to take part in his council; it was on that journey, when Pope and Emperor were gazing from the lofty tower of Cremona on the panorama of Lombardy, that their host, the tyrant Gabrino

Fondolo, was seized with the desire to throw them both over. On his second visit Sigismund came as a mere adventurer; for more than half a year he remained shut up in Siena, like a debtor in gaol, and only with difficulty, and at a later period, succeeded in being crowned in Rome. And what can be thought of Frederick III? His journeys to Italy have the air of holiday trips or pleasure tours made at the expense of those who wanted him to confirm their prerogatives, or whose vanity is flattered to entertain an emperor. The latter was the case with Alfonso of Naples, who paid 150,000 florins for the honour of an imperial visit. At Ferrara, on his second return from Rome, Frederick spent a whole day without leaving his chamber, distributing no less than eighty titles; he created knights, counts, doctors, notaries counts, indeed, of different degrees, as, for instance, counts palatine, counts with the right to create doctors up to the number of five, counts with the rights to legitimize bastards, to appoint notaries, and so forth. The Chancellor, however, expected in return for the patents in

question a gratuity which was thought excessive at Ferrara. The opinion of Borso, himself created Duke of Modena and Reggio in return for an annual payment of 4,000 gold florins, when his imperial patron was distributing titles and diplomas to all the little court, is not mentioned. The humanists, then the chief spokesmen of the age, were divided in opinion according to their personal interests, while the Emperor was greeted by some of them with the conventional acclamations of the poets of imperial Rome. Poggio confessed that he no longer knew what the coronation meant: in the old times only the victorious Emperor was crowned, and then he was crowned with laurel.

With Maximilian I begins not only the general intervention of foreign nations, but a new imperial policy with regard to Italy. The first step the investiture of Lodovico il Moro with the duchy of Milan and the exclusion of his unhappy nephew was not of a kind to bear good fruits. According to the modern theory of intervention

when two parties are tearing a country to pieces, a third may step in and take its share, and on this principle the empire acted. But right and justice could be involved no longer. When Louis XI was expected in Genoa, and the imperial eagle was removed from the hall of the ducal palace and replaced by painted lilies, the historian Senarega asked what, after all, was the meaning of the eagle which so many revolutions had spared, and what claims the empire had upon Genoa. No one knew more about the matter than the old phrase that Genoa was a *_camera imperii_*. In fact, nobody in Italy could give a clear answer to any such questions. At length when Charles V held Spain and the empire together, he was able by means of Spanish forces to make good imperial claims: but it is notorious that what he thereby gained turned to the profit, not of the empire, but of the Spanish monarchy.

Closely connected with the political illegitimacy of the dynasties of the fifteenth century was the public indifference to legitimate birth, which to foreigners for

example, to Commynes appeared so remarkable. The two things went naturally together. In northern countries, as in Burgundy, the illegitimate offspring were provided for by a distinct class of appanages, such as bishoprics and the like: in Portugal an illegitimate line maintained itself on the throne only by constant effort; in Italy, on the contrary, there no longer existed a princely house where even in the direct line of descent, bastards were not patiently tolerated. The Aragonese monarchs of Naples belonged to the illegitimate line, Aragon itself falling to the lot of the brother of Alfonso I. The great Federigo of Urbino was, perhaps, no Montefeltro at all. When Pius II was on his way to the Congress of Mantua, eight bastards of the house of Este rode to meet him at Ferrara, among them the reigning duke Borso himself and two illegitimate sons of his illegitimate brother and predecessor Lionello. The latter had also had a lawful wife, herself an illegitimate daughter of Alfonso I of Naples by an African woman. The bastards were often admitted to the succession where the lawful

children were minors and the dangers of the situation were pressing; and a rule of seniority became recognized, which took no account of pure or impure birth. The fitness of the individual, his worth and capacity, were of more weight than all the laws and usages which prevailed elsewhere in the West. It was the age, indeed, in which the sons of the Popes were founding dynasties. In the sixteenth century, through the influence of foreign ideas and of the counter reformation which then began, the whole question was judged more strictly: Varchi discovers that the succession of the legitimate children 'is ordered by reason, and is the will of heaven from eternity.' Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici founded his claim to the lordship of Florence on the fact that he was perhaps the fruit of a lawful marriage, and at all events son of a gentlewoman, and not, like Duke Alessandro, of a servant girl. At this time began those morganatic marriages of affection which in the fifteenth century, on grounds either of policy or morality, would have had no meaning at all.

But the highest and the most admired form of illegitimacy in the fifteenth century was presented by the Condottiere, who whatever may have been his origin, raised himself to the position of an independent ruler. At bottom, the occupation of Lower Italy by the Normans in the eleventh century was of this character. Such attempts now began to keep the peninsula in a constant ferment.

It was possible for a Condottiere to obtain the lordship of a district even without usurpation, in the case when his employer, through want of money or troops, provided for him in this way; under any circumstances the Condottiere, even when he dismissed for the time the greater part of his forces, needed a safe place where he could establish his winter quarters, and lay up his stores and provisions. The first example of a captain thus portioned is John Hawkwood, who was invested by Gregory XI with the lordship of Bagnacavallo and Cotignola. When with Alberigo da Barbiano Italian armies and leaders appeared upon the scene, the chances of founding a principality, or of

increasing one already acquired, became more frequent. The first great bacchanalian outbreak of military ambition took place in the duchy of Milan after the death of Giangaleazzo . The policy of his two sons was chiefly aimed at the destruction of the new despotisms founded by the Condottieri; and from the greatest of them, Facino Cane, the house of Visconti inherited, together with his widow, a long list of cities, and 400,000 golden florins, not to speak of the soldiers of her first husband whom Beatrice di Tenda brought with her. From henceforth that thoroughly immoral relation between the governments and their Condottieri, which is characteristic of the fifteenth century, became more and more common. An old story one of those which are true and not true, everywhere and nowhere describes it as follows: The citizens of a certain town had once an officer in their service who had freed them from foreign aggression; daily they took counsel how to recompense him, and concluded that no reward in their power was great enough, not even if they made him lord of the city. At last

one of them rose and said, 'Let us kill him and then worship him as our patron saint.' And so they did, following the example set the Roman senate with Romulus. In fact the Condottieri had reason to fear none so much as their employers: if they were successful, they became dangerous, and were put out of the way like Roberto Malatesta just after the victory he had won for Sixtus IV ; if they failed, the vengeance of the Venetians on Carmagnola showed to what risks they were exposed . It is characteristic of the moral aspect of the situation that the Condottieri had often to give their wives and children as hostages, and notwithstanding this, neither felt nor inspired confidence. They must have been heroes of abnegation, natures like Belisarius himself, not to be cankered by hatred and bitterness; only the most perfect goodness could save them from the most monstrous iniquity. No wonder then if we find them full of contempt for all sacred things, cruel and treacherous to their fellows men who cared nothing whether or no they died under the ban of the Church. At the

same time, and through the force of the same conditions, the genius and capacity of many among them attained the highest conceivable development, and won for them the admiring devotion of their followers; their armies are the first in modern history in which the personal credit of the leader is the one moving power. A brilliant example is shown in the life of Francesco Sforza; no prejudice of birth could prevent him from winning and turning to account when he needed it a boundless devotion from each individual with whom he had to deal; it happened more than once that his enemies laid down their arms at the sight of him, greeting him reverently with uncovered heads, each honoring in him 'the common father of the men at arms.' The race of the Sforza has this special interest that from the very beginning of its history we seem able to trace its endeavors after the crown. The foundation of its fortune lay in the remarkable fruitfulness of the family; Francesco's father, Jacopo, himself a celebrated man, had twenty brothers and sisters, all brought up roughly at Cotignola,

near Faenza, amid the perils of one of the endless Romagnole 'vendette' between their own house and that of the Pasolini. The family dwelling was a mere arsenal and fortress; the mother and daughters were as warlike as their kinsmen. In his thirtieth year Jacopo ran away and fled to Panicale to the Papal Condottiere Boldrino the man who even in death continued to lead his troops, the word of order being given from the bannered tent in which the embalmed body lay, till at last a fit leader was found to succeed him. Jacopo, when he had at length made himself a name in the service of different Condottieri, sent for his relations, and obtained through them the same advantages that a prince derives from a numerous dynasty. It was these relations who kept the army together when he lay a captive in the Castel dell'Uovo at Naples; his sister took the royal envoys prisoners with her own hands, and saved him by this reprisal from death. It was an indication of the breadth and the range of his plans that in monetary affairs Jacopo was thoroughly trustworthy: even in his defeats he

consequently found credit with the bankers. He habitually protected the peasants against the license of his troops, and reluctantly destroyed or injured a conquered city. He gave his well known mistress, Lucia, the mother of Francesco, in marriage to another, in order to be free for a princely alliance. Even the marriages of his relations were arranged on a definite plan. He kept clear of the impious and profligate life of his contemporaries, and brought up his son Francesco to the three rules: 'Let other men's wives alone; strike none of your followers, or, if you do, send the injured man far away; don't ride a hard mouthed horse, or one that drops his shoe.' But his chief source of influence lay in the qualities, if not of a great general, at least of a great soldier. His frame was powerful, and developed by every kind of exercise; his peasant's face and frank manners won general popularity; his memory was marvelous, and after the lapse of years could recall the names of his followers, the number of their horses, and the amount of their pay. His education was purely Italian: he devoted his leisure to the study of

history, and had Greek and Latin authors translated for his use. Francesco, his still more famous son, set his mind from the first on founding a powerful State, and through brilliant generalship and a faithlessness which hesitated at nothing, got possession of the great city of Milan .

His example was contagious. Aeneas Sylvius wrote about this time: 'In our change loving Italy, where nothing stands firm, and where no ancient dynasty exists, a servant can easily become a king.' One man in particular, who styles himself 'the man of fortune,' filled the imagination of the whole country: Giacomo Piccinino, the son of Niccolo;. It was a burning question of the day if he, too, would succeed in founding a princely house. The greater States had an obvious interest in hindering it, and even Francesco Sforza thought it would be all the better if the list of self made sovereigns were not enlarged. But the troops and captains sent against him, at the time, for instance, when he was aiming at the lordship of Siena, recognized their interest in supporting him: 'If it were all over with him, we

should have to go back and plough our fields.' Even while besieging him at Orbetello, they supplied him with provisions: and he got out of his straits with honour. But at last fate overtook him. All Italy was betting on the result, when after a visit to Sforza at Milan, he went to King Ferrante at Naples. In spite of the pledges given, and of his high connections, he was murdered in the Castel Nuovo. Even the Condottieri who had obtained their dominions by inheritance, never felt themselves safe. When Roberto Malatesta and Federigo of Urbino died on the same day, the one at Rome, the other at Bologna, it was found that each had recommended his State to the care of the other. Against a class of men who themselves stuck at nothing, everything was held to be permissible. Francesco Sforza, when quite young, had married a rich Calabrian heiress, Polissella Ruffo, Countess of Montalto, who bore him a daughter; an aunt poisoned both mother and child, and seized the inheritance.

From the death of Piccinino onwards, the foundations

of new States by the Condottieri became a scandal not to be tolerated. The four great Powers, Naples, Milan, the Papacy, and Venice, formed among themselves a political equilibrium which refused to allow of any disturbance. In the States of the Church, which swarmed with petty tyrants, who in part were, or had been, Condottieri, the nephews of the Popes, since the time of Sixtus IV, monopolized the right to all such undertakings. But at the first sign of a political crisis, the soldiers of fortune appeared again upon the scene. Under the wretched administration of Innocent VIII it was near happening that a certain Boccacino, who had formerly served in the Burgundian army, gave himself and the town of Osimo, of which he was master, up to the Turkish forces; fortunately, through the intervention of Lorenzo the Magnificent, he proved willing to be paid off, and took himself away. In the year 1495, when the wars of Charles VIII had turned Italy upside down, the Condottiere Vidovero, of Brescia, made trial of his strength; he had already seized the town of Cesena and murdered many of

the nobles and the burghers; but the citadel held out, and he was forced to withdraw. He then, at the head of a band lent him by another scoundrel, Pandolfo Malatesta of Rimini, son of the Roberto already spoken of, and Venetian Condottiere, wrested the town of Castelnovo from the Archbishop of Ravenna. The Venetians, fearing that worse would follow, and urged also by the Pope, ordered Pandolfo, 'with the kindest intentions,' to take an opportunity of arresting his good friend: the arrest was made, though 'with great regret,' whereupon the order came to bring the prisoner to the gallows. Pandolfo was considerate enough to strangle him in prison, and then show his corpse to the people. The last notable example of such usurpers is the famous Castellan of Musso, who during the confusion in the Milanese territory which followed the battle of Pavia , improvised a sovereignty on the Lake of Como.

The Smaller Despotisms

It may be said in general of the despotisms of the fifteenth century that the greatest crimes are most frequent in the smallest States. In these, where the family was numerous and all the members wished to live in a manner befitting their rank, disputes respecting the inheritance were unavoidable. Bernardo Varano of Camerino put two of his brothers to death, wishing to divide their property among his sons. Where the ruler of a single town was distinguished by a wise, moderate, and humane government, and by zeal for intellectual culture, he was generally a member of some great family, or politically expedients, which gives so great an interest to the other States is what we find least of all at Rome, since here the spiritual power could constantly conceal or supply the defects of the temporal. And what fiery trials did this State undergo in the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century, when the Papacy was led captive to Avignon! All, at first, was

thrown into confusion; but the Pope had money, troops, and a great statesman and general, the Spaniard Albornoz, who again brought the ecclesiastical State into complete subjection. The danger of a final dissolution was still greater at the time of the schism, when neither the Roman nor the French Pope was rich enough to reconquer the newly lost State; but this was done under Martin V, after the unity of the Church was restored, and done again under Eugenius IV, when the same danger was renewed. But the ecclesiastical State was and remained a thorough anomaly among the powers of Italy; in and near Rome itself, the Papacy was defied by the great families of the Colonna, Orsini, Savelli and Anguillara; in Umbria, in the Marches, and in Romagna, those civic republics had almost ceased to exist, for whose devotion the Papacy had shown so little gratitude; their place had been taken by a crowd of princely dynasties, great or small, whose loyalty and obedience signified little. As self dependent powers, standing on their own merits, they have an interest of their own; and from

this point of view the most important of them have already been discussed.

Nevertheless, a few general remarks on the Papacy can hardly be dispensed with. New and strange perils and trials came upon it in the course of the fifteenth century, as the political spirit of the nation began to lay hold upon it on various sides, and to draw it within the sphere of its action. The least of these dangers came from the populace or from abroad; the most serious had their ground in the characters of the Popes themselves.

Let us, for this moment, leave out of consideration the countries beyond the Alps. At the time when the Papacy was exposed to mortal danger in Italy, it neither received nor could receive the slightest assistance either from France, then under Louis XI, or from England, distracted by the Wars of the Roses, or from the then disorganized Spanish monarchy, or from Germany, but lately betrayed at the Council of Basle. In Italy itself there was a certain number of instructed and even uninstructed people whose national

vanity was flattered by the Italian character of the Papacy; the personal interests of very many depended on its having and retaining this character; and vast masses of the people still believed in the virtue of the Papal blessing and consecration; among them notorious transgressors like Vitellozzo Vitelli, who still prayed to be absolved by Alexander VI, when the Pope's son had him strangled. But all these grounds of sympathy put together would not have sufficed to save the Papacy from its enemies, had the latter been really in earnest, and had they known how to take advantage of the envy and hatred with which the institution was regarded.

And at the very time when the prospect of help from without was so small, the most dangerous symptoms appeared within the Papacy itself. Living as it now did, and acting in the spirit of the secular Italian principalities, it was compelled to go through the same dark experiences as they; but its own exceptional nature gave a peculiar color to the shadows.

As far as the city of Rome itself is concerned, small account was taken of its internal agitations, so many were the Popes who had returned after being expelled by popular tumult, and so greatly did the presence of the Curia minister to the interests of the Roman people. But Rome not only displayed at times a specific anti papal radicalism, but in the most serious plots which were then contrived, gave proof of the working of unseen hands from without. It was so in the case of the conspiracy of Stefano Porcari against Nicholas V , the very Pope who had done most for the prosperity of the city. Porcari aimed at the complete overthrow of the papal authority, and had distinguished accomplices, who, though their names are not handed down to us, are certainly to be looked for among the Italian governments of the time. Under the pontificate of the same man, Lorenzo Valla concluded his famous declamation against the gift of Constantine with the wish for the speedy secularization of the States of the Church.

The Catilinarian gang with which Pius II had to

avowed with equal frankness their resolution to overthrow the government of the priests, and its leader, Tiburzio, threw the blame on the soothsayers, who had fixed the accomplishment of his wishes for this very year. Several of the chief men of Rome, the Prince of Taranto, and the Condottiere Jacopo Piccinino, were accomplices and supporters of Tiburzio. Indeed, when we think of the booty which was accumulated in the palaces of wealthy prelates the conspirators had the Cardinal of Aquileia especially in view we are surprised that, in an almost unguarded city, such attempts were not more frequent and more successful. It was not without reason that Pius II preferred to reside anywhere rather than in Rome, and even Paul II was exposed to no small anxiety through a plot formed by some discharged abbreviators, who, under the command of Platina, besieged the Vatican for twenty days. The Papacy must sooner or later have fallen a victim to such enterprises, if it had not stamped out the aristocratic factions under whose protection these bands of robbers grew to a head.

This task was undertaken by the terrible Sixtus IV. He was the first Pope who had Rome and the neighbourhood thoroughly under his control, especially after his successful attack on the House of Colonna, and consequently, both in his Italian policy and in the internal affairs of the Church, he could venture to act with a defiant audacity, and to set at nought the complaints and threats to summon a council which arose from all parts of Europe. He supplied himself with the necessary funds by simony, which suddenly grew to unheard of proportions, and which extended from the appointment of cardinals down to the granting of the smallest favours. Sixtus himself had not obtained the papal dignity without recourse to the same means.

A corruption so universal might sooner or later bring disastrous consequences on the Holy See, but they lay in the uncertain future. It was otherwise with nepotism, which threatened at one time to destroy the Papacy altogether. Of all the 'nipoti,' Cardinal Pietro Riario enjoyed at first the chief and almost exclusive favour of Sixtus. He soon drew

upon him the eyes of all Italy, partly by the fabulous luxury of his life, partly through the reports which were current of his irreligion and his political plans. He bargained with Duke Galeazzo Maria of Milan , that the latter should become King of Lombardy, and then aid him with money and troops to return to Rome and ascend the papal throne; Sixtus, it appears, would have voluntarily yielded to him. This plan, which, by making the Papacy hereditary, would have ended in the secularization of the papal State, failed through the sudden death of Pietro. The second 'nipote,' Girolamo Riario, remained a layman, and did not seek the Pontificate. From this time the 'nipoti,' by their endeavors to found principalities for themselves, became a new source of confusion to Italy. It had already happened that the Popes tried to make good their feudal claims on Naples in favour of their relatives, but since the failure of Calixtus III. such a scheme was no longer practicable, and Girolamo Riario, after the attempt to conquer Florence had failed, was forced to content himself with founding a State within

the limits of the papal dominions themselves. This was in so far justifiable as Romagna, with its princes and civic despots, threatened to shake off the papal supremacy altogether, and ran the risk of shortly falling a prey to Sforza or the Venetians, when Rome interfered to prevent it. But who, at times and in circumstances like these, could guarantee the continued obedience of 'nipoti' and their descendants, now turned into sovereign rulers, to Popes with whom they had no further concern? Even in his lifetime the Pope was not always sure of his own son or nephew, and the temptation was strong to expel the 'nipote' of a predecessor and replace him by one of his own. The reaction of the whole system on the Papacy itself was of the most serious character; all means of compulsion, whether temporal or spiritual, were used without scruple for the most questionable ends, and to these all the other objects of the Apostolic See were made subordinate. And when they were attained, at whatever cost of revolutions and proscriptions, a dynasty was founded which had no

stronger interest than the destruction of the Papacy.

At the death of Sixtus, Girolamo was only able to maintain himself in his usurped principality of Forli and Imola by the utmost exertions of his own, and by the aid of the House of Sforza, to which his wife belonged. In the conclave which followed the death of Sixtus that in which Innocent VIII was elected an incident occurred which seemed to furnish the Papacy with a new external guarantee. Two cardinals, who, at the same time, were princes of ruling houses, Giovanni d'Aragona, son of King Ferrante, and Ascanio Sforza, brother of Lodovico il Moro, sold their votes with shameless effrontery; so that, at any rate, the ruling houses of Naples and Milan became interested, by their participation in the booty, in the continuance of the papal system. Once again, in the following conclave, when all the cardinals but five sold themselves, Ascanio received enormous sums in bribes, not without cherishing the hope that at the next election he would himself be the favored candidate.

Lorenzo the Magnificent, on his part, was anxious that the House of Medici should not be sent away with empty hands. He married his daughter Maddalena to the son of the new Pope the first who publicly acknowledged his children Franceschetto Cibo, and expected not only favours of all kinds for his own son, Cardinal Giovanni, afterwards Leo X, but also the rapid promotion of his son in law. But with respect to the latter, he demanded impossibilities. Under Innocent VIII there was no opportunity for the audacious nepotism by which States had been founded, since Franceschetto himself was a poor creature who, like his father the Pope, sought power only for the lowest purpose of all the acquisition and accumulation of money. The manner, however, in which father and son practiced this occupation must have led sooner or later to a final catastrophe the dissolution of the State. If Sixtus had filled his treasury by the sale of spiritual dignities and favours, Innocent and his son, for their part, established an office for the sale of secular favours, in which pardons for murder

and manslaughter were sold for large sums of money. Out of every fine 150 ducats were paid into the papal exchequer, and what was over to Franceschetto. Rome, during the latter part of this pontificate, swarmed with licensed and unlicensed assassins; the factions, which Sixtus had begun to put down, were again as active as ever; the Pope, well guarded in the Vatican, was satisfied with now and then laying a trap, in which a wealthy misdoer was occasionally caught. For Franceschetto the chief point was to know by what means, when the Pope died, he could escape with well filled coffers. He betrayed himself at last, on the occasion of a false report of his father's death; he endeavored to carry off all the money in the papal treasury, and when this proved impossible, insisted that, at all events, the Turkish prince, Djem, should go with him, and serve as a living capital, to be advantageously disposed of, perhaps to Ferrante of Naples. It is hard to estimate the political possibilities of remote periods, but we cannot help asking ourselves the question if Rome could have survived two or

three pontificates of this kind. Also with reference to the believing countries of Europe, it was imprudent to let matters go so far that not only travellers and pilgrims, but a whole embassy of Maximilian, King of the Romans, were stripped to their shirts in the neighbourhood of Rome, and that envoys had constantly to turn back without setting foot within the city.

Such a condition of things was incompatible with the conception of power and its pleasures which inspired the gifted Alexander VI, and the first event that happened was the restoration, at least provisionally, of public order, and the punctual payment of every salary.

Strictly speaking, as we are now discussing phases of Italian civilization, this pontificate might be passed over, since the Borgias are no more Italian than the House of Naples. Alexander spoke Spanish in public with Cesare; Lucrezia, at her entrance to Ferrara, where she wore a Spanish costume, was sung to by Spanish buffoons; their confidential servants consisted of Spaniards, as did also the

most ill famed company of the troops of Cesare in the war of 1500; and even his hangman, Don Micheletto, and his poisoner, Sebastiano Pinzon Cremonese, seem to have been of the same nation. Among his other achievements, Cesare, in true Spanish fashion, killed, according to the rules of the craft, six wild bulls in an enclosed court. But the Roman corruption, which seemed to culminate in this family, was already far advanced when they came to the city.

What they were and what they did has been often and fully described. Their immediate purpose, which, in fact, they attained, was the complete subjugation of the pontifical State. All the petty despots, who were mostly more or less refractory vassals of the Church, were expelled or destroyed; and in Rome itself the two great factions were annihilated, the so called Guelph Orsini as well as the so called Ghibelline Colonna. But the means employed were of so frightful a character that they must certainly have ended in the ruin of the Papacy, had not the contemporaneous death of both father and son by poison

suddenly intervened to alter the whole aspect of the situation. The moral indignation of Christendom was certainly no great source of danger to Alexander; at home he was strong enough to extort terror and obedience; foreign rulers were won over to his side, and Louis XII even aided him to the utmost of his power. The mass of the people throughout Europe had hardly a conception of what was passing in Central Italy. The only moment which was really fraught with danger when Charles VIII was in Italy went by with unexpected fortune, and even then it was not the Papacy as such that was in peril, but Alexander, who risked being supplanted by a more respectable Pope. The great, permanent, and increasing danger for the Papacy lay in Alexander himself, and, above all, in his son Cesare Borgia.

In the nature of the father, ambition, avarice, and sensuality were combined with strong and brilliant qualities. All the pleasures of power and luxury he granted himself from the first day of his pontificate in the fullest measure.

In the choice of means to this end he was wholly without scruple; it was known at once that he would more than compensate himself for the sacrifices which his election had involved, and that the seller would far exceed the simony of the buyer. It must be remembered that the vice chancellorship and other offices which Alexander had formerly held had taught him to know better and turn to more practical account the various sources of revenue than any other member of the Curia. As early as 1494, a Carmelite, Adam of Genoa, who had preached at Rome against simony, was found murdered in his bed with twenty wounds. Hardly a single cardinal was appointed without the payment of enormous sums of money.

But when the Pope in course of time fell under the influence of his son Cesare Borgia, his violent measures assumed that character of devilish wickedness which necessarily reacts upon the ends pursued. What was done in the struggle with the Roman nobles and with the tyrants of Romagna exceeded in faithlessness and barbarity even that

measure to which the Aragonese rulers of Naples had already accustomed the world; and the genius for deception was also greater. The manner in which Cesare isolated his father, murdering brother, brother in law, and other relations or courtiers, whenever their favour with the Pope or their position in any other respect became inconvenient to him, is literally appalling. Alexander was forced to acquiesce in the murder of his best loved son, the Duke of Gandia, since he himself lived in hourly dread of Cesare.

What were the final aims of the latter? Even in the last months of his tyranny, when he had murdered the Condottieri at Sinigaglia, and was to all intents and purposes master of the ecclesiastical State, those who stood near him gave the modest reply that the Duke merely wished to put down the factions and the despots, and all for the good of the Church only; that for himself he desired nothing more than the lordship of the Romagna, and that he had earned the gratitude of all the following Popes by ridding them of the Orsini and Colonna. But no one will

accept this as his ultimate design. The Pope Alexander himself, in his discussions with the Venetian ambassador, went further than this, when committing his son to the protection of Venice: 'I will see to it,' he said, that one day the Papacy shall belong either to him or to you.' Cesare indeed added that no one could become Pope without the consent of Venice, and for this end the Venetian cardinals had only to keep well together. Whether he referred to himself or not we are unable to say; at all events, the declaration of his father is sufficient to prove his designs on the pontifical throne. We further obtain from Lucrezia Borgia a certain amount of indirect evidence, in so far as certain passages in the poems of Ercole Strozza may be the echo of expressions which she as Duchess of Ferrara may easily have permitted herself to use. Here, too, Cesare's hopes of the Papacy are chiefly spoken of; but now and then a supremacy over all Italy is hinted at, and finally we are given to understand that as temporal ruler Cesare's projects were of the greatest, and that for their sake he had

formerly surrendered his cardinalate. In fact, there can be no doubt whatever that Cesare, whether chosen Pope or not after the death of Alexander, meant to keep possession of the pontifical State at any cost, and that this, after all the enormities he had committed, he could not as Pope have succeeded in doing permanently. He, if anybody, could have secularized the States of the Church, and he would have been forced to do so in order to keep them. Unless we are much deceived, this is the real reason of the secret sympathy with which Machiavelli treats the great criminal; from Cesare, or from nobody, could it be hoped that he 'would draw the steel from the wound,' in other words, annihilate the Papacy the source of all foreign intervention and of all the divisions of Italy. The intriguers who thought to divine Cesare's aims, when holding out to him hopes of the Kingdom of Tuscany, seem to have been dismissed with contempt.

But all logical conclusions from his premises are idle, not because of the unaccountable genius, which in fact

characterized him as little as it did Wallenstein, but because the means which he employed were not compatible with any large and consistent course of action. Perhaps, indeed, in the very excess of his wickedness some prospect of salvation for the Papacy may have existed even without the accident which put an end to his rule.

Even if we assume that the destruction of the petty despots in the pontifical State had gained for him nothing but sympathy, even if we take as proof of his great projects the army composed of the best soldiers and officers in Italy, with Leonardo da Vinci as chief engineer, which followed his fortunes in 1502, other facts nevertheless bear such a character of unreason that our judgement, like that of contemporary observers, is wholly at a loss to explain them. One fact of this kind is the devastation and maltreatment of the newly won State, which Cesare still intended to keep and to rule over. Another is the condition of Rome and of the Curia in the last decades of the pontificate. Whether it were that father and son had drawn up a formal list of

proscribed persons, or that the murders were resolved upon one by one, in either case the Borgias were bent on the secret destruction of all who stood in their way or whose inheritance they coveted. Of this, money and movable goods formed the smallest part; it was a much greater source of profit for the Pope that the incomes of the clerical dignitaries in question were suspended by their death, and that he received the revenues of their offices while vacant, and the price of these offices when they were filled by the successors of the murdered men. The Venetian ambassador Paolo Capello reported in the year 1500: 'Every night four or five murdered men are discovered bishops, prelates and others so that all Rome is trembling for fear of being destroyed by the Duke .' He himself used to wander about Rome in the night time with his guards, and there is every reason to believe that he did so not only because, like Tiberius, he shrank from showing his now repulsive features by daylight, but also to gratify his insane thirst for blood, perhaps even on persons unknown to him.

As early as the year 1499 the despair was so great and so general that many of the Papal guards were waylaid and put to death. But those whom the Borgias could not assail with open violence fell victims to their poison. For the cases in which a certain amount of discretion seemed requisite, a white powder of an agreeable taste was made use of, which did not work on the spot, but slowly and gradually, and which could be mixed without notice in any dish or goblet. Prince Djem had taken some of it in a sweet draught, before Alexander surrendered him to Charles VIII, and at the end of their career father and son poisoned themselves with the same powder by accidentally tasting a sweetmeat intended for a wealthy cardinal. The official epitomizer of the history of the Popes, Onofrio Panvinio, mentions three cardinals, Orsini, Ferrerio and Michiel, whom Alexander caused to be poisoned, and hints at a fourth, Giovanni Borgia, whom Cesare took into his own charge though probably wealthy prelates seldom died in Rome at that time without giving rise to suspicions of this

sort. Even tranquil scholars who had withdrawn to some provincial town were not out of reach of the merciless poison. A secret horror seemed to hang about the Pope; storms and thunderbolts, crushing in walls and chambers, had in earlier times often visited and alarmed him; in the year 1500, when these phenomena were repeated, they were held to be 'cosa diabolica.' The report of these events seems at last, through the well attended jubilee of 1500, to have been carried far and wide throughout the countries of Europe, and the infamous traffic in indulgences did what else was needed to draw all eyes upon Rome. Besides the returning pilgrims, strange white robed penitents came from Italy to the North, among them disguised fugitives from the Papal State, who are not likely to have been silent. Yet none can calculate how far the scandal and indignation of Christendom might have gone, before they became a source of pressing danger to Alexander. 'He would,' says Panvinio elsewhere, 'have put all the other rich cardinals and prelates out of the way, to get their property, had he not,

in the midst of his great plans for his son, been struck down by death.' And what might not Cesare have achieved if, at the moment when his father died, he had not himself been laid upon a sickbed! What a conclave would that have been, in which, armed with all his weapons, he had extorted his election from a college whose numbers he had judiciously reduced by poison and this at a time when there was no French army at hand! In pursuing such a hypothesis the imagination loses itself in an abyss.

Instead of this followed the conclave in which Pius III was elected, and, after his speedy death, that which chose Julius II both elections the fruits of a general reaction.

Whatever may have been the private morals of Julius II, in all essential respects he was the savior of the Papacy. His familiarity with the course of events since the pontificate of his uncle Sixtus had given him a profound insight into the grounds and conditions of the Papal authority. On these he founded his own policy, and devoted to it the whole force and passion of his unshaken soul. He

ascended the steps of St. Peter's chair without simony and amid general applause, and with him ceased, at all events, the undisguised traffic in the highest offices of the Church. Julius had favorites, and among them were some the reverse of worthy, but a special fortune put him above the temptation to nepotism. His brother, Giovanni della Rovere, was the husband of the heiress of Urbino, sister of the last Montefeltro, Guidobaldo, and from this marriage was born, in 1491, a son, Francesco Maria della Rovere, who was at the same time Papal 'nipote' and lawful heir to the duchy of Urbino. What Julius elsewhere acquired, either on the field of battle or by diplomatic means, he proudly bestowed on the Church, not on his family; the ecclesiastical territory, which he found in a state of dissolution, he bequeathed to his successor completely subdued, and increased by Parma and Piacenza. It was not his fault that Ferrara too was not added the Church. The 700,000 ducats which were stored up in the Castel Sant' Angelo were to be delivered by the governor to none but the future Pope. He made himself heir

of the cardinals, and, indeed, of all the clergy who died in Rome, and this by the most despotic means; but he murdered or poisoned none of them. That he should himself lead his forces to battle was for him an unavoidable necessity, and certainly did him nothing but good at a time when a man in Italy was forced to be either hammer or anvil, and when personality was a greater power than the most indisputable right. If despite all his high sounding 'Away with the barbarians!' he nevertheless contributed more than any man to the firm settlement of the Spaniards in Italy, he may have thought it a matter of indifference to the Papacy, or even, as things stood, a relative advantage. And to whom, sooner than to Spain, could the Church look for a sincere and lasting respect, in an age when the princes of Italy cherished none but sacrilegious projects against her? Be this as it may, the powerful, original nature, which could swallow no anger and conceal no genuine good will, made on the whole the impression most desirable in his situation that of the 'Pontefice terribile.' 26 He could even, with

comparatively clear conscience, venture to summon a council to Rome, and so bid defiance to that outcry for a council which was raised by the opposition all over Europe. A ruler of this stamp needed some great outward symbol of his conceptions; Julius found it in the reconstruction of St. Peter's. The plan of it, as Bramante wished to have it, is perhaps the grandest expression of power in unity which can be imagined. In other arts besides architecture the face and the memory of the Pope live on in their most ideal form, and it is not without significance that even the Latin poetry of those days gives proof of a wholly different enthusiasm for Julius than that shown for his predecessors. The entry into Bologna, at the end of the 'Iter Julii Secundi' by the Cardinal Adriano da Corneto, has a splendor of its own, and Giovan Antonio Flaminio, in one of the finest elegies, appealed to the patriot in the Pope to grant his protection to Italy.

In a constitution of his Lateran Council, Julius had solemnly denounced the simony of the Papal elections.

After his death in 1513, the money loving cardinals tried to evade the prohibition by proposing that the endowments and offices hitherto held by the chosen candidate should be equally divided among themselves, in which case they would have elected the best endowed cardinal, the incompetent Raphael Riario. But a reaction, chiefly arising from the younger members of the Sacred College, who, above all things, desired a liberal Pope, rendered the miserable combination futile; Giovanni Medici was elected the famous Leo X.

We shall often meet with him in treating of the noonday of the Renaissance; here we wish only to point out that under him the Papacy was again exposed to great inward and outward dangers. Among these we do not reckon the conspiracy of the Cardinals Petrucci, De Sauli, Riario, and Corneto, which at most could have occasioned a change of and to which Leo found the true antidote in the unheard of creation of thirty one new cardinals, a measure which additional advantage of rewarding, in some cases at

least, real merit.

But some of the paths which Leo allowed himself to tread during the first two years of his office were perilous to the last degree. He seriously endeavored to secure, by negotiation, the kingdom of Naples for his brother Giuliano, and for his nephew Lorenzo a powerful North Italian State, to comprise Milan, Tuscany, Urbino and Ferrara. It is clear that the Pontifical State, thus hemmed in on all sides, would have become a mere Medicean appanage, and that, in fact, there would have been no further need to secularize it.

The plan found an insuperable obstacle in the political conditions of the time. Giuliano died early. To provide for Lorenzo, Leo undertook to expel the Duke Francesco Maria della Rovere from Urbino, but reaped from the war nothing but hatred and poverty, and was forced, when in 1519 Lorenzo followed his uncle to the grave, to hand over the hard won conquests to the Church. He did on compulsion and without credit what, if it had been done voluntarily, would have been to his lasting honour. What he attempted

against Alfonso of Ferrara, and actually achieved against a few petty despots and Condottieri, was assuredly not of a kind to raise his reputation. And this was at a time when the monarchs of the West were yearly growing more and more accustomed to political gambling on a colossal scale, of which the stakes were this or that province of Italy. Who could guarantee that, since the last decades had seen so great an increase of their power at home, their ambition would stop short of the States of the Church? Leo himself witnessed the prelude of what was fulfilled in the year 1527; a few bands of Spanish infantry appeared of their own accord, it seems at the end of 1520, on the borders of the Pontifical territory, with a view to laying the Pope under contribution, but were driven back by the Papal forces. The public feeling, too, against the corruptions of the hierarchy had of late years been drawing rapidly to a head, and men with an eye for the future, like the younger Pico della Mirandola, called urgently for reform. Meantime Luther had already appeared upon the scene.

Under Adrian VI , the few and timid improvements, carried out in the face of the great German Reformation, came too late. He could do little more than proclaim his horror of the course which things had taken hitherto, of simony, nepotism, prodigality, brigandage, and profligacy. The danger from the side of the Lutherans was by no means the greatest; an acute observer from Venice, Girolamo Negro, uttered his fears that a speedy and terrible disaster would befall the city of Rome itself.

Under Clement VII the whole horizon of Rome was filled with vapors, like that leaden veil which the sirocco drew over the Campagna, and which made the last months of summer so deadly. The Pope was no less detested at home than abroad. Thoughtful people were filled with anxiety, hermits appeared upon the streets and squares of Rome, foretelling the fate of Italy and of the world, and calling the Pope by the name of Antichrist; the faction of the Colonna raised its head defiantly; the indomitable Cardinal Pompeo Colonna, whose mere existence was a

permanent menace to the Papacy, ventured to surprise the city in 1526, hoping with the help of Charles V, to become Pope then and there, as soon as Clement was killed or captured. It was no piece of good fortune for Rome that the latter was able to escape to the Castel Sant' Angelo, and the fate for which he himself was reserved may well be called worse than death. By a series of those falsehoods which only the powerful can venture on, but which bring ruin upon the weak, Clement brought about the advance of the Germano Spanish army under Bourbon and Frundsberg . It is certain that the Cabinet of Charles V intended to inflict on him a severe castigation, and that it could not calculate beforehand how far the zeal of its unpaid hordes would carry them. It would have been vain to attempt to enlist men in Germany without paying any bounty, if it had not been well known that Rome was the object of the expedition. It may be that the written orders to Bourbon will be found some day or other, and it is not improbable that they will prove to be worded mildly. But historical

criticism will not allow itself to be led astray. The Catholic King and Emperor owed it to his luck and nothing else that Pope and cardinals were not murdered by his troops. Had this happened, no sophistry in the world could clear him of his share in the guilt. The massacre of countless people of less consequence, the plunder of the rest, and all the horrors of torture and traffic in human life, show clearly enough what was possible in the 'Sacco di Roma.'

Charles seems to have wished to bring the Pope, who had fled a second time to the Castel Sant' Angelo, to Naples, after extorting from him vast sums of money, and Clement's flight to Orvieto must have happened without any connivance on the part of Spain. Whether the Emperor ever thought seriously of the secularization of the States of the Church, for which every body was quite prepared, and whether he was really dissuaded from it by the representations of Henry VIII of England, will probably never be made clear.

But if such projects really existed, they cannot have

lasted long: from the devastated city arose a new spirit of reform both in Church and State. It made itself felt in a moment. Cardinal Sadoletto, one witness of many, thus writes: 'If through our suffering a satisfaction is made to the wrath and justice of God, if these fearful punishments again open the way to better laws and morals, then is our misfortune perhaps not of the greatest.... What belongs to God He will take care of; before us lies a life of reformation, which no violence can take from us. Let us so rule our deeds and thoughts as to seek in God only the true glory of the priesthood and our own true greatness and power.'

In point of fact, this critical year, 1527, so far bore fruit that the voices of serious men could again make themselves heard. Rome had suffered too much to return, even under a Paul III, to the gay corruption of Leo X.

The Papacy, too, when its sufferings became so great, began to excite a sympathy half religious and half political. The kings could not tolerate that one of their number

should arrogate to himself the right of Papal gaoler, and concluded the Treaty of Amiens, one of the objects of which was the deliverance of Clement. They thus, at all events, turned to their own account the unpopularity which the deeds of the Imperial troops had excited. At the same time the Emperor became seriously embarrassed, even in Spain, where the prelates and grandees never saw him without making the most urgent remonstrances. When a general deputation of the clergy and laity, all clothed in mourning, was projected, Charles, fearing that troubles might arise out of it, like those of the insurrection quelled a few years before, forbade the scheme. Not only did he not dare to prolong the maltreatment of the Pope, but he was absolutely compelled, even apart from all considerations of foreign politics, to be reconciled with the Papacy, which he had so grievously wounded. For the temper of the German people, which certainly pointed to a different course, seemed to him, like German affairs generally, to afford no foundation for a policy. It is possible, too, as a Venetian

maintains, that the memory of the sack of Rome lay heavy on his conscience, and tended to hasten that expiation which was sealed by the permanent subjection of the Florentines to the Medicean family of which the Pope was a member. The 'nipote' and new Duke, Alessandro Medici, was married to the natural daughter of the Emperor.

In the following years the plan of a Council enabled Charles to keep the Papacy in all essential points under his control, and at one and the same time to protect and to oppress it. The greatest danger of all secularization the danger which came from within, from the Popes themselves and their 'nipoti,' was adjourned for centuries by the German Reformation. Just as this alone had made the expedition against Rome possible and successful, so did it compel the Papacy to become once more the expression of a world wide spiritual power, to raise itself from the soulless debasement in which it lay, and to place itself at the head of all the enemies of this reformation. The institution thus developed during the latter years of

Clement VII, and under Paul III, Paul IV, and their successors, in the face of the defection of half Europe, was a new, regenerated hierarchy, which avoided all the great and dangerous scandals of former times, particularly nepotism, with its attempts at territorial aggrandizement, and which, in alliance with the Catholic princes, and impelled by a newborn spiritual force, found its chief work in the recovery of what had been lost. It only existed and is only intelligible in opposition to the seceders. In this sense it can be said with perfect truth that the moral salvation of the Papacy is due to its mortal enemies. And now its political position, too, though certainly under the permanent tutelage of Spain, became impregnable; almost without effort it inherited, on the extinction of its vassals, the legitimate line of Este and the house of Della Rovere, the duchies of Ferrara and Urbino. But without the Reformation if, indeed, it is possible to think it away the whole ecclesiastical State would long ago have passed into secular hands.

Patriotism

In conclusion, let us briefly consider the effect of these political circumstances on the spirit of the nation at large.

It is evident that the general political uncertainty in Italy, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, was of a kind to excite in the better spirits of the time a patriotic disgust and opposition. Dante and Petrarch, in their day, proclaimed loudly a common Italy, the object of the highest efforts of all her children. It may be objected that this was only the enthusiasm of a few highly instructed men, in which the mass of the people had no share; but it can hardly have been otherwise even in Germany, although in name at least that country was united, and recognized in the Emperor one supreme head. The first patriotic utterances of German literature, if we except some verses of the 'Minnesanger,' belong to the humanists of the time of Maximilian I and after, and read like an echo of Italian declamations. And yet, as a matter of fact, Germany had

been long a nation in a truer sense than Italy ever was since the Roman days. France owes the consciousness of its national unity mainly to its conflicts with the English, and Spain has never permanently succeeded in absorbing Portugal, closely related as the two countries are. For Italy, the existence of the ecclesiastical State, and the conditions under which alone it could continue, were a permanent obstacle to national unity, an obstacle whose removal seemed hopeless. When, therefore, in the political intercourse of the fifteenth century, the common fatherland is sometimes emphatically named, it is done in most cases to annoy some other Italian State. But those deeply serious and sorrowful appeals to national sentiment were not heard again till later, when the time for unity had gone by, when the country was inundated with Frenchmen and Spaniards. The sense of local patriotism may be said in some measure to have taken the place of this feeling, though it was but a poor equivalent for it.

PART TWO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Personality

In the character of these States, whether republics or despotisms, lies, not the only, but the chief reason for the early development of the Italian. To this it is due that he was the firstborn among the sons of modern Europe.

In the Middle Ages both sides of human consciousness that which was turned within as that which was turned without lay dreaming or half awake beneath a common veil. The veil was woven of faith, illusion, and childish prepossession, through which the world and history were seen clad in strange hues. Man was conscious of himself only as a member of a race, people, party, family, or corporation only through some general category. In Italy this veil first melted into air; an _objective _treatment and consideration of the State and of all the things of this world

became possible. The subjective side at the same time asserted itself with corresponding emphasis; man became a spiritual _individual, _recognized himself as such. In the same way the Greek had once distinguished himself from the barbarian, and the Arab had felt himself an individual at a time when other Asiatics knew themselves only as members of a race. It will not be difficult to show that this result was due above all to the political circumstances of Italy.

In far earlier times we can here and there detect a development of free personality which in Northern Europe either did not occur at all, or could not display itself in the same manner. The band of audacious wrongdoers in the tenth century described to us by Liudprand, some of the contemporaries of Gregory VII , and a few of the opponents of the first Hohenstaufen, show us characters of this kind. But at the close of the thirteenth century Italy began to swarm with individuality; the ban laid upon human personality was dissolved; and a thousand figures meet us

each in its own special shape and dress. Dante's great poem would have been impossible in any other country of Europe, if only for the reason that they all still lay under the spell of race. For Italy the august poet, through the wealth of individuality which he set forth, was the most national herald of his time. But this unfolding of the treasures of human nature in literature and art this many sided representation and criticism will be discussed in separate chapters; here we have to deal only with the psychological fact itself. This fact appears in the most decisive and unmistakable form. The Italians of the fourteenth century knew little of false modesty or of hypocrisy in any shape; not one of them was afraid of singularity, of being and seeming unlike his neighbors.

Despotism, as we have already seen, fostered in the highest degree the individuality not only of the tyrant or Condottiere himself, but also of the men whom he protected or used as his tools the secretary, minister, poet, and companion. These people were forced to know all the

inward resources of their own nature, passing or permanent; and their enjoyment of life was enhanced and concentrated by the desire to obtain the greatest satisfaction from a possibly very brief period of power and influence.

But even the subjects whom they ruled over were not free from the same impulse. Leaving out of account those who wasted their lives in secret opposition and conspiracies, we speak of the majority who were content with a strictly private station, like most of the urban population of the Byzantine empire and the Mohammedan States. No doubt it was often hard for the subjects of a Visconti to maintain the dignity of their persons and families, and multitudes must have lost in moral character through the servitude they lived under. But this was not the case with regard to individuality; for political impotence does not hinder the different tendencies and manifestations of private life from thriving in the fullest vigor and variety. Wealth and culture, so far as display and rivalry were not forbidden to them, a municipal freedom which did not cease to be considerable,

and a Church which, unlike that of the Byzantine or of the Mohammedan world, was not identical with the State all these conditions undoubtedly favored the growth of individual thought, for which the necessary leisure was furnished by the cessation of party conflicts. The private man, indifferent to politics, and busied partly with serious pursuits, partly with the interests of a _dilettante, _seems to have been first fully formed in these despotisms of the fourteenth century. Documentary evidence cannot, of course, be required on such a point. The novelists, from whom we might expect information, describe to us oddities in plenty, but only from one point of view and in so far as the needs of the story demand. Their scene, too, lies chiefly in the republican cities.

In the latter, circumstances were also, but in another way, favourable to the growth of individual character. The more frequently the governing party was changed, the more the individual was led to make the utmost of the exercise and enjoyment of power. The statesmen and popular leaders,

especially in Florentine history, acquired so marked a personal character that we can scarcely find, even exceptionally, a parallel to them in contemporary history, hardly even in Jacob van Arteveldt.

The members of the defeated parties, on the other hand, often came into a position like that of the subjects of the despotic States, with the difference that the freedom or power already enjoyed, and in some cases the hope of recovering them, gave a higher energy to their individuality. Among these men of involuntary leisure we find, for instance, an Agnolo Pandolfini, whose work on domestic economy is the first complete programme of a developed private life. His estimate of the duties of the individual as against the dangers and thanklessness of public life is in its way a true monument of the age.

Banishment, too, has this effect above all, that it either wears the exile out or develops whatever is greatest in him. 'In all our more populous cities,' says Gioviano Pontano, 'we see a crowd of people who have left their homes of

their own free will; but a man takes his virtues with him wherever he goes.' And, in fact, they were by no means only men who had been actually exiled, but thousands left their native place voluntarily, because they found its political or economic condition intolerable. The Florentine emigrants at Ferrara and the Lucchese in Venice formed whole colonies by themselves.

The cosmopolitanism which grew up in the most gifted circles is in itself a high stage of individualism. Dante, as we have already said, finds a new home in the language and culture of Italy, but goes beyond even this in the words, 'My country is the whole world.' And when his recall to Florence was offered him on unworthy conditions, he wrote back: 'Can I not everywhere behold the light of the sun and the stars; everywhere meditate on the noblest truths, without appearing ingloriously and shamefully before the city and the people? Even my bread will not fail me.' The artists exult no less defiantly in their freedom from the constraints of fixed residence. 'Only he who has

learned everything,' says Ghiberti, 'is nowhere a stranger; robbed of his fortune and without friends, he is yet the citizen of every country, and can fearlessly despise the changes of fortune.' In the same strain an exiled humanist writes: 'Wherever a learned man fixes his seat, there is home.'

An acute and practiced eye might be able to trace, step by step, the increase in the number of complete men during the fifteenth century. Whether they had before them as a conscious object the harmonious development of their spiritual and material existence, is hard to say; but several of them attained it, so far as is consistent with the imperfection of all that is earthly. It may be better to renounce the attempt at an estimate of the share which fortune, character, and talent had in the life of Lorenzo il Magnifico. But look at a personality like that of Ariosto, especially as shown in his satires. In what harmony are there expressed the pride of the man and the poet, the irony with which he treats his own enjoyments, the most delicate

satire, and the deepest goodwill!

When this impulse to the highest individual development was combined with a powerful and varied nature, which had mastered all the elements of the culture of the age, then arose the 'all sided man' 'l'uomo universale' who belonged to Italy alone. Men there were of encyclopedic knowledge —, in many countries during the Middle Ages, for this knowledge was confined within narrow limits; and even in the twelfth century there were universal artists, but the problems of architecture were comparatively simple and uniform, and in sculpture and painting the matter was of more importance than the form. But in Italy at the time of the Renaissance, we find artists who in every branch created new and perfect works, and who also made the greatest impression as men. Others, outside the arts they practiced, were masters of a vast circle of spiritual interests.

Dante, who, even in his lifetime, was called by some a poet, by others a philosopher, by others a theologian, pours

forth in all his writings a stream of personal force by which the reader, apart from the interest of the subject, feels himself carried away. What power of will must the steady, unbroken elaboration of the *Divine Comedy* have required! And if we look at the matter of the poem, we find that in the whole spiritual or physical world there is hardly an important subject which the poet has not fathomed, and on which his utterances often only a few words are not the most weighty of his time. For the visual arts he is of the first importance, and this for better reasons than the few references to contemporary artists he soon became himself the source of inspiration.

The fifteenth century is, above all, that of the many sided men. There is no biography which does not, besides the chief work of its hero, speak of other pursuits all passing beyond the limits of dilettantism. The Florentine merchant and statesman was often learned in both the classical languages; the most famous humanists read the *Ethics* and *Politics* of Aristotle to him and his sons; even

the daughters of the house were highly educated. It is in these circles that private education was first treated seriously. The humanist, on his side, was compelled to the most varied attainments, since his philological learning was not limited, as it is now, to the theoretical knowledge of classical antiquity, but had to serve the practical needs of daily life. While studying Pliny, he made collections of natural history; the geography of the ancients was his guide in treating of modern geography, their history was his pattern in writing contemporary chronicles, even when composed in Italian; he did not only translate the comedies of Plautus, but acted as manager when they were put on the stage; every effective form of ancient literature down to the dialogues of Lucian he did his best to imitate; and besides all this, he acted as magistrate, secretary and diplomatist not always to his own advantage.

But among these many sided men, some, who may truly be called all sided, tower above the rest. Before analyzing the general phases of life and culture of this

period, we may here, on the threshold of the fifteenth century, consider for a moment the figure of one of these giants Leon Battista Alberti . His biography, which is only a fragment, speaks of him but little as an artist , and makes no mention at all of his great significance in the history of architecture. We shall now see what he was, apart from these special claims to distinction.

In all by which praise is won, Leon Battista was from his childhood the first. Of his various gymnastic feats and exercises we read with astonishment how, with his feet together, he could spring over a man's head; how in the cathedral, he threw a coin in the air till it was heard to ring against the distant roof; how the wildest horses trembled under him. In three things he desired to appear faultless to others, in walking, in riding, and in speaking. He learned music without a master, and yet his compositions were admired by professional judges. Under the pressure of poverty, he studied both civil and canonical law for many years, till exhaustion brought on a severe illness. In his

twenty fourth year, finding his memory for words weakened, but his sense of facts unimpaired, he set to work at physics and mathematics. And all the while he acquired every sort of accomplishment and dexterity, cross examining artists, scholars and artisans of all descriptions, down to the cobblers, about the secrets and peculiarities of their craft. Painting and modelling he practiced by the way, and especially excelled in admirable likenesses from memory. Great admiration was excited by his mysterious 'camera obscura,' in which he showed at one time the stars and the moon rising over rocky hills, at another wide landscapes with mountains and gulfs receding into dim perspective, and with fleets advancing on the waters in shade or sunshine. And that which others created he welcomed joyfully, and held every human achievement which followed the laws of beauty for something almost divine. To all this must be added his literary works, first of all those on art, which are landmarks and authorities of the first order for the Renaissance of Form, especially in

architecture; then his Latin prose writings novels and other works of which some have been taken for productions of antiquity; his elegies, eclogues, and humorous dinner speeches. He also wrote an Italian treatise on domestic life in four books; and even a funeral oration on his dog. His serious and witty sayings were thought worth collecting, and specimens of them, many columns long, are quoted in his biography. And all that he had and knew he imparted, as rich natures always do, without the least reserve, giving away his chief discoveries for nothing. But the deepest spring of his nature has yet to be spoken of the sympathetic intensity with which he entered into the whole life around him. At the sight of noble trees and waving cornfields he shed tears; handsome and dignified old men he honored as 'a delight of nature,' and could never look at them enough. Perfectly formed animals won his goodwill as being specially favored by nature; and more than once, when he was ill, the sight of a beautiful landscape cured him. No wonder that those who saw him in this close and

mysterious communion with the world ascribed to him the gift of prophecy. He was said to have foretold a bloody catastrophe in the family of Este, the fate of Florence and that of the Popes many years beforehand, and to be able to read in the countenances and the hearts of men. It need not be added that an iron will pervaded and sustained his whole personality; like all the great men of the Renaissance, he said, 'Men can do all things if they will.'

And Leonardo da Vinci was to Alberti as the finisher to the beginner, as the master to the _dilettante_. Would only that Vasari's work were here supplemented by a description like that of Alberti! The colossal outlines of Leonardo's nature can never be more than dimly and distantly conceived.

Glory

To this inward development of the individual corresponds a new sort of outward distinction the modern form of glory.

In the other countries of Europe the different classes of society lived apart, each with its own medieval caste sense of honour. The poetical fame of the Troubadours and Minnesanger was peculiar to the knightly order. But in Italy social equality had appeared before the time of the tyrannies or the democracies. We there find early traces of a general society, having, as will be shown more fully later on, a common ground in Latin and Italian literature; and such a ground was needed for this new element in life to grow in. To this must be added that the Roman authors, who were not zealously studied, are filled and saturated with the conception of fame, and that their subject itself the universal empire of Rome stood as a permanent ideal before the minds of Italians. From henceforth all the

aspirations and achievements of the people were governed by a moral postulate, which was still unknown elsewhere in Europe.

Here, again, as in all essential points, the first witness to be called is Dante. He strove for the poet's garland with all the power of his soul.³³ As publicist and man of letters, he laid stress on the fact that what he did was new, and that he wished not only to be, but to be esteemed the first in his own walks.³⁴ But in his prose writings he touches also on the inconveniences of fame; he knows how often personal acquaintance with famous men is disappointing, and explains how this is due partly to the childish fancy of men, partly to envy, and partly to the imperfections of the hero himself. And in his great poem he firmly maintains the emptiness of fame, although in a manner which betrays that his heart was not free from the longing for it. In Paradise the sphere of Mercury is the seat of such blessed ones as on earth strove after glory and thereby dimmed 'the beams of true love.' It is characteristic that the lost souls in hell beg

of Dante to keep alive for them their memory and fame on earth, while those in Purgatory only entreat his prayers and those of others for their deliverance.³⁷ And in a famous passage, the passion for fame 'lo gran disio dell'eccellenza' is reproved for the reason that intellectual glory is not absolute, but relative to the times, and may be surpassed and eclipsed by greater successors.

The new race of poet scholars which arose soon after Dante quickly made themselves masters of this fresh tendency. They did so in a double sense, being themselves the most acknowledged celebrities of Italy, and at the same time, as poets and historians, consciously disposing of the reputation of others. An outward symbol of this sort of fame was the coronation of the poets, of which we shall speak later on.

A contemporary of Dante, Albertinus Musattus or Mussatus, crowned poet at Padua by the bishop and rector, enjoyed a fame which fell little short of deification. Every Christmas Day the doctors and students of both colleges at

the University came in solemn procession before his house with trumpets and, it seems, with burning tapers, to salute him and bring him presents. His reputation lasted till, in 1318, he fell into disgrace with the ruling tyrant of the House of Carrara.

This new incense, which once was offered only to saints and heroes, was given in clouds to Petrarch, who persuaded himself in his later years that it was but a foolish and troublesome thing. His letter 'To Posterity' is the confession of an old and famous man, who is forced to gratify the public curiosity. He admits that he wishes for fame in the times to come, but would rather be without it in his own day. In his dialogue on fortune and misfortune, the interlocutor, who maintains the futility of glory, has the best of the contest. But, at the same time, Petrarch is pleased that the autocrat of Byzantium knows him as well by his writings as Charles IV knows him. And in fact, even in his lifetime, his fame extended far beyond Italy. And the emotion which he felt was natural when his friends, on the

occasion of a visit to his native Arezzo , took him to the house where he was born, and told him how the city had provided that no change should be made in it. In former times the dwellings of certain great saints were preserved and revered in this way, like the cell of St. Thomas Aquinas in the Dominican convent at Naples, and the Portincula of St. Francis near Assisi; and one or two great jurists so enjoyed the half mythical reputation which led to this honour. Towards the close of the fourteenth century the people at Bagnolo, near Florence, called an old building the 'Studio of Accursius' , but, nevertheless, suffered it to be destroyed. It is probable that the great incomes and the political influence which some jurists obtained as consulting lawyers made a lasting impression on the popular imagination.

To the cult of the birthplaces of famous men must be added that of their graves, and, in the case of Petrarch, of the spot where he died. In memory of him Arqua became a favorite resort of the Paduans, and was dotted with graceful

little villas. At this time there were no 'classic spots' in Northern Europe, and pilgrimages were only made to pictures and relics. It was a point of honour for the different cities to possess the bones of their own and foreign celebrities; and it is most remarkable how seriously the Florentines, even in the fourteenth century long before the building of Santa Croce labored to make their cathedral a Pantheon. Accorso, Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and the jurist Zanobi della Strada were to have had magnificent tombs there erected to them. Late in the fifteenth century, Lorenzo il Magnifico applied in person to the Spoletans, asking them to give up the corpse of the painter Fra Filippo Lippi for the cathedral, and received the answer that they had none too many ornaments to the city, especially in the shape of distinguished people, for which reason they begged him to spare them; and, in fact, he had to be content with erecting a cenotaph. And even Dante, in spite of all the applications to which Boccaccio urged the Florentines with bitter emphasis, remained sleeping tranquilly in San

Francesco at Ravenna, 'among ancient tombs of emperors and vaults of saints, in more honorable company than thou, O Florence, couldst offer him.' It even happened that a man once took away unpunished the lights from the altar on which the crucifix stood, and set there by the grave, with the words, 'Take them; thou art more worthy of them than He, the Crucified One! '

And now the Italian cities began again to remember their ancient citizens and inhabitants. Naples, perhaps, had never forgotten its tomb of Virgil, since a kind of mythical halo had become attached to the name.

The Paduans, even in the sixteenth century, firmly believed that they possessed not only the genuine bones of their founder, Antenor, but also those of the historian Livy. 'Sulmona,' says Boccaccio, 'bewails that Ovid lies buried far away in exile; and Parma rejoices that Cassius sleeps within its walls.' The Mantuans coined a medal in 1257 with the bust of Virgil, and raised a statue to represent him. In a fit of aristocratic insolence, the guardian of the young

Gonzaga, Carlo Malatesta, caused it to be pulled down in 1392, and was afterwards forced, when he found the fame of the old poet too strong for him, to set it up again. Even then, perhaps, the grotto, a couple of miles from the town, where Virgil was said to have meditated, was shown to strangers, like the 'Scuola di Virgilio' at Naples. Como claimed both the Plinys for its own, and at the end of the fifteenth century erected statues in their honour, sitting under graceful baldachins on the facade of the cathedral.

History and the new topography were now careful to leave no local celebrity unnoticed. At the same period the northern chronicles only here and there, among the list of popes, emperors, earthquakes, and comets, put in the remark, that at such a time this or that famous man 'flourished.' We shall elsewhere have to show how, mainly under the influence of this idea of fame, an admirable biographical literature was developed. We must here limit ourselves to the local patriotism of the topographers who recorded the claims of their native cities to distinction.

In the Middle Ages, the cities were proud of their saints and of the bones and relics in their churches. With these the panegyrist of Padua in 1450, Michele Savonarola, begins his list; from them he passes to 'the famous men who were no saints, but who, by their great intellect and force deserve to be added _ _to the saints' just as in classical antiquity the distinguished man came close upon the hero. The further enumeration is most characteristic of the time. First comes Antenor, the brother of Priam, who founded Padua with a band of Trojan fugitives; King Dardanus, who defeated Attila in the Euganean hills, followed him in pursuit, and struck him dead at Rimini with a chessboard; the Emperor Henry IV, who built the cathedral; a King Marcus, whose head was preserved in Monselice; then a couple of cardinals and prelates as founders of colleges, churches, and so forth; the famous Augustinian theologian, Fra Alberto; a string of philosophers beginning with Paolo Veneto and the celebrated Pietro of Abano; the jurist Paolo Padovano; then

Livy and the poets Petrarch, Mussato, Lovato. If there is any want of military celebrities in the list, the poet consoles himself for it by the abundance of learned men whom he has to show, and by the more durable character of intellectual glory, while the fame of the soldier is buried with his body, or, if it lasts, owes its permanence only to the scholar. It is nevertheless honorable to the city that foreign warriors lie buried here by their own wish, like Pietro de' Rossi of Parma, Filippo Arcelli of Piacenza, and especially Gattamelata of Narni, whose brazen equestrian statue, 'like a Caesar in triumph,' already stood by the church of the Santo. The author then names a crowd of jurists and physicians, nobles 'who had not only, like so many others, received, but deserved, the honour of knighthood.' Then follows a list of famous mechanics, painters, and musicians, and in conclusion the name of a fencing master Michele Rosso, who, as the most distinguished man in his profession, was to be seen painted in many places.

By the side of these local temples of fame, which

myth, legend, popular admiration, and literary tradition combined to create, the poet scholars built up a great Pantheon of worldwide celebrity. They made collections of famous men and famous women, often in direct imitation of Cornelius Nepos, the pseudo Suetonius, Valerius Maximus, Plutarch _ , _Jerome _ , _and others: or they wrote of imaginary triumphal processions and Olympian assemblies, as was done by Petrarch in his 'Trionfo della Fama,' and Boccaccio in the 'Amorosa Visione,' with hundreds of names, of which three fourths at least belong to antiquity and the rest to the Middle Ages. By and by this new and comparatively modern element was treated with greater emphasis; the historians began to insert descriptions of character, and collections arose of the biographies of distinguished contemporaries, like those of Filippo Villani, Vespasiano Fiorentino, Bartolommeo I Fazio, and lastly of Paolo Giovio.

The North of Europe, until Italian influence began to tell upon its writers for instance, on Trithemius, the first

German who wrote the lives of famous men possessed only either legends of the saints, or descriptions of princes and churchmen partaking largely of the character of legends and showing no traces of the idea of fame, that is, of distinction won by a man's personal efforts. Poetical glory was still confined to certain classes of society, and the names of northern artists are only known to us at this period in so far as they were members of certain guilds or corporations.

The poet scholar in Italy had, as we have already said, the fullest consciousness that he was the giver of fame and immortality, or, if he chose, of oblivion. Boccaccio complains of a fair one to whom he had done homage, and who remained hard hearted in order that he might go on praising her and making her famous, and he gives her a hint that he will try the effect of a little blame. Sannazaro, in two magnificent sonnets, threatens Alfonso of Naples with eternal obscurity on account of his cowardly flight before Charles VIII. Angelo Poliziano seriously exhorts King John

of Portugal to think betimes of his immortality in reference to the new discoveries in Africa, and to send him materials to Florence, there to be put into shape _ , _otherwise it would befall him as it had befallen all the others whose deeds, unsupported by the help of the learned, 'lie hidden in the vast heap of human frailty.' The king, or his humanistic chancellor, agreed to this, and promised that at least the Portuguese chronicles of African affairs should be translated into Italian, and sent to Florence to be done into Latin. Whether the promise was kept is not known. These pretensions are by no means so groundless as they may appear at first sight; for the form in which events, even the greatest, are told to the living and to posterity is anything but a matter of indifference. The Italian humanists, with their mode of exposition and their Latin style, had long the complete control of the reading world of Europe, and till last century the Italian poets were more widely known and studied than those of any other nation. The baptismal name of the Florentine Amerigo Vespucci was given, on account

of his book of travels, to a new quarter of the globe, and if Paolo Giovio, with all his superficiality and graceful caprice, promised himself immortality, his expectation has not altogether been disappointed.

Amid all these preparations outwardly to win and secure fame, the curtain is now and then drawn aside, and we see with frightful evidence a boundless ambition and thirst after greatness, regardless of all means and consequences. Thus, in the preface to Machiavelli's Florentine history, in which he blames his predecessors Leonardo, Aretino and Poggio for their too considerate reticence with regard to the political parties in the city: 'They erred greatly and showed that they understood little the ambition of men and the desire to perpetuate a name. How many who could distinguish themselves by nothing praiseworthy, strove to do so by infamous deeds! ' Those writers did not consider that actions which are great in themselves, as is the case with the actions of rulers and of States, always seem to bring more glory than blame, of

whatever kind they are and whatever the result of them may be. In more than one remarkable and dreadful undertaking the motive assigned by serious writers is the burning desire to achieve something great and memorable. This motive is not a mere extreme case of ordinary vanity, but something demonic, involving a surrender of the will, the use of any means, however atrocious, and even an indifference to success itself. In this sense, for example, Machiavelli conceives the character of Stefano Porcari; of the murderers of Galeazzo Maria Sforza, the documents tell us about the same; and the assassination of Duke Alessandro of Florence is ascribed by Varchi himself to the thirst for fame which tormented the murderer Lorenzino Medici. Still more stress is laid on this motive by Paolo Giovio. Lorenzino, according to him, pilloried by a pamphlet of Molza, broods over a deed whose novelty shall make his disgrace forgotten, and ends by murdering his kinsman and prince. These are characteristic features of this age of overstrained and despairing passions and forces, and remind us of the

burning of the temple of Diana at Ephesus in the time of Philip of Macedon

Ridicule and Wit

The corrective, not only of this modern desire for fame, but of all highly developed individuality, is found in ridicule, especially when expressed in the victorious form of wit. We read in the Middle Ages how hostile armies, princes, and nobles, provoked one another with symbolical insult, and how the defeated party was loaded with symbolical outrage. Here and there, too, under the influence of classical literature, wit began to be used as a weapon in theological disputes, and the poetry of Provence produced a whole class of satirical compositions. Even the Minnesanger, as their political poems show, could adopt this tone when necessary. But wit could not be an independent element in life till its appropriate victim, the developed individual with personal pretensions, had appeared. Its weapons were then by no means limited to the

tongue and the pen, but included tricks and practical jokes the so called 'burle' and 'baffe' which form a chief subject of many collections of novels.

The 'Hundred Old Novels,' which must have been composed about the end of the thirteenth century, have as yet neither wit, the fruit of contrast, nor the 'burla,' for their subject; their aim is merely to give simple and elegant expression to wise sayings and pretty stories or fables. But if anything proves the great antiquity of the collection, it is precisely this absence of satire. For with the fourteenth century comes Dante, who, in the utterance of scorn, leaves all other poets in the world far behind, and who, if only on account of his great picture of the deceivers, must be called the chief master of colossal comedy. With Petrarch begin the collections of witty sayings after the pattern of Plutarch .

What stores of wit were concentrated in Florence during this century is most characteristically shown in the novels of Franco Sacchetti. These are, for the most part, not

stories but answers, given under certain circumstances shocking pieces of _naivete,_with which silly folks, court jesters, rogues, and profligate women make their retort. The comedy of the tale lies in the startling contrast of this real or assumed naivete with conventional morality and the ordinary relations of the world things are made to stand on their heads. All means of picturesque representation are made use of, including the introduction of certain North Italian dialects. Often the place of wit is taken by mere insolence, clumsy trickery, blasphemy, and obscenity; one or two jokes told of Condottieri are among the most brutal and malicious which are recorded. Many of the 'burle' are thoroughly comic, but many are only real or supposed evidence of personal superiority, of triumph over another. How much people were willing to put up with, how often the victim was satisfied with getting the laugh on his side by a retaliatory trick, cannot be said; there was much heartless and pointless malice mixed up with it all, and life in Florence was no doubt often made unpleasant enough

from this cause. The inventors and retailers of jokes soon became inevitable figures, and among them there must have been some who were classical far superior to all the mere court jesters, to whom competition, a changing public, and the quick apprehension of the audience, all advantages of life in Florence, were wanting. Some Florentine wits went starring among the despotic courts of Lombardy and Romagna, and found themselves much better rewarded than at home, where their talent was cheap and plentiful. The better type of these people is the amusing man, the worse is the buffoon and the vulgar parasite who presents himself at weddings and banquets with the argument, 'If I am not invited, the fault is not mine.' Now and then the latter combine to pluck a young spendthrift, but in general they are treated and despised as parasites, while wits of higher position bear themselves like princes, and consider their talent as something sovereign. Dolcibene, whom Charles IV had pronounced to be the 'king of Italian jesters,' said to him at Ferrara: 'You will conquer the world, since you are

my friend and the Pope's; you fight with the sword, the Pope with his bulls, and I with my tongue.' This is no mere jest, but the foreshadowing of Pietro Aretino.

The two most famous jesters about the middle of the fifteenth century were a priest near Florence, Arlotto , for more refined wit , and the court fool of Ferrara, Gonnella, for buffoonery. We can hardly compare their stories with those of the Parson of Kalenberg and Till Eulenspiegel, since the latter arose in a different and half mythical manner, as fruits of the imagination of a whole people, and touch rather on what is general and intelligible to all, while Arlotto and Gonnella were historical beings, colored and shaped by local influences. But if the comparison be allowed, and extended to the jests of the non Italian nations, we shall find in general that the joke in the French _fabliaux, _as among the Germans, is chiefly directed to the attainment of some advantage or enjoyment; while the wit of Arlotto and the practical jokes of Gonnella are an end in themselves, and exist simply for the sake of the

triumph of production. The court fool of the Este retaliated more than once by his keen satire and refined modes of vengeance.

The type of the 'uomo piacevole' and the 'buffone' long survived the freedom of Florence. Under Duke Cosimo flourished Barlacchia, and at the beginning of the seventeenth century Francesco Ruspoli and Curzio Marignolli. In Pope Leo X, the genuine Florentine love of jesters showed itself strikingly. This prince, whose taste for the most refined intellectual pleasures was insatiable, endured and desired at his table a number of witty buffoons and jack puddings, among them two monks and a cripple; at public feasts he treated them with deliberate scorn as parasites, setting before them monkeys and crows in the place of savory meats. Leo, indeed, showed a peculiar fondness for the 'burla'; it belonged to his nature sometimes to treat his own favorite pursuits music and poetry ironically, parodying them with his factotum, Cardinal Bibbiena. Neither of them found it beneath him to fool an

honest old secretary till he thought himself a master of the art of music. The Improvisatore, Baraballo of Gaeta, was brought so far by Leo's flattery that he applied in all seriousness for the poet's coronation on the Capitol. On the feast of St. Cosmas and St. Damian, the patrons of the House of Medici, he was first compelled, adorned with laurel and purple, to amuse the papal guests with his recitations, and at last, when all were ready to split with laughter, to mount a gold harnessed elephant in the court of the Vatican, sent as a present to Rome by Emmanuel the Great of Portugal, while the Pope looked down from above through his eye glass. The brute, however, was so terrified by the noise of the trumpets and kettledrums, and the cheers of the crowd, that there was no getting him over the bridge of Sant' Angelo.

The parody of what is solemn or sublime, which here meets us in the case of a procession, had already taken an important place in poetry. It was naturally compelled to choose victims of another kind than those of Aristophanes,

who introduced the great tragedians into his plays. But the same maturity of culture which at a certain period produced parody among the Greeks, did the same in Italy. By the close of the fourteenth century, the love lorn wailings of Petrarch's sonnets and others of the same kind were taken off by caricaturists; and the solemn air of this form of verse was parodied in lines of mystic twaddle. A constant invitation to parody was offered by the 'Divine Comedy,' and Lorenzo il Magnifico wrote the most admirable travesty in the style of the 'Inferno'. Luigi Pulci obviously imitates the Improvisatori in his 'Morgante,' and both his poetry and Boiardo's are in part, at least, a half conscious parody of the chivalrous poetry of the Middle Ages. Such a caricature was deliberately undertaken by the great parodist Teofilo Folengo. Under the name of Limerno Pitocco, he composed the 'Orlandino,' in which chivalry appears only as a ludicrous setting for a crowd of modern figures and ideas. Under the name of Merlinus Coccaius he described the journeys and exploits of his fantastic vagabonds in half

Latin hexameters, with all the affected pomp of the learned Epos of the day . Since then caricature has been constantly, and often brilliantly, represented on the Italian Parnassus.

About the middle period of the Renaissance a theoretical analysis of wit was undertaken, and its practical application in good society was regulated more precisely. The theorist was Gioviano Pontano. In his work on speaking, especially in the third and fourth books, he tries by means of the comparison of numerous jokes or 'facetiae' to arrive at a general principle. How wit should be used among people of position is taught by Baldassare Castiglione in his 'Cortigiano.' Its chief function is naturally to enliven those present by the repetition of comic or graceful stories and sayings; personal jokes, on the contrary, are discouraged on the ground that they wound unhappy people, show too much honour to wrong doers, and make enemies of the powerful and the spoiled children of fortune; and even in repetition, a wide reserve in the use of dramatic gestures is recommended to the gentleman. Then follows,

not only for purposes of quotation, but as patterns for future jesters, a large collection of puns and witty sayings, methodically arranged according to their species, among them some that are admirable. The doctrine of Giovanni della Casa, some twenty years later, in his guide to good manners, is much stricter and more cautious; with a view to the consequences, he wishes to see the desire of triumph banished altogether from jokes and 'burle.' He is the herald of a reaction, which was certain sooner or later to appear.

Italy had, in fact, become a school for scandal, the like of which the world cannot show, not even in France at the time of Voltaire. In him and his comrades there was assuredly no lack of the spirit of negation; but where, in the eighteenth century, was to be found the crowd of suitable victims, that countless assembly of highly and characteristically developed human beings, celebrities of every kind, statesmen, churchmen, inventors, and discoverers, men of letters, poets and artists, all of whom then gave the fullest and freest play to their individuality.

This host existed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and by its side the general culture of the time had educated a poisonous brood of impotent wits, of born critics and railers, whose envy called for hecatombs of victims; and to all this was added the envy of the famous men among themselves. In this the philologists notoriously led the way Filelfo, Poggio, Lorenzo Valla, and others while the artists of the fifteenth century lived in peaceful and friendly competition with one another. The history of art may take note of the fact.

Florence, the great market of fame, was in this point, as we have said, in advance of other cities. 'Sharp eyes and bad tongues' is the description given of the inhabitants. An easygoing contempt of everything and everybody was probably the prevailing tone of society. Machiavelli, in the remarkable prologue to his 'Mandragola,' refers rightly or wrongly the visible decline of moral force to the general habit of evil speaking, and threatens his detractors with the news that he can say sharp things as well as they. Next to

Florence comes the Papal court, which had long been a rendezvous of the bitterest and wittiest tongues. Poggio's 'Facetiae' are dated from the Chamber of Lies _ _of the apostolic notaries; and when we remember the number of disappointed place hunters, of hopeless competitors and enemies of the favorites, of idle, profligate prelates there assembled, it is intelligible how Rome became the home of the savage pasquinade as well as of more philosophical satire. If we add to this the widespread hatred borne to the priests, and the well known instinct of the mob to lay any horror to the charge of the great, there results an untold mass of infamy. Those who were able, protected themselves best by contempt both of the false and true accusations, and by brilliant and joyous display. More sensitive natures sank into utter despair when they found themselves deeply involved in guilt, and still more deeply in slander. In course of time calumny became universal, and the strictest virtue was most certain of all to challenge the attacks of malice. Of the great pulpit orator, Fra Egidio

of Viterbo, whom Leo made a cardinal on account of his merits, and who showed himself a man of the people and a brave monk in the calamity of 1527, Giovio gives us to understand that he preserved his ascetic pallor by the smoke of wet straw and other means of the same kind. Giovio is a genuine Curial in these matters. He generally begins by telling his story, then adds that he does not believe it, and then hints at the end that perhaps after all there may be something in it. But the true scapegoat of Roman scorn was the pious and moral Adrian VI. A general agreement seemed to be made to take him only on the comic side. He fell out from the first with the formidable Francesco Berni, threatening to have thrown into the Tiber not, as people said, the statue of Pasquino, but the writers of the satires themselves. The vengeance for this was the famous 'Capitolo' against Pope Adriano, inspired not exactly by hatred, but by contempt for the comical Dutch barbarian; the more savage menaces were reserved for the cardinals who had elected him. The plague, which then was

prevalent in Rome, was ascribed to him; Berni and others sketch the environment of the Pope with the same sparkling untruthfulness with which the modern _feuilletoniste _turns black into white, and everything into anything. The biography which Paolo Giovio was commissioned to write by the cardinal of Tortosa, and which was to have been a eulogy, is for anyone who can read between the lines an unexampled piece of satire. It sounds ridiculous at least for the Italians of that time to hear how Adrian applied to the Chapter of Saragossa for the jawbone of St. Lambert; how the devout Spaniards decked him out till he looked 'like a right well dressed Pope'; how he came in a confused and tasteless procession from Ostia to Rome, took counsel about burning or drowning Pasquino, would suddenly break off the most important business when dinner was announced; and lastly, at the end of an unhappy reign, how he died of drinking too much beer whereupon the house of his physician was hung with garlands by midnight revellers, and adorned with the inscription, 'Liberatori Patriae

S.P.Q.R.' It is true that Giovio had lost his money in the general confiscation of public funds, and had only received a benefice by way of compensation because he was 'no poet,' that is to say, no pagan. But it was decreed that Adrian should be the last great victim. After the disaster which befell Rome in 1527, slander visibly declined along with the unrestrained wickedness of private life.

But while it was still flourishing was developed, chiefly in Rome the greatest railer of modern times, Pietro Aretino. A glance at his life and character will save us the trouble of noticing many less distinguished members of his class.

We know him chiefly in the last thirty years of his life, , which he passed in Venice, the only asylum possible for him. From hence he kept all that was famous in Italy in a kind of state of siege, and here were delivered the presents of the foreign princes who needed or dreaded his pen. Charles V and Francis I both pensioned him at the same time, each hoping that Aretino would do some

mischief to the other. Aretino flattered both, but naturally attached himself more closely to Charles, because he remained master in Italy. After the Emperor's victory at Tunis in 1535, this tone of adulation passed into the most ludicrous worship, in observing which it must not be forgotten that Aretino constantly cherished the hope that Charles would help him to a cardinal's hat. It is probable that he enjoyed special protection as Spanish agent, as his speech or silence could have no small effect on the smaller Italian courts and on public opinion in Italy. He affected utterly to despise the Papal court because he knew it so well; the true reason was that Rome neither could nor would pay him any longer. Venice, which sheltered him, he was wise enough to leave unassailed. The rest of his relations with the great is mere beggary and vulgar extortion.

Aretino affords the first great instance of the abuse of publicity to such ends. The polemical writings which a hundred years earlier Poggio and his opponents

interchanged, are just as infamous in their tone and purpose, but they were not composed for the press, but for a sort of private circulation. Aretino made all his profit out of a complete publicity, and in a certain sense may be considered the father of modern journalism. His letters and miscellaneous articles were printed periodically, after they had already been circulated among a tolerably extensive public.

Compared with the sharp pens of the eighteenth century, Aretino had the advantage that he was not burdened with principles, neither with liberalism nor philanthropy nor any other virtue, nor even with science; his whole baggage consisted of the well known motto, 'Veritas odium parit.' He never, consequently, found himself in the false position of Voltaire, who was forced to disown his 'Pucelle' and conceal all his life the authorship of other works. Aretino put his name to all he wrote, and openly gloried in his notorious 'Ragionamenti.' His literary talent, his clear and sparkling style, his varied observation

of men and things, would have made him a considerable writer under any circumstances, destitute as he was of the power of conceiving a genuine work of art, such as a true dramatic comedy; and to the coarsest as well as the most refined malice he added a grotesque wit so brilliant that in some cases it does not fall short of that of Rabelais.

In such circumstances, and with such objects and means, he set to work to attack or circumvent his prey. The tone in which he appealed to Clement VII not to complain or to think of vengeance, but to forgive, at the moment when the wailings of the devastated city were ascending to the Castel Sant' Angelo, where the Pope himself was a prisoner, is the mockery of a devil or a monkey. Sometimes, when he is forced to give up all hope of presents, his fury breaks out into a savage howl, as in the 'Capitolo' to the Prince of Salerno, who after paying him for some time refused to do so any longer. On the other hand, it seems that the terrible Pierluigi Farnese, Duke of Parma, never took any notice of him at all. As this gentleman had probably

renounced altogether the pleasures of a good reputation, it was not easy to cause him any annoyance; Aretino tried to do so by comparing his personal appearance to that of a constable, a miller, and a baker. Aretino is most comical of all in the expression of whining mendicancy, as in the 'Capitolo' to Francis I; but the letters and poems made up of menaces and flattery cannot, notwithstanding all that is ludicrous in them, be read without the deepest disgust. A letter like that one of his written to Michelangelo in November, 1545, is alone of its kind; along with all the admiration he expresses for the 'Last Judgement' he charges him with irreligion, indecency, and theft from the heirs of Julius II, and adds in a conciliating postscript, 'I only want to show you that if you are "divino," I am not "d'acqua." ' Aretino laid great stress upon it whether from the insanity of conceit or by way of caricaturing famous men that he himself should be called divine, as one of his flatterers had already begun to do; and he certainly attained so much personal celebrity that his house at Arezzo passed for one

of the sights of the place. There were indeed whole months during which he never ventured to cross his threshold at Venice, lest he should fall in with some incensed Florentine like the younger Strozzi. Nor did he escape the cudgels and the daggers of his enemies, although they failed to have the effect which Berni prophesied him in a famous sonnet. Aretino died in his house, of apoplexy.

The differences he made in his modes of flattery are remarkable: in dealing with non Italians he was grossly fulsome; people like Duke Cosimo of Florence he treated very differently. He praised the beauty of the then youthful prince, who in fact did share this quality with Augustus in no ordinary degree; he praised his moral conduct, with an oblique reference to the financial pursuits of Cosimo's mother, Maria Salviati, and concluded with a mendicant whine about the bad times and so forth. When Cosimo pensioned him, which he did liberally, considering his habitual parsimony to the extent, at least, of 160 ducats a year he had doubtless an eye to Aretino's dangerous

character as Spanish agent. Aretino could ridicule and revile Cosimo, and in the same breath threaten the Florentine agent that he would obtain from the Duke his immediate recall; and if the Medicean prince felt himself at last to be seen through by Charles V he would naturally not be anxious that Aretino's jokes and rhymes against him should circulate at the Imperial court. A curiously qualified piece of flattery was that addressed to the notorious Marquis of Marignano, who as Castellan of Musso had attempted to found an independent State. Thanking him for the gift of a hundred crowns, Aretino writes: 'All the qualities which a prince should have are present in you, and all men would think so, were it not that the acts of violence inevitable at the beginning of all undertakings cause you to appear a trifle rough _.'

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It has often been noticed as something singular that Aretino only reviled the world, and not God also. The religious belief of a man who lived as he did is a matter of

perfect indifference, as are also the edifying writings which he composed for reasons of his own. It is in fact hard to say why he should have been a blasphemer. He was no professor, or theoretical thinker or writer; and he could extort no money from God by threats or flattery, and was consequently never goaded into blasphemy by a refusal. A man like him does not take trouble for nothing.

It is a good sign for the present spirit of Italy that such a character and such a career have become a thousand times impossible. But historical criticism will always find in Aretino an important study.

PART THREE The Revival of Antiquity

Introductory

Now that this point in our historical view of Italian civilization has been reached, it is time to speak of the influence of antiquity, the 'new birth' of which has been one sidedly chosen as the name to sum up the whole period. The conditions which have been hitherto described would have sufficed, apart from antiquity, to upturn and to mature the national mind; and most of the intellectual tendencies which yet remain to be noticed would be conceivable without it. But both what has gone before and what we have still to discuss are colored in a thousand ways by the influence of the ancient world; and though the essence of the phenomena might still have been the same without the classical revival, it is only with and through this revival that they are actually manifested to us. The Renaissance would not have been the process of world wide significance which it is, if its elements could be so easily separated from one

another. We must insist upon it, as one of the chief propositions of this book, that it was not the revival of antiquity alone, but its union with the genius of the Italian people, which achieved the conquest of the western world. The amount of independence which the national spirit maintained in this union varied according to circumstances. In the modern Latin literature of the period, it is very small, while in the visual arts, as well as in other spheres, it is remarkably great; and hence the alliance between two distant epochs in the civilization of the same people, because concluded on equal terms, proved justifiable and fruitful. The rest of Europe was free either to repel or else partly or wholly to accept the mighty impulse which came forth from Italy. Where the latter was the case we may as well be spared the complaints over the early decay of mediaeval faith and civilization. Had these been strong enough to hold their ground, they would be alive to this day. If those elegiac natures which long to see them return could pass but one hour in the midst of them, they would gasp to

be back in modern air. That in a great historical process of this kind flowers of exquisite beauty may perish, without being made immortal in poetry or tradition, is undoubtedly true; nevertheless, we cannot wish the process undone. The general result of it consists in this that by the side of the Church which had hitherto held the countries of the West together there arose a new spiritual influence which, spreading itself abroad from Italy, became the breath of life for all the more instructed minds in Europe. The worst that can be said of the movement is, that it was antipopular, that through it Europe became for the first time sharply divided into the cultivated and uncultivated classes. The reproach will appear groundless when we reflect that even now the fact, though clearly recognized, cannot be altered. The separation, too, is by no means so cruel and absolute in Italy as elsewhere. The most artistic of her poets, Tasso, is in the hands of even the poorest.

The civilization of Greece and Rome, which, ever since the fourteenth century, obtained so powerful a hold on

Italian life, as the source and basis of culture, as the object and ideal of existence, partly also as an avowed reaction against preceding tendencies this civilization had long been exerting a partial influence on mediaeval Europe, even beyond the boundaries of Italy. The culture of which Charlemagne was a representative was, in face of the barbarism of the seventh and eighth centuries, essentially a Renaissance, and could appear under no other form. Just as in the Romanesque architecture of the North, beside the general outlines inherited from antiquity, remarkable direct imitations of the antique also occur, so too monastic scholarship had not only gradually absorbed an immense mass of materials from Roman writers, but the style of it, from the days of Einhard onwards, shows traces of conscious imitation.

But the resuscitation of antiquity took a different form in Italy from that which it assumed in the North. The wave of barbarism had scarcely gone by before the people, in whom the former life was but half effaced, showed a

consciousness of its past and a wish to reproduce it. Elsewhere in Europe men deliberately and with reflection borrowed this or the other element of classical civilization; in Italy the sympathies both of the learned and of the people were naturally engaged on the side of antiquity as a whole, which stood to them as a symbol of past greatness. The Latin language, too, was easy to an Italian, and the numerous monuments and documents in which the country abounded facilitated a return to the past. With this tendency other elements the popular character which time had now greatly modified, the political institutions imported by the Lombards from Germany, chivalry and other northern forms of civilization, and the influence of religion and the Church combined to produce the modern Italian spirit, which was destined to serve as the model and ideal for the whole western world.

How antiquity influenced the visual arts, as soon as the flood of barbarism had subsided, is clearly shown in the Tuscan buildings of the twelfth and in the sculptures of the

thirteenth centuries. In poetry, too, there will appear no want of similar analogies to those who hold that the greatest Latin poet of the twelfth century, the writer who struck the keynote of a whole class of Latin poems, was an Italian. We mean the author of the best pieces in the so called 'Carmina Burana.' A frank enjoyment of life and its pleasures, as whose patrons the gods of heathendom are invoked, while Catos and Scipios hold the place of the saints and heroes of Christianity, flows in full current through the rhymed verses. Reading them through at a stretch, we can scarcely help coming to the conclusion that an Italian, probably a Lombard, is speaking; in fact, there are positive grounds for thinking so. To a certain degree these Latin poems of the 'Clerici vagantes' of the twelfth century, with all their remarkable frivolity, are, doubtless, a product in which the whole of Europe had a share; but the writer of the song 'De Phyllide et Flora' and the 'Aestuans Interius' can have been a northerner as little as the polished Epicurean observer to whom we owe 'Dum Diana vitrea

sero lampas oritur.' Here, in truth, is a reproduction of the whole ancient view of life, which is all the more striking from the medieval form of the verse in which it is set forth. There are many works of this and the following centuries, in which a careful imitation of the antique appears both in the hexameter and pentameter of the meter and in the classical, often myth ological, character of the subject, and which yet have not anything like the same spirit of antiquity about them. In the hexametric chronicles and other works of Guglielmus Apuliensis and his successors , we find frequent trace of a diligent study of Virgil, Ovid, Lucan, Statius, and Claudian; but this classical form is, after all, a mere matter of archaeology, as is the classical subject in compilers like Vincent of Beauvais, or in the mythological and allegorical writer, Alanus ab Insulis. The Renaissance, however, is not a fragmentary imitation or compilation, but a new birth; and the signs of this are visible in the poems of the unknown 'Clericus' of the twelfth century.

But the great and general enthusiasm of the Italians for Classical antiquity did not display itself before the fourteenth century. For this a development of civic life was required, which took place only in Italy, and there not till then. It was needful that noble and burgher should first learn to dwell together on equal terms, and that a social world should arise which felt the want of culture, and had the leisure and the means to obtain it. But culture, as soon as it freed itself from the fantastic bonds of the Middle Ages, could not at once and without help find its way to the understanding of the physical and intellectual world. It needed a guide, and found one in the ancient civilization, with its wealth of truth and knowledge in every spiritual interest. Both the form and the substance of this civilization were adopted with admiring gratitude; it became the chief part of the culture of the age. The general condition of the country was favourable to this transformation. The medieval empire, since the fall of the Hohenstaufen, had either renounced, or was unable to make good, its claims on

Italy. The Popes had migrated to Avignon. Most of the political powers actually existing owed their origin to violent and illegitimate means. The spirit of the people, now awakened to self consciousness, sought for some new and stable ideal on which to rest. And thus the vision of the world wide empire of Italy and Rome so possessed the popular mind that Cola di Rienzi could actually attempt to put it in practice. The conception he formed of his task, particularly when tribune for the first time, could only end in some extravagant comedy; nevertheless, the memory of ancient Rome was no slight support to the national sentiment. Armed afresh with its culture, the Italian soon felt himself in truth citizen of the most advanced nation in the world.

It is now our task to sketch this spiritual movement, not indeed in all its fullness, but in its most salient features, and especially in its first beginnings.

The Ruins of Rome

Rome itself, the city of ruins, now became the object of a wholly different sort of piety from that of the time when the 'Mirabilia Roma' and the collection of William of Malmesbury were composed. The imaginations of the devout pilgrim, or of the seeker after marvels and treasures, are supplanted in contemporary records by the interests of the patriot and the historian. In this sense we must understand Dante's words, that the stones of the walls of Rome deserve reverence, and that the ground on which the city is built is more worthy than men say. The jubilees, incessant as they were, have scarcely left a single devout record in literature properly so called. The best thing that Giovanni Villani brought back from the jubilee of the year 1300 was the resolution to write his history which had been awakened in him by the sight of the ruins of Rome. Petrarch gives evidence of a taste divided between classical and Christian antiquity. He tells us how often with Giovanni Colonna he

ascended the mighty vaults of the Baths of Diocletian, and there in the transparent air, amid the wide silence with the broad panorama stretching far around them, they spoke, not of business or political affairs, but of the history which the ruins beneath their feet suggested, Petrarch appearing in these dialogues as the partisan of classical, Giovanni of Christian antiquity; then they would discourse of philosophy and of the inventors of the arts. How often since that time, down to the days of Gibbon and Niebuhr, have the same ruins stirred men's minds to the same reflections!

This double current of feeling is also recognizable in the 'Dittamondo' of Fazio degli Uberti, composed about the year 1360 a description of visionary travels, in which the author is accompanied by the old geographer Solinus, as Dante was by Virgil. They visit Bari in memory of St. Nicholas, and Monte Gargano of the archangel Michael, and in Rome the legends of Aracoeli and of Santa Maria in Trastevere are mentioned. Still, the pagan splendor of ancient Rome unmistakably exercises a greater charm upon

them. A venerable matron in torn garments Rome herself is meant tells them of the glorious past, and gives them a minute description of the old triumphs; she then leads the strangers through the city, and points out to them the seven hills and many of the chief ruins 'che comprender potrai, quanto fui bella.'

Unfortunately this Rome of the schismatic and Avignonese popes was no longer, in respect of classical remains, what it had been some generations earlier. The destruction of 140 fortified houses of the Roman nobles by the senator Brancalone in 1257 must have wholly altered the character of the most important buildings then standing: for the nobles had no doubt ensconced themselves in the loftiest and best preserved of the ruins. Nevertheless, far more was left than we now find, and probably many of the remains had still their marble incrustation, their pillared entrances, and their other ornaments, where we now see nothing but the skeleton of brickwork. In this state of things, the first beginnings of a topographical study of the old city

were made.

In Poggio's walks through Rome the study of the remains themselves is for the first time more intimately combined with that of the ancient authors and inscriptions the latter he sought out from among all the vegetation in which they were imbedded the writer's imagination is severely restrained, and the memories of Christian Rome carefully excluded. The only pity is that Poggio's work was not fuller and was not illustrated with sketches. Far more was left in his time than was found by Raphael eighty years later. He saw the tomb of Caecilia Metella and the columns in front of one of the temples on the slope of the Capitol, first in full preservation, and then afterwards half destroyed, owing to that unfortunate quality which marble possesses of being easily burnt into lime. A vast colonnade near the Minerva fell piecemeal a victim to the same fate. A witness in the year 1443 tells us that this manufacture of lime still went on: 'which is a shame, for the new buildings are pitiful, and the beauty of Rome is in its ruins.' The inhabitants of

that day, in their peasant's cloaks and boots, looked to foreigners like cowherds; and in fact the cattle were pastured in the city up to the Banchi. The only social gatherings were the services at church, on which occasion it was possible also to get a sight of the beautiful women.

In the last years of Eugenius IV Biondus of Forli wrote his 'Roma Instaurata,' making use of Frontinus and of the old 'Libri Regionali,' as well as, it seems, of Anastasius. His object is not only the description of what existed, but still more the recovery of what was lost. In accordance with the dedication to the Pope, he consoles himself for the general ruin by the thought of the precious relics of the saints in which Rome was so rich.

With Nicholas V that new monumental spirit which was distinctive of the age of the Renaissance appeared on the papal throne. The new passion for embellishing the city brought with it on the one hand a fresh danger for the ruins, on the other a respect for them, as forming one of Rome's claims to distinction. Pius II was wholly possessed by

antiquarian enthusiasm, and if he speaks little of the antiquities of Rome, he closely studied those of all other parts of Italy, and was the first to know and describe accurately the remains which abounded in the districts for miles around the capital. It is true that, both as priest and cosmographer, he was interested alike in classical and Christian monuments and in the marvels of nature. Or was he doing violence to himself when he wrote that Nola was more highly honoured by the memory of St. Paulinus than by all its classical reminiscences and by the heroic struggle of Marcellus? Not, indeed, that his faith in relics was assumed; but his mind was evidently rather disposed to an inquiring interest in nature and antiquity, to a zeal for monumental works, to a keen and delicate observation of human life. In the last years of his Papacy, afflicted with the gout and yet in the most cheerful mood, he was borne in his litter over hill and dale to Tusculum, Alba, Tibur, Ostia, Falerii, and Otriculum, and whatever he saw he noted down. He followed the Roman roads and aqueducts, and tried to

fix the boundaries of the old tribes which had dwelt round the city. On an excursion to Tivoli with the great Federigo of Urbino the time was happily spent in talk on the military system of the ancients, and particularly on the Trojan war. Even on his journey to the Congress of Mantua he searched, though unsuccessfully, for the labyrinth of Clusium mentioned by Pliny, and visited the so called villa of Virgil on the Mincio. That such a Pope should demand a classical Latin style from his abbreviators, is no more than might be expected. It was he who, in the war with Naples, granted an amnesty to the men of Arpinum, as countrymen of Cicero and Marius, after whom many of them were named. It was to him alone, as both judge and patron, that Blondus could dedicate his 'Roma Triumphans,' the first great attempt at a complete exposition of Roman antiquity.

Nor was the enthusiasm for the classical past of Italy confined at this period to the capital. Boccaccio had already called the vast ruins of Baia 'old walls, yet new for modern spirits'; and since his time they were held to be the most

interesting sight near Naples. Collections of antiquities of all sorts now became common. Ciriaco of Ancona travelled not only through Italy, but through other countries of the old Orbis terrarum, and brought back countless inscriptions and sketches. When asked why he took all this trouble, he replied, 'To wake the dead.' The histories of the various cities of Italy had from the earliest times laid claim to some true or imagined connection with Rome, had alleged some settlement or colonization which started from the capital; and the obliging manufacturers of pedigrees seem constantly to have derived various families from the oldest and most famous blood of Rome. So highly was the distinction valued, that men clung to it even in the light of the dawning criticism of the fifteenth century. When Pius II was at Viterbo he said frankly to the Roman deputies who begged him to return, 'Rome is as much my home as Siena, for my House, the Piccolomini, came in early times from the capital to Siena, as is proved by the constant use of the names 'neas and Sylvius in my family.' He would probably

have had no objection to be held a descendant of the Julii. Paul II, a Barbo of Venice, found his vanity flattered by deducing his House, notwithstanding an adverse pedigree, according to which it came from Germany, from the Roman Ahenobarbus, who had led a colony to Parma, and whose successors had been driven by party conflicts to migrate to Venice. That the Massimi claimed descent from Q. Fabius Maximus, and the Cornaro from the Cornelii, cannot surprise us. On the other hand, it is a strikingly exceptional fact for the sixteenth century that the novelist Bandello tried to connect his blood with a noble family of Ostrogoths.

To return to Rome. The inhabitants, 'who then called themselves Romans,' accepted greedily the homage which was offered them by the rest of Italy. Under Paul II, Sixtus IV and Alexander VI, magnificent processions formed part of the Carnival, representing the scene most attractive to the imagination of the time the triumph of the Roman Emperor. The sentiment of the people expressed itself

naturally in this shape and others like it. In this mood of public feeling, a report arose on April 18, 1485, that the corpse of a young Roman lady of the classical period wonderfully beautiful and in perfect preservation had been discovered. Some Lombard masons digging out an ancient tomb on an estate of the convent of Santa Maria Nuova, on the Appian Way, beyond the tomb of Caecilia Metella, were said to have found a marble sarcophagus with the inscription: 'Julia, daughter of Claudius.' On this basis the following story was built. The Lombards disappeared with the jewels and treasure which were found with the corpse in the sarcophagus. The body had been coated with an antiseptic essence, and was as fresh and flexible as that of a girl of fifteen the hour after death. It was said that she still kept the colors of life, with eyes and mouth half open. She was taken to the palace of the 'Conservatori' on the Capitol; and then a pilgrimage to see her began. Among the crowd were many who came to paint her; 'for she was more beautiful than can be said or written, and, were it said or

written, it would not be believed by those who had not seen her.' By order of Innocent VIII she was secretly buried one night outside the Pincian Gate; the empty sarcophagus remained in the court of the 'Conservatori.' Probably a colored mask of wax or some other material was modelled in the classical style on the face of the corpse, with which the gilded hair of which we read would harmonize admirably. The touching point in the story is not the fact itself, but the firm belief that an ancient body, which was now thought to be at last really before men's eyes, must of necessity be far more beautiful than anything of modern date.

Meanwhile the material knowledge of old Rome was increased by excavations. Under Alexander VI the so called 'Grotesques,' that is, the mural decorations of the ancients, were discovered, and the Apollo of the Belvedere was found at Porto d'Anzio. Under Julius II followed the memorable discoveries of the Laocoon, of the Venus of the Vatican, of the Torso of the Cleopatra. The palaces of the

nobles and the cardinals began to be filled with ancient statues and fragments. Raphael undertook for Leo X that ideal restoration of the whole ancient city which his celebrated letter speaks of. After a bitter complaint over the devastations which had not even then ceased, and which had been particularly frequent under Julius II, he beseeches the Pope to protect the few relics which were left to testify to the power and greatness of that divine soul of antiquity whose memory was inspiration to all who were capable of higher things. He then goes on with penetrating judgement to lay the foundations of a comparative history of art, and concludes by giving the definition of an architectural survey which has been accepted since his time; he requires the ground plan, section and elevation separately of every building that remained. How archaeology devoted itself after his day to the study of the venerated city and grew into a special science, and how the Vitruvian Academy at all events proposed to itself great aims, cannot here be related. Let us rather pause at the days of Leo X, under

whom the enjoyment of antiquity combined with all other pleasures to give to Roman life a unique stamp and consecration. The Vatican resounded with song and music, and their echoes were heard through the city as a call to joy and gladness, though Leo did not succeed thereby in banishing care and pain from his own life, and his deliberate calculation to prolong his days by cheerfulness was frustrated by an early death. The Rome of Leo, as described by Paolo Giovio, forms a picture too splendid to turn away from, unmistakable as are also its darker aspects the slavery of those who were struggling to rise; the secret misery of the prelates, who, notwithstanding heavy debts, were forced to live in a style befitting their rank; the system of literary patronage, which drove men to be parasites or adventurers; and, lastly, the scandalous maladministration of the finances of the State. Yet the same Ariosto who knew and ridiculed all this so well, gives in the sixth satire a longing picture of his expected intercourse with the accomplished poets who would conduct him through the

city of ruins, of the learned counsel which he would there find for his own literary efforts, and of the treasures of the Vatican library. These, he says, and not the long abandoned hope of Medicean protection, were the baits which really attracted him, if he were again asked to go as Ferrarese ambassador to Rome.

But the ruins within and outside Rome awakened not only archaeological zeal and patriotic enthusiasm, but an elegiac of sentimental melancholy. In Petrarch and Boccaccio we find touches of this feeling. Poggio Bracciolini often visited the temple of Venus and Roma, in the belief that it was that of Castor and Pollux, where the senate used so often to meet, and would lose himself in memories of the great orators Crassus, Hortensius, Cicero. The language of Pius II, especially in describing Tivoli, has a thoroughly sentimental ring, and soon afterwards appeared the first pictures of ruins, with a commentary by Polifilo. Ruins of mighty arches and colonnades, half hid in plane trees, laurels, cypresses and brushwood, figure in his

pages. In the sacred legends it became the custom, we can hardly say how, to lay the scene of the birth of Christ in the ruins of a magnificent palace. That artificial ruins became afterwards a necessity of landscape gardening is only a practical consequence of this feeling.

The Classics

But the literary bequests of antiquity, Greek as well as Latin, were of far more importance than the architectural, and indeed than all the artistic remains which it had left. They were held in the most absolute sense to be the springs of all knowledge. The literary conditions of that age of great discoveries have often been set forth; no more can here be attempted than to point out a few less known features of the picture.

Great as was the influence of the old writers on the Italian mind in the fourteenth century and before, yet that influence was due rather to the wide diffusion of what had long been known than to the discovery of much that was

new. The most popular latin poets, historians, orators and letter writers, together with a number of Latin translations of single works of Aristotle, Plutarch, and a few other Greek authors, constituted the treasure from which a few favored individuals in the time of Petrarch and Boccaccio drew their inspiration. The former, as is well known, owned and kept with religious care a Greek Homer, which he was unable to read. A complete Latin translation of the Iliad and Odyssey, though a very bad one, was made at Petrarch's suggestion, and with Boccaccio's help, by a Calabrian Greek, Leonzio Pilato. But with the fifteenth century began the long list of new discoveries, the systematic creation of libraries by means of copies, and the rapid multiplication of translations from the Greek.

Had it not been for the enthusiasm of a few collectors of that age, who shrank from no effort or privation in their researches, we should certainly possess only a small part of the literature, especially that of the Greeks, which is now in our hands. Pope Nicholas V, when only a simple monk, ran

deeply into debt through buying manuscripts or having them copied. Even then he made no secret of his passion for the two great interests of the Renaissance, books and buildings. As Pope he kept his word. Copyists wrote and spies searched for him through half the world. Perotto received 500 ducats for the Latin translation of Polybius; Guarino, 1,000 gold florins for that of Strabo, and he would have been paid 500 more but for the death of the Pope. Filelfo was to have received 10,000 gold florins for a metrical translation of Homer, and was only prevented by the Pope's death from coming from Milan to Rome. Nicholas left a collection of 5,000 or, according to another way of calculating, of 6,000 volumes, for the use of the members of the Curia, which became the foundation of the library of the Vatican. It was to be preserved in the palace itself, as its noblest ornament, the library of Ptolemy Philadelphus at Alexandria. When the plague drove him and his court to Fabriano, whence then, as now, the best paper was procured, he took his translators and compilers

with him, that he might run no risk of losing them.

The Florentine Niccolo Niccoli, a member of that accomplished circle of friends which surrounded the elder Cosimo de' Medici, spent his whole fortune in buying books. At last, when his money was all gone, the Medici put their purse at his disposal for any sum which his purpose might require. We owe to him the later books of Ammianus Marcellinus, the 'De Oratore' of Cicero, and other works; he persuaded Cosimo to buy the best manuscript of Pliny from a monastery at Lubeck. With noble confidence he lent his books to those who asked for them, allowed all comers to study them in his own house, and was ready to converse with the students on what they had read. His collection of 800 volumes, valued at 6,000 gold florins, passed after his death, through Cosimo's intervention, to the monastery of San Marco, on the condition that it should be accessible to the public.

Of the two great book finders, Guarino and Poggio, the latter, on the occasion of the Council of Constance and

acting partly as the agent of Niccoli, searched industriously among the abbeys of South Germany. He there discovered six orations of Cicero, and the first complete Quintilian, that of St. Gallen, now at Zurich; in thirty two days he is said to have copied the whole of it in a beautiful handwriting. He was able to make important additions to Silius Italicus, Manilius, Lucretius, Valerius Flaccus, Asconius Pedianus, Columella, Celsus, Aulus Gellius, Statius, and others; and with the help of Leonardo Aretino he unearthed the last twelve comedies of Plautus, as well as the Verrine orations.

The famous Greek, Cardinal Bessarion, in whom patriotism was mingled with a zeal for letters, collected, at a great sacrifice, 600 manuscripts of pagan and Christian authors. He then looked round for some receptacle where they could safely lie until his unhappy country, if she ever regained her freedom, could reclaim her lost literature. The Venetian government declared itself ready to erect a suitable building, and to this day the Biblioteca Marciana

retains a part of these treasures.

The formation of the celebrated Medicean library has a history of its own, into which we cannot here enter. The chief collector for Lorenzo il Magnifico was Johannes Lascaris. It is well known that the collection, after the plundering in the year 1494, had to be recovered piecemeal by the Cardinal Giovanni Medici, afterwards Leo X.

The library of Urbino, now in the Vatican, was wholly the work of the great Federigo of Montefeltro. As a boy he had begun to collect; in after years he kept thirty or forty 'scrittori' employed in various places, and spent in the course of time no less than 30,000 ducats on the collection. It was systematically extended and completed, chiefly by the help of Vespasiano, and his account of it forms an ideal picture of a library of the Renaissance. At Urbino there were catalogues of the libraries of the Vatican, of St. Mark at Florence, of the Visconti at Pavia, and even of the library at Oxford. It was noted with pride that in richness and completeness none could rival Urbino. Theology and the

Middle Ages were perhaps most fully represented. There was a complete Thomas Aquinas, a complete Albertus Magnus, a complete Bonaventura. The collection, however, was a many sided one, and included every work on medicine which was then to be had. Among the 'moderns' the great writers of the fourteenth century Dante and Boccaccio, with their complete works occupied the first place. Then followed twenty five select humanists, invariably with both their Latin and Italian writings and with all their translations. Among the Greek manuscripts the Fathers of the Church far outnumbered the rest; yet in the list of the classics we find all the works of Sophocles, all of Pindar, and all of Menander. The last codex must have quickly disappeared from Urbino, else the philologists would have soon edited it.

We have, further, a good deal of information as to the way in which manuscripts and libraries were multiplied. The purchase of an ancient manuscript, which contained a rare, or the only complete, or the only existing text of an

old writer, was naturally a lucky accident of which we need take no further account. Among the professional copyists those who understood Greek took the highest place, and it was they especially who bore the honorable name of 'scrittori.' Their number was always limited, and the pay they received very large. The rest, simply called 'copisti,' were partly mere clerks who made their living by such work, partly schoolmasters and needy men of learning, who desired an addition to their income. The copyists at Rome in the time of Nicholas V were mostly Germans or Frenchmen 'barbarians' as the Italian humanists called them, probably men who were in search of favours at the papal court, and who kept themselves alive meanwhile by this means. When Cosimo de' Medici was in a hurry to form a library for his favorite foundation, the Badia below Fiesole, he sent for Vespasiano, and received from him the advice to give up all thoughts of purchasing books, since those which were worth getting could not be had easily, but rather to make use of the copyists; whereupon Cosimo bargained to

pay him so much a day, and Vespasiano, with forty five writers under him, delivered 200 volumes in twenty two months. The catalogue of the works to be copied was sent to Cosimo by Nicholas V, who wrote it with his own hand. Ecclesiastical literature and the books needed for the choral services naturally held the chief place in the list.

The handwriting was that beautiful modern Italian which was already in use in the preceding century, and which makes the sight of one of the books of that time a pleasure. Pope Nicholas V, Poggio, Gianozzo Manetti, Niccolo Niccoli, and other distinguished scholars, themselves wrote a beautiful hand, and desired and tolerated none other. The decorative adjuncts, even when miniatures formed no part of them, were full of taste, as may be seen especially in the Laurentian manuscripts, with the light and graceful scrolls which begin and end the lines. The material used to write on, when the work was ordered by great or wealthy people, was always parchment; the binding, both in the Vatican and at Urbino, was a uniform

crimson velvet with silver clasps. Where there was so much care to show honour to the contents of a book by the beauty of its outward form, it is intelligible that the sudden appearance of printed books was greeted at first with anything but favour. Federigo of Urbino 'would have been ashamed to own a printed book.'

But the weary copyists not those who lived by the trade, but the many who were forced to copy a book in order to have it rejoiced at the German invention. It was soon applied in Italy to the multiplication first of the Latin and then of the Greek authors, and for a long period nowhere but in Italy, yet it spread with by no means the rapidity which might have been expected from the general enthusiasm for these works. After a while the modern relation between author and publisher began to develop itself, and under Alexander VI, when it was no longer easy to destroy a book, as Cosimo could make Filelfo promise to do, the prohibitive censorship made its appearance.

The growth of textual criticism which accompanied

the advancing study of languages and antiquity belongs as little to the subject of this book as the history of scholarship in general. We are here occupied, not with the learning of the Italians in itself, but with the reproduction of antiquity in literature and life. One word more on the studies themselves may still be permissible.

Greek scholarship was chiefly confined to Florence and to the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries. The impulse which had proceeded from Petrarch and Boccaccio, superficial as was their own acquaintance with Greek, was powerful, but did not tell immediately on their contemporaries, except a few; on the other hand, the study of Greek literature died out about the year 1520 with the last of the colony of learned Greek exiles, and it was a singular piece of fortune that northerners like Erasmus, the Stephani, and Budaeus had meanwhile made themselves masters of the language. That colony had begun with Manuel Chrysoloras and his relation John, and with George of Trebizond. Then followed, about and after the time of

the conquest of Constantinople, John Argyropulos, Theodore Gaza, Demetrios Chalcondylas, who brought up his sons Theophilos and Basilios to be excellent Hellenists, Andronikos Kallistos, Marcos Musuros and the family of Lascaris, not to mention others. But after the subjection of Greece by the Turks was completed, the succession of scholars was maintained only by the sons of the fugitives and perhaps here and there by some Candian or Cyprian refugee. That the decay of Hellenistic studies began about the time of the death of Leo X was due partly to a general change of intellectual attitude, and to a certain satiety of classical influences which now made itself felt; but its coincidence with the death of the Greek fugitives was not wholly a matter of accident. The study of Greek among the Italians appears, if we take the year 1500 as our standard, to have been pursued with extraordinary zeal. Many of those who then learned the language could still speak it half a century later, in their old age, like the Popes Paul III and Paul IV. But this sort of mastery of the study presupposes

intercourse with native Greeks.

Besides Florence, Rome and Padua nearly always maintained paid teachers of Greek, and Verona, Ferrara, Venice, Perugia, Pavia and other cities occasional teachers. Hellenistic studies owed a priceless debt to the press of Aldo Manuzio at Venice, where the most important and voluminous writers were for the first time printed in the original. Aldo ventured his all in the enterprise; he was an editor and publisher whose like the world has rarely seen.

Along with this classical revival, Oriental studies now assumed considerable proportions. The controversial writings of the great Florentine statesman and scholar, Giannozzo Manetti against the Jews afford an early instance of a complete mastery of their language and science. His son Agnolo was from his childhood instructed in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. The father, at the bidding of Nicholas V, translated the whole Bible afresh, as the philologists of the time insisted on giving up the 'Vulgata.'

Many other humanists devoted themselves before

Reuchlin to the study of Hebrew, among them Pico della Mirandola, who was not satisfied with a knowledge of the Hebrew grammar and ScriptureS, but penetrated into the Jewish Cabbalah and even made himself as familiar with the literature of the Talmud as any Rabbi.

Among the Oriental languages, Arabic was studied as well as Hebrew. The science of medicine, no longer satisfied with the older Latin translations of the great Arab physicians, had constant recourse to the originals, to which an easy access was offered by the Venetian consulates in the East, where Italian doctors were regularly kept. Hieronimo Ramusio, a Venetian physician, translated a great part of Avicenna from the Arabic and died at Damascus in 1486. Andrea Mongaio of Belluno lived long at Damascus for the purpose of studying Avicenna, learnt Arabic, and emended the author's text. The Venetian government afterwards appointed him professor of this subject at Padua.

We must here linger for a moment over Pico della

Mirandola, before passing on to the general effects of humanism. He was the only man who loudly and vigorously defended the truth and science of all ages against the one sided worship of classical antiquity. He knew how to value not only Averroes and the Jewish investigators, but also the scholastic writers of the Middle Ages, according to the matter of their writings. In one of his writings he makes them say, 'We shall live for ever, not in the schools of word catchers, but in the circle of the wise, where they talk not of the mother of Andromache or of the sons of Niobe, but of the deeper causes of things human and divine; he who looks closely will see that even the barbarians had intelligence _ , _not on the tongue but in the breast.' Himself writing a vigorous and not inelegant Latin, and a master of clear exposition, he despised the purism of pedants and the current over estimate of borrowed forms, especially when joined, as they often are, with one sidedness, and involving indifference to the wider truth of the things themselves. Looking at Pico, we can guess at the

lofty flight which Italian philosophy would have taken had not the counter reformation annihilated the higher spiritual life of the people.

The Humanists

Who now were those who acted as mediators between their own age and a venerated antiquity, and made the latter a chief element in the culture of the former?

They were a crowd of the most miscellaneous sort, wearing one face today and another tomorrow; but they clearly felt themselves, and it was fully recognized by their time that they formed, a wholly new element in society. The 'clerici vagantes' of the twelfth century may perhaps be taken as their forerunners the same unstable existence, the same free and more than free views of life, and the germs at all events of the same pagan tendencies in their poetry. But now, as competitor with the whole culture of the Middle Ages, which was essentially clerical and was fostered by the Church, there appeared a new civilization, founding

itself on that which lay on the other side of the Middle Ages. Its active representatives became influential because they knew what the ancients knew, because they tried to write as the ancients wrote, because they began to think, and soon to feel, as the ancients thought and felt. The tradition to which they devoted themselves passed at a thousand points into genuine reproduction.

Some modern writers deplore the fact that the germs of a far more independent and essentially national culture, such as appeared in Florence about the year 1300, were afterwards so completely swamped by the humanists. There was then, we are told, nobody in Florence who could not read; even the donkeymen sang the verses of Dante; the best Italian manuscripts which we possess belonged originally to Florentine artisans; the publication of a popular encyclopedia, like the 'Tesoro' of Brunetto Latini, was then possible; and all this was founded on strength and soundness of character due to the universal participation in public affairs, to commerce and travel, and

to the systematic reprobation of idleness. The Florentines, it is urged, were at that time respected and influential throughout the whole world, and were called in that year, not without reason, by Pope Boniface VIII, 'the fifth element.' The rapid progress of humanism after the year 1400 paralysed native impulses. Henceforth men looked only to antiquity for the solution of every problem, and consequently allowed literature to turn into mere quotation. Nay, the very fall of civil freedom is partly ascribed to all this, since the new learning rested on obedience to authority, sacrificed municipal rights to Roman law, and thereby both sought and found the favour of the despots.

These charges will occupy us now and then at a later stage of our inquiry, when we shall attempt to reduce them to their true value, and to weigh the losses against the gains of this movement. For the present we must confine ourselves to showing how the civilization even of the vigorous fourteenth century necessarily prepared the way for the complete victory of humanism, and how precisely

the greatest representatives of the national Italian spirit were themselves the men who opened wide the gate for the measureless devotion to antiquity in the fifteenth century.

To begin with Dante. If a succession of men of equal genius had presided over Italian culture, whatever elements their natures might have absorbed from the antique, they still could not fail to retain a characteristic and strongly marked national stamp. But neither Italy nor Western Europe produced another Dante, and he was and remained the man who first thrust antiquity into the foreground of national culture. In the 'Divine Comedy' he treats the ancient and the Christian worlds, not indeed as of equal authority, but as parallel to one another. Just as, at an earlier period of the Middle Ages, types and anti types were sought in the history of the Old and New Testaments, so does Dante constantly bring together a Christian and a pagan illustration of the same fact. It must be remembered that the Christian cycle of history and legend was familiar, while the ancient was relatively unknown, was full of

promise and of interest, and must necessarily have gained the upper hand in the competition for public sympathy when there was no longer a Dante to hold the balance between the two.

Petrarch, who lives in the memory of most people nowadays chiefly as a great Italian poet, owed his fame among his contemporaries far rather to the fact that he was a kind of living representative of antiquity, that he imitated all styles of Latin poetry, endeavored by his voluminous historical and philosophical writings not to supplant but to make known the works of the ancients, and wrote letters that, as treatises on matters of antiquarian interest, obtained a reputation which to us is unintelligible, but which was natural enough in an age without handbooks.

It was the same with Boccaccio. For two centuries, when but little was known of the 'Decameron' north of the Alps, he was famous all over Europe simply on account of his Latin compilations on mythology, geography and biography. One of these, 'De Genealogia Deorum,' contains

in the fourteenth and fifteenth books a remarkable appendix, in which he discusses the position of the then youthful humanism with regard to the age. We must not be misled by his exclusive references to 'poesie,' as closer observation shows that he means thereby the whole mental activity of the poet scholars. This it is whose enemies he so vigorously combats the frivolous ignoramuses who have no soul for anything but debauchery; the sophistical theologian, to whom Helicon, the Castalian fountain, and the grove of Apollo were foolishness; the greedy lawyers, to whom poetry was a superfluity, since no money was to be made by it; finally the mendicant friars, described periphrastically, but clearly enough, who made free with their charges of paganism and immorality. Then follows the defence of poetry, the praise of it, and especially of the deeper and allegorical meanings which we must always attribute to it, and of that calculated obscurity which is intended to repel the dull minds of the ignorant.

And finally, with a clear reference to his own scholarly

work, the writer justifies the new relation in which his age stood to paganism. The case was wholly different, he pleads, when the Early Church had to fight its way among the heathen. Now praised be Jesus Christ ! true religion was strengthened, paganism destroyed, and the victorious Church in possession of the hostile camp. It was now possible to touch and study paganism almost _ _without danger. This is the argument invariably used in later times to defend the Renaissance.

There was thus a new cause in the world and a new class of men to maintain it. It is idle to ask if this cause ought not to have stopped short in its career of victory, to have restrained itself deliberately, and conceded the first place to purely national elements of culture. No conviction was more firmly rooted in the popular mind than that antiquity was the highest title to glory which Italy possessed.

There was a symbolical ceremony peculiar to the first generation of poet scholars which lasted on into the

fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, though losing the higher sentiment which inspired it the coronation of the poets with the laurel wreath. The origin of this custom in the Middle Ages is obscure, and the ritual of the ceremony never became fixed. It was a public demonstration, an outward and visible expression of literary enthusiasm, and naturally its form was variable. Dante, for instance, seems to have understood it in the sense of a halfreligious consecration; he desired to assume the wreath in the baptistery of San Giovanni, where, like thousands of other Florentine children, he had received baptism. He could, says his biographer, have anywhere received the crown in virtue of his fame, but desired it nowhere but in his native city, and therefore died uncrowned. From the same source we learn that the usage was till then uncommon, and was held to be inherited by the ancient Romans from the Greeks. The most recent source to which the practices could be referred is to be found in the Capitoline contests of musicians, poets, and other artists, founded by Domitian in imitation of the

Greeks and celebrated every five years, which may possibly have survived for a time the fall of the Roman Empire; but as few other men would venture to crown themselves, as Dante desired to do, the question arises, to whom did this office belong? Albertino Mussato was crowned at Padua in 1310 by the bishop and the rector of the University. The University of Paris, the rector of which was then a Florentine, and the municipal authorities of Rome, competed for the honour of crowning Petrarch. His self-elected examiner, King Robert of Anjou, would have liked to perform the ceremony at Naples, but Petrarch preferred to be crowned on the Capitol by the senator of Rome. This honour was long the highest object of ambition, and so it seemed to Jacobus Pizinga, an illustrious Sicilian magistrate. Then came the Italian journey of Charles IV, whom it amused to flatter the vanity of ambitious men, and impress the ignorant multitude by means of gorgeous ceremonies. Starting from the fiction that the coronation of poets was a prerogative of the old Roman emperors, and

consequently was no less his own, he crowned the Florentine scholar, Zanobi della Strada, at Pisa, to the great disgust of Boccaccio, who declined to recognize this 'laurea Pisana' as legitimate. Indeed, it might be fairly asked with what right this stranger, half Slavonic by birth, came to sit in judgement on the merits of Italian poets. But from henceforth the emperors crowned poets wherever they went on their travels; and in the fifteenth century the popes and other princes assumed the same right, till at last no regard whatever was paid to place or circumstances. In Rome, under Sixtus IV, the academy of Pomponius L'tus gave the wreath on its own authority. The Florentines had the good taste not to crown their famous humanists till after death. Carlo Aretino and Leonardo Aretino were thus crowned; the eulogy of the first was pronounced by Matteo Palmieri, of the latter by Giannozzo Manetti, before the members of the council and the whole people, the orator standing at the head of the bier, on which the corpse lay clad in a silken robe. Carlo Aretino was further honoured by a tomb in

Santa Croce, which is among the most beautiful in the whole course of the Renaissance.

Universities and Schools

The influence of antiquity on culture, of which we have now to speak, presupposes that the new learning had gained possession of the universities. This was so, but by no means to the extent and with the results which might have been expected.

Few of the Italian universities show themselves in their full vigor till the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when the increase of wealth rendered a more systematic care for education possible. At first there were generally three sorts of professorships one for civil law, another for canonical law, the third for medicine; in course of time professorships of rhetoric, of philosophy, and of astronomy were added, the last commonly, though not always, identical with astrology. The salaries varied greatly in different cases. Sometimes a capital sum was paid down.

With the spread of culture, competition became so active that the different universities tried to entice away distinguished teachers from one another, under which circumstances Bologna is said to have sometimes devoted the half of its public income to the university. The appointments were as a rule made only for a certain time, sometimes for only half a year, so that the teachers were forced to lead a wandering life, like actors. Appointments for life were, however, not unknown. Sometimes the promise was exacted not to teach elsewhere what had already been taught at one place. There were also voluntary, unpaid professors.

Of the chairs which have been mentioned, that of rhetoric was especially sought by the humanist; yet it depended only on his familiarity with the matter of ancient learning whether or no he could aspire to those of law, medicine, philosophy, or astronomy. The inward conditions of the science of the day were as variable as the outward conditions of the teacher. Certain jurists and physicians

received by far the largest salaries of all, the former chiefly as consulting lawyers for the suits and claims of the State which employed them. In Padua a lawyer of the fifteenth century received a salary of 1,000 ducats, and it was proposed to appoint a celebrated physician with a yearly payment of 2,000 ducats, and the right of private practice, the same man having previously received 700 gold florins at Pisa. When the jurist Bartolommeo Socini, professor at Pisa, accepted a Venetian appointment at Padua, and was on the point of starting on his journey, he was arrested by the Florentine government and only released on payment of bail to the amount of 18,000 gold florins. The high estimation in which these branches of science were held makes it intelligible why distinguished philologists turned their attention to law and medicine, while on the other hand specialists were more and more compelled to acquire something of a wide literary culture. We shall presently have occasion to speak of the work of the humanists in other departments of practical life.

Nevertheless, the position of the philologists, as such, even where the salary was large, and did not exclude other sources of income, was on the whole uncertain and temporary, so that one and the same teacher could be connected with a great variety of institutions. It is evident that change was desired for its own sake, and something fresh expected from each newcomer, as was natural at a time when science was in the making, and consequently depended to no small degree on the personal influence of the teacher. Nor was it always the case that a lecturer on classical authors really belonged to the university of the town where he taught. Communication was so easy, and the supply of suitable accommodation, in monasteries and elsewhere, was so abundant, that a private appointment was often practicable. In the first decades of the fifteenth century, when the University of Florence was at its greatest brilliance, when the courtiers of Eugenius IV, and perhaps even of Martin V thronged the lecture room, when Carlo Aretino and Filelfo were competing for the largest audience,

there existed, not only an almost complete university among the Augustinians of Santo Spirito, not only an association of scholars among the Camaldolesi of the Angeli, but individuals of mark, either singly or in common, arranged to provide philosophical and philological teaching for themselves and others. Linguistic and antiquarian studies in Rome had next to no connection with the university, and depended almost exclusively either on the favour of individual popes and prelates, or on the appointments made in the Papal chancery. It was not till Leo X that the great reorganization of the Sapienza took place, which now had eighty eight lecturers, among whom there were the most able men of Italy, reading and interpreting the classics. But this new brilliancy was of short duration. We have already spoken briefly of the Greek professorships in Italy.

To form an accurate picture of the method of scientific instruction then pursued, we must turn away our eyes as far as possible from our present academic system. Personal

intercourse between the teachers and the taught, public disputations, the constant use of Latin and often of Greek, the frequent changes of lecturers and the scarcity of books, gave the studies of that time a color which we cannot represent to ourselves without effort.

There were Latin schools in every town of the least importance, not by any means merely as preparatory to higher education, but because, next to reading, writing, and arithmetic, the knowledge of Latin was a necessity; and after Latin came logic. It is to be noted particularly that these schools did not depend on the Church, but on the municipality; some of them, too, were merely private enterprises.

This school system, directed by a few distinguished humanists, not only attained a remarkable perfection of organization, but became an instrument of higher education in the modern sense of the phrase. With the education of the children of two princely houses in North Italy institutions were connected which may be called unique of their kind.

At the court of Giovan Francesco Gonzaga at Mantua appeared the illustrious Vittorino da Feltre, one of those men who devote their whole life to an object for which their natural gifts constitute a special vocation.

He directed the education of the sons and daughters of the princely house, and one of the latter became under his care a woman of learning. When his reputation extended far and wide over Italy, and members of great and wealthy families came from long distances, even from Germany, in search of his instructions, Gonzaga was not only willing that they should be received, but seems to have held it an honour for Mantua to be the chosen school of the aristocratic world. Here for the first time gymnastics and all noble bodily exercises were treated along with scientific instruction as indispensable to a liberal education. Besides these pupils came others, whose instruction Vittorino probably held to be his highest earthly aim, the gifted poor, whom he supported in his house and educated, 'per l'amore di Dio,' along with the highborn youths who here learned to

live under the same roof with untitled genius. Gonzaga paid him a yearly salary of 300 gold florins, and contributed to the expenses caused by the poorer pupils. He knew that Vittorino never saved a penny for himself, and doubtless realized that the education of the poor was the unexpressed condition of his presence. The establishment was conducted on strictly religious lines, stricter indeed than many monasteries.

More stress was laid on pure scholarship by Guarino of Verona , who in the year 1429 was called to Ferrara by Niccolo d'Este to educate his son Lionello, and who, when his pupil was nearly grown up in 1436, began to teach at the university of eloquence and of the ancient languages. While still acting as tutor to Lionello, he had many other pupils from various parts of the country, and in his own house a select class of poor scholars, whom he partly or wholly supported. His evening hours till far into the night were devoted to hearing lessons or to instructive conversation. His house, too, was the home of a strict

religion and morality. It signified little to him or to Vittorino that most of the humanists of their day deserved small praise in the matter of morals or religion. It is inconceivable how Guarino, with all the daily work which fell upon him, still found time to write translations from the Greek and voluminous original works.

Not only in these two courts, but generally throughout Italy, the education of the princely families was in part and for certain years in the hands of the humanists, who thereby mounted a step higher in the aristocratic world. The writing of treatises on the education of princes, formerly the business of theologians, fell now within their province.

From the time of Pier Paolo Vergerio the Italian princes were well taken care of in this respect, and the custom was transplanted into Germany by Aeneas Sylvius, who addressed detailed exhortations to two young German princes of the House of Habsburg on the subject of their further education, in which they are both urged, as might be expected, to cultivate and nurture humanism. Perhaps

Aeneas was aware that in addressing these youths he was talking in the air, and therefore took measures to put his treatise into public circulation. But the relations of the humanists to the rulers will be discussed separately. We have here first to speak of those citizens, mostly Florentines, who made antiquarian interests one of the chief objects of their lives, and who were themselves either distinguished scholars, or else distinguished *_dilettanti_* who maintained the scholars. They were of peculiar significance during the period of transition at the beginning of the fifteenth century, since it was in them that humanism first showed itself practically as an indispensable element in daily life. It was not till after this time that the popes and princes began seriously to occupy themselves with it.

Niccolo Niccoli and Giannozzo Manetti have been already spoken of more than once. Niccoli is described to us by Vespasiano as a man who would tolerate nothing around him out of harmony with his own classical spirit. His handsome long robed figure, his kindly speech, his

house adorned with the noblest remains of antiquity, made a singular impression. He was scrupulously cleanly in everything, most of all at table, where ancient vases and crystal goblets stood before him on the whitest linen. The way in which he won over a pleasure loving young Florentine to intellectual interests is too charming not to be here described. Piero de' Pazzi, son of a distinguished merchant, and himself destined to the same calling, fair to behold, and much given to the pleasures of the world, thought about anything rather than literature. One day, as he was passing the Palazzo del Podesta, Niccolo called the young man to him, and although they had never before exchanged a word, the youth obeyed the call of one so respected. Niccolo asked him who his father was. He answered, 'Messer Andrea de' Pazzi.' When he was further asked what his pursuit was, Piero replied, as young people are wont to do, 'I enjoy myself'. Niccolo said to him, 'As son of such a father, and so fair to look upon, it is a shame that thou knowest nothing of the Latin language, which

would be so great an ornament to thee. If thou learnest it not, thou wilt be good for nothing, and as soon as the flower of youth is over, wilt be a man of no consequence' .

When Piero heard this, he straightway perceived that it was true, and said that he would gladly take pains to learn, if only he had a teacher. Whereupon Niccol?answered that he would see to that. And he found him a learned man for Latin and Greek, named Pontano, whom Piero treated as one of his own house, and to whom he paid 100 gold florins a year. Quitting all the pleasures in which he had hitherto lived, he studied day and night, and became a friend of all learned men and a noble-minded statesman. He learned by heart the whole 'neid and many speeches of Livy, chiefly on the way between Florence and his country house at Trebbio. Antiquity was represented in another and higher sense by Giannozzo Manetti . Precocious from his first years, he was hardly more than a child when he had finished his apprenticeship in commerce and became bookkeeper in a bank. But soon the life he led seemed to

him empty and perishable, and he began to yearn after science, through which alone man can secure immortality. He then busied himself with books as few laymen had done before him, and became, as has been said, one of the most profound scholars of his time. When appointed by the government as its representative magistrate and tax collector at Pescia and Pistoia, he fulfilled his duties in accordance with the lofty ideal with which his religious feeling and humanistic studies combined to inspire him. He succeeded in collecting the most unpopular taxes which the Florentine State imposed, and declined payment for his services. As provincial governor he refused all presents, abhorred all bribes, checked gambling, kept the country well supplied with corn, was indefatigable in settling lawsuits amicably, and did wonders in calming inflamed passions by his goodness. The Pistoiese were never able to discover to which of the two political parties he leaned. As if to symbolize the common rights and interests of all, he spent his leisure hours in writing the history of the city,

which was preserved, bound in a purple cover, as a sacred relic in the town hall. When he took his leave the city presented him with a banner bearing the municipal arms and a splendid silver helmet.

For further information as to the learned citizens of Florence at this period the reader must all the more be referred to Vespasiano, who knew them all personally, because the tone and atmosphere in which he writes, and the terms and conditions on which he mixed in their society, are of even more importance than the facts which he records. Even in a translation, and still more in the brief indications to which we are here compelled to limit ourselves, this chief merit of his book is lost. Without being a great writer, he was thoroughly familiar with the subject he wrote on, and had a deep sense of its intellectual significance.

If we seek to analyze the charm which the Medici of the fifteenth century, especially Cosimo the Elder and Lorenzo the Magnificent exercised over Florence and over

all their contemporaries, we shall find that it lay less in their political capacity than in their leadership in the culture of the age. A man in Cosimo's position a great merchant and party leader, who also had on his side all the thinkers, writers and investigators, a man who was the first of the Florentines by birth and the first of the Italians by culture such a man was to all intents and purposes already a prince. To Cosimo belongs the special glory of recognizing in the Platonic philosophy the fairest flower of the ancient world of thought, of inspiring his friends with the same belief, and thus of fostering within humanistic circles themselves another and a higher resuscitation of antiquity. The story is known to us minutely. It all hangs on the calling of the learned Johannes Argyropulos, and on the personal enthusiasm of Cosimo himself in his last years, which was such that the great Marsilio Ficino could style himself, as far as Platonism was concerned, the spiritual son of Cosimo. Under Pietro Medici, Ficino was already at the head of a school; to him Pietro's son and Cosimo's grandson, the

illustrious Lorenzo, came over from the Peripatetics. Among his most distinguished fellow scholars were Bartolommeo Valori, Donato Acciaiuoli, and Pierfilippo Pandolfini. The enthusiastic teacher declares in several passages of his writings that Lorenzo had sounded all the depths of the Platonic philosophy, and had uttered his conviction that without Plato it would be hard to be a good Christian or a good citizen. The famous band of scholars which surrounded Lorenzo was united together, and distinguished from all other circles of the kind, by this passion for a higher and idealistic philosophy. Only in such a world could a man like Pico della Mirandola feel happy. But perhaps the best thing of all that can be said about it is, that, with all this worship of antiquity, Italian poetry found here a sacred refuge, and that of all the rays of light which streamed from the circle of which Lorenzo was the centre, none was more powerful than this. As a statesman, let each man judge him as he pleases; a foreigner will hesitate to pronounce what in the fate of Florence was due to human

guilt and what to circumstances, but no more unjust charge was ever made than that in the field of culture Lorenzo was the protector of mediocrity, that through his fault Leonardo da Vinci and the mathematician Fra Luca Pacioli lived abroad, and that Toscanella, Vespucci, and others remained at least unsupported. He was not, indeed, a man of universal mind; but of all the great men who have striven to favour and promote spiritual interests, few certainly have been so many sided, and in none probably was the inward need to do so equally deep.

The age in which we live is loud enough in proclaiming the worth of culture, and especially of the culture of antiquity. But the enthusiastic devotion to it, the recognition that the need of it is the first and greatest of all needs, is nowhere to be found in such a degree as among the Florentines of the fifteenth and the early part of the sixteenth centuries. On this point we have indirect proof which precludes all doubt. It would not have been so common to give the daughters of the house a share in the

same studies, had they not been held to be the noblest of earthly pursuits, exile would not have been turned into a happy retreat, as was done by Palla Strozzi; nor would men who indulged in every conceivable excess have retained the strength and the spirit to write critical treatises on the Natural History of Pliny like Filippo Strozzi. Our business here is not to deal out either praise or blame, but to understand the spirit of the age in all its vigorous individuality.

Besides Florence, there were many cities of Italy where individuals and social circles devoted all their energies to the support of humanism and the protection of the scholars who lived among them. The correspondence of that period is full of references to personal relations of this kind. The feeling of the instructed classes set strongly and almost exclusively in this direction.

But it is now time to speak of humanism at the Italian courts. The natural alliance between the despot and the scholar, each relying solely on his personal talent, has

already been touched upon; that the latter should avowedly prefer the princely courts to the free cities, was only to be expected from the higher pay which he there received. At a time when the great Alfonso of Aragon seemed likely to become master of all Italy, Aeneas Sylvius wrote to another citizen of Siena: 'I had rather that Italy attained peace under his rule than under that of the free cities, for kingly generosity rewards excellence of every kind.' Too much stress has latterly been laid on the unworthy side of this relation, and the mercenary flattery to which it gave rise, just as formerly the eulogies of the humanists led to a too favourable judgement on their patrons. Taking all things together, it is greatly to the honour of the latter that they felt bound to place themselves at the head of the culture of their age and country, one sided though this culture was. In some of the popes, the fearlessness of the consequences to which the new learning might lead strikes us as something truly, but unconsciously, imposing. Nicholas V was confident of the future of the Church, since thousands of learned men

supported her. Pius II was far from making such splendid sacrifices for humanism as were made by Nicholas, and the poets who frequented his court were few in number; but he himself was much more the personal head of the republic of letters than his predecessor, and enjoyed his position without the least misgiving. Paul II was the first to dread and mistrust the culture of his secretaries, and his three successors, Sixtus, Innocent, and Alexander, accepted dedications and allowed themselves to be sung to the hearts' content of the poets there even existed a 'Borgiad,' probably in hexameter but were too busy elsewhere, and too occupied in seeking other foundations for their power, to trouble themselves much about the poet scholars. Julius II found poets to eulogize him, because he himself was no mean subject for poetry, but he does not seem to have troubled himself much about them. He was followed by Leo X, 'as Romulus by Numa' in other words, after the warlike turmoil of the previous pontificate, a new one was hoped for wholly given to the muses. Enjoyment of elegant

Latin prose and melodious verse was part of the programme of Leo's life, and his patronage certainly had the result that his Latin poets have left us a living picture of that joyous and brilliant spirit of the Leonine days, with which the biography of Jovius is filled, in countless epigrams, elegies, odes, and orations. Probably in all European history there is no prince who, in proportion to the few striking events of his life, has received such manifold homage. The poets had access to him chiefly about noon, when the musicians had ceased playing; but one of the best among them tells us how they also pursued him when he walked in his garden or withdrew to the privacy of his chamber, and if they failed to catch him there, would try to win him with a mendicant ode or elegy, filled, as usual, with the whole population of Olympus. For Leo, prodigal of his money, and disliking to be surrounded by any but cheerful faces, displayed a generosity in his gifts which was fabulously exaggerated in the hard times that followed. His reorganization of the Sapienza has been

already spoken of. In order not to underrate Leo's influence on humanism we must guard against being misled by the toy work that was mixed up with it, and must not allow ourselves to be deceived by the apparent irony with which he himself sometimes treated these matters. Our judgement must rather dwell on the countless spiritual possibilities which are included in the word 'stimulus,' and which, though they cannot be measured as a whole, can still, on closer study, be actually followed out in particular cases. Whatever influence in Europe the Italian humanists have had since 1520 depends in some way or other on the impulse which was given by Leo. He was the Pope who in granting permission to print the newly found Tacitus, could say that the great writers were a rule of life and a consolation in misfortune; that helping learned men and obtaining excellent books had ever been one of his highest aims; and that he now thanked heaven that he could benefit the human race by furthering the publication of this book.

The sack of Rome in the year 1527 scattered the

scholars no less than the artists in every direction, and spread the fame of the great departed Maecenas to the farthest boundaries of Italy.

Among the secular princes of the fifteenth century, none displayed such enthusiasm for antiquity as Alfonso the Great of Aragon, King of Naples. It appears that his zeal was thoroughly unaffected, and that the monuments and writings of the ancient world made upon him, from the time of his arrival in Italy, an impression deep and powerful enough to reshape his life. With strange readiness he surrendered the stubborn Aragon to his brother, and devoted himself wholly to his new possessions. He had in his service, either successively or together, George of Trebizond, the younger Chrysoloras, Lorenzo Valla, Bartolommeo Fazio and Antonio Panormita, of whom the two latter were his historians; Panormita daily instructed the King and his court in Livy, even during military expeditions. These men cost him yearly 20,000 gold florins. He gave Panormita 1,000 for his work; Fazio received for

the 'Historia Alfonsi,' besides a yearly income of 500 ducats, a present of 1,500 more when it was finished, with the words, 'It is not given to pay you, for your work would not be paid for if I gave you the fairest of my cities; but in time I hope to satisfy you.'

When he took Giannozzo Manetti as his secretary on the most brilliant conditions, he said to him, 'My last crust I will share with you.' When Giannozzo first came to bring the congratulations of the Florentine government on the marriage of Prince Ferrante, the impression he made was so great, that the King sat motionless on the throne, 'like a brazen statue, and did not even brush away a fly, which had settled on his nose at the beginning of the oration.' His favorite haunt seems to have been the library of the castle at Naples, where he would sit at a window overlooking the bay, and listen to learned debates on the Trinity. For he was profoundly religious, and had the Bible, as well as Livy and Seneca, read to him, till after fourteen perusals he knew it almost by heart. Who can fully understand the feeling with

which he regarded the suppositions remains of Livy at Padua? When, by dint of great entreaties, he obtained an arm bone of the skeleton from the Venetians, and received it with solemn pomp at Naples, how strangely Christian and pagan sentiment must have been blended in his heart! During a campaign in the Abruzzi, when the distant Sulmona, the birthplace of Ovid, was pointed out to him, he saluted the spot and returned thanks to its tutelary genius. It gladdened him to make good the prophecy of the great poet as to his future fame. Once indeed, at his famous entry into the conquered city of Naples he himself chose to appear before the world in ancient style. Not far from the market a breach forty ells wide was made in the wall, and through this he drove in a gilded chariot like a Roman Triumphator. The memory of the scene is preserved by a noble triumphal arch of marble in the Castello Nuovo. His Neapolitan successors inherited as little of this passion for antiquity as of his other good qualities.

Alfonso was far surpassed in learning by Federigo of

Urbino, who had but few courtiers around him, squandered nothing, and in his appropriation of antiquity, as in all other things, went to work considerably. It was for him and for Nicholas V that most of the translations from the Greek, and a number of the best commentaries and other such works, were written. He spent much on the scholars whose services he used, but spent it to good purpose. There were no traces of a poets' court at Urbino, where the Duke himself was the most learned in the whole court. Classical antiquity, indeed, only formed a part of his culture. An accomplished ruler, captain, and gentleman, he had mastered the greater part of the science of the day, and this with a view to its practical application. As a theologian, he was able to compare Scotus with Aquinas, and was familiar with the writings of the old Fathers of the Eastern and Western Churches, the former in Latin translations. In philosophy, he seems to have left Plato altogether to his contemporary Cosimo, but he knew thoroughly not only the Ethics and Politics of Aristotle but the Physics and some

other works. The rest of his reading lay chiefly among the ancient historians, all of whom he possessed; these, and not the poets, 'he was always reading and having read to him.'

The Sforza, too, were all of them men of more or less learning and patrons of literature; they have been already referred to in passing. Duke Francesco probably looked on humanistic culture as a matter of course in the education of his children, if only for political reasons. It was felt universally to be an advantage if a prince could mix with the most instructed men of his time on an equal footing. Lodovico il Moro, himself an excellent Latin scholar, showed an interest in intellectual matters which extended far beyond classical antiquity.

Even the petty rulers strove after similar distinctions, and we do them injustice by thinking that they only supported the scholars at their courts as a means of diffusing their own fame. A ruler like Borso of Ferrara, with all his vanity, seems by no means to have looked for immortality from the poets, eager as they were to propitiate

him with a 'Borseid' and the like. He had far too proud a sense of his own position as a ruler for that. But intercourse with learned men, interest in antiquarian matters, and the passion for elegant Latin correspondence were necessities for the princes of that age. What bitter complaints are those of Duke Alfonso, competent as he was in practical matters, that his weakness in youth had forced him to seek recreation in manual pursuits only! or was this merely an excuse to keep the humanists at a distance? A nature like his was not intelligible even to contemporaries.

Even the most insignificant despots of Romagna found it hard to do without one or two men of letters about them. The tutor and secretary were often one and the same person, who sometimes, indeed, acted as a kind of court factotum. We are apt to treat the small scale of these courts as a reason for dismissing them with a too ready contempt, forgetting that the highest spiritual things are not precisely matters of measurement.

Life and manners at the court of Rimini must have

been a singular spectacle under the bold pagan Condottiere Sigismondo Malatesta. He had a number of scholars around him, some of whom he provided for liberally, even giving them landed estates, while others earned at least a livelihood as officers in his army. In his citadel 'arx Sismundea' they used to hold discussions, often of a very venomous kind, in the presence of the 'rex,' as they termed him. In their Latin poems they sing his praises and celebrate his amour with the fair Isotta, in whose honour and as whose monument the famous rebuilding of San Francesco at Rimini took place 'Divae Isottae Sacrum.' When the humanists themselves came to die, they were laid in or under the sarcophagi with which the niches of the outside walls of the church were adorned, with an inscription testifying that they were laid here at the time when Sigismundus, the son of Pandulfus, ruled. It is hard for us nowadays to believe that a monster like this prince felt learning and the friendship of cultivated people to be a necessity of life; and yet the man who excommunicated

him, made war upon him, and burnt him in effigy, Pope Pius II, says: 'Sigismondo knew history and had a great store of philosophy; he seemed born to all that he undertook.'

Propagators of Antiquity

We have here first to speak of those citizens, mostly Florentines, who made antiquarian interests one of the chief objects of their lives, and who were themselves either distinguished scholars, or else distinguished *_dilettanti_* who maintained the scholars. They were of peculiar significance during the period of transition at the beginning of the fifteenth century, since it was in them that humanism first showed itself practically as an indispensable element in daily life. It was not till after this time that the popes and princes began seriously to occupy themselves with it.

Niccol?Niccoli and Giannozzo Manetti have been already spoken of more than once. Niccoli is described to us by Vespasiano as a man who would tolerate nothing

around him out of harmony with his own classical spirit. His handsome long robed figure, his kindly speech, his house adorned with the noblest remains of antiquity, made a singular impression. He was scrupulously cleanly in everything, most of all at table, where ancient vases and crystal goblets stood before him on the whitest linen. The way in which he won over a pleasure loving young Florentine to intellectual interests is too charming not to be here described. Piero de' Pazzi, son of a distinguished merchant, and himself destined to the same calling, fair to behold, and much given to the pleasures of the world, thought about anything rather than literature. One day, as he was passing the Palazzo del Podest? Niccol? called the young man to him, and although they had never before exchanged a word, the youth obeyed the call of one so respected. Niccol?asked him who his father was. He answered, 'Messer Andrea de' Pazzi'. When he was further asked what his pursuit was, Piero replied, as young people are wont to do, 'I enjoy myself' . Niccol?said to him, 'As

son of such a father, and so fair to look upon, it is a shame that thou knowest nothing of the Latin language, which would be so great an ornament to thee. If thou learnest it not, thou wilt be good for nothing, and as soon as the flower of youth is over, wilt be a man of no consequence' . When Piero heard this, he straightway perceived that it was true, and said that he would gladly take pains to learn, if only he had a teacher. Whereupon Niccol?answered that he would see to that. And he found him a learned man for Latin and Greek, named Pontano, whom Piero treated as one of his own house, and to whom he paid 100 gold florins a year. Quitting all the pleasures in which he had hitherto lived, he studied day and night, and became a friend of all learned men and a noble minded statesman. He learned by heart the whole AEneid and many speeches of Livy, chiefly on the way between Florence and his country house at Trebbio. Antiquity was represented in another and higher sense by Giannozzo Maneeti . Precocious from his first years, he was hardly more than a child when he had

finished his apprenticeship in commerce, and became book keeper in a bank. But soon the life he led seemed to him empty and perishable, and he began to yearn after science, through which alone man can secure immortality. He then busied himself with books as few laymen had done before him, and became, as has been said, one of the most profound scholars of his time. When appointed by the government as its representative magistrate and tax collector at Pescia and Pistoia, he fulfilled his duties in accordance with the lofty ideal with which his religious feeling and humanistic studies combined to inspire him. He succeeded in collecting the most unpopular taxes which the Florentine State imposed, and declined payment for his services. As provincial governor he refused all presents, abhorred all bribes, checked gambling, kept the country well supplied with corn, was indefatigable in settling law suits amicably, and did wonders in calming inflamed passions by his goodness. The Pistoiese were never able to discover to which of the two political parties he leaned. As

if to symbolize the common rights and interests of all, he spent his leisure hours in writing the history of the city, which was preserved, bound in a purple cover, as a sacred relic in the town hall. When he took his leave the city presented him with a banner bearing the municipal arms and a splendid silver helmet. For further information as to the learned citizens of Florence at this period the reader must all the more be referred to Vespasiano, who knew them all personally, because the tone and atmosphere in which he writes, and the terms and conditions on which he mixed in their society, are of even more importance than the facts which he records. Even in a translation, and still more in the brief indications to which we are here compelled to limit ourselves, this chief merit of his book is lost. Without being a great writer, he was thoroughly familiar with the subject he wrote on, and had a deep sense of its intellectual significance.

If we seek to analyse the charm which the Medici of the fifteenth century, especially Cosimo the Elder and

Lorenzo the Magnificent exercised over Florence and over all their contemporaries, we shall find that it lay less in their political capacity than in their leadership in the culture of the age. A man in Cosimo's position a great merchant and party leader, who also had on his side all the thinkers, writers and investigators, a man who was the first of the Florentines by birth and the first of the Italians by culture such a man was to all intents and purposes already a prince. To Cosimo belongs the special glory of recognizing in the Platonic philosophy the fairest flower of the ancient world of thought, of inspiring his friends with the same belief, and thus of fostering within humanistic circles themselves another and a higher resuscitation of antiquity. The story is known to us minutely. It all hangs on the calling of the learned Johannes Argyropulos, and on the personal enthusiasm of Cosimo himself in his last years, which was such, that the great Marsilio Ficino could style himself, as far as Platonism was concerned, the spiritual son of Cosimo. Under Pietro Medici, Ficino was already at the head of a

school; to him Pietro's son and Cosimo's grandson, the illustrious Lorenzo, came over from the Peripatetics. Among his most distinguished fellow scholars were Bartolommeo Valori, Donato Acciaiuoli, and Pierfilippo Pandolfini. The enthusiastic teacher declares in several passages of his writings that Lorenzo had sounded all the depths of the Platonic philosophy, and had uttered his conviction that without Plato it would be hard to be a good Christian or a good citizen. The famous band of scholars which surrounded Lorenzo was united together, and distinguished from all other circles of the kind, by this passion for a higher and idealistic philosophy. Only in such a world could a man like Pico della Mirandola feel happy. But perhaps the best thing of all that can be said about it is, that, with all this worship of antiquity, Italian poetry found here a sacred refuge, and that of all the rays of light which streamed from the circle of which Lorenzo was the centre, none was more powerful than this. As a statesman, let each man judge him as he pleases; a foreigner will hesitate to

pronounce what was due to human guilt and what to circumstances in the fate of Florence, but no more unjust charge was ever made than that in the field of culture Lorenzo was the protector of mediocrity, that through his fault Leonardo da Vinci and the mathematician Fra Luca Pacioli lived abroad, and that Toscanella, Vespucci, and others at least remained unsupported. He was not, indeed, a man of universal mind; but of all the great men who have striven to favour and promote spiritual interests, few certainly have been so many sided, and in none probably was the inward need to do so equally deep.

The age in which we live is loud enough in proclaiming the worth of culture, and especially of the culture of antiquity. But the enthusiastic devotion to it, the recognition that the need of it is the first and greatest of all needs, is nowhere to be found in such a degree as among the Florentines of the fifteenth and the early part of the sixteenth centuries. On this point we have indirect proof which precludes all doubt. It would not have been so

common to give the daughters of the house a share in the same studies, had they not been held to be the noblest of earthly pursuits; exile would not have been turned into a happy retreat, as was done by Palla Strozzi; nor would men who indulged in every conceivable excess have retained the strength and the spirit to write critical treatises on the 'Natural History' of Pliny like Filippo Strozzi. Our business here is not to deal out either praise or blame, but to understand the spirit of the age in all its vigorous individuality.

Besides Florence, there were many cities of Italy where individuals and social circles devoted all their energies to the support of humanism and the protection of the scholars who lived among them. The correspondence of that period is full of references to personal relations of this kind. The feeling of the instructed classes set strongly and almost exclusively in this direction.

But it is now time to speak of humanism at the Italian courts. The natural alliance between the despot and the

scholar, each relying solely on his personal talent, has already been touched upon; that the latter should avowedly prefer the princely courts to the free cities, was only to be expected from the higher pay which they there received. At a time when the great Alfonso of Aragon seemed likely to become master of all Italy, Aeneas Sylvius wrote to another citizen of Siena: 'I had rather that Italy attained peace under his rule than under that of the free cities, for kingly generosity rewards excellence of every kind'. Too much stress has latterly been laid on the unworthy side of this relation, and the mercenary flattery to which it gave rise, just as formerly the eulogies of the humanists led to a too favourable judgement on their patrons. Taking all things together, it is greatly to the honour of the latter that they felt bound to place themselves at the head of the culture of their age and country, one sided though this culture was. In some of the popes, the fearlessness of the consequences to which the new learning might lead strikes us as something truly, but unconsciously, imposing. Nicholas V was confident of

the future of the Church, since thousands of learned men supported her. Pius II was far from making such splendid sacrifices for humanism as were made by Nicholas, and the poets who frequented his court were few in number; but he himself was much more the personal head of the republic of letters than his predecessor, and enjoyed his position without the least misgiving. Paul II was the first to dread and mistrust the culture of his secretaries, and his three successors, Sixtus, Innocent, and Alexander, accepted dedications and allowed themselves to be sung to the hearts' content of the poets there even existed a 'Borgiad', probably in hexameters but were too busy elsewhere, and too occupied in seeking other foundations for their power, to trouble themselves much about the poet scholars. Julius II found poets to eulogize him, because he himself was no mean subject for poetry, but he does not seem to have troubled himself much about them. He was followed by Leo X, 'as Romulus by Numa' in other words after the warlike turmoil of the first pontificate, a new one was

hoped for wholly given to the muses. The enjoyment of elegant Latin prose and melodious verse was part of the programme of Leo's life, and his patronage certainly had the result that his Latin poets have left us a living picture of that joyous and brilliant spirit of the Leonine days, with which the biography of Jovius is filled, in countless epigrams, elegies, odes, and orations. Probably in all European history there is no prince who, in proportion to the few striking events of his life, has received such manifold homage. The poets had access to him chiefly about noon, when the musicians had ceased playing; but one of the best among them tells us how they also pursued him when he walked in his garden or withdrew to the privacy of his chamber, and if they failed to catch him there, would try to win him with a mendicant ode or elegy, filled, as usual, with the whole population of Olympus. For Leo, prodigal of his money, and disliking to be surrounded by any but cheerful faces, displayed a generosity in his gifts which was fabulously exaggerated in the hard times that

followed. His reorganization of the Sapienza has been already spoken of. In order not to underrate Leo's influence on humanism we must guard against being misled by the toy work that was mixed up with it, and must not allow ourselves to be deceived by the apparent irony with which he himself sometimes treated these matters. Our judgement must rather dwell on the countless spiritual possibilities which are included in the word 'stimulus', and which, though they cannot be measured as a whole, can still, on closer study, be actually followed out in particular cases. Whatever influence in Europe the Italian humanists have had since 1520 depends in some way or other on the impulse which was given by Leo. He was the Pope who in granting permission to print the newly found Tacitus, could say that the great writers were a rule of life and a consolation in misfortune; that helping learned men and obtaining excellent books had ever been one of his highest aims; and that he now thanked heaven that he could benefit the human race by furthering the publication of this book.

The sack of Rome in the year 1527 scattered the scholars no less than the artists in every direction, and spread the fame of the great departed Maecenas to the farthest boundaries of Italy.

Among the secular princes of the fifteenth century, none displayed such enthusiasm for antiquity as Alfonso the Great of Aragon, King of Naples. It appears that his zeal was thoroughly unaffected, and that the monuments and writings of the ancient world made upon him from the time of his arrival in Italy, an impression deep and powerful enough to reshape his life. With strange readiness he surrendered the stubborn Aragon to his brother, and devoted himself wholly to his new possessions. He had in his service, either successively or together, George of Trebizond, the younger Chrysoloras, Lorenzo Valla, Bartolommeo Facio and Antonio Panormita, of whom the two latter were his historians; Panormita daily instructed the King and his court in Livy, even during military expeditions. These men cost him yearly 20,000 gold florins.

He gave Panormita 1,000 for his work: Facio received for the 'Historia Alfonsi', besides a yearly income of 500 ducats, a present of 1,500 more when it was finished, with the words, 'It is not given to pay you, for your work would not be paid for if I gave you the fairest of my cities; but in time I hope to satisfy you'. When he took Giannozzo Manetti as his secretary on the most brilliant conditions, he said to him, 'My last crust I will share with you'. When Giannozzo first came to bring the congratulations of the Florentine government on the marriage of Prince Ferrante, the impression he made was so great, that the King sat motionless on the throne, 'like a brazen statue, and did not even brush away a fly, which had settled on his nose at the beginning of the oration'. His favourite haunt seems to have been the library of the castle at Naples, where he would sit at a window overlooking the bay, and listen to learned debates on the Trinity. For he was profoundly religious, and had the Bible, as well as Livy and Seneca, read to him, till after fourteen perusals he knew it almost by heart. Who can

fully understand the feeling with which he regarded the supposititious remains of Livy at Padua? When, by dint of great entreaties, he obtained an arm bone of the skeleton from the Venetians, and received it with solemn pomp at Naples, how strangely Christian and pagan sentiment must have been blended in his heart! During a campaign in the Abruzzi, when the distant Sulmona, the birthplace of Ovid, was pointed out to him, he saluted the spot and returned thanks to its tutelary genius. It gladdened him to make good the prophecy of the great poet as to his future fame. Once indeed, at his famous entry into the conquered city of Naples he himself chose to appear before the world in ancient style. Not far from the market a breach forty ells wide was made in the wall, and through this he drove in a gilded chariot like a Roman Triumphator. The memory of the scene is preserved by a noble triumphal arch of marble in the Castello Nuovo. His Neapolitan successors inherited as little of this passion for antiquity as of his other good qualities.

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'Ethics' and 'Politics' of Aristotle but the 'Physics' and some other works. The rest of his reading lay chiefly among the ancient historians, all of whom he possessed; these, and not the poets, 'he was always reading and having read to him'.

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Even the petty despots strove after similar distinctions, and we do them injustice by thinking that they only supported the scholars at their courts as a means of diffusing their own fame. A ruler like Borso of Ferrara, with all his vanity, seems by no means to have looked for

immortality from the poets, eager as they were to propitiate him with a 'Borseid' and the like. He had far too proud a sense of his own position as a ruler for that. But intercourse with learned men, interest in antiquarian matters, and the passion for elegant Latin correspondence were necessities for the princes of that age. What bitter complaints are those of Duke Alfonso, competent as he was in practical matters, that his weakness in youth had forced him to seek recreation in manual pursuits only! or was this merely an excuse to keep the humanists at a distance? A nature like his was not intelligible even to contemporaries.

Even the most insignificant despots of Romagna found it hard to do without one or two men of letters about them. The tutor and secretary were often one and the same person, who sometimes, indeed, acted as a kind of court factotum. We are apt to treat the small scale of these courts as a reason for dismissing them with a too ready contempt, forgetting that the highest spiritual things are not precisely matters of measurement.

Life and manners at the court of Rimini must have been a singular spectacle under the bold pagan Condottiere Sigismondo Malatesta. He had a number of scholars around him, some of whom he provided for liberally, even giving them landed estates, while others earned at least a livelihood as officers in his army. In his citadl 'arx Sismundea' they used to hold discussions, often of a very venomous kind, in the presence of the 'rex', as they termed him. In their Latin poems they sing his praises and celebrate his amour with the fair Isotta, in whose honour and as whose monument the famous rebuilding of San Francesco at Rimini took place 'Divae Isottae Sacrum'. When the humanists themselves came to die, they were laid in or under the sarcophagi with which the niches of the outside walls of the church were adorned, with an inscription testifying that they were laid here at the time when Sigismundus, the son of Pandulfus, ruled. It is hard for us nowadays to believe that a monster like this prince felt learning and the friendship of cultivated people to be a

necessity of life; and yet the man who excommunicated him, made war upon him, and burnt him in effigy, Pope Pius II, says: 'Sigismondo knew history and had a great store of philosophy; he seemed born to all that he undertook'.

Propagators of Antiquity; Epistolography: Latin Orators

There were two purposes, however, for which the humanist was as indispensable to the republics as to princes or popes, namely, the official correspondence of the State, and the making of speeches on public and solemn occasions.

Not only was the secretary required to be a competent Latinist, but conversely, only a humanist was credited with the knowledge and ability necessary for the post of secretary. And thus the greatest men in the sphere of science during the fifteenth century mostly devoted a considerable part of their lives to serve the State in this capacity. No importance was attached to a man's home or

origin. Of the four great Florentine secretaries who filled the office between 1427 and 1465, three belonged to the subject city of Arezzo, namely, Leonardo , Carlo , and Benedetto Accolti; Poggio was from Terra Nuova, also in Florentine territory. For a long period, indeed, many of the highest offices of State were on principle given to foreigners. Leonardo, Poggio, and Giannozzo Manetti were at one time or another private secretaries to the popes, and Carlo Aretino was to have been so. Biondo of Forli, and, in spite of everything, at last even Lorenzo Valla, filled the same office. From the time of Nicholas V and Pius II onwards, the Papal chancery continued more and more to attract the ablest men, and this was still the case even under the last popes of the fifteenth century, little as they cared for letters. In Platina's 'History of the Popes,' the life of Paul II is a charming piece of vengeance taken by a humanist on the one Pope who did not know how to behave to his chancery to that circle 'of poets and orators who bestowed on the Papal court as much glory as they received

from it.' It is delightful to see the indignation of these haughty gentlemen, when some squabble about precedence happened, when, for instance, the 'Advocati consistoriales' claimed equal or superior rank to theirs. The Apostle John, to whom the 'Secreta caelestia' were revealed; the secretary of Porsenna, whom Mucius Scaevola mistook for the king; Maecenas, who was private secretary to Augustus; the archbishops, who in Germany were called chancellors, are all appealed to in turn. 'The apostolic secretaries have the most weighty business of the world in their hands. For who but they decide on matters of the Catholic faith, who else combat heresy, re establish peace, and mediate between great monarchs; who but they write the statistical accounts of Christendom? It is they who astonish kings, princes, and nations by what comes forth from the Pope. They write commands and instructions for the legates, and receive their orders only from the Pope, on whom they wait day and night.' But the highest summit of glory was only attained by the two famous secretaries and stylists of Leo X:

Pietro Bembo and Jacopo Sadoletto.

All the chanceries did not turn out equally elegant documents. A leathern official style, in the impurest of Latin, was very common. In the Milanese documents preserved by Corio there is a remarkable contrast between this sort of composition and the few letters written by members of the princely house, which must have been written, too, in moments of critical importance. They are models of pure Latinity. To maintain a faultless style under all circumstances was a rule of good breeding, and a result of habit.

The letters of Cicero, Pliny, and others, were at this time diligently studied as models. As early as the fifteenth century a great mass of manuals and models for Latin correspondence had appeared, a mass which is astounding to us even now when we look at them in the libraries. But just as the existence of these helps tempted many to undertake a task to which they had no vocation, so were the really capable men stimulated to a more faultless

excellence, till at length the letters of Politian, and at the beginning of the sixteenth century those of Pietro Bembo, appeared, and took their place as unrivalled masterpieces, not only of Latin style in general, but also of the more special art of letter writing.

Together with these there appeared in the sixteenth century the classical style of Italian correspondence, at the head of which stands Bembo again. Its form is wholly modern, and deliberately kept free from Latin influence, and yet its spirit is thoroughly penetrated and possessed by the ideas of antiquity.

But at a time and among a people where 'listening' was among the chief pleasures of life, and where every imagination was filled with the memory of the Roman senate and its great speakers, the orator occupied a far more brilliant place than the letter writer. Eloquence had shaken off the influence of the Church, in which it had found a refuge during the Middle Ages, and now became an indispensable element and ornament of all elevated lives.

Many of the social hours which are now filled with music were then given to Latin or Italian oratory, with results which every reader can imagine.

The social position of the speaker was a matter of perfect indifference; what was desired was simply the most cultivated humanistic talent. At the court of Borso of Ferrara, the Duke's physician, Girolamo da Castello, was chosen to deliver the congratulatory address on the visits of Frederick III and of Pius II. Married laymen ascended the pulpits of the churches at any scene of festivity or mourning) and even on the feastdays of the saints. It struck the non Italian members of the Council of Basle as something strange that the Archbishop of Milan should summon Aeneas Sylvius, who was then unordained, to deliver a public discourse at the feast of Saint Ambrose; but they suffered it in spite of the murmurs of the theologians, and listened to the speaker with the greatest curiosity.

Let us glance for a moment at the most frequent and important occasions of public speaking.

It was not for nothing, in the first place, that the ambassadors from one State to another received the title of orators. Whatever else might be done in the way of secret negotiation, the envoy never failed to make a public appearance and deliver a public speech, under circumstances of the greatest possible pomp and ceremony. As a rule, however numerous the embassy might be, one individual spoke for all; but it happened to Pius II, a critic before whom all were glad to be heard, to be forced to sit and listen to a whole deputation, one after another. Learned princes who had the gift of speech were themselves fond of discoursing in Latin or Italian. The children of the House of Sforza were trained to this exercise. The boy Galeazzo Maria delivered in 1455 a fluent speech before the Great Council at Venice, and his sister Ippolita saluted Pope Pius II with a graceful address at the Congress of Mantua . Pius himself through all his life did much by his oratory to prepare the way for his final elevation to the Papal chair. Great as he was both as scholar and diplomatist, he would

probably never have become Pope without the fame and the charm of his eloquence. 'For nothing was more lofty than the dignity of his oratory.' Without doubt this was a reason why multitudes held him to be the fittest man for the office even before his election.

Princes were also commonly received on public occasions with speeches, which sometimes lasted for hours. This happened of course only when the prince was known as a lover of eloquence, or wished to pass for such, and when a competent speaker was present, whether university professor, official, ecclesiastic, physician, or court scholar. Every other political opportunity was seized with the same eagerness, and according to the reputation of the speaker, the concourse of the lovers of culture was great or small. At the yearly change of public officers, and even at the consecration of new bishops, a humanist was sure to come forward, and sometimes addressed his audience in hexameters or Sapphic verses. Often a newly appointed official was himself forced to deliver a speech more or less

relevant to his department, as, for instance, on justice; and lucky for him if he were well up in his part! At Florence even the Condottieri, whatever their origin or education might be, were compelled to accommodate themselves to the popular sentiment, and on receiving the insignia of their office, were harangued before the assembled people by the most learned secretary of state. It seems that beneath or close to the Loggia de' Lanzi the porch where the government was wont to appear solemnly before the people a tribune or platform _ _ was erected for such purposes.

Anniversaries, especially those of the death of princes, were commonly celebrated by memorial speeches. Even the funeral oration strictly so called was generally entrusted to a humanist, who delivered it in church, clothed in a secular dress; nor was it only princes, but officials, or persons otherwise distinguished, to whom this honour was paid. This was also the case with the speeches delivered at weddings or betrothals, with the difference that they seem to have been made in the palace, instead of in church, like

that of Filelfo at the betrothal of Anna Sforza to Alfonso of Este in the castle of Milan. It is still possible that the ceremony may have taken place in the chapel of the castle. Private families of distinction no doubt also employed such wedding orators as one of the luxuries of high life. At Ferrara, Guarino was requested on these occasions to send some one or other of his pupils. The clergy performed only the purely religious ceremonies at weddings and funerals.

The academical speeches, both those made at the installation of a new teacher and at the opening of a new course of lectures were delivered by the professor himself, and treated as occasions of great rhetorical display. The ordinary university lectures also usually had an oratorical character.

With regard to forensic eloquence, the quality of the audience determined the form of speech. In case of need it was enriched with all sorts of philosophical and antiquarian learning.

As a special class of speeches we may mention the

address made in Italian on the battlefield, either before or after the combat. Federigo of Urbino was esteemed a classic in this style; he used to pass round among his squadrons as they stood drawn up in order of battle, inspiring them in turn with pride and enthusiasm. Many of the speeches in the military historians of the fifteenth century, as for instance in Porcellius, may be, in part at least, imaginary, but may be also in part faithful representations of words actually spoken. The addresses again which were delivered to the Florentine Militia, organized in 1506 chiefly through the influence of Machiavelli, and which were spoken first at reviews, and afterwards at special annual festivals, were of another kind. They were simply general appeals to the patriotism of the hearers, and were addressed to the assembled troops in the church of each quarter of the city by a citizen in armor, sword in hand.

Finally, the oratory of the pulpit began in the fifteenth century to lose its distinctive peculiarities. Many of the

clergy had entered into the circle of classical culture, and were ambitious of success in it. The street preacher Bernardino da Siena, who even in his lifetime passed for a saint and who was worshipped by the populace, was not above taking lessons in rhetoric from the famous Guarino, although he had only to preach in Italian. Never indeed was more expected from preachers than at that time especially from the Lenten preachers; and there were not a few audiences which could not only tolerate, but which demanded a strong dose of philosophy from the pulpit. But we have here especially to speak of the distinguished occasional preachers in Latin. Many of their opportunities had been taken away from them, as has been observed, by learned laymen. Speeches on particular saints' days, at weddings and funerals, or at the installation of a bishop, and even the introductory speech at the first mass of a clerical friend, or the address at the festival of some religious order, were all left to laymen. But at all events at the Papal court in the fifteenth century, whatever the

occasion might be, the preachers were generally monks. Under Sixtus IV, Giacomo da Volterra regularly enumerates these preachers, and criticizes them according to the rules of the art. Fedra Inghirami, famous as an orator under Julius II, had at least received holy orders and was canon at St. John Lateran; and besides him, elegant Latinists were now common enough among the prelates. In this matter, as in others, the exaggerated privileges of the profane humanists appear lessened in the sixteenth century on which point we shall presently speak more fully.

What now was the subject and general character of these speeches? The national gift of eloquence was not wanting to the Italians of the Middle Ages, and a so called 'rhetoric' belonged from the first to the seven liberal arts; but so far as the revival of the ancient methods is concerned, this merit must be ascribed, according to Filippo Villani, to the Florentine Bruno Casini, who died of the plague in 1348. With the practical purpose of fitting his countrymen to speak with ease and effect in public, he treated, after the

pattern of the ancients, invention, declamation, bearing, and gesticulation, each in its proper connection. Elsewhere too we read of an oratorical training directed solely to practical application. No accomplishment was more highly esteemed than the power of elegant improvisation in Latin. The growing study of Cicero's speeches and theoretical writings, of Quintilian and of the imperial panegyrists, the appearance of new and original treatises, the general progress of antiquarian learning, and the stores of ancient matter and thought which now could and must be drawn from, all combined to shape the character of the new eloquence.

This character nevertheless differed widely according to the individual. Many speeches breathe a spirit of true eloquence, especially those which keep to the matter treated of; of this kind is the mass of what is left to us of Pius II. The miraculous effects produced by Giannozzo Manetti point to an orator the like of whom has not been often seen. His great audiences as envoy before Nicholas V

and before the Doge and Council of Venice were events not to be soon forgotten. Many orators, on the contrary, would seize the opportunity, not only to flatter the vanity of distinguished hearers, but to load their speeches with an enormous mass of antiquarian rubbish. How it was possible to endure this infliction for two and even three hours, can only be understood when we take into account the intense interest then felt in everything connected with antiquity, and the rarity and defectiveness of treatises on the subject at a time when printing was but little diffused. Such orations had at least the value which we have claimed for many of Petrarch's letters. But some speakers went too far. Most of Filelfo's speeches are an atrocious patchwork of classical and biblical quotations, tacked on to a string of commonplaces, among which the great people he wishes to flatter are arranged under the head of the cardinal virtues, or some such category, and it is only with the greatest trouble, in his case and in that of many others, that we can extricate the few historical notices of any value which they

really contain. The speech, for instance, of a scholar and professor of Piacenza at the reception of the Duke Galeazzo Maria, in 1467, begins with Julius Caesar, then proceeds to mix up a mass of classical quotations with a number from an allegorical work by the speaker himself, and concludes with some exceedingly indiscreet advice to the ruler. Fortunately it was late at night, and the orator had to be satisfied with handing his written panegyric to the prince. Filelfo begins a speech at a betrothal with the words: 'Aristotle, the peripatetic.' Others start with P. Cornelius Scipio, and the like, as though neither they nor their hearers could wait a moment for a quotation. At the end of the fifteenth century public taste suddenly improved, chiefly through Florentine influence, and the practice of quotation was restricted within due limits. Many works of reference were now in existence, in which the first comer could find as much as he wanted of what had hitherto been the admiration of princes and people.

As most of the speeches were written out beforehand

in the study, the manuscripts served as a means of further publicity afterwards. The great extemporaneous speakers, on the other hand, were attended by shorthand writers. We must further remember that not all the orations which have come down to us were intended to be actually delivered. The panegyric, for example, of the elder Beroaldus on Lodovico il Moro was presented to him in manuscript. In fact, just as letters were written addressed to all conceivable persons and parts of the world as exercises, as formularies, or even to serve a controversial end, so there were speeches for imaginary occasions to be used as models for the reception of princes, bishops, and other dignitaries.

For oratory, as for the other arts, the death of Leo X and the sack of Rome mark the epoch of decadence. Giovio, but just escaped from the desolation of the eternal city, described, not impartially, but on the whole correctly, the causes of this decline: 'The plays of Plautus and Terence, once a school of Latin style for the educated Romans, are banished to make room for Italian comedies. Graceful

speakers no longer find the recognition and reward which they once did. The Consistorial advocates no longer prepare anything but the introductions to their speeches, and deliver the rest a confused muddle on the inspiration of the moment. Sermons and occasional speeches have sunk to the same level. If a funeral oration is wanted for a cardinal or other great personage, the executors do not apply to the best orators in the city, to whom they would have to pay a hundred pieces of gold, but they hire for a trifle the first impudent pedant whom they come across, and who only wants to be talked of, whether for good or ill. The dead, they say, is none the wiser if an ape stands in a black dress in the pulpit, and beginning with a hoarse, whimpering mumble, passes little by little into a loud howling. Even the sermons preached at great Papal ceremonies are no longer profitable, as they used to be. Monks of all orders have again got them into their hands, and preach as if they were speaking to the mob. Only a few years ago a sermon at mass before the Pope might easily lead the way to a

bishopric.'