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The meaning and relations of religion and patriotism as conceived by Savanarola and Machiavelli

THE MEANING AND RELATIONS OF RELIGION AND PATRIOTISM

as Conceived by Savonarola and Machiavelli

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B I B L I O G R A P H Y

Life and Times of Girolamo Savonarola
by Professor Pasquale Villari
Translation by Linda Villari
(Charles Scribner's Sons.)

Life and Times of Niccolo Machiavelli
by Professor Pasquale Villari
Translation by Linda Villari
(T. Fisher Unwin - London; 4th Impression)

The Prince
by Nicolo Machiavelli
Translation by W.K.Marriott, F.R.Hist.S.
(Everyman's Library
New York: E.P.Dutton & Co., 681 5th Avenue)

Niccolo Machiavelli
by J.A.Symonds, M.A.- author of "The Renaissance in Italy"
Article in Encyclopedia Britannica, 9th Ed.

(Note: In this paper reference to the above works will be made as follows: Life of Savonarola, Life of Machiavelli, The Prince, and Britannica, respectively.)

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as Conceived by Savonarola and Machiavelli

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Part I. - Background of the Present Study.

Introductory word.

Two great names shed their glory upon the Italian Renaissance. They gather up all the intellectual vigor of that age, but they send a peculiar influence of their own out into the newly forming modern consciousness of Europe. They are not companion spirits in any sense. One stands in the strength of an almost unparalleled mystical spirituality; the other is wellnigh devoid of any vital spirituality whatsoever. One pours the flood of a passionate Catholic conscience into an age of degeneracy; the other sees little or no connection between Christian teaching and the practical affairs of life. And yet each, in his own way, made his own invaluable contribution to the modern social and political ideal. It is the purpose of this paper to study, in a brief way, the meaning and relations of religion and patriotism as conceived by these two outstanding geniuses of the Italian Renaissance: Girolamo Savonarola, the prophet, and Niccolo Machiavelli, sometimes called the father of political science.

Any close study of the views of Savonarola and Machiavelli will necessarily involve some consideration of the times in which they lived and of the peculiar endowment of character traits with which each had to work; or else we shall be able to come to no adequate understanding of the excesses into which each ran - excesses

which, from our modern point of view, can hardly be excused by the widest charity.

Social and political background

A study of Savonarola and Machiavelli is a study of the city of Florence, at the close of the fifteenth and the opening of the sixteenth century; and a study of Florence involves some notion of the political chaos into which Italy as a whole had been disintegrating. This last, in turn, centers in the Vatican, where a dissolute Pope plays like a crafty spider at the center of a web of political intrigue that reaches out into all Europe. Indeed, political and religious considerations throughout the European world during this period are so interwoven that it is extremely difficult to distinguish one from the other - or perhaps it would be more exact to say political and ecclesiastical considerations. Savonarola's devout temperament would find patriotism eventually kneeling at Saint Peter's chair in Rome, unless such devotion were made impossible by the greed and sensuality of an Alexander VI; but the more skeptical mind of Machiavelli could not fail to look unpon the Church solely as a political power, to be counted upon as the most cunning player upon the political chessboard of Europe.

Chaotic condition of Florence, Italy, Europe.

Corruption of the Church.

The corruption of the Church during the period under discussion is almost beyond the comprehension of one who is accustomed to associate religion with decency, to say nothing of high ethical standards. The Catholic idea of a celibate clergy was flouted by the Pope, who did not seek to conceal his illegitimate children, but rather continually sought their advancement to places of power. Sixtus IV still shielded his sons under the name of "nephews", but he did not hesitate to make even the most worthless of them, Pietro Riario, a high dignitary in the Church: Cardinal-prelate, Patriarch of Constantinople, Archbishop of Florence. A passing glimpse at this same Riario will show how the whole resources of the Church at this time were being drained to keep up a high state of unbridled luxury for prelates of lofty station:

"On receiving the ambassadors of France he gave them a banquet, to which nearly all the arts

known at the period were called to contribute. The land was ransacked for all that was most rare and precious. ..... When Eleonora of Aragon, daughter of the Neapolitan king, halted in Rome on the way to her nuptials at Ferrara (1473), the reception accorded her was of unparalleled magnificence. The bride was met by a procession of cardinals and ambassadors, who led her to the Pope's presence through streets draped with rich stuffs and tapestries; she was then conducted to a palace the young Riario had erected expressly for her use, next to his own dwelling. Its walls were of precious woods; its interior brilliant with gilding and shining silks; the plates, beakers, and other table utensils were all of silver and gold." (1)

What must have been the reaction of a sensitive soul like Savonarola's, or what must have been the increasing cynicism of a mind like Machiavelli's, in reflecting upon the heathenish pomp of the Church as displayed for instance, on the occasion of the attempt of Pope Pius II to launch a crusade against the Turks in 1458, concerning which we read:

"At last ..... Pope Pius II summoned a council at Mantua under his own presidency, for the purpose of inciting the Christian powers to war with the infidel. He set forth on his progress in 1459, with a cortège of incredible pomp, and with ten cardinals, sixty bishops, and many secular princes in his train ..... The Pontiff entered Florence borne on the shoulders of Galeazzo Maria Sforza and of the lords Malatesta, Manfredi, and Ordelaffi; and the festivals ordained him by the Republic were such as were generally accorded to no one but the Emperor or some other great temporal potentate. At Ferrara the Pope made his entrance under a canopy of gold brocade; the streets through which he passed were carpeted with cloth and sprinkled with flowers; rich tapestries hung from the windows, and the city echoed with music and song. On reaching the Cathedral, Guarino read him a long Latin oration, crammed with learn-

(1) Life of Savonarola, p. 25.

ed allusions and praise of the Holy Father .....

> "In 1460 the Pope returned to Ferrara without having achieved anything; nevertheless, his reception was even more splendid than before. The Duke went up the Pò to meet him in a magnificent barge surrounded by a swarm of boats gaily decked with banners and musical instruments, spreading across the river from bank to bank. A multitude of youths dressed in white, and bearing wreaths in their hands, stood arrayed on the flower-strewn shores, and at the spot where the Head of the Church was to land, statues of the pagan divinities were set up in his honor." (1)

The spiritual deadness of Nicholas V, who forgot the claims of Christian duty upon the Holy Father and sought only to make of the papal chair a center for secular and pagan learning, was bad enough. But that was saintly in comparison with his successors. Calixtus III (the first of the Borgias) filled Rome with Spanish adventurers and threw the whole city into bloody anarchy. Concerning Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII, and Alexander VI, we are told:

> "...(they) are those filling the most degraded period in papal history, and proving to what a state Italy was then reduced. The first of these men was a Genoese friar, who immediately after his election (9th August, 1471) exhibited himself as a violent despot, devoid of all scruples and all decency. He needed money, and therefore put up to sale offices, benefices, and indulgences. He showed a downright mania for the advancement of his nephews, some of whom were, according to the general verdict, his own sons. One of these, Pietro Riario, was made Cardinal, with an income of sixty thousand crowns, and plunged so desperately into luxury, dissipation, and debauchery of all kinds that he soon died, worn out by his vices, and overwhelmed with debts. The other brother, Girolamo, as zealously patronized, led the same

(1) Life of Savonarola, pp.9,10.

sort of life. The Pope's whole policy was ruled by his greed of fresh acquisitions for his sons and nephews. It was solely because Lorenzo dei Medici had crossed those designs that the conspiracy of the Pazzi was hatched in the Vatican, and that on its failure the Pope made war on Florence, and launched a sentence of excommunication against the city." (1)

Political intrigues of the Papacy.

In this same general strain, we find the Popes of this period so anxious to build up dukedoms for their children that they had no scruples whatsoever against stirring up continual strife between the states of Italy, in the hope of snatching a bit of territory here or there, nor, indeed, of inviting time and again outside powers to overrun Italy, in the hope that out of the general confusion the papal lands might be increased and the papal temporal power made more formidable. Some notion of the deplorable state into which Italian society had been plunged under the reign of degeneracy with which we have been dealing may be gathered from this sketch of the condition of Rome under Innocent VIII:

"...Then began a most scandalous traffic in votes for election to the Papal chair, which was sold to the highest bidder. The Fortunate purchaser was Cardinal Cibo, who was proclaimed Pope on 29th August, 1484, under the name of Innocent VIII. Hostile to the Aragonese, he soon joined the conspiracy of the Neapolitan barons, promising men, arms, money, and the arrival of a new Angevin pretender. The city of Aquila began the rebellion by raising the standard of the Church (October, 1485); Florence and Milan declared for the Aragonese; Venice and Genoa, on the other hand, declared for the Pope and the barons, who had the aid of the Colonna, while the Orsini, taking arms in the Campagna, marched straight on the walls of Rome. Confusion was at its height; the Pope despairing of succour, armed even the common felons; the cardinals were at variance, the people terror-stricken, and Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere alone

(1) Life of Machiavelli, pp.51,52.

paced the walls, and prepared for their defence. An attack was momentarily expected from the Duke of Calabria. But the Pope's invitations to René II of Lorraine had the effect of bringing about a peace, compelling Ferrante to pay an annual tribute, and grant an amnesty to the barons, who, however, were put to death shortly afterwards.

"During this confusion, anarchy had again broken loose in Rome, nor was any way found to restrain it: no morning passed without corpses being found in the streets. Malefactors who could pay, obtained safe conducts; those who could not were hung at Tor di Nona. Every crime had its price, and all sums over one hundred and fifty ducats went to Franceschetto Cibo, the Pope's son; smaller amounts to the chamber. Parricide, violation, any sort of crime, could obtain absolution for money. The Vice-Chamberlain used to say, laughing, 'The Lord desireth not the death of the sinner, but his life and purse.' The houses of the Cardinals were crammed with weapons, and gave shelter to numerous assassins and malefactors. Nor was the state of things in the country very different from this. At Forlì Girolamo Riario was assassinated (1484), men said, because the Pope wished to give that State to Franceschetto Cibo; at Faenza, Galeotto Manfredi was murdered by his own wife. Dagger and poison were everywhere at work, the most diabolical passions were unchained in Italy, and Rome was the headquarters of crime.

"Meanwhile, Innocent VIII passed his time in festivities. He was the first Pope who acknowledged his own children, and celebrated their wedding feasts. Franceschetto espoused Maddalena, daughter of Lorenzo dei Medici (1487), and by way of recompense, her brother Giovanni was made a Cardinal at the age of fourteen. ....." (1)

(1) Life of Machiavelli, pp. 53,54.

Florence under Lorenzo the Magnificent.

This study would not be complete without some reference to the condition of affairs in Florence itself. This was the age of Lorenzo dei Medici, called the Magnificent, and his dissolute son Piero.(1)

It is needless to review the steps by which the Medici family had established their tyranny over the city of Florence and its tributaries. It is sufficient to say that by the time of Lorenzo the Republic of Florence was a republic only in name, a dead shell that could not function for a free people, even when the Medici were expelled.

The period of Lorenzo the Magnificent truly reflects all Italian society of that day. Lorenzo himself was well educated, and became the powerful supporter of the Platonic Academy, which had been established by his grandfather Cosimo, at the instance of Gemistos Pletho. In this regard Lorenzo was the fitting champion of his day, for all men were delving into the learning of Plato and Aristotle, and erudite discussion was quite the fashion. No public address was acceptable unless it was packed with classic allusions. Even the preacher in his pulpit was more concerned about his Hellenic rhetoric than he was about an honest attempt to interpret the Christian scriptures. The great preacher in Florence was Frà Mariano da Genazzano. "I went," writes Poliziano to his friend Tristano Calco, "feeling badly disposed, and mistrustful of the great praises I had heard of him. But no sooner did I enter the church than the preacher's appearance, his habit and his face, wrought a revulsion in my feelings, and I at once desired and expected great things. I confess to thee, that he frequently seemed to soar to a gigantic height in the pulpit, far beyond all human proportions. And now, behold, he begins to speak! I am all ears to the musical voice, the chosen words, the grand sentences. Then I note the clauses, recognize the periods, am swayed by their harmonious cadence, etc."(2) Concerning this preacher we also read: "Frà Mariano had all the impetuosity, hypocrisy, and malice of a

(1) Life of Savonarola, Book I, Chapter III.
(2) Ibid., pp.78,79.

courtier-pedant, and although much of his eloquence as a preacher consisted of exaggerated gesticulations, groans and tears, yet he had some reputation for learning, and was in great favour with the creatures of Lorenzo, whom he always flattered from the pulpit."(1)

Such was the preacher who might be called the court-preacher of Lorenzo, and he fitted into Lorenzo's scheme of life perfectly. Mariano had a convent at the Porta San Gallo which had been built for him by (2) the Medici, whether by Lorenzo himself or not is not clear, and thither Lorenzo often went to discuss theology with him. It is safe to assume that these theological discussions never pierced beneath the surface of Lorenzo's sensuality nor in any wise found his conscience. Neither did Lorenzo's frequent high debate in the Platonic Academy on the immortality of the soul prevent him from going the following night into a revel of debauchery of incredible baseness. Lorenzo could write literary verses, and might have attained to some fame on that account, had he ever been moved by any great and noble theme; but he found it more to his liking to create carnival songs for the Florentines to sing, so odious that they would not be tolerated in our day even by the baser levels of society. They were foul beyond description. (3)

Lorenzo is not only the master of Florence politically, but he is in every way the burning focus of Florentine society - naturally brilliant, of high intellectual training, passionately devoted to the recovery of the ancient Greek culture and philosophy, and yet insensible to any of the great moral forces which a Christian civilization of any vitality at all feels coursing through it. It is not to be wondered at if, on the one hand the sensitive spirituality of a Savonarola should have been goaded by such a condition of society and by such a ruler into an almost insane fury, or, on the other, a practical genius like Machiavelli should have discovered no real place in political affairs for any truly moral element. The key to Florentine life in Machiavelli's day was pleas-

(1) Life of Savonarola, p.133.
(2) Life of Savonarola, p.78.
(3) Ibid. p.47.

ure and utilitarian advantage. It is not strange that a man like Machiavelli, destitute of the high spiritual dynamic of Savonarola, should have allowed himself, at certain periods in his life, to be sucked in by the whirlpool of Florentine vice, or should have injected into his philosophy of political government a utilitarianism that was nearly dead to moral impulse.

Character background Savonarola and Machiavelli.

Against such a background as this, then, the genius of Savonarola the prophet and that of Machiavelli the student of political science play. They are as diverse as the poles, and yet, when they are properly understood, the career of either of them is reasonably to be expected. The one, with an uncompromising character of flinty righteousness, could not help striking the spark of martyrdom; the other, keen of vision and detached from the prophetic impulse of the heroic friar of Saint Mark's, even though he may be accused of the taint of the immorality of his age and even of fawning a little at the feet of the Medici, yet gathers all the high intellectual acumen of his age and lays the foundation of a really scientific approach to the problems of government. But to understand fully this divergence in two great characters of nearly the same period and of practically the same social and political environment, it is necessary to look a little more closely at their personal history.

Savonarola's sensitiveness to sin.

Many legends gather around the childhood of Savonarola, and due account must be made for an element of fanciful exaggeration in them. And yet, even so, it seems certain that "he was by no means an attractive child; for he was neither pretty nor playful, but already serious and subdued."(1) Very little of substantial history is to be ascertained of Savonarola's childhood, but what little there is reveals a temperament which was from the first abnormally sensitive to the excesses common to the age in which he lived. His biographers recount "his sad and lonely mode of life, his humble and dejected demeanour, his wasted form, his increasingly fervent devotion, the long hours he passed in church, and the frequency of

(1) Life of Savonarola, p.3.

his fasts. .... During this period he was entirely absorbed in studying the Scriptures and St. Thomas Aquinas, allowing himself no recreation save that of playing sad music on his lute or writing verses expressing with a certain simple force the griefs which weighed upon his heart." (1) It is recalled that even as a child Savonarola so strongly reacted against the rapine, fraud, and violence that centered in the palaces of rulers that, "having been once taken by his parents to the ducal palace, he refused, with a firmness highly remarkable in so young a lad, ever to cross its threshold again." It does not require a very great leap of (2) imagination to connect this childish rebellion against a duke's palace with the stony indifference with which, after he had become Prior of Saint Mark's, he treated the blandishments of Lorenzo dei Medici; nor is it a long step from this childish set of mind to that tragic scene in his mature life in which the inflexible Confessor refused absolution to the dying tyrant of Florence, except full restitution were made for all that had been seized upon by the rapacity of the Medici. (3)

Intellectual independence versus orthodoxy

But if in Savonarola, even as a child, there is evidence of a disposition abnormally sensitive to sinfulness, it is well to remember that the discipline through which he passed was a powerful reinforcement to his naturally religious nature. The Savonarola family greatly desired to perpetuate the practice of medicine among them, for the medical profession had been "the source of the dignity and honour of their house." (4) In this particular their hopes were centered in Girolamo. "Accordingly the grandfather, Michele, gave his tenderest care to Girolamo. With the patience and simple directness gained by long years and experience, this wise old scientist devoted himself to the development of his grandson's intellect, the careful unfolding of its budding thoughts and ideas. Such a training was undoubtedly the best of schools, and the boy soon rewarded his grandsire's devotion by showing a true passion for study. So great was his ardour for books that even those beyond his comprehension were eagerly seized upon and ransacked for hidden treasures." Here was the beginning

(1) Life of Savonarola, pp.11,12.
(2) Ibid. p.13. (3) Ibid. p.148. (4) Ibid.p.4.

of the working out of the intellectual independence which made of Savonarola at first the laughing stock of Florence, when he began to match his homely sermons against the lordly style of Frà Mariano da Genazzano; but which later on drew all Florence into a breathless throng around his pulpit and aroused the interest of all Christendom. Here is also the beginning of that mode of thinking which first glints forth in the fragments of philosophy preserved for us from his teachings of his novices in Saint Mark's, and which finds its almost startling culmination in "The Triumph of the Cross."

It would have been well for the ease of mind of Savonarola himself if the clear teachings of his grandfather could have continued until the young student's conceptions had come to clarity, and it might have saved him from many of the exaggerations to which he was so prone in his interpretations of the Scriptures and of the life, when he came to fame and power as a preacher. But it was almost inevitable that the meshes of scholasticism should be cast around his thinking. It was a thing to be reckoned with in the thinking processes of that time. However that may be, the safeguard of old Michele's teaching was soon removed by the old man's death. Then Savonarola's father attempted to take up the task of instruction where the grandfather had laid it down. The youthful student was straightway plunged into the works of Thomas Aquinas and the Arabic commentaries on Aristotle. These studies, strangely enough, were at that time considered as indispensable guides and introductions to the study of medicine. (1)

But for Girolamo Savonarola these studies did not lead out into the profession of medicine. They rather opened up to his eager mind a field of intellectual and spiritual adventure where he was to grow into a life filled with peculiar and powerful contradictions. In that he was a worshipful devotee of Aquinas, he became the most orthodox of Churchmen; but in that he became acutely trained in the argumentative skill of the Aristotelians, his naturally keen mind and his

(1) Life of Savonarola, p.4.

powerful penetration of intellect brought him to the brink of the disclosure of many fallacies in the Roman faith which his Catholic loyalty did not allow him thoroughly to investigate. One instance will serve to illustrate. Savonarola could not remain blind to the corruption of the Papacy, and yet he was bound by his training in Aquinas and by his great loyalty to the Church not to suppose that the Pope could be guilty of such great evil. He was consequently thrown into a great quandary, and particularly so when the atrocious Alexander VI launched his excommunication against Savonarola upon grounds that outraged the simplest demands of reason and justice. He arrived at an ingenious solution of his problem:

> "The superior may not give me any command contrary to the rules of my order; the Pope may not give me any command opposed to charity, or contrary to the Gospel. I do not believe that the Pope would ever seek to do so; but were he so to do, I should say to him, Now thou art no pastor, thou art not the Church of Rome, thou art in error." (1)

There is no reason to believe that Savonarola ever in the slightest released himself from the authority of the Church or its supreme head, the Pope, but when the authority of natural reason and justice began to play so plainly upon the question of the errancy of the Church as it does in this instance, one cannot help supposing that, however unconsciously on Savonarola's part, the road is being paved for some future Protestant revolt.

His visionary tendencies.

One further element in Savonarola's nature remains to be considered. With a nervous system so delicately adjusted that toward the end of his life his inquisitors, in the trial that led to his death, said they had never seen a person respond to sensitively to the pain of torture as did Savonarola, it is not strange that in an earlier period of his life his burning zeal and fevered mind should have brought to him visions by night and by day. In this he was influenced by the current Platonic belief in angels and visions to yield

(1) Life of Savonarola, p.406.

to the conviction that his visions were prophetic, as truly as were the visions of the prophets of the olden time. That he firmly, and even passionately, believed in his visions as sent from God there can be little doubt. And that the coming of these visions did much to shape his views of the meaning of both religion and patriotism there can hardly be any greater doubt. A high visionary he was to the very last, desiring for Florence that it should become a perpetual city of penance and unselfish alms-deeds, and of the Roman Church that it should come forth with unspotted raiment in an adulterous age.

Machiavelli's contrast temperament.

Let us now turn for a moment to a similar glance at the character of Machiavelli. How different is the whole setting of the stage! The environment and temperament are both radically different from those of Savonarola, although both men flourished in the same city.

The family of Machiavelli bequeathed to him that strain of political sagacity which is the chief ground for his renown. It was a very old Tuscan family, descended from the same stock as the lords of Montespertoli (1), and Symonds relates that the Machiavelli wing of the family contained many priors and gonfaloniers of justice. (2) Niccolo Machiavelli's father Bernardo was himself a jurist of some distinction, and possessed of moderate property holdings. (3) We are told that Bernardo was a studious man and that his wife Bartolommea was "a pious woman, evidently of some culture, since she composed certain religious verses and hymns to the Blessed Virgin, dedicated, as we find it asserted, to her son Niccolo." (4) But of any pious impression made by this mother upon the son to whom she dedicated her hymns to the Virgin we are unable to find one clear trace. He had, evidently, his father's judicial mind, but his whole concept of virtue is more readily interpreted in the light of the old Roman pagan ideas than in the light of his mother's Catholic piety.

(1)Life of Machiavelli, p.218.
(2)Brittanica.
(3)Life of Machiavelli, p.220. (4) Ibid. p.221.

Concerning Machiavelli's childhood little is definitely known. "... the early years of Machiavelli remain, perhaps always will remain, involved in obscurity. He is seldom mentioned by his contemporaries, and after his death none of his friends or acquaintances thought of writing his life. And he, continually occupied in the observation of contemporary men and events, never refers to himself, never alludes to his own past." (1) In this last observation is a strong indication of that very aloofness, that impersonal objectivity, that so permeate Machiavelli's writings as to throw them open to the criticism of being utterly lacking in personal conviction and moral passion. The man is so constantly the bystander, the cold recorder of what men are doing, the critical suggester of how men might play the game of politics to their better advantage, apparently so utterly devoid of any warm personal interest in what he is saying, that men of generous passions are completely at a loss to understand him at all.

But to revert to his early training. From what fragments we have, it appears that his schooling was mainly gained from Marcello Virgilio Adriani. From the fact that his works show a wide reading in Latin and Italian classics, while they are almost devoid of direct reference to the Greek classics, some have argued that Machiavelli was ignorant of the Greek tongue, the tongue of high classic culture in his day. But Villari takes a more moderate position. He says:

> "..... It would have been strange indeed if, as some have pretended, on the faith of Giovio's little trustworthy assertions, Machiavelli had been at that time utterly wanting in culture, only acquiring later from Marcello Virgilio Adriani all that he introduced into his works of Greek or Latin authors. But, on the other hand, although Machiavelli was already a fair scholar in his youth, and, as time went on, made much progress in the classics, and gained not a little by his intimacy with Marcello Virgilio, we cannot believe

(1) Life of Machiavelli, p.218.

> the assertions of those who credit him with profound learning and Grecian scholarship. Whether he knew or did not know the elements of Greek, can neither be affirmed nor denied, and it is a point of no ~~consequence~~ importance. It is certain that he diligently studied translations of Greek authors and made use of them in his writings; but of his ability to read them in the original - a point which it would certainly be very desirable to know - we have no satisfactory proofs whatever. Amid his numerous Latin quotations, we never meet with one in Greek; we have some translations of his from the Latin, but not a single page purporting to be translated from the Greek, nor does he ever mention having read a single author in that tongue." (1)

His practical disposition.

This somewhat lengthy quotation is here justified only because it contributes to a further insight into the mental disposition of Machiavelli, which will go not a little way toward explaining some of the attitudes which he took. Greek was the language of the school room, of Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy; it was the index to that part of the learning of the Renaissance which belonged to the Academy. Machiavelli's mind was not of that turn. He was a man of the street and the market place. "He made the world of men and things his study, learned to write his mother tongue with idiomatic conciseness, and nourished his imagination on the masterpieces of the Romans. Machiavelli shared the enthusiasm of his race and period for antiquity; but the antiquity he worshipped was confined to the commonwealth of Rome. Not the arts, the letters, and the philosophy of the Greeks, but the Latin histories in which the statecraft and organization of the Romans are described, arrested his attention. His habit of thought is marked throughout by a strong Latin bias." (2)

His Latin bias.

We might think of Machiavelli as the last of the great pagan Romans, essentially an apostate from the Catholic conception of the State. He seeks parallels

(1) Life of Machiavelli, pp. 222, 223.
(2) Britannica.

and precepts in Roman history to substantiate every doctrine he formulates, and is continually "expounding practical doctrine from texts derived from Livy." He watches the play of intrigue around the person of Caesar Borgia, and calculates the power of this and that force in much the same mood that one might expect in Julius Caesar himself as he estimated the strength of his Roman legions against all sorts of opposing armies, both civilized and barbarian. Machiavelli notes the political solidarity of the Swiss, on the occasion of his embassy to the court of Maximilian, and contrasts it with the feudal groupings of the Germanic nation; or estimates the whole in the light of another feudal arrangement in France. His whole approach is that of the tactician. He is utterly insensible of the inner dynamic of moral or religious power. He fails to see that religion has anything to do with sincere patriotism, or that the already evident unrest of Germany has anything to do with a religious or moral protest that is to rise to such power as to issue in a sweeping Reformation. His eyes are blind to that which would have been openly apparent to Savonarola.

His reaction to Savonarola's preaching

Perhaps no more striking picture could be found of the thxorough-going contrast between Savonarola and Machiavelli than this description of the effect of Savonarola's preaching upon Machiavelli, at the very moment when the prophetic preacher was stirring the City of Florence to its depths by his exposure of its political and religious corruption:

> ".....It was there (in Saint Mark's) that Machiavelli came to hear two sermons, of which he sent details to a friend in Rome, in a letter dated the 8th of March of the same year.(1498) In this we already find certain noteworthy characteristics of an intellect not merely different from, but opposed to, that of Savonarola. He could not understand that there was anything great or noble in the Friar. He listened with a smile of irony and scorn to the strange words of the man whom he afterwards described as the <u>weaponless prophet</u>.

> He heard him slashing at 'your books, oh priests, and treating you in a way that even dogs would not submit to'; he heard him say of the Pope 'everything that can be said of any great villain'; as it appeared to him 'this Friar is colouring his lies to suit the times'; but he failed to comprehend how he had gained so great a power in Florence, nor how the affair would end, wherefore he besought his friend to enlighten him upon the subject if possible."

This reaction came at the time when Machiavelli was in his 29th year, and just emerging into public life, and it is so remarkable that its narrator is forced to remark: "What manner of man, then, was this who remained a cold inquirer in the midst of these seething popular passions?" If that question could be answered, the whole riddle of this man who is at once one of the most admired and the most detested men in the modern study of historical figures could be solved; and the vital differences which separated him from his eminent fellow-Florentine might in some degree be abated.

In Savonarola's life there was, as has been noted, a great conflict between his loyalty to reason and his loyalty to the Church; but the conflict was harmonized by the high ethical consciousness and character of the man. In Machiavelli there is also evidence of varying streams of impulse, but there is no high, co-ordinating principle. From beginning to end, he has the keen intellect and objective curiosity of the scientist, but any commanding moral impulse is lost in his utilitarian philosophy of the conduct of a State.

Part II. - Religious Views of Savonarola and Machiavelli.

Many students of the life of Savonarola have declared that he was the first of the great Protestant leaders, the forerunner of Luther. If we consider that his religious intensity and prophetic power did much to shatter the frozen solidarity of the Catholic consciousness of his time, in his effort to raise again an ethical conscience in the Church, then we may think of him as preparing the way for Luther. For undoubtedly the passion of Savonarola's utterances did supply an explosive power that helped to loosen the packed-in earth for Luther's ideas to grow. When Savonarola was at the height of his power, we are told, "the new doctrine was noised throughout the world. It excited much attention even in the East, where the Sultan caused the sermons to be translated into Turkish for his own reading. From France, Germany, and England Savonarola received letters from new followers whom these sermons had converted to his views." A wave of influence so powerful as this, coinciding, as it did, with a condition of unrest that was steadily increasing in Germany any way, on account of Papal exactions and the corruption and tyranny of the Church, could not do otherwise than help on the Reformation movement which was so shortly to find its great head in Luther. (1)

Savonarol in no sen Protestan

But when so much is granted, it is hardly fair to go any farther in our estimation of Savonarola as a radical in religious thinking. He was Catholic through and through. When as a mere lad he felt the burden of the sin of his day crushing him, it was to the cloister of a Catholic order that he fled. Once within the mon-

Evidence from his own life.

(1) Life of Savonarola, p.439.

astery, his rigid adherence to the rules and purpose of his Order and Church made him almost immediately a marked man. His instruction of the novices at Saint Mark's was a more thorough training in Catholic fundamentals than was at all usual, even in the most careful of monasteries. His protest against the licentiousness of the Church and of its clergy, from the obscure priest to the Pope, was, in truth, the most vital kind of plea for the purity of Catholic faith and practice.

If any further testimony were needful from Savonarola's own life as to his loyalty to the Catholic faith one might well look at two scenes in those tragic final hours that hastened him toward his execution. Let us look first at a scene within Saint Mark's, when the monastery is being stormed by the mob, led by the Compagnacci, in its furious attempt to lay violent hands on the Friar. We read that certain heroic spirits among the friars of Saint Mark's put "breastplates over their Dominican robes and helmets on their heads, brandishing enormous halberts and speeding through the cloister, with shouts of Viva Cristo, to call their companions to arms." Whereupon:

> "Savonarola was deeply grieved at by this, and Frà Domenico went about imploring all to cast aside their weapons. 'They must not stain their hands in blood; they must not disobey the precepts of the gospel, nor their superior's commands!'"

At this point Savonarola sought to give himself into the hands of the mob, in order to keep the rest of his friars from coming to violence, but being prohibited from doing this,

> "...he turned about and bade all follow him to the church. First of all he carried the Host in procession through the cloisters; then led the way to the choir, and reminded them that prayer was the only weapon to be employed by ministers of religion, whereupon all fell on their knees before the consecrated wafer, and intoned the chant: Salvum fac

populum tuum, Domine." (1)

Then, when it became evident that the friars must yield to the ruffians battering at the doors, Savonarola delivered an earnest little address to his companions:

> " ... My beloved children, in the presence of God, in the presence of the consecrated wafer, with our enemies already in the convent, I confirm the truth of my doctrines. All that I have said hath come to me from God, and He is my witness in heaven that I speak no lie. ... My last exhortation to ye is this: let faith, prayer, and patience be your weapons. I leave ye with anguish and grief, to give myself into my enemies hands. I know not whether they will take my life, but certain am I that, once dead, I shall be able to succour ye in heaven, far better than it hath been granted me to help ye on earth. Take comfort, embrace the cross, and by it shall ye find the way to salvation." (2)

When a man stands at the crisis of his life he is likely to speak the deepest things in him. If there were any rebellion against the Catholic faith, as such, in Savonarola's heart, it would surely have come forth at such a time as this. But surely the unprejudiced reader can find nothing in these utterances, nor in Savonarola's behavior in the hour of peril that would in the faintest degree inveigh against an orthodox Catholic view of religious truth.

Now let us glance at the other scene to which we have referred. After Savonarola had been taken prisoner xxxx, he was put cruelly to the torture, but did not waver in his faith in his own integrity. When he was able to write again a bit, he indited two meditations that afterwards gained great fame. In the first of these meditations, "Miserere mei Deus", there is this unmistakably Catholic utterance:

> "...I ardently desire the salvation of all men; the works of the good would greatly console

(1) Life of Savonarola, p680.
(2) Ibid., p.687.

me. Wherefore, I beseech Thee, look on Thy Church, and behold how in these days more infidels than Christians are numbered in its fold, and how every one doth make a God of his belly. Send forth Thy spirit, and let the face of the earth be renewed. Hell is filled, Thy Church desolate. Arise; why sleepest Thou, O Lord? Our sacrifices find no favour in Thy sight, for they are mere ceremonies and unrighteous. Where be now the glory of the apostles, the fortitude of the martyrs, the holy simplicity of the monks?" (1)

In the second meditation, an exposition of the Thirtieth Psalm, there is an interplay between the Catholic doctrine of works and the doctrine of faith. It was Savonarola's insistence upon faith in this meditation that caused Luther himself to claim that Savonarola was a precursor of the Reformation, whose slogan was salvation by faith. (1½) But Villari contends that the real heart of this meditation is that both man's work and free-will have a recognized value, according to the Catholic creed. (2) And again, that "it is absolutely false that he (Savonarola) ever renounced or neglected to maintain the value of those good works and religious ceremonies, of which, on the contrary, he was apt to exaggerate the importance almost to the point of superstition."(3) The justice of this last observation seems to be amply supported by a complete review of Savonarola's life in all its phases.

His own express statement

But if we were still in any doubt as to how to construe the orthodoxy of Savonarola,s position as a reformer, we are not without a clear statement of the matter in his own words. In a sermon delivered on February 17, 1496 he says:

"... as regards faith my ways are wholly pure; for I have ever believed and do believe all that is believed by the Holy Roman Church, and have ever submitted and do submit myself to Her ... I have written to Rome, that if peradventure I may have preached or written any heretical thing ... I am willing to amend me and to retract my words

(1) Life of Savonarola, p. 735.
(1½) Ibid., p.740. (2) Ibid.,p.739. (3) Ibid., p.740.

here in public. I am ever prepared to yield obedience to the Roman Church, and declare that whosoever obeyeth her not shall be damned ... I declare and confess that the Catholic Church will surely endure to the day of judgment; ... and inasmuch as there be divers opinions as to the real definition of this Catholic Church, I rely on Christ and on the decision of the Church of Rome." (1)

Failure of Alexander VI to prove heresy.

In this connection it may be well to examine the brief of excommunication which Pope Alexander VI finally wrote against Savonarola. If there were any real grounds for accusing Savonarola of heresy against the Catholic faith, it ought to appear in so critical a document as this, for excommunications largely presuppose heresy. The brief of Pope Alexander VI is not lengthy, and may be set forth in a paragraph:

"We have heard from many persons worthy of belief that a certain Frà Girolamo Savonarola, at this present said to be vicar of St. Mark's in Florence, hath disseminated pernicious doctrines to the scandal and great grief of simple souls. We had already commanded him, by his vows of obedience, to suspend his sermons, and to come to us to seek pardon for his errors; but he refused to obey, and alleged various excuses, which we too graciously accepted, hoping to convert him by our clemency. But, on the contrary, he persisted still more in his obstinacy; wherefore, by a second brief (7th of November, 1496) we commanded him, under pain of excommunication, to unite the Convent of St. Mark to the Tusco-Roman Congregation recently created by us. But even then he still persisted in his stubbornness, thus, ipse facto, incurring censure. Therefore we now command ye, on all festivals, and in the presence of the people, to declare the said Frà Girolamo excommunicate, and to be held as such by all men, for his failure to obey our apostolic admonitions and commands. And, under pain of the same penalty, all are forbidden to assist him, hold intercourse with him, or approve him, either by word or deed,

(1) Life of Savonarola, p.405. Note: The quotation as here made from Villari is exact, including the omissions.

inasmuch as he is an excommunicated person, and suspected of heresy."

"Given in Rome, this 13th day of May,1497." (1)

A study of this brief of excommunication brings out several interesting things. In the first place,it is evident that the Pope desires to leave the impression that Savonarola is heretic. This appears in the first sentence, in the words, "hath disseminated pernicious doctrines to the scandal and great grief of simple souls", and is touched upon again in the last clause of the brief: "and suspected of heresy." It is not unfair to say that if there had been valid grounds for a charge of heresy, Alexander VI would have stated them sharply in his sentence of excommunication It would have done much to clear his own hateful attitude toward Savonarola in the eyes of the whole Church. But it is plain, as Villari points out (2), that all that the brief warrants in its own statement is that "the Pope only suspected Savonarola of heresy, and even this only on hearsay, and therefore implicitly avows that he never examined into the charges himself."

But why resort even to the wording of the brief? It is no secret that the least of Alexander's cares was to safeguard the orthodoxy of the Church at any point - his consuming interest was sensual gratification and a greed for temporal power. Against both of these Savonarola had hurled his thunderbolts, and despite the pious phrasing of the Pope's language, the most superficial can discern that the Pope was seeking by hook or crook to get Savonarola out of the way, because, and simply because, Savonarola hindered his own unrighteous scheming. The Pope himself seemed to recognize the flimsiness of his sentence of excommunication on any ground of heresy, for, after the opening sentence he hastily shifts to a technical charge of disobedience in connection with the union of Saint Mark's with the Tusco-Roman Congregation. He plays upon Savonarola's obstinacy in dealing with the Pope's command to appear at Rome "to seek pardon for his errors", and specifically states that the threat of excommunication formerly ad-

(1) Life of Savonarola, pp.541,542.
(2) Ibid., p.543.

dressed to Savonarola was based upon this act of disobedience; wherefore, in persisting in this disobedience, Savonarola, ipse facto, incurred censure.

So it is evident that the technical charge upon which Savonarola was excommunicated was his refusal to unite the Convent of Saint Mark's to the Tusco-Roman Congregation, and that the excommunication was based upon a charge of disobedience to the Pope, rather than upon any heresy. Some point might be made of the fact that back of this Tusco-Roman controversy there was also the venom of the Pope for Savonarola personally. But little would be gained for our present purpose to go into that controversy in any detail. Our real concern is that even the decree of excommunication did not lay the charge of proved heresy at the door of Savonarola, but only the charge of disobedience to his Superior, and that too under circumstances where unquestioning obedience would have required a grave violation of Savonarola's moral nature.

Burning soul of reform within th Church.

We may, then, sum up all that we have been trying to say in regard to Savonarola's religious views, by concluding that he was throughout his life, to the very end, consistently Catholic. Making all due allowance for a vigorous mind which, in its natural power of investigation, often came to the very edge of its credulity in some of the exactions which the Church of the Middle Ages laid upon it, yet the uniform temper of that mind was orthodox. We are not warranted in saying that Savonarola, when he is fully understood, ever uttered even the faintest protest against the Catholic Church or her Pope as such. It was only against the infamy and sensuality of the Church and her Pope that he protested, and he protested in the same spirit that has marked heroic martyrdom in every age of the Christian Church.

Machiavel in no sen a Church- man.

We are willing to assert, without any qualification, that Savonarola was thoroughly and genuinely Catholic. But no stretch of imagination can make the same claim for Machiavelli. We need not look, in Machiavelli's

case, for open war against the Church. He would not have deemed that prudent. To Machiavelli, the Catholic Church was an institution in Italian society, chiefly to be counted upon as a factor in politics. It is true that he does bridle stiffly against the Church when he considers the Church as the foe of Italian political life, but as to any deep interest in the Church, either in its favor or against it, there is very little to be noticed. The Church was a powerful principality and the Pope was a powerful prince, and as such each had to be reckoned with. As such they were interesting to the political mind of Machiavelli, but when that line of interest was run out, he became almost wholly indifferent, unless, indeed, he may be thought to have developed a mild antagonism for the Roman hierarchy.

Attitude in general toward religion.

That is not to say that Machiavelli gave no thought to religion. In religion, after a fashion, he was really very much interested, but it was not the religion of Savonarola. We have already had occasion to notice that Machiavelli's ideas were largely cast in a pagan mold, the mold of the older Roman society. By recurring to that observation, we may get some light upon his attitude toward religion. Villari remarks:

> "And if the contemporaries of Machiavelli were Pagans in political matters, Machiavelli himself was a still greater Pagan, as is abundantly proved by every page of his works. It is proved by his boundless admiration for antiquity; his indifference to religion; his hatred towards the Papacy; by the way in which he spoke of Christianity, especially when comparing it with Paganism; and, finally, by the peculiar language he frequently employed and that demonstrated his mode of thought with singular lucidity. For example: he always used the word <u>virtue</u> in the sense of courage and energy both for good and evil. To Christian virtue in its more general meaning, he rather applied the term, goodness, and felt much less admiration for it than for the Pagan virtue

> that was always fruitful of glory. And in his opinion men valued glory beyond all else in the world, since that alone rendered them immortal and like unto the gods. Men, he said, preferred infamy to oblivion, for at least infamy served to transmit their names to posterity." (1)

So much for the personal element in religion, from Machiavelli's point of view. Strength, the power to achieve, were the elements of a religious character at all worth while. The gentler virtues of the Christian were weakening things. One is reminded of Nietzsche.

But there is another side to religion on the Machiavellian view. It is a thing to be reckoned with as a binding element in the life of the State. Here Machiavelli immediately becomes respectful in his treatment of religion. He treats of this meaning of religion at length in the "Discourses":

> "... Not only, too, should the founders of kingdoms and republics stand alone, but, for the same reasons, the founders of religious creeds, equally intended to curb the evil passions of mankind and enforce righteous laws, should likewise act singly. 'The Roman people was greatly favored by fortune in obtaining after a law-giving, warrior king like Romulus, a sovereign like Numa, founder of a religion, the which is always necessary for the maintenance of civilization, more especially among a people so ferocious as the Romans of that time. And to gain increased authority, he feigned to hold intercourse with a nymph, a means to which Romulus was not constrained to have recourse, but which has been turned to account by other law-givers, and more especially by makers of creeds, the better to win the belief of the people. The religion of the Romans was one of the chief sources of their greatness, inasmuch as it caused the laws to be respected and morality preserved. The sagacious politician will always respect religion, even if he have no belief in it, since there have been frequent proofs

(1) Life of Machiavelli, Vol.II, Book II,Chap.II,p.92.

> that through inculcating it even by craft, much valour has been roused for the defence of the country. In fact, when the Consul Papirius wished to give battle to the Samnites, he called the augurs to ascertain the auspices; and the chief of the Pollarii, seeing that the army was ready for battle, said that the fowls had pecked, although that was not true, as was afterwards discovered. Nevertheless, the Consul gave battle, saying, that were there any deception, it would be punished by the gods, and meanwhile he caused the Pollarii to be placed in the van of the army. Thus when their chief was wounded and killed, he instantly exclaimed that all was going well, since chastisement had come. And the Romans, either in good faith or by calculation, always enforced respect for religion, and found their profit therein.'"(1)

Surely one may look in vain through this whole utterance (one of the most open, perhaps, that Machiavelli ever made of his view of the value of religion) for anything that savors of any conviction in Machiavelli's own heart of any fundamental claim of religion upon the human character. Religion is valuable simply because men are naturally religious, and this tendency makes for patriotism. Patriotism is the chief thing, and if religion contributes to it in this fashion, then is religion to be cherished; but always and only insofar as religion is the handmaid of patriotism, and the guarantee of the strength of the State.

In a similar vein Machiavelli makes his biting criticism of the Roman Catholic Church. As we now look at it, Machiavelli was mercilessly correct in his analysis of the bearing of the Church in his day upon the political welfare of Italy, but that does not rob his criticism of the Church of that utilitarian estimate which we have already noted. Still quoting from the "Discourses":

> "'Had the Christian religion been maintained as it was instituted by its founder, things would have gone differently, and men would have been greatly

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(1) Life of Machiavelli, Vol. II, p. 103. Quoted by Villari from the "Discourses", Bk. I, Ch's. XI, XII, and XIV.

happier. How much, on the contrary, it has been changed and corrupted, is proved by this, that the people nearest to Rome are those having the least faith in it. And whoever considers the use made of religion by the Church of Rome and the nature of its manners, must deem its hour of flagellation and destruction to be near at hand. But inasmuch as there are some who believe that the welfare of Italy depends from the Church of Rome, I will allege two very weighty reasons against her.' 'The first, that by the infamous example of that Court, this land has lost all devotion and all religion..... We Italians, then, are first indebted to the Church and the clergy for the loss of our faith and the gain of wickedness; but we likewise owe them another and greater obligation, which is the cause of our ruin. It is that the Church has kept and keeps our country divided. And verily no country was ever united and happy, save under the complete sway of a Republic or a sovereign, as has been the case with France and Spain.' 'The Church alone has prevented this union in Italy; for having had her seat there and held the temporal power, she has neither been strong enough to occupy it entirely, nor so weak as not to be able, when fearing the loss of the temporal power, to summon a new potentate to defend her against any one threatening to seize it. Thus the Church has been the true cause, for which Italy has never been united under one head, but always divided among lords and princes, wherefore the land has fallen into such feebleness that it has become the prey of the first who attacked it. For all this we Italians are indebted to the Church and to none else. And if any man should desire to see of what the Church may be capable, let him introduce her among the Swiss, the only nation still living after the fashion of the ancients, and he would see that in a brief space the iniquitous customs of the Court would create more disorder than any other event that could possibly occur.'" (1)

Political menace to Italy.

(1) Life of Machiavelli, Vol. II, PP. 103, 104. Quoted from the "Discourses", Book I, Ch. XII, pp. 54-56.

As one reviews this criticism of the corrupt Roman Church, and listens to Machiavelli deploring the loss of faith in the Italians due to the baseness of the clergy, one fancies that for a moment one has caught a refrain from Savonarola's broken-hearted and passionate protest against the ruined Church. One is inclined for a moment to think that some deeper note in the consciousness of Machiavelli has been struck, and that there is about to burst forth a prophetic appeal for the renovation of the Church and restoration to its apostolic purity. But this impression soon dies out as the real trend of Machiavelli's thinking becomes apparent. It is not the Church, or the faith of the people, in ~~themselves~~ itself that is concerning him. It is always the State - the State which the Church has ruined.

Dead to ethical considerations?

Perhaps this review of Machiavelli's conception of religion would not be complete without a little closer attention paid to a question which allies itself closely to any man's religious convictions: that is Machiavelli's estimate of the truly ethical in human living. Some have claimed that Machiavelli was dead to any truly ethical considerations, that he lacked all element of conscience; but others have claimed that conscience was the big thing with him. Yet, say these latter, Machiavelli was so wrapped up in the duty which a man owes to the State that he subordinated all more strictly personal problems of duty to that. A candid survey of all the evidence leaves us in a veritable quandary.

Take, for instance, the incident already cited, wherein Machiavelli seems to justify the action of Numa, the Roman founder of religion, in publishing a falsehood for the sake to gaining credence for the religious system to which he wishes to bind his people. Or again, the studied deceitfulness of the Consul Papirius in juggling the omens to suit his own purposes. Or still again, Machiavelli's laudation of the Roman view that religion ought to be fostered, because it was politically profitable, and his own observation that "the sagacious politician will always respect relig-

ion, even if he have no belief in it, since there are frequent proofs that through inculcating it even by craft, much valour has been roused for the defense of the country." One is at sea to find any dominating ethical motive in any of these instances. When the claims of religion, the deepest ethical spring in the human heart, have been twisted everywhither to suit whatever purpose may be in hand, the ethical nature in him who does the twisting is grievously hurt, if not, indeed, destroyed. And yet the defender of Machiavelli will say that he was not seeking to play fast and loose with ethical values, but was only making them conserve the ultimate welfare of the State.

It is true that the ethical evaluation of public affairs was different in that day than in ours. Then one might conceive, as some maintain Machiavelli held, that private virtue ought to be maintained, but that in public affairs expediency was the only rule. On this ground they defend his championing all sorts of atrocities in the name of some ultimate good for the State, as, for instance, his citation of the example of his hero Romulus:

> "Many will deem it a most pernicious example, that one who, like Romulus, was the founder of a civil community, should first have killed his own brother and then consented to the death of Titus Tatius Sabinus, his chosen companion.... The which opinion would be true if we did not consider the reasons urging him to those crimes... And it should be remarked adopted as a general rule, that in order to found and reconstitute a State it is necessary to be single-handed ..... It may be that even when his deeds accuse him, he shall be justified by their results; and when it is a good deed, like that of Romulus, the deed itself is sufficient justification, since he who commits violence for purposes of destruction does verily deserve censure, but not he who commits violence in order to establish security." (1)

(1) Life of Mach., Vol. II, P.101, quoted from „Discorsi" Bk. I, Ch. IX.

Here we leave the problem of Machiavelli's conscience with those who think they can solve it. We attempt only to point out the two major elements in the problem. First, Machiavelli's whole field of vision seems to have been involved in his conception of the welfare of the State, and to this he forces all minor considerations of duty to bow. Whatever is right for the State is right for the man, even though that may involve the committing of some deed that, according to the Christian standard of ethics, would be wholly reprehensible. Secondly, in all these matters it is the end which justifies the means. Given a sufficient end in view, say the establishment of the security of the State, and all crimes committed toward that end, no matter how hideous in themselves, become not only justifiable, but to be applauded. This is Jesuitry pure and simple, and our modern standard of morals, public as well as private, is horrified by it. But we may venture the question whether in our modern conduct of State affairs, to say nothing of private, we have in any large measure succeeding in extricating ourselves from the toils of this kind of a philosophy. Perhaps something might be said against our whole modern scheme of government and diplomacy, which we call Christian, on this score.

Part III. - The Meaning of Patriotism for Savonarola and Machiavelli.

Political significance of Savonarola's miss

As we scrutinize the life of Savonarola, we are apt to think of his prophetical mission as being purely religious, in the personal and introspective sense of the term. But like those older prophets of the Hebrew race, who so fascinated him, Savonarola found that his intensely religious life could not be satisfied without coming to grips with social and political renovation, as will as individual. Had it not been so, it is doubtful whether Savonarola should ever have been known beyond his own time and region. But like Luther in Germany, Savonarola came upon the scene when social and political reformation were so vitally necessary, and when the lines of political and ecclesiastical interest were so interwoven, that any heroic spirit of reform in the religious world must needs be a reformer in the social and political world as well. A bare statement of the fact would be this: at the time when Savonarola was at his height of power a great political revolution occurred in the State of Florence; concerning this revolution, some, like Machiavelli, cannot see that the preaching of the great Friar had anything particularly to do with it, but see in the revolution only a natural culmination of forces long at work in the life of the Florentine people; but others see the whole movement heading up in the burning spirit of Savonarola, and seriously doubt whether anything would have come of the whole thing apart from the prophetic power of the great preacher. Villari, after making an exhaustive examination of the State documents of that

period, concludes that, "by collating all these documents with Savonarola's sermons I ascertained that the Friar of St. Mark was beyond all doubt the leading spirit of the great political drama before me." (1)

His primar
hold on
Florence
political

When we think of the fiery sermons of Savonarola to the dense throngs of Florentines, as he denounced with utmost vehemence the sins of the day, and when we think of his so gripping the city that "the aspect of the city was completely changed", women throwing aside their vain finery, licentious young Florentines converted into sober, industrious citizens, and the townsfolk given to the reading of the Bible and Savonarola's writings, then we are likely to conclude that the real hold of Savonarola upon Florence was that of a great evangelistic preacher. But before we can safely come to such a conclusion, it is well to remember the circumstances of that remarkable transformation.

The preaching that had thus brought Florence to its knees in penitence was political preaching. For a long time the whole burden of Savonarola's preaching had been that Italy was to feel the scourge of God's wrath on account of her sins. He had prophesied the coming of that scourge in the form of the French invasion, and the people had beheld the literal fulfilment of that prophecy. Moreover, when the French King Charles had disgusted the Florentines by the grossness with which he treated their hospitality while he and his soldiers were quartered in their city, it was Savonarola who had used his prophetic office to urge Charles to move on, and had completely dominated the weak personality of the arrogant French monarch by his own power. (2) Still further, it was Savonarola whose vigorous preaching had led the hesitating city to thrust out the notorious tyrant Piero dei Medici, and yet had so mastered the populace that that revolution was accomplished without bloodshed or needless disorder. (3) The Florentines had been of old liberty loving people, intense in their passion for freedom. The Medici yoke had galled them beyond all endurance. Savonarola, more than any one else, had led them out of that bondage, and they adored

(1) Life of Savonarola, p. 343.
(2) Ibid., p.242. (3) Ibid., Book II, Chapter II.

him, accordingly, as a political savior. And because his preaching had been the instrument of their political salvation, they were willing to accept all his doctrine, even that which bore in on their personal living. This is, perhaps, a sweeping assertion to make, but it is upheld by two or three notable facts.

In the first place, it is notable that when Savonarola had lost his political prestige among the Florentines, they went back to their former licentious mode of living almost over night. In spite of the fact that he had led them through two triumphant and spectacular Burnings of the Vanities and through a very significant "Reform of the Children"(1) both of which movements struck at the heart of the bestial carnival season which had come to such prominence under the rule of the Medici, no sooner had the hand of fortune turned against Savonarola than the mob cried out for his blood, and reinstated the old-time Carnival with all its revolting features.

In the second place, Florence valiantly upheld the great preacher in his contest with the corruption of the Papacy, just so long as it was felt that the Papacy was in league with the Medici, and by supporting the work of Savonarola constant pressure could be exerted against the return of the Medici. As long as Florence held to that feeling, the Pope was powerless to make them deliver up Savonarola to him. But when he finally managed to get them to believe that he had no idea of restoring the Medici, they opened their gates to the papal commissioners, knowing full well that the death warrant of Savonarola was signed in advance thereby.

Still further, while Savonarola was making a heroic effort toward the spiritual and moral reformation of the Church and the people, he found it necessary to proclaim his message in political terms. With great solemnity, in his sermons on Haggai, in 1495, he proclaimed that Florence was to have a new political head, and when he had brought his audience to tremendous tension to know who this new head might be, he heralded Jesus Christ as king of Florence. The notion seized upon the fancy of the Florentines, and they made much ado to so reform the city that it might properly receive its divine King. (2)

(1) Life of Savonarola, pp. 396,398.
(2) Ibid., pp.330 ff.

We may sum up this contention that Savonarola's hold upon the Florentines was primarily political, by quoting Villari's conclusion:

> "When he (Savonarola) first spoke to them of religion and morals, the Florentines were roused to love of liberty; he had then favored their desires by counselling and promoting the foundation of a new Republic, and immediately became the idol of the multitude. But he sought to make politics and free institutions serve the cause of religion, whereas the Florentines wished to subordinate religion to freedom. Whenever the Friar lost sight of politics, he could no longer command his hearers' attention. Hence he was obliged to proclaim Jesus Christ King of Florence, to represent himself as the mouthpiece of the Virgin, when he counselled from the pulpit the formation of the new government, and declared that the Almighty Himself had ordained the abolition of Parliaments." (1)

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It will now be in order to examine Savonarola's own view of the State a little more closely. From what has already been said, it may be inferred that Savonarola's prime interest was always the religious, that is the spiritual, interest. If he entered into the field of political controversy, it was never as a politician, but always as a prophet of a spiritual life. It is an open fact that he refrained from political preaching as long as he could, that is, until he saw clearly the futility of preaching religion to an individual, when the whole social and political atmosphere was charged with that which made against any spiritual life whatsoever. It may be doubted whether he would ever have entered the lists against the Medici if they had stood for sobriety and good morals, regardless of the fact that they were political tyrants. But the thing that maddened the sensitive soul of Savonarola was that the Medici fostered and encouraged everything that promoted vice and tended to tear to pieces the moral integrity of the Florentines.

But while this may be granted, it is still plain that Savonarola was gaining for himself a principle

(1) Life of Savonarola, p. 438.

that was much at variance with the accepted philosophy of the State then much in vogue. Even such eminent thinkers as Machiavelli could not see that private virtue held any laws that ought to be applied to public affairs. Man in his private life lived in a closed circle that was entirely distinct from the life which man lived in the aggregate life of the State. In the life of the State public expediency was a full and sufficient rule, and the laws of private morality must not be suffered to intrude upon that domain. But Savonarola saw with startling clearness that the integrity of the spiritual life is fundamental, not only to the individual life of man, but to the life of the State; that morality is a uniform and universal requirement in all the ranges of human life and endeavor.

> "Only those without any intimate knowledge of Savonarola can regard him as one who desired to revive the Middle Ages and again sacrifice earth to heaven, the world to the Church. .... He appears, on the contrary, in his true light, as a soul yearning for the Christian ideal he proclaimed to his contemporaries; that is, that without virtue, self-sacrifice, and moral grandeur, both mankind and society must fall to ruin. Surrounded by scholars, philosophers, poets, and artists, who were among the most ardent of his followers, he was no enemy to the Italian Renaissance, but he saw and felt the inherent defects which were leading to its decay." (1)

His attitude toward patriotism.

The direct question of Savonarola's conception of the meaning of patriotism still remains to be considered. But with these observations made in regard to his view of the State, and with the general background of the age of Lorenzo the Magnificent in mind, we shall be able to come to some conclusion as to his idea of what constitutes true patriotism. And first let us review the great controversy as to what constituted true patriotism in Savonarola's time.

(1) Life of Savonarola, Preface to the new edition, p. xxvi.

Savonarola stood at the close of the Middle Ages. Back of him lay the old concept of State and Church. On the side of the State there still lingered the controlling idea of the Roman Empire, and empire of world dominion as deeply fixed in the mediaeval mind as the very laws of nature. On the side of the Church there was the great structure of the Roman hierarchy which paralleled the Empire at every point. Or, to change the figure a little, the Empire and the Roman Church were two ancient vines, gnarled but mighty, which had so twisted into the life of each other that one could not be thought of separately from the other. They reinforced each other at every point. In such a system as this patriotism must have two aspects: loyalty to the Empire and loyalty to the Church; and these two loyalties would be but different aspects of the same thing. Then when the Empire dropped into decay, and only the Church was left to preserve the semblance of the old granite order of government, what could be more natural than that loyalty to the Pope should supplant the olden loyalty formerly given to the Emperor. Refnforce that with the temporal power which was constantly increasing in the hands of the Pope, and you have some conception of the problem of patriotism as it presented itself to thinking men in Savonarola's period.

The pro b- lem of patriotism in Savon- arola's time.

The question of patriotism, then, resolved itself into this: Is unquestioning obedience to be yielded to Rome, in matters pertaining to the State? or is patriotism to be defined in terms of the liberty of the respective States, even though such liberty involved a break with Rome? It is precisely this question that led to a former assertion in this paper that in a man of Savonarola's type, conscientious and devout, patriotism would be likely to eventuate in a kneeling before the Chair of Saint Peter in Rome, unless that papal throne had been degraded. And yet a reservation must be. While we still affirm that in the matter of spiritual obedience Savonarola never wavered from perfect loyalty to the Roman Church, it is not so clear that he granted the same kind of unquestioning loyalty in matters of temporal sovereignty.

Did he bow unques- tioning- ly to Rome in the matte of patri- otic loyalty?

It is true that Savonarola looked for a general purging of human society, and that he looked for that purging to come first in the Church, from whence renewed spiritual life should flow out into the world with regenerating power, and that society in general should be re-cast under such a renewing and reforming power. It is true, also, that Savonarola earnestly looked for the speedy coming of the day when the whole earth should become one fold with one Christian Shepherd; that he looked for a world unity to which the Christian faith and Church should be the key. But (1) granting all that, it is not clearly evident that he thought of the whole world coming politically under the head of one man, even the Pope of Rome. It is far easier to believe that he looked for the coming of the worldwide Christian Kingdom in a much more spiritual sense than that, and that he would have allowed readily for units of government not bound with iron bands to the statecraft of the Roman Pontiff. Indeed, we are prepared to believe, not only that he would not have unquestioningly supported the Roman ecclesiastical monarchy, but that his ideas of government had well-nigh outgrown the necessity of any unconditioned monarchy whatsoever; in support of which we cite the following, in connection with his first direct speech on government:

His democratic tendencies.

> "He began by explaining a theory already much diffused in the schools, namely, that an absolute monarchy is the best of all governments under a good prince, but the worst under a bad one, inasmuch as it is the strongest and most united, both for good and for evil, and is typical of God's Empire over nature, which seeks unity in all things. .....
>
> "But as he went on his good sense came to the rescue, and he left the old formulas behind. 'These principles', he added, 'should be modified according to the nature of the people to whom they are applied. Among northern nations, where there is great strength and little intellect, the rule of the despot may sometimes be the best of govern-

(1) Life of Savonarola, Bk. II, Chap. VI, p. 311.

> ments. But in Italy, and above all in Florence, where both strength and intellect abound, where men have wits and restless spirits, the government of one can only result in tyranny. The sole form of government suited to our needs is a civil and general government. ... Wherefore let this be the first of thy laws, that, henceforth no man shall be the head of thy city .... Those who would fain rise above other men and cannot tolerate civil equality, are always desperately wicked, destroyers of souls and States." (1)

The last sentence in this quotation comes very nearly being an open plea for democracy, and it is driven home and clinched by one of the principles which he specifically laid down for the reformation of the government of Florence: "that no man may receive any benefit save by the will of the whole people, who have the sole right of creating magistrates and enacting laws." (2) It may be stretching the interpretation of this principle to say that it might be made to apply to the suzerainty of the Pope of Rome, apart from the will of the people of Florence. It may be that Savonarola had in mind only local tyrants, and not a Papal tyrant. But certainly there is a democratic flavor to this utterance that seems to make against the unqualified bowing of the people of Florence to any tyrant whatsoever, even though he claimed the authority of the Papal Chair.

Whatever his deepest motives may have been, this putting of the matter will, we believe, hold: that Savonarola was the staunch champion of the civil liberty of the Florentines, and that he did not at any point waver therefrom to the day of his death. He bent his whole mind and energy, not only to the expulsion of the Medici tyrants, but to the erection of a sterling form of government that was so admirable that even Machiavelli and Guicciardini, in the days of the downfall of the Republic, could find no better form to suggest. What could be more majestic than the sight of the lone monk in the palace of the Medici, there by express invitation of the dying Lorenzo to receive his last confession, standing inflexibly for the rights of the

(1) Life of Savonarola, p.261
(2) Ibid., p. 263.

the Florentines, and refusing absolution even to the Magnificent unless, among other things, he should guarantee the restoration of the rights of Florence of which the House of Medici had robbed them.

We may conclude our consideration of Savonarola's attitude toward patriotism with this bare summary: first, he stood for the renovation of society, as well as of individuals, solely by the insweep of spiritual influences; second, that the Church, herself first being purified, was to be the agency for such a spiritual reformation of the world; third, that in the interest of such a worldwide Christian reformation of human society Savonarola yearned for the coming of one fold and one Shepherd, even Christ and His church, among all men; and fourth, that while he yielded the utmost loyalty to the See of Rome in the matter of this spiritual universal Kingdom of God which he hoped would speedily come into the world, yet in matters of temporal and civil government, he concluded that the power of government lay in the hands of the people themselves, at least among those peoples who had come to a stage of civilization where self-government was feasible.

Machiavelli the politicia

We now turn to Machiavelli's views on patriotism. And by way of approach, we may say that in one way Machiavelli much resembled Savonarola, in that his principal significance for the Florentine people was political. But immediately a modification must be made. Savonarola was interested in the political life of Florence in a secondary way; his first interest was the religious and spiritual interest, and he entered the field of politics partly through the force of circumstances, and partly because his prophetic passion could not stop short of the spiritual recreation of the State as well as of the individual. With Machiavelli, however, the political interest was primary and the religious interest secondary. If, as we have already attempted to show, the welfare of the State could best be ministered to by the agency of religion,

then religion ought to be fostered and encouraged, even though falsehood were employed to fasten the claims of religion upon the people. A similar estimate might be made of Machiavelli's interest in social problems. Social problems, as such, did not seems to interest him very much, but if, as in the case of the Swiss nation, social purity became an element in political strength, then social purity became an object greatly to be desired in a people. The political interest is always supreme in Machiavelli. To it everything else must bow, even the claims of conscience. As we look into the life of Machiavelli, we are confounded by the counter-currents running, and we are inclined to agree with those who found him an insoluble riddle and dubbed him the Sphinx. But if we take into consideration his all-mastering passion for the political welfare of the State, the riddle may somewhat solve itself.

Savonarola, as we have noted, emerged into a comparatively democratic view of the government of a State, after struggling his way out of the meshes of scholastic thinking; and his concession that government derives its reasonable powers from the willing consent of the governed was a distinct achievement, in view of his absolute loyalty to Pope as the one world-head of the spiritual Kingdom of God. But Machiavelli had no such fight to make for his republican ideas. Enough has already been said to give a fair background for Machiavelli's views. He steeped himself in the history of the older Roman civilization, and his great ideal was the Roman Republic. Of course, a fairly distinct line may be drawn between the republicanism of ancient Rome and the democracy of our modern times, for the Consul at Rome was not so very much different in many regards from the King of Rome whom he succeeded. And Machiavelli stood pretty much for what that kind of a republic signified. It is not so very difficult to see how a disciple of this order of things might slip over the boundary here and there and build a philosophy of a governing Prince who strangely resembles the tyrants of Florence. Neither is it impossible to understand, on this score, how after Machiavelli had faithfully served the Republic of

His republican view

Florence for eighteen or nineteen years, he could retire to compose the "Prince" and seek the favor of the returned Medici tyrants by making distinct overtures to them. Such a course would be unthinkable among men of honor in our time, but it seems plausible enough when one takes into consideration the kind of a Republic to which Machiavelli had adhered and the fact that his philosophy of government was, ultimately, utilitarian in a high degree. Moreover, Machiavelli is not out of key with the kind of political thinking which was current in his day when he felt inclined to make such a shift as this.

We ought to remember that the life of a State in Machiavelli's time did not mean what it means in our time. The old Empire had gone to pieces, but the modern nation had not yet fully arisen. The political chaos of Europe in general, and of Italy in particular, was most disruptive of any well-defined sentiments of patriotism. Italy had broken up into a number of small units, each with a city at the center, surrounded by a fringe of feudatory vassals held by force. Even the high republicanism of Florence, for example, could see nothing amiss in holding in tyrannical subjection the neighboring community of Pisa. As a natural part of such a state of affairs, the rule of tyrants was quite the order of the day. The Medici in Florence were not exceptional, only insofar as they were milder in their requirements than many of the tyrants of that period. The ancient idea of liberty which had been so jealously guarded by the Florentines had been eaten out by the corrosion of the age. Men still strutted under the forms of liberty, which the Medici still wisely encouraged, but forgot altogether the reality of liberty which had been as the breath of life to their forefathers.

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In addition to all this, this was the time when the Free Companies assumed the military burdens of the State. Bands of mercenaries roved from one State to another, ready to hire out to the highest bidder. There was no thought of patriotic service at arms. Military service had become a kind of profession, and a highly

paid profession at that. When a State is relieved of its own military protection, the nerve of patriotic impulse is likely to be cut. And so it was with the Italian States at the close of the Middle Ages. States aligned themselves one with another for military purposes, and realigned themselves, with great facility. So mobile were these relations between the States of Italy that Lorenzo dei Medici was able to keep himself in power largely by playing off one of his neighbors against another, or else diplomatically preserving a balance between his neighbors.

Under such conditions as these it would have been remarkable indeed if any intellect had been keen enough to have been able to mark out just what the legitimate requirements of a State upon its citizens were. A man with a commanding spiritual genius like Savonarola's could approximate it along the lines of a great moral imperative. But the eclectic genius of a Machiavelli would not fare so well. Machiavelli was clear on one thing, namely that the welfare of the State ought to be the first interest of mankind; but the relation of the individual man to that problem, which is to say the whole matter of a man's patriotic duty to a State, was not so clear. Patriotism of any sterling kind demands some great backlying and unifying principle of loyalty to a commanding ideal. We fail to find such an ideal in Machiavelli's thinking. One force plays against another force naturally, and the statesman is he who can discern the most fortunate concurrence of such forces for the State. If a king can best bring about such a favorable concurrence of forces, then Romulus becomes the ideal; if the magisterial power of a Consul will best do it, then the king must give place; but if in a state of chaos the tyrannical power of a Prince seems most efficient, then the Prince becomes the pattern of government. There is no appeal to fundamental principle or to the ethical conscience of the citizen, such as modern patriotism would hold to be essential. The only question asked is, Will this or that course work in affairs of government? and if so, how can there be any objection to any means whatsoever, even criminal, to achieve the immediate success of the State?

Effect of such a co fusion up Machia- velli's thinking.

His naturalistic mode of thinking.

Out of all this perhaps we can arrive at a word that will serve as a key to Machiavelli's type of thinking with reference to our problem of patriotism. We have seen that the the spiritual, or moral, imperative was fundamental to Savonarola's view of the State. But it has become evident that Machiavelli's conception is ruled by something quite the opposite. We do not mean the opposite of the spiritual or moral in the sense of the immoral, for that would not be fair. Machiavelli did have a well-defined notion of public virtue, after the fashion of the Roman definition of virtue. Perhaps we would be more justified in naming Machiavelli's key-thought, rather, the non-moral meaning of the State, or, better still, the naturalistic development of the State and its problems, wholly apart from the scheme of morals which so riveted Savonarola's mind. In support of this interpretation we might do well to quote Machiavelli's description of the rise of human government in general:

> "... 'At first men lived like brutes; then they thought of choosing a chief for their better protection, and elected the strongest man among them. Thus the first communities arose; the sentiments of justice and honesty came into being; the first laws were made, and punishments were inflicted upon transgressors. Afterwards they no longer chose the strongest, but the wisest and most prudent man to hold rule; this man then transmitted his power to his heirs, and thus arose monarchy, which was the primary form of government. But owing to the innate tendency of mankind to abuse all things, the monarch once assured of his power, he sooner or later transformed into a tyrant. Thereupon, either in their own defence, or that of the people, whose leaders they became, the ottimati, or patricians, came to the front, and thus arose the aristocratic government, which, in its turn running to excess as soon as it was firmly established, was converted into oligarchy. Finally the people arose, and founded the democratic government; and this also, and for the same reasons,

proceeding to excess, sank into demagogy. This in turn made princely power a necessity, and human society again trod the same road from the beginning, with infinite twists and deviations, unless, as frequently happened, it was checked half-way by falling a prey to neighbouring States. To avoid the dangers caused by these continual changes and revolutions, prudent men invented the mixed form of government - composed of all the three other forms - judging it to be safer and more stable, because sovereign, patrician and popular government being united in the same city, all kept one another in check. This it is that was accomplished with excellent results by Lycurgus of Sparta. Romulus, on the other hand, founded a monarchy; but that which in Rome was left undone by the legislator, was brought about by the good fortune and natural force of events. The insolence of kings gave rise to government by consuls and patricians, the insolence of the latter roused the people, who, without overthrowing either consuls or patricians, gained its share of rule. And thus a mixed government was naturally formed, in which the monarchical element was represented by the consuls, while the aristocratic and popular elements also shared in it at the same time." (1)

Concrete illustrations of Machiavelli's idea from "The Prince."

Thus far we have tried to outline, in a general way, Machiavelli's view of the State and of the patriotic relations of a citizen to the State. It now remains to fill in this outline a little with observations from Machiavelli's classic utterance, "The Prince". Of "The Prince" it may well be said that it is the text book for that whole class of thinkers on political subjects who center their philosophy of the State in the maxim that whatever works is right. Let us look first at some passages bearing directly upon this last general assertion.

"Whatever works is right."

We must not lose sight of the reason why Machiavelli held up the ideal of a rule by princes in the first place. It was not from a reasoned conviction that there was anything fundamentally right in a rule by princes,

(1) Life of Machiavelli, pp.98,99. Quoted from the "Discourses", Bk.I, Chap.II.

as we have attempted to show, but from the deliberate observation that a government by princes was likely to work where other forms of government failed. In this he is directly in line with his thesis that in government whatever works is right. It is most natural, then, that in his setting up of his model Prince this same working principle should be carried out, even to the point of ruthlessness. And so we find that this is ultimately the test of the Prince's deeds in every direction. There is no fine consideration of the rights of a citizen in any case, except insofar as the welfare of the citizen contributes to the power of the Prince. The interests of the Prince are the interests of the State, and whatever is required to minister thereto is to be yielded without question by the subject. That, in a nutshell, is patriotism. And the Prince is justified in any course of procedure which will contribute to his hold upon the State. Note the following in his consideration of the Prince's treatment of his neighbors:

> "Upon this one has to remark that men ought either to be well treated or crushed, because they can avenge themselves of lighter injuries, of more serious ones they cannot; therefore the injury that is done to a man ought to be of such a kind that one does not stand in fear of revenge." (1)

There is no hint here of what is equitable and right between neighbors, but only the question, How can a man so handle his neighbors that they shall not have the inclination or the power to make reprisal? The same consideration moves this utterance:

> "Again, the prince ..... ought to make himself the head and defender of his less powerful neighbors, and to weaken the more powerful amongst them, taking care that no foreigner as powerful as himself shall, by any accident, get a footing there; for it will always happen that such a one will be introduced by those who are discontented, either through excess of ambition or through fear ...." (2)

These quotations will serve as a fair example of Machia-

(1) "The Prince", third chapter, p.19.
(2) Ibid., third chapter, p.20.

velli's notion of the motif in the relations between powers. But the internal policy of a principality or other political power is not noticeably different. Whatever works is right. In the fifth chapter of "The Prince", "Concerning the Way to Govern Cities or Principalities Which Lived Under Their Own Laws before They were Annexed", we learn that three courses are open to the conquering Prince. He may ruin the conquered province, he may reside there in person, or he may permit the people to live under their own laws, drawing a tribute and establishing within it an oligarchy which will keep it friendly to him. (1) But on the next page, Machiavelli concludes that the only safe way is to ruin the conquered people. But once a Prince is established in a country, he is justified in using all means possible to root himself in securely. By way of illustration at this point, Machiavelli refers to the notorious Cesare Borgia, of whom he says that he "had taken every measure and done all that ought to be done by a wise and able man to fix firmly his roots in the States which the arms and fortunes of others had bestowed upon him." (2) In this connection Machiavelli sees nothing incongruous in the policy of Cesare Borgia when the latter, to establish his hold more securely upon the people, employs Messer Ramiro d'Orco, "a swift and cruel man, to whom he gave the fullest power". Machiavelli's tribute to d'Orco is that in a short time he restored peace and unity by his merciless methods. (3) That is to say, d'Orco's methods worked, hence they were right. But d'Orco's usefulness ended when his power began to collide with the power of his Prince, and so, in an equally cold-blooded fashion, Machiavelli calmly sanctions his execution on the piazza at Cesena by the Prince's orders, expressly in order that the Prince himself may escape the wrath of the people for the cruelty which he had required at d'Orco's hands.

Prince and his subjects.

We may now turn for a moment to Machiavelli's attitude toward war, as revealed in "The Prince". And first, he makes it crystal clear that his sole reliance for the strength of the State is upon its military ~~strength~~ power. He scoffs at the unarmed Prophet Savonarola,

Prince at war.

(1) "The Prince", fifth chapter, p.39.
(2) Ibid, seventh chapter, pp. 54,55.
(3) Ibid., seventh chapter, p.58.

and all his kind, who seek to bring new things to pass in the political life of a people, without prime reliance upon military power. In this case he remarks:

> "It is necessary, therefore, if we desire to discuss this matter thoroughly, to inquire whether these innovators can rely upon themselves or have to depend on others: that is to say, whether, to consummate their enterprise, have they to use prayers or can they use force? In the first instance they always succeed badly, and never compass anything; but when they can rely on themselves and use force, then they are rarely endangered. Hence it is that all armed prophets have conquered, and the unarmed ones have been destroyed." (1)

If we were to digress for a moment, we might ask, What stronger proof can be desired than this that Machiavelli was not in any sense profoundly Christian in his philosophy of the State? How would this utterance of his have comported with that scene in the life of the Christ where he commanded his fiery Apostle to put up his sword, with the remark that his kingdom was not to come by way of the sword? And how better could we find a vivid contrast between the Catholic soul of Savonarola and the Pagan mind of Machiavelli?

The goal of patriotism.

It appears from all this that the end of patriotism is the power of the Prince, and that the power of the Prince is in no wise to be regulated by humanitarian motives of any kind, unless, indeed, humanitarianism is an efficient instrument to bring the people up close to the Prince and thereby increase his power all the more. There is nothing to show that the end of patriotism is the full-rounded social development (including whatever elements of economic and military strength may be adjudged requisite thereto) which is included in the best of our modern concepts of patriotism. Machiavelli seems almost dead to anything but sheer military power. For instance, the opening sentence of the fourteenth chapter of the "Prince":

> "A prince ought to have no other aim or thought, nor to select anything else for his study, than war

(1) "The Prince", sixth chapter, p.48.

and its rules and discipline; for this is the sole art that belongs to him who rules ....."

This seems to us a very crude notion of the end and aim of the prosperity of a State, in the person of its Prince; but we surely cannot accuse Machiavelli of deserting his working principle that that is right which works. We may not agree with him in what it is that works for the best interest of the State, but we cannot legitimately quarrel with him for poor eyesight in this matter. He is consistently utilitarian all the way through, and if his utilitarianism differs from the utilitarianism of many modern thinkers, it is rather in the scope of its field, rather than in its fundamental view of life. It may be that if Machiavelli had lived in this our modern day, he would have estimated the strength of nations on the basis of markets, rather than of armies and consented without reservation to the modern slogan that every war is a bread war.

Prince's obligation to keep faith.

Many have criticized Machiavelli for keeping so unrelentingly to his text, and perhaps the storm center for this kind of criticism is to be found in the opening paragraph of the eighteenth chapter of "The Prince":

> "Every one admits how praiseworthy it is in a prince to keep faith, and to live with integrity and not with craft. Nevertheless our experience has been that those princes who have done great things have held good faith of little account, and have known how to circumvent the intellect of men by craft, and in the end have overcome those who have relied on their word. You must know there are two ways of contesting, the one by law, the other by force; the first method is proper to men, the second to beasts; but because the first is frequently not sufficient, it is necessary to have recourse to the second. Therefore it is necessary for a prince to understand how to avail himself of the beast and the man."

Some have said that in such a passage as this Machia-

velli outreaches himself. On the one hand, there are those who, taking him literally, say it is almost inconceivable that a man of his brilliant insight should have failed to discern inner forces at work for the coherence and agitation of society, much more fundamental than any outward passage at arms. Others look upon the whole thing as a kind of mask. They think that all the way through Machiavelli is not really pleading the cause of the Prince, but only, behind what appears to be such a plea, he is making in the opposite direction of republicanism by making the case of the Prince so atrocious that men would naturally revolt from it. This latter interpretation does not appear acceptable, for it is out of line with any broad interpretation of Machiavelli's whole life and philosophy of human affairs. It seems to me that the bare actualism of the whole presentation in "The Prince" comes out in a statement which Machiavelli makes in the fifteenth chapter: "Concerning Things for which Men, and especially Princes, are Praised or Blamed."

> "...for many have pictured republics and principalities which in fact have never been known or seen, because how one lives is so far distant from how one ought to live, that he who neglects what is done for what ought to be done, sooner effects his ruin than his preservation; for a man who wishes to act entirely up to his professions of virtue soon meets with what destroys him among so much that is evil." (1)

And yet, strangely enough, while this statement brings to a focus the bitter actuality which seems to motivate all Machiavelli's thinking, it seems also to hold a faint gleam of a possible better interpretation of the Florentine Secretary's inner thought on life. We notice here what comes out time and again in his writings, his profound distrust in any fundamental goodness in human nature. In that he reflects the pessimistic tone that hovered over the corruption of Italian and European society in Machiavelli's day. It is not unthinkable that it was this very distrust that drove Machiavelli so desperately to some view of

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(1) "The Prince", fifteenth chapter, p.121.

human welfare whose only grim support was the force of arms. He had seen the fickleness of the Florentines in his own time, when they turned against an "unarmed prophet" and rewarded all his services with a criminal's death; and although he had no great faith in Savonarola himself, yet the reaction of Florence against the eccentric preacher could not fail to have made some very real impression upon him. The utter degeneracy that prevailed in every fibre of society, even to the papal chair, could not have failed to strike home to the very center of his thinking that man is essentially untrue to the higher things of life. There are very small rifts even in "The Prince" itself which leave the road open to a suspicion that there may have been something deeper in Machiavelli than the crass utilitarianism which appears upon the surface of "The Prince". For instance, in the sixth chapter, he speaks of Moses as the "mere executor of the will of God"; in the eleventh chapter, in speaking of ecclesiastical principalities: "Such principalities only are secure and happy. But being upheld by powers, to which the human mind cannot reach, I shall speak no more of them, because, being exalted and maintained by God, it would be the act of a presumptuous and rash man to discuss them." This latter quotation could easily be slurred over by the observation that perhaps Machiavelli hoped by some such overture as this to win favor from the Pope himself, but such a criticism is not solidly grounded. Again, even in the almost diabolical passage already quoted, in which Machiavelli says that the powerful Prince must "understand how to avail himself of the beast and the man", we have an earlier sentence which makes allowance that "Every one admits how praiseworthy it is for a prince to keep faith, and to live with integrity and not with craft."

One is obliged to try to see the fairer side of any man's character who is so much villified as Machiavelli. It may be that had he lived in more virtuous times, and that had he not become so utterly skeptical of any good motives playing through statecraft and churchcraft as he did, he would have written for us a more humane interpretation of the State and of the concept of loyalty. But we are here obliged to deal with what is, and not with what might have been.

------- The End. -------