but they did Rome’s behests. Savonarola’s judges were chosen from his bitterest foes. Day after day he was tortured, and in his agony, with a frame weakened by constant austerity and the mental strain of the past months, he made every admission demanded by his tormentors. But directly he was released from the rack he always withdrew the confessions uttered in the delirium of pain. These being too incoherent to serve for a legal report, a false account of the friar’s avowals was drawn up and published.

Though physically unable to resist torture, Savonarola’s clearness of mind returned whenever he was at peace in his cell. So long as writing materials were allowed him he employed himself in making a commentary on the Psalms, in which he restated all his doctrines. Alexander was frantically eager to see his enemy die in Rome. But the signory insisted that the false prophet should suffer death before the Florentines whom he had so long led astray. The matter was finally compromised. A second mock trial was held by two apostolic commissioners specially appointed by the pope. One of the new judges was a Venetian general of the Dominicans, the other a Spaniard. Meanwhile the trial of Brothers Domenico and Silvestro was still in progress. The former remained faithful to his master and himself. No extremity of torture could make him recant or extract a syllable to Savonarola’s hurt; he steadfastly repeated his belief in the divinity of the prior’s mission. Frà Silvestro on the contrary gave way at mere sight of the rack, and this seer of heavenly visions owned himself and his master guilty of every crime laid to their charge.

The two commissioners soon ended their task. They had the pope’s orders that Savonarola was to die “ even were he a second John the Baptist.” On three successive days they “ examined ” the prior with worse tortures than before. But he now resisted pain better, and, although more than once a promise to recant was extorted from him, he reasserted his innocence when un­bound, crying out, “ My God, I denied Thee for fear of pain.” On the evening of the 22nd of May sentence of death was pro­nounced on him and his two disciples. Savonarola listened unmoved to the awful words, and then quietly resumed his interrupted devotions. Frà Domenico exulted in the thought of dying by his master’s side; Frà Silvestro, on the contrary, raved with despair.

The only favour Savonarola craved before death was a short interview with his fellow victims. This the signory unwillingly granted. The memorable meeting took place in the hall of the Cinquecento. During their forty days of confinement and torture each one had been told that the others had recanted, and the false report of Savonarola’s confession had been shown to the two monks. The three were now face to face for the first time. Frà Domenico’s loyalty had never wavered, and the weak Silvestro’s enthusiasm rekindled at sight of his chief. Savonarola prayed with the two men, gave them his blessing, and exhorted them by the memory of their Saviour’s crucifixion to submit meekly to their fate. Midnight was long past when Savonarola was led back to his cell. Jacopo Niccolini, one of a religious fraternity dedicated to consoling the last hours of condemned men, remained with him. Spent with weakness and fatigue he asked leave to rest his head on his companion’s lap, and quickly fell into a quiet sleep. As Niccolini tells us, the martyr’s face became serene and smiling as a child’s. On awaking he addressed kind words to the compassionate brother, and then prophesied that dire calamities would befall Florence during the reign of a pope named Clement. The carefully recorded prediction was verified by the siege of 1529.

The execution took place the next morning. A scaffold, connected by a wooden bridge with the magistrates’ rostrum, had been erected on the spot where the piles of the ordeal had stood. At one end of the platform was a huge cross with faggots heaped at its base. As the prisoners, clad in penitential haircloth, were led across the bridge, wanton boys thrust sharp sticks between the planks to wound their feet. First came the ceremonial of degradation. Sacer­dotal robes were thrown over the victims, and then roughly

stripped off by two Dominicans, the bishop of Vasona and the prior of Sta Maria Novella. To the bishop’s formula, “ I separate thee from the church militant and the church triumphant,” Savonarola replied in firm tones, “ Not from the church triumphant; that is beyond thy power.” By a refinement of cruelty Savonarola was the last to suffer. His disciples’ bodies already dangled from the arms of the cross before he was hung on the centre beam. Then the pile was fired. For a moment the wind blew the flames aside, leaving the corpses untouched. “A miracle,” cried the weeping Piagnoni; but then the fire leapt up and ferocious yells of triumph rang from the mob. At dusk the martyrs’ remains were collected in a cart and thrown into the Arno.

Savonarola’s party was apparently annihilated by his death, but, when in 1529-1530 Florence was exposed to the horrors predicted by him, the most heroic defenders of his beloved if ungrateful city were Piagnoni who ruled their lives by his precepts and revered his memory as that of a saint.

Savonarola’s writings may be classed in three categories:—(1) numerous sermons, collected mainly by Lorenzo Violi, one of his most enthusiastic hearers; (2) an immense number of devotional and moral essays and some theological works, of which *Il Trionfo della Croce* is the chief ; (3) a few short poems and a political treatise on the government of Florence. Although his faith in the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church never swerved, his strenuous protests against papal corruptions, his reliance on the Bible as his surest guide, and his intense moral earnestness undoubtedly connect Savonarola with the movement that heralded the Reformation.

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**SAVORY, SIR WILLIAM SCOVELL,** Bart. (1826-1895), British surgeon, was born on the 30th of November 1826, in London. He entered St Bartholomew’s Hospital in 1844, becoming M.R.C.S. in 1847, and F.R.C.S. in 1852. From 1849 to 1859 he was demonstrator of anatomy and operative surgery at St Bartholomew’s, and for many years curator of the museum, where he devoted himself to pathological and physiology work. In 1859 he succeeded Sir James Paget as lecturer on general anatomy and physiology. In 1861 he became assistant surgeon, and in 1867 surgeon, holding the latter post till 1891; and from 1869 to 1889 he was lecturer on surgery. In the College of Surgeons he was a man of the greatest influence, and was president for four successive years, 1885-1888. As Hunterian professor of comparative anatomy and physiology (1859-1861), he lectured on “ General Physiology ” and the “ Physiology of Food.” In 1884 he delivered the Bradshaw Lecture on the “ Pathology of Cancer.” In 1887 he delivered the Hunterian Oration. In 1879, at Cork, he had declared against “ Listerism ” at the meeting of the British Medical Association, “ the last public expression,” it has been said, “ by a prominent surgeon against the now accepted method of modern surgery.” In 1887 he became surgeon-extraordinary to Queen Victoria, and in 1890 he was made a baronet. Savory, who was an able operator, but averse from exhibitions of brilliancy, was a powerful and authoritative man in his profession, his lucidity of expression being almost as valuable as his great knowledge of physiology and anatomy. He died in London on the 4th of March 1895.