Lectures on Modern History

I. Beginning of the Modern State

Modern history tells how the last four hundred years have modified the medieval conditions of life and thought. In comparison with them, the Middle Ages were the domain of stability, and continuity, and instinctive evolution, seldom interrupted by such originators as Gregory VII or St. Francis of Assisi. Ignorant of History, they allowed themselves to be governed by the unknown Past; ignorant of Science, they never believed in hidden forces working onwards to a happier future. The sense of decay was upon them; and each generation seemed so inferior to the last, in ancient wisdom and ancestral virtue, that they found comfort in the assurance that the end of the world was at hand.

Yet the most profound and penetrating of the causes that have transformed society is a medieval inheritance. It was late in the thirteenth century that the psychology of Conscience was dosely studied for the first time, and men began to speak of it as the audible voice of God, that never misleads or fails, and that ought to be obeyed always, whether enlightened or darkened, right or wrong. The notion was restrained, on its appearance, by the practice of regarding opposition to Church power as equivalent to specific heresy, which depressed the secret monitor below the public and visible authority. With the dedine of coercion the claim of Conscience rose, and the ground abandoned by the inquisitor was gained by the individual. There was less reason then for men to be cast of the same type; there was a more vigorous growth of independent character, and a conscious control over its formation. The knowledge of good and evil was not an exclusive and sublime prerogative assigned to states, or nations, or majorities. When it had been defined and recognised as something divine in human nature, its action was to limit power by causing the sovereign voice within to be heard above the expressed will

and settled custom of surrounding men. By that hypothesis, the soul became more sacred than the state, because it receives light from above, as well as because its concerns are eternal, and out of all proportion with the common interests of government. That is the root from which liberty of Conscience was developed, and all other liberty needed to confine the sphere of power, in order that it may not challenge the supremacy of that which is highest and best in man.

The securities by which this purpose has been attempted compose the problem of all later history, and centuries were spent in ascertaining and constructing them. If in the main the direction has been upward, the movement has been tardy, the conflict intense, the balance often uncertain. The passion for power over others can never cease to threaten mankind, and is always sure of finding new and unforeseen allies in continuing its martyrology. Therefore, the method of modern progress was revolution. By a series of violent shocks the nations in succession have struggled to shake off the Past, to reverse the action of Time and the verdict of success, and to rescue the world from the reign of the dead. They have been due less to provocation by actual wrong than to the attraction of ideal right, and the claims that inspired them were universal and detached. Progress has imposed increasing sacrifices on society, on behalf of those who can make no return, from whose welfare it derives no equivalent benefit, whose existence is a burden, an evil, eventually a peril to the community. The mean duration of life, the compendious test of improvement, is prolonged by all the chief agents of civilisation, moral and material, religious and scientific, working together, and depends on preserving, at infinite cost, which is infinite loss, the crippled child and the victim of accident, the idiot and the madman, the pauper and the culprit, the old and infirm, curable and incurable. This growing dominion of disinterested motive, this liberality towards the weak, in social life, corresponds to that respect for the minority, in political life, which is the essence of freedom. It is an application of the same principle of self-denial, and of the higher law.

Taking long periods, we perceive the advance of moral over material influence, the triumph of general ideas, the gradual amendment. The line of march will prove, on the whole, to have been from force and cruelty to consent and association, to humanity, rational persuasion, and the persistent appeal to common, simple, and evident maxims. We have dethroned necessity, in the shape both of hunger and of fear, by extending the scene from Western Europe to the whole world, so that all

shall contribute to the treasure of civilisation, and by taking into partnership in the enjoyment of its rewards those who are far off as well as those who are below. We shall give our attention to much that has failed and passed away, as well as to the phenomena of progress, which help to build up the world in which we live. For History must be our deliverer not only from the undue influence of other times, but from the undue influence of our own, from the tyranny of environment and the pressure of the air we breathe. It requires all historic forces to produce their record and submit to judgment, and it promotes the faculty of resistance to contemporary surroundings by familiarity with other ages and other orbits of thought.

In these latter days the sum of differences in international character has been appreciably bound down by the constant process of adaptation and adjustment, and by exposure to like influences. The people of various countries are swayed by identical interests, they are absorbed in the same problems, and thrill with the same emotions; their classics are interchangeable, authorities in science are nearly alike for all, and they readily combine to make experiments and researches in common. Towards 1500, European nations, having been fashioned and composed out of simple elements during the thousand years between the fall of the Roman Empire and that of its successor in the East, had reached full measure of differentiation. They were estranged from each other, and were inclined to treat the foreigner as the foe. Ancient links were loosened, the Pope was no longer an accepted peacemaker; and the idea of an international code, overriding the will of nations and the authority of sovereigns, had not dawned upon philosophy. Between the old order that was changing and the new that was unborn, Europe had an inorganic interval to go through.

Modern History begins under stress of the Ottoman Conquest. Constantinople fell, after an attempt to negotiate for help, by the union of the Greek and Latin Churches. The agreement come to at Florence was not ratified at home; the attempt was resented, and led to an explosion of feeling that made even subjugation by the Turk seem for the moment less intolerable, and that hastened the catastrophe by making Western Christians slow to sacrifice themselves for their implacable brethren in the East. Offers of help were made, conditional on acceptance of the Florentine decree, and were rejected with patriotic and theological disdain. A small force of papal and Genoese mercenaries shared the fate of the defenders, and the end could not have been long averted,

even by the restoration of religious unity. The Powers that held back were not restrained by dogmatic arguments only. The dread of Latin intolerance was the most favourable circumstance encountered by the Turks in the Eastern Empire, and they at once offered protection and immunities to the patriarch and his prelates. The conquest of the entire peninsula, with the islands, occupied a generation, and it was good policy meanwhile to do nothing that would diminish the advantage or awaken alarm of persecution. Their system required the increase rather than the conversion of Christian subjects, for the tribute of gold as well as the tribute of blood. The Janissaries were selected among the sons of Christian parents, who became renegades, and who, having neither home nor family, no life but in camp, no employment but arms, became not only the best professional soldiers in the world, but a force constantly active to undo the work of pacific statesmen and to find fresh occasion for war. There were occasional outbreaks of blind ferocity, and at all times there was the incapacity of an uncivilised race to understand the character and the interest of alien subjects more cultivated than themselves. But there was not at first the sense of unmitigated tyranny that arose later; and there was not so great a contrast with life as it was under Italian despots as to make Christians under the Sultan passionately long for deliverance.

From the perjury of Varna, in 1444, when the Christians broke the treaty just concluded at Szegedin, it was understood that they could never be trusted to keep engagements entered into with people of another religion. It seemed a weak-minded exaggeration of hypocrisy to abstain from preying on men so furiously divided, so full of hatred, so incapable of combining in defence of their altars and their homes, so eager in soliciting aid and intervention from the infidel in their own disputes. The several principalities of the circumference, Servia, Bosnia, Wallachia, the Morea, and the islands, varying in nationality and in religion, were attacked separately, and made no joint defence. In Epirus, Scanderberg, once a renegade, then in communion with Rome, drawing his supplies from the opposite coast of Apulia, which his sentinels on Cape Linguetta could see at sunrise, maintained himself for many years victoriously, knowing that his country would perish with him. John Hunyadi had defended Christendom on the Hungarian frontier so well that the monarchy of his son stemmed the tide of invasion for seventy years. While the Turkish outposts kept watch on the Danube, Mahomet seized Otranto, and all the way upwards to the Alps there was no force

capable of resisting him. Just then, he died, Otranto was lost, and the enterprise was not renewed. His people were a nation of soldiers, not a nation of sailors. For operations beyond sea they relied on the seamen of the *Ægean*, generally Christians, as they had required the help of Genoese ships to ferry them over the Hellespont.

Under Bajazet, the successor, there was some rest for Europe. His brother, who was a dangerous competitor, as the crown went to the one who survived, fled for safety to the Christians, and was detained as a hostage, beyond the possibility of ransom, by the Knights of St John, and then by the Pope. The Sultan paid, that he might be kept quiet.

For years the Turks were busy in the East. Selim conquered Syria and part of Persia. He conquered Arabia, and was acknowledged by the Sheriff of Mecca caliph and protector of the holy shrine. He conquered Egypt and assumed the prerogative of the Imaum, which had been a shadow at Cairo, but became, at Constantinople, the supreme authority in Islam. Gathering up the concentrated resources of the Levant, Solyman the Magnificent turned, at last, against the enemy who guarded the gates of civilised Europe. Having taken Belgrade, he undertook, in 1526, the crowning campaign of Turkish history. At the battle of Mohacs Hungary lost her independence. The Turks found a Transylvanian magnate who was willing to receive the crown from them; and the broad valley of the Danube continued to be their battlefield until the days of Sobieski and Eugene. But the legitimate heir of King Ladislas, who fell at Mohacs, was Ferdinand, only brother of Charles V; and Hungary, with the vast region then belonging to the Bohemian crown, passing to the same hands as the ancient inheritance of the Habsburgs, constituted the great Austrian monarchy which extended from the Adriatic to the far Sarmatian plain, and Solyman's victory brought him face to face with the first Power able to arrest his progress. The Turks were repulsed at Vienna in 1529, at Malta in 1564. This was their limit in Western Europe; and after Lepanto, in 1571, their only expansion was at the expense of Poland and Muscovy. They still wielded almost boundless resources; the entire seaboard from Cattaro all round by the Euxine to the Atlantic was Mahomedan, and all but one-fourth of the Mediterranean was a Turkish lake. It was long before they knew that it was not their destiny to be masters of the Western as well as of the Eastern world.

While this heavy cloud overhung the Adriatic and the Danube, and the countries within reach of the Turk were in peril of extinction, the nations farther west were consolidating rapidly into unity and power.

By the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, by their conquest of Granada and the rise of a new hemisphere at their command, Spain for the first time became a great Power; while France, having expelled the English, having instituted a permanent army, acquired vast frontier provinces, and crushed the centrifugal forces of feudalism, was more directly formidable and more easily aggressive. These newly created Powers portended danger in one direction. Their increase was not so much in comparison with England or with Portugal, as in contrast with Italy. England, through the Tudors, had achieved internal tranquillity; and Portugal was already at the head of Europe in making the ocean tributary to trade. But Italy was divided, unwarlike, poor in the civic virtues that made Switzerland impregnable, rich in the tempting luxuries *of civilisation*, an inexhaustible treasure-house of much that the neighbours greatly needed and could never find elsewhere. The best writers and scholars and teachers, the most consummate artists, the ablest commanders by land and sea, the deepest explorers of the mystery of State that have been known before or since, all the splendours of the Renaissance, and the fruits of a whole century of progress were there, ready to be appropriated and employed for its own benefit by a paramount Power.

It was obvious that the countries newly strengthened, the countries growing in unity and concentration and superfluous forces, would encroach upon those that were demoralised and weakened. By strict reason of State, this was not the policy of France; for the French frontiers were assigned by nature everywhere but in the north-east. There the country was open, the enemy's territory approached the capital; and the true line of expansion was towards Antwerp, or Liege, or Strasburg. But the French were invited into Italy with promise of welcome, because the Angevin claim to Naples, defeated in 1462, had passed to the King of France. The Aragonese, who had been successful in resisting it, was not legitimate, and had been compelled again to struggle for existence by the Rising of the Barons. The rising was suppressed; the discontented Neapolitans went into exile; and they were now in France, prophesying easy triumphs if Charles VIII would extend his hand to take the greatness that belonged to the heir of the house of Anjou. They were followed by the most important of the Italian Cardinals, Delia Rovere, nephew of a former Pope, himself afterwards the most famous pontiff who had appeared for centuries. Armed with the secrets of the Conclave, the Cardinal insisted that Alexander VI should be deposed, on the ground that he had paid for the papacy in ascertainable sums of

money and money's worth; whereas spiritual office obtained in that way was *ipso facto* void.

The advent of the French, heralded by the passionate eloquence of Savonarola, was also hailed by Florence and its dependencies, in their impatience of the Medicean rule, now that it had dropped from the hands of the illustrious Lorenzo into those of his less competent son. Lodovico Sforza, the Regent of Milan, was also among those who called in the French, as he had a family quarrel with Naples. His father, Francesco, the most successful of the Condottieri, who acquired the Milanese by marriage with a Visconti, is known by that significant saying: "May God defend me from my friends. From my enemies I can defend myself." As the Duke of Orleans also descended from the Visconti, Lodovico wished to divert the French to the more alluring prospect of Naples.

In September 1494 Charles VIII invaded Italy by the Mont Genevre, with an army equal to his immediate purpose. His horsemen still displayed the medieval armour, wrought by the artistic craftsmen of the Renaissance. They were followed by artillery, the newer arm which, in another generation, swept the steel-clad knight away. French infantry was not thought so well of. But the Swiss had become, in their wars with Burgundy, the most renowned of all foot-soldiers. They were unskilled in manoeuvres; but their pikemen, charging in dense masses, proved irresistible on many Italian fields; until it was discovered that they would serve for money on either side, and that when opposed to their countrymen they refused to fight. At Pavia they were cut down by the Spaniards and their fame began to wane. They were Germans, hating Austria, and their fidelity to the golden lilies is one of the constant facts of French history, under the Swiss guard and the white flag vanished together, in July 1830.

Charles reached Naples early in 1495, having had no resistance to overcome, but having accomplished nothing, and having manifested no distinct purpose on his way, when he found himself, for a moment, master of Florence and of Rome. The deliverance of Constantinople was an idea that occurred inevitably to a man of enterprise who was in possession of Southern Italy. It was the advanced post of Europe against the East, of Christendom against Islam; the proper rendezvous of Crusaders; the source of supplies; the refuge of squadrons needing to refit. The Sultan was not an overwhelming warrior, like his father; he had not, like Selim, his successor, control of the entire East, and he was held in check by the existence of his brother, whom Charles took with him, on leaving

Rome, with a view to ulterior service, but whom he lost soon after.

Charles VIII was not a man ripened by experience of great affairs, and he had assumed the title of King of Jerusalem, as a sign of his crusading purpose. But he also called himself King of Sicily, as representing the Anjous, and this was not a disused and neglected derelict For the island belonged to the King of Aragon, the most politic and capable of European monarchs. Before starting for Italy, Charles had made terms with him, and Ferdinand, in consideration of a rectified frontier, bad engaged, by the Treaty of Barcelona, to take no unfriendly advantage of his neighbour's absence. The basis of this agreement was shattered by the immediate unexpected and overwhelming success of the French arms. From his stronghold in the South it would be easy for Charles to make himself master of Rome, of Florence, of all Italy, until he came in sight of the lion of St. Mark. So vast and sudden a superiority was a serious danger. A latent jealousy of Spain underlay the whole expedition. The realm of the Catholic kings was expanding, and an indistinct empire, larger, in reality, than that of Rome, was rising out of the Atlantic. By a very simple calculation of approaching contingencies, Ferdinand might be suspected of designs upon Naples. Now that the helplessness of the Neapolitans had been revealed, it was apparent that he had made a false reckoning when he allowed the French to occupy what he might have taken more easily himself, by crossing the Straits of Messina. Ferdinand joined the Italians of the North in declaring against the invader, and his envoy Fonseca tore up the Treaty of Barcelona before the face of the French king.

Having been crowned in the Cathedral, and having garrisoned his fortresses, Charles set out for France, at the head of a small army. As he came over the Apennines into Lombardy, at Pomovo he was met by a larger force, chiefly provided by Venice, and had to fight his way through. A fortnight after his departure, the Spaniards, under Gonsalvo of Cordova, landed in Calabria, as auxiliaries of the dethroned king. The throne was once more occupied by the fallen family, and Charles retained nothing of his easy and inglorious conquests when he died in 1498.

His successor, Lewis XII, was the Duke of Orleans, who descended from the Visconti, and he at once prepared to enforce his claim on Milan. He allied himself against his rival, Sforza, with Venice, and with Pope Alexander. That he might marry the widowed queen, and preserve her duchy of Brittany for the Crown, he required that his own childless

marriage should be annulled. Upon the Legate who brought the necessary documents the grateful king bestowed a principality, a bride of almost royal rank, and an army wherewith to reconquer the lost possessions of the Church in Central Italy. For the Legate was the Cardinal of Valencia, who became thenceforward Duke of Valentinois, and is better known as Cassar Borgia. The rich Lombard plain, the garden of Italy, was conquered as easily as Naples had been in the first expedition. Sforza said to the Venetians : "I have been the dinner; you will be the supper"; and went up into the Alps to look for Swiss levies. At Novara, in 1500, his mercenaries betrayed him and he ended his days in a French prison. On their way home from the scene of their treachery, the Swiss crowned their evil repute by seizing Bellinzona and the valley of the Ticino, which has remained one of their cantons.

Lewis, undisputed master of Milan and Genoa, assured of the Roman and the Venetian alliance, was in a better position than his predecessor to renew the claim on the throne of Naples. But now, behind Frederic of Naples, there was Ferdinand of Aragon and Sicily, who was not likely to allow the king for whom he had fought to be deposed without resistance. Therefore it was a welcome suggestion when Ferdinand proposed that they should combine to expel Frederic and to divide his kingdom. As it was Ferdinand who had just reinstated him, this was an adaptation to the affairs of Christendom of the methods which passed for justice in the treatment of unbelievers, and were applied without scruple by the foremost men of the age, Albuquerque and Cortez. Frederic turned for aid to the Sultan, and this felonious act was put forward as the justification of his aggressors. The Pope sanctioned the Treaty of Partition, and as the Crown of Naples was technically in his gift, he deprived the king on the ground stated by the allies. The exquisite significance of the plea was that the Pope himself had invited Turkish intervention in Italy, and now declared it a cause of forfeiture. In 1501 French and Spaniards occupied their allotted portions, and then quarrelled over the distribution of the spoil. For a time Gonsalvo, "the great Captain," was driven to bay at Barletta on the Adriatic; but at the end of 1503 he won a decisive victory, and the defeated French, under Bayard, withdrew from the Garigliano to the Po. Naples remained a dependency of Spain, for all purposes, in modern history.

In the midst of foreign armies, and of new combinations disturbing the established balance of Italian Powers, the lesser potentates were exposed to destruction; and there were forces about sufficient, under

capable guidance, to remodel the chaotic centre of Italy, where no strong government had ever been constituted. Caesar Borgia recognised the opportunity as soon as the French were at Milan; the Pope was growing old and was clay in his terrible hands. His sister just then became Duchess of Ferrara, on the border of the defenceless region which he coveted; and the dominions of the King of France, his patron and ally, extended to the Adda and the Po. Never had such advantages been united in such a man. For Caesar's talents were of the imperial kind. He was fearless of difficulties, of dangers, and of consequences; and having no preference for right or wrong, he weighed with an equal and dispassionate mind whether it was better to spare a man or to cut his throat. As he did not attempt more than he could perform, his rapid success awakened aspirations for a possible future. He was odious to Venice, but a Venetian, who watched his meteoric course, wonders, in his secret diary, whether this unerring schemer was to be the appointed deliverer. He was a terror to Florence, yet the Florentine secretary, to whom he confided his thoughts in certain critical hours, wrote of him as men have written of Napoleon, and erected a monument to his memory that has secretly fascinated half the politicians in the world.

With his double equipment as a lieutenant of the French king and as a *condottiere of* the Pope, he began by reviving the dormant authority of Rome, where nominal feudatories held vicarious sway. In the place of many despots struggling not for objects of policy, but for their own existence, there appeared a single state, reaching from sea to sea, from the Campagna to the salt-marshes by the delta of the Po, under a papal prince and *gonfaloniere,* invested with rights and prerogatives to protect the Holy See, and with power to control it. Rome would have become a dependency of the reigning house of Borgia, as it had been of less capable vassals, and the system might have lasted as long as the brain that devised it. Lorenzo de' Medici once said that his buildings were the only works that would outlast him; and it is common in the secular characters of that epoch, unlike the priesthood, not to believe in those things that are abiding, and not to regard organisations that are humble and obscure at first and bloom by slow degrees for the use of another age.

Caesar's enterprise was not determined or limited by the claims of the Vatican. He served both Pope and king, and his French alliance carried farther than the recovery of the Romagna. Florence became tributary by taking him into pay. Bologna bought him off with a heavy ran-

som. Venice inscribed his name in the illustrious record of its nobility. None could tell where his ambition or his resources would end, how his inventive genius would employ the rivalry of the invaders, what uses he would devise for the Emperor and the Turk. The era of petty tyranny was closed by the apparition of one superior national tyrant, who could be no worse than twenty, for though his crimes would be as theirs, they would not be useless to the nation, but were thoughtfully designed and executed for the sake of power, the accepted object of politics in a country where the right was known by the result. Caesar was not an unpopular master, and his subjects were true to him in his falling fortunes. The death of Alexander and the decline of the French cause in the South cut short his work in the autumn of 1503. Delia Rovere, Cardinal Vincula, whose title came from the Church of St. Peter in Chains, the inflexible enemy of the Borgias, was now Julius II; and after a brief interval he was strong enough to drive Caesar out of the country; while the Venetians, entering the Romagna under ill omens for the Republic, occupied the remnant of his many conquests.

Julius had resisted Alexander, as a man unfit for his function, and it soon appeared that this was not a private feud, but a total reversal of ideas and policy. The change was not felt in religious reform or in patronage of learning, but first in the notion of territorial politics. Caesar had rebuilt the duchy of Romagna in the service of the papacy; and it was the essence of the schemes of Julius that it should be secured for the Holy See, together with all else that could be claimed by right, or acquired by policy and war. The Borgias had prevailed by arms, and Julius would not consent to be their inferior and to condemn his whole career. He must draw the sword; but, unlike them, he would draw it in the direct interest of the Church. He had overthrown the conqueror, not that the conquests might be dissolved, or might go to Venice, but in order that he himself and bis successors might have power in Italy, and through Italians, over the world. Upon this foundation he instituted the temporal power, as it subsisted for three centuries. The jealous municipal spirit of the Middle Ages had dissolved society into units, and nothing but force could reverse the tradition and weld the fragments into great communities. Borgia had shown that this could be done; but also that no victorious *condottiere,* were he even his own son, could be trusted by a Pope. Julius undertook to command his army himself, and to fight at the head of his troops. Letting his white beard grow, putting on armour, and proudly riding his war-horse under fire, he exhibited the most pictur-

esque and romantic figure of his time.

The Venetians, commanding the seaboard with their galleys, were not easy to dislodge from the towns they occupied. Essentially a maritime and commercial Power, their centre of gravity lay so far east that it was once proposed to move the capital from the Lagoons to the Bosphorus. When the advancing Turk damaged their trade and threatened their Colonial empire, they took advantage of Italian disintegration to become a continental state, and the general insecurity and oppression of miniature potentates made it a happy fate to be subject to the serene and politic government, whose 3000 ships still held the sea, flying the Christian flag. Renouncing non-intervention on the mainland, they set power above prosperity, and the interest of the State above the welfare and safety of a thousand patrician houses. Wherever there were troubled waters, the fisher was Venice. All down the Eastern coast, and along the Alpine slopes to the passes which were the trade route to Northern Europe, and still farther, at the expense of Milan and Naples, the patriarch of Aquileia and the Duke of Ferrara, the Emperor and the Pope, the Queen of the Adriatic extended her intelligent sway. It was under the long administration of the Doge Foscari, Byron's hero, that it dawned upon the Venetians that it might be their mission to supersede the frail and helpless governments of the Peninsula; and their famous politician and historian, Paruta, believed that it was in their power to do what Rome had done. Their ambition was evident to their neighbours, and those whom they had despoiled, under every plausible pretext, awaited the opportunity of retribution.

Julius, taking counsel with Machiavelli, found it easy to form a league composed of their enemies. As it was not the interest of the empire, France and Spain, to spite Venice by strengthening each other, the Venetians imagined they could safely hold their ground, leaving the dependent cities to make their own terms with the enemy. Padua held out victoriously against Maximilian, but the battle of Agnadello was lost against the French in the same year 1509, in which, fighting under the Crescent in the Indian Ocean, the Venetians were defeated by the Portuguese, and lost their Eastern trade. They soon obtained their revenge. Having gained his ends by employing France against Venice in the League of Cambray, Julius now allied himself with the Venetians to expel the French from Milan. He had recovered the papal possessions, he had broken the Venetian power, and in this his third effort to reconstitute Italy, he still succeeded, because he had the support of the Venetians and

the Swiss. The French gave battle to the Spaniards at Ravenna and to the Swiss at Novara, and then they evacuated the Milanese.

Lewis XII swore that he would wreak vengeance on the papacy, and, in conjunction with the Emperor, opened a Council at Pisa, which was attended by a minority of cardinals. Julius met the attack by calling a general Council to meet at the Lateran, which was the first since the great reforming Council, and was still sitting when Julius died in 1513. Like the Council at Pisa, it was regarded at Rome as a move in the great game of Politics, and it made no serious attempt to heal the longstanding and acknowledged wounds of the Church. Its action spread the belief that the reigning diseases were known, but that the remedy was refused, and that reforms that might help religion were not to be expected from Church or State. Julius II died without having expelled the barbarians, as he bad promised. The French were gone, but the Spaniards remained unshaken, and were still the pivot of the operations of the Holy See. The investiture of Naples was granted to Ferdinand of Aragon, and the fairest region in Europe bound Spain irrevocably to the Popes.

Although the Italian scheme of Julius was left half-way, his Roman scheme was completed; the intermittent suzerainty of the Middle Ages was straightened out into effective sovereignty over the half of Central Italy, where anarchy used to reign, and the temporal power was fixed on foundations solid enough to bear the coming diminution of spiritual power. The added splendours of modern royalty, round which cardinals of reigning houses—Medici, Este, Famese, Gonzaga—displayed the pomp and ceremony of semi-regal state, in palaces built by Bramante and Michael Angelo, with the ambassadors and protectors of the Powers, and the heads of princely families that had worn the tiara, made Rome the magnetic pole of aristocratic society. As the capital of an absolute monarchy, as others were, it became associated with principles which, in the Middle Ages, it resisted with spiritual and secular weapons; and the magnitude of the change was apparent when Leo X, by the Concordat of Bologna, conceded to Francis I the choice of bishops and the higher patronage of the Church of France. For Francis on his accession sent an army into Italy, the last work of Julius II was overthrown at Marignano, and France again was master of the Milanese.

The final struggle was to come at the vacancy of the Imperial throne. Ferdinand of Aragon was dead, and Naples passed to the King of undivided Spain. It was the unswerving policy of Rome that it should not be united with the Empire, and against that fixed axiom the strongest dy-

nasty of emperors went to pieces. The Reformation had just begun in Germany, and Leo wished one of the Northern Electors to be chosen as Maximilian's successor. In conformity with the political situation, he would have preferred Frederic of Saxony, the protector of Luther. The election of Charles, in 1519, was a defiance of the Balance of Power, a thing not to the taste of the Middle Ages, but becoming familiar in those days. France, unable formerly to keep Naples against Spain, had now to defend Lombardy against Spain, supported by Germany, Naples, and the Netherlands. Francis maintained the unequal struggle for four years, although his most powerful vassal. Bourbon, brought the enemy to the gates of Marseilles. The decisive action of the long Italian war was fought at Pavia in June 1525, where Francis was taken prisoner, and was compelled to purchase his release by cruel sacrifices.

The years that followed are only a phase in the permanent subjugation of Italy, but they are memorable in another connection. For the triumph of Pavia brought the suppression of the Lutherans within the range of practical politics. The Peasants' War had damaged their position; the Emperor was able now to execute the Imperial decree of Worms, and there were some in Germany who desired it. He made it a condition of his prisoner's deliverance that he should assist in destroying them; and Francis readily offered to do it by coming in person, and bearing half the charge. Charles proposed to take him at his word, when he learnt that the Pope was at the head of a great alliance against him. Pope Clement was advised by the best ecclesiastic in his court, the *Datario* Giberti, to try one more struggle before the chains were riveted, and before he became, as they said, a Spanish chaplain. It is a war, said Giberti, not for power or dominion, but for the redemption of Italy from perpetual bondage; and he placed his master, for the moment, at the head of the nation. Clement concluded a treaty with the Emperor's enemies at Cognac, released Francis from his oath to observe the Treaty of Madrid, and endeavoured to make Pescara, the victor of Pavia, turn traitor by the prospect of the throne of Naples.

In this way Charles was compelled to turn his arms against Rome. He protested that he would risk all his crowns for the sake of revenge, and appealed to Germany, with its Lutherans, for support. Tell them, he wrote, that they are wanted against the Turk. They will know what Turk we mean. They knew it so well that the landsknechts came provided with silken nooses for the necks of cardinals, besides a gold-thread one for the Pope. He issued a detailed manifesto against him, the work of

Valdes, one *of* the rare Lutherans of Spain; and those who were in the secret expected that the shrift would be short. Francis had intended from the first moment to break his word, and to execute no conditions injurious to France, but he came too late. A large body of Germans poured over the Alps and joined the Spaniards in Lombardy. It was observed afterwards that the Spaniards were the most vindictive, but it was the Germans who made the push for Rome; and Bourbon, on the plea of economy, as he could not pay them, led them through the passes of the Apennines, overthrowing the Medici at Florence on the way. Rome was taken almost without resistance, and Clement shut himself up in St. Angelo, while the city was given over to unmerciful pillage, the prelates were held to ransom, and all the secret treasure was got at by torture. That month of May 1527, with its awful experience, was an end to the pride and the hope and the gladness of the pagan revival; a severe and penitential spirit came over society, preparing to meet the Reformation by reform, and to avert change in doctrine by a change in morality. The sack of Rome, said Cardinal Cajetan, was a just judgment on the sufferers. The city was now the Emperor's, by right of conquest, to bestow as he chose, and the Romans were not unwilling that it should be his capital. Some said that the abolition of the temporal power would secure peace among the Powers, whilst others thought that the consequence would be a patriarch in France, if not in England as well. The last effort of the French being spent, and Doria having gone over to the Emperor, taking with him Genoa, the key of French influence, the chain of transactions which began with the Neapolitan expedition of 1494, concluded in 1530 with the siege of Florence. Charles made peace with France at Cambray, and with the Pope at Barcelona, and received the Imperial crown at Bologna.

This was the consummation of the Italian wars, by which the main conditions of modern politics were determined. The conflicts which had lasted for a generation, and the disorder and violence which were older still, were at an end; Italy obtained repose from her master, and spent for centuries her intellect in his service. Pescara, Ferrante, Gonzaga, Philibert Emanuel, Spinola, were the men who made Spain the first of military powers. And Parma's invincible legions, which created Belgium, wrested Antwerp from the Dutch, delivered Paris from Henry IV, and watched the signals of the Armada that they might subdue England, were thronged with Italian infantry. Excepting Venice, strong in her navy and her unapproachable lagoon, Spain dominated thenceforward over

Italy, and became, by her ascendency in both Sicilies, a bulwark against the Turks.

Italy passed out of. general politics, and was a force in Europe only through Rome. The Conclave, and the creation of cardinals to compose the Conclave, made it a constant school of negotiation and intrigue for the best diplomacy in the world. By favour of the Habsburgs, the papacy obtained a fixed dominion, secure against all comers, requiring no military defence, no wasting and profitless expenditure, nothing to dissolve the mirage of an ideal government, under spiritual and converted men. The pontificates became steadily longer, averaging six years in the sixteenth century, eight in the seventeenth, twelve in the eighteenth, sixteen in the nineteenth, and by the original and characteristic institution which is technically known as nepotism, the selection of a Prime Minister, not from the College of the ecclesiastical aristocracy, but from the family of the reigning sovereign, the tonsured statesmen introduced a dynastic infusion into the Suctuations of elective monarchy.

The triumph and coronation of the Emperor Charles V, when he was superior to all that Europe had beheld since Charlemagne, revived the ancient belief in a supreme authority elevated on alliance with the priesthood, at the expense of the independence and the equipoise of nations. The exploits of Magellan and Cortez, upsetting all habits of perspective, called up vain dreams of the coming immensity of Spain, and roused the phantom of universal empire. The motive of domination became a reigning force in Europe; for it was an idea which monarchy would not willingly let fall after it had received a religious and an international consecration. For centuries it was constantly asserted as a claim of necessity and of right. It was the supreme manifestation of the modern state according to the image which Machiavelli had set up, the state that suffers *neither limit* nor equality, and is bound by no duty to nations or to men, that thrives on destruction, and sanctifies whatever things contributed to increase of power.

This law of the modern world, that power tends to expand indefinitely, and will transcend all barriers, abroad and at home, until met by superior forces, produces the rhythmic movement of History. Neither race, nor religion, nor political theory has been in the same degree an incentive to the perpetuation of universal enmity and national strife. The threatened interests were compelled to unite for the self-government of nations, the toleration of religions, and the rights of men. And it is by the combined efforts of the weak, made under compulsion, to resist

the reign of force and constant wrong, that, in the rapid change but slow progress of four hundred years, liberty has been preserved, and secured, and extended, and finally understood.

II. The New World

Greater changes than those which were wrought by governments or armies on the battlefield of Italy were accomplished at the same time, thousands of miles away, by solitary adventurers, with the future of the world in their hands. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to understand that the ocean is not a limit, but the universal waterway that unites mankind. Shut in by Spain, they could not extend on land, and had no opening but the Atlantic. Their arid soil gave little scope to the territorial magnate, who was excluded from politics by the growing absolutism of the dynasty, and the government found it well to employ at a distance forces that might be turbulent at home.

The great national work of exploration did not proceed from the State. The Infante Henry had served in the African wars, and his thoughts were drawn towards distant lands. He was not a navigator himself; but from his home at Sagres, on the Sacred Promontory, he watched the ships that passed between the great maritime centre at the mouth of the Tagus and the regions that were to compose the Portuguese empire. As Grandmaster of the Order of Christ he had the means to equip them, and he rapidly occupied the groups of islands that lie between Africa and mid Atlantic, and that were a welcome accession to the narrow territory of Portugal. Then he sent his mariners to explore the coast of the unknown and dreaded continent. When they reached the Senegal and the Gambia, still more, when the coast of Guinea trended to the East, they remembered Prester John, and dreamed of finding a way to his fictitious realm which would afford convenient leverage for Christendom, at the back of the dark world that faced the Mediterranean.

As the trade of the country did not cover the outlay. Henry began in 1442 to capture negroes, who were imported as slaves, or sold with advantage to local chiefs. In five years, 927 blacks from Senegambia reached the Lisbon market; and, later on, the Guinea coast supplied about a thousand every year. That domestic institution was fast disappearing from Europe when it was thus revived; and there was some feeling against the Infante, and some temporary sympathy for his victims. On the other side, there were eminent divines who thought that the people of hot countries may properly be enslaved. Henry the Navigator