

## Chapter 6

### MUTUAL AID IN THE MEDIEVAL CITY

(continued)

Likeness and diversity among the medieval cities. — The craft-guilds: State-attributes in each of them. - Attitude of the city towards the peasants; attempts to free them. — The lords. — Results achieved by the medieval city: in arts, in learning. — Causes of decay.

THE medieval cities were not organized upon some preconceived plan in obedience to the will of an outside legislator. Each of them was a natural growth in the full sense of the word - an always varying result of struggle between various forces which adjusted and re-adjusted themselves in conformity with their relative energies, the chances of their conflicts, and the support they found in their surroundings. Therefore, there are not two cities whose inner organization and destinies would have been identical. Each one, taken separately, varies from century to century. And yet, when we cast a broad glance upon all the cities of Europe, the local and national unlikenesses disappear, and we are struck to find among all of them a wonderful resemblance, although each has developed for itself, independently from the others, and in different conditions. A small town in the north of Scotland, with its population of coarse labourers and fishermen; a rich city of Flanders, with its world-wide commerce, luxury, love of amusement and animated life; an Italian city enriched by its intercourse with the East, and breeding within its walls a refined artistic taste and civilization; and a poor, chiefly agricultural, city in the marsh and lake district of Russia, seem to have little in common. And nevertheless, the leading lines of their organization, and the spirit which animates them, are imbued with a strong family likeness. Everywhere we see the same federations of small communities and guilds, the same 'sub-towns' round the mother city, the same folk-mote, and the same insigns of its independence. The *defensor* of the city, under different names and in

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different accoutrements, represents the same authority and interests; food supplies, labour and commerce are organized on closely similar lines; inner and outer struggles are fought with like ambitions; nay, the very formulae used in the struggles, as also in the annals, the ordinances, and the rolls, are identical; and the architectural monuments, whether Gothic, Roman, or Byzantine in style, express the same aspirations and the same ideals; they are conceived and built in the same way. Many dissemblances are mere differences of age, and those disparities between sister cities which are real are repeated in different parts of Europe. The unity of the leading idea and the identity of origin make up for differences of climate, geographical situation, wealth, language and religion. This is why we can speak of *the* medieval city as of a well-defined phase of civilization; and while every research insisting upon local and individual differences is most welcome, we may still indicate the chief lines of development which are common to all cities.<sup>1</sup>

i. The literature of the subject is immense; but there is no work yet which treats of the medieval city as of a whole. For the French Communes, Augustin Thierry's *Lettres and Considérations sur l'histoire de France* still remain classical, and Luchaire's *Communes françaises* is an excellent addition on the same lines. For the cities of Italy, the great work of Sismondi (*Histoire des républiques italiennes du moyen age*, Paris, 1826, 16 vols.), Leo and Botta's *History of Italy*, Ferrari's *Revolutions d'Italie*, and Hegel's *Geschichte der Städteverfassung in Italien*, are the chief sources of general information. For Germany we have Maurer's *Städteverfassung*, Barthold's *Geschichte der deutschen Städte*, and, of recent works, Hegel's *Städte und Gilden der germanischen Völker* (2 vols., Leipzig, 1891), and Dr Otto Kallsen's *Die deutschen Städte im Mittelalter* (2 vols., Halle, 1891), as also Janssen's *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes* (5 vols., 1886), which, let us hope, will soon be translated into English (French translation in 1892). For Belgium, A. Wauters, *Les Libertés communales* (Bruxelles, 1869-78, 3 vols.). For Russia, Byelaeff's, Kostomarof's and Sergievich's works. And finally, for England, we possess one of the best works on cities of a wider region in Mrs J. R. Green's *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century* (2 vols., London, 1894). We have, moreover, a wealth of well-known local histories, and several excellent works of general or economical history which I have so often mentioned in this and the preceding chapter. The richness of literature consists, however, chiefly in separate, sometimes admirable, researches into the history of separate cities, especially Italian and German; the guilds; the land question; the economical principles of the time; the economical importance of guilds and crafts; the leagues between cities (the Hansa); and communal art. An incredible wealth of information is contained in works of this second category, of which only some of the more important are named in these pages.

There is no doubt that the protection which used to be accorded to the market-place from the earliest barbarian times has played an important, though not an exclusive, part in the emancipation of the medieval city. The early barbarians knew no trade within their village communities; they traded with strangers only, at certain definite spots, on certain determined days. And, in order that the stranger might come to the barter-place without risk of being slain for some feud which might be running between two kins, the market was always placed under the special protection of all kins. It was inviolable, like the place of worship under the shadow of which it was held. With the Kabyles it is still *anaya*, like the foot-path along which women carry water from the well; neither must be trodden upon in arms, even during inter-tribal wars. In medieval times the market universally enjoyed the same protection.<sup>2</sup> No feud could be prosecuted on the place whereto people came to trade, nor within a certain radius from it; and if a quarrel arose in the motley crowd of buyers and sellers, it had to be brought before those under whose protection the market stood - the community's tribunal, or the bishop's, the lord's, or the king's judge. A stranger who came to trade was a guest, and he went on under this very name. Even the lord who had no scruples about robbing a merchant on the high road, respected the *Weichbild*, that is, the pole which stood in the market-place and bore either the king's arms, or a glove, or the image of the local saint, or simply a cross, according to whether the market was under the protection of the king, the lord, the local church, or the folkmote — the *vyech*.<sup>3</sup>

It is easy to understand how the self-jurisdiction of the city

2. Kulischer, in an excellent essay on primitive trade (*Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie*, vol. x, 380), also points out that, according to Herodotus, the Argippaeans were considered inviolable, because the trade between the Scythians and the northern tribes took place on their territory. A fugitive was sacred on their territory, and they were often asked to act as arbiters for their neighbours. See Appendix 11.

3. Some discussion has lately taken place upon the *Weichbild* and the *Weichbild-law*, which still remain obscure (see Zopf, *Alterthümer des deutschen Reichs und Rechts*, iii, 29; Kallsen, i, 316). The above explanation seems to be the more probable, but, of course, it must be tested by further research. It is also evident that, to use a Scotch expression, the 'mercet cross' could be considered as an emblem of Church jurisdiction, but we find it both in bishop cities and in those in which the folkmote was sovereign.

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could develop out of the special jurisdiction in the market-place, when this last right was conceded, willingly or not, to the city itself. And such an origin of the city's liberties, which can be traced in very many cases, necessarily laid a special stamp upon their subsequent development. It gave a predominance to the trading part of the community. The burghers who possessed a house in the city at the time being, and were co-owners in the town-lands, constituted very often a merchant guild which held in its hands the city's trade; and although at the outset every burgher, rich and poor, could make part of the merchant guild, and the trade itself seems to have been carried on for the entire city by its trustees, the guild gradually became a sort of privileged body. It jealously prevented the outsiders who soon began to flock into the free cities from entering the guild, and kept the advantages resulting from trade for the few 'families' which had been burghers at the time of the emancipation. There evidently was a danger of a merchant oligarchy being thus constituted. But already in the tenth, and still more during the two next centuries, the chief crafts, also organized in guilds, were powerful enough to check the oligarchic tendencies of the merchants.

The craft guild was then a common seller of its produce and a common buyer of the raw materials, and its members were merchants and manual workers at the same time. Therefore, the predominance taken by the old craft guilds from the very beginnings of the free city life guaranteed to manual labour the high position which it afterwards occupied in the city.<sup>4</sup> In fact, in a medieval city manual labour was no token of inferiority; it bore, on the contrary,

4. For all concerning the merchant guild see Mr Gross's exhaustive work, *The Guild Merchant* (Oxford, 1890, 2 vols.); also Mrs Green's remarks in *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century*, vol. ii, chapters 5, 8 and 10; and A. Doren's review of the subject in Schmoller's *Forschungen*, vol. xii. If the considerations indicated in the previous chapter (according to which trade was communal at its beginnings) prove to be correct, it will be permissible to suggest as a probable hypothesis that the guild merchant was a body entrusted with commerce in the interest of the whole city, and only gradually became a guild of merchants trading for themselves; while the merchant adventurers of this country, the Novgorod *povolniki* (free colonizers and merchants) and the *mercator personati*, would be those to whom it was left to open new markets and new branches of commerce for themselves. Altogether, it must be remarked that the origin of the medieval city can be ascribed to no separate agency. It was a result of many agencies in different degrees.

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traces of the high respect it had been kept in in the village community. Manual labour in a 'mystery' was considered as a pious duty towards the citizens: a public function (*Amt*), as honourable as any other. An idea of 'justice' to the community, of 'right' towards both producer and consumer, which would seem so extravagant now, penetrated production and exchange. The tanner's, the cooper's or the shoemaker's work must be 'just', fair, they wrote in those times. Wood, leather or thread which are used by the artisan must be 'right'; bread must be baked 'in justice', and so on. Transport this language into our present life, and it would seem affected and unnatural; but it was natural and unaffected then, because the medieval artisan did not produce for an unknown buyer, or to throw his goods into an unknown market. He produced for his guild first; for a brotherhood of men who knew each other, knew the techniques of the craft, and, in naming the price of each product, could appreciate the skill displayed in its fabrication or the labour bestowed upon it. Then the guild, not the separate producer, offered the goods for sale in the community, and this last, in its turn, offered to the brotherhood of allied communities those goods which were exported, and assumed responsibility for their quality. With such an organization, it was the ambition of each craft not to offer goods of inferior quality, and technical defects or adulterations became a matter concerning the whole community, because, an ordinance says, 'they would destroy public confidence'.<sup>5</sup> Production being thus a social duty, placed under the control of the whole *amitas*, manual labour could not fall into the degraded condition which it occupies now, so long as the free city was living.

A difference between master and apprentice, or between master and worker (*compayne*, *Geselle*), existed in the medieval cities from their very beginnings; but this was at the outset a mere difference of age and skill, not of wealth and power. After a seven years' apprenticeship, and after having proved his knowledge and capacities by a work of art, the apprentice became a master himself. And only much later, in the sixteenth century, after the royal power had destroyed the city and the craft organization, was it possible to become master in virtue of simple inheritance or wealth. But this

5. Janssen's *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes*, i, 315; Gramich's *Würzburg*; and, in fact, any collection of ordinances.

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were already realized in the middle ages, but much of what is described now as Utopian was accepted then as a matter of fact. We are laughed at when we say that work must be pleasant, but - 'everyone must be pleased with his work,' a medieval Kuttenberg ordinance says, 'and no one shall, while doing nothing (*mit nichts thun*), appropriate for himself what others have produced by application and work, because laws must be a shield for application and work'.<sup>8</sup> And amidst all present talk about an eight hours' day, it may be well to remember an ordinance of Ferdinand the First relative to the Imperial coal mines, which settled the miner's day at eight hours, 'as it used to be of old' (*me vor Alters herkommen*), and work on Saturday afternoon was prohibited. Longer hours were very rare, we are told by Janssen, while shorter hours were of common occurrence. In this country, in the fifteenth century, Rogers says, 'the workmen worked only forty-eight hours a week'.<sup>9</sup> The Saturday half-holiday, too, which we consider as a modern conquest, was in reality an old medieval institution; it was bathing-time for a great part of the community, while Wednesday afternoon was bathing-time for the *Geselle*.<sup>10</sup> And although school meals did not exist — probably because no children went hungry to school — a distribution of bath-money to the children whose parents found difficulty in providing it was habitual in several places. As to Labour Congresses, they also were a regular feature of the middle ages. In some parts of Germany craftsmen of the same trade, belonging to different communes, used to come together every year to discuss questions relative to their trade, the years of apprenticeship, the wandering years, the wages, and so on; and in 1572, the Hanseatic towns formally recognized the right of the crafts to come together

8. Quoted by Janssen, *op. cit.*, i, 343.

9. *The Economical Interpretation of History*, London, 1891, p. 303.

10. Janssen, *op. cit.* See also Dr Alwin Schultz, *Deutsches Leben im XIV. und XV. Jahrhundert*, complete edn, Wien, 1892, pp. 67 ff. At Paris, the day of labour varied from seven to eight hours in the winter to fourteen hours in summer in certain trades, while in others it was from eight to nine hours in winter, to from ten to twelve in summer. All work was stopped on Saturdays and on about twenty-five other days (*jours de commun de vile foire*) at four o'clock, while on Sundays and thirty other holidays there was no work at all. The general conclusion is, that the medieval worker worked *less* hours, all taken, than the present-day worker (Dr E. Martin Saint-Leon, *Histoire des corporations*, p. 121).

at periodical congresses, and to take any resolutions, so long as they were not contrary to the cities' rolls, relative to the quality of goods. Such Labour Congresses, partly international like the Hansa itself, are known to have been held by bakers, founders, smiths, tanners, sword-makers and cask-makers.<sup>11</sup>

The craft organization required, of course, a close supervision of the craftsmen by the guild, and special jurates were always nominated for that purpose. But it is most remarkable that, so long as the cities lived their free life, no complaints were heard about the supervision; while, after the State had stepped in, confiscating the property of the guilds and destroying their independence in favour of its own bureaucracy, the complaints became simply countless.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, the immensity of progress realized in all arts under the medieval guild system is the best proof that the system was no hindrance to individual initiative.<sup>13</sup> The fact is, that the medieval guild, like the medieval parish, 'street', or 'quarter', was not a body of citizens, placed under the control of State functionaries; it was a union of all men connected with a given trade: jurate buyers of raw produce, sellers of manufactured goods, and artisans - masters, 'compaynes' and apprentices. For the inner organization of the trade its assembly was sovereign, so long as it did not hamper the other guilds, in which case the matter was brought before the guild of the guilds - the city. But there was in it something more than that. It had its own self-jurisdiction, its own military force, its own

11. W. Stieda, 'Hansische Vereinbarungen iiber stadtisches Gewerbe im XIV. und XV. Jahrhundert', in *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, Jahrgang 1886, p. 121. Schonberg's *Wirthschaftliche Bedeutung der Zünfte*; also, partly, Roscher.

12. See Toulmin Smith's deeply felt remarks about the royal spoliation of the guilds, in Miss Smith's Introduction to *English Guilds*. In France the same royal spoliation and abolition of the guilds' jurisdiction was begun from 1306, and the final blow was struck in 1382 (Fagniez, op. cit., pp. 53-4).

13. Adam Smith and his contemporaries knew well what they were condemning when they wrote against the *State* interference in trade and the trade monopolies of *State* creation. Unhappily, their followers, with their hopeless superficiality, flung medieval guilds and *State* interference into the same sack, making no distinction between a Versailles edict and a guild ordinance. It hardly need be said that the economists who have seriously studied the subject, like Schonberg (the editor of the well-known course of *Political Economy*), never fell into such an error. But, till lately, diffuse discussions of the above type went on for economical 'science'.

general assemblies, its own traditions of struggles, glory and independence, its own relations with other guilds of the same trade in other cities: it had, in a word, a full organic life which could only result from the integrality of the vital functions. When the town was called to arms, the guild appeared as a separate company (*Schaar*), armed with its own arms (or its own guns, lovingly decorated by the guild, at a subsequent epoch), under its own self-elected commanders. It was, in a word, as independent a unit of the federation as the republic of Uri or Geneva was fifty years ago in the Swiss Confederation. So that, to compare it with a modern trade union, divested of all attributes of State sovereignty, and reduced to a couple of functions of secondary importance, is as unreasonable as to compare Florence or Brugge with a French commune vegetating under the Code Napoleon, or with a Russian town placed under Catherine the Second's municipal law. Both have elected mayors, and the latter has also its craft corporations; but the difference is - all the difference that exists between Florence and Fontenay-les-Oies or Tsarevokokshaisk, or between a Venetian doge and a modern mayor who lifts his hat before the *sous-prefers* clerk.

The medieval guilds were capable of maintaining their independence; and, later on, especially in the fourteenth century, when, in consequence of several causes which shall presently be indicated, the old municipal life underwent a deep modification, the younger crafts proved strong enough to conquer their due share in the management of the city affairs. The masses, organized in 'minor' arts, rose to wrest the power out of the hands of a growing oligarchy, and mostly succeeded in this task, opening again a new era of prosperity. True, that in some cities the uprising was crushed in blood, and mass decapitations of workers followed, as was the case in Paris in 1306, and in Cologne in 1371. In such cases the city's liberties rapidly fell into decay, and the city was gradually subdued by the central authority. But the majority of the towns had preserved enough of vitality to come out of the turmoil with a new life and vigour.<sup>14</sup> A new period of rejuvenescence was their reward.

14. In Florence the seven minor arts made their revolution in 1270—82, and its results are fully described by Perrens (*Histoire de Florence*, Paris, 1877, 3 vols.), and especially by Gino Capponi (*Storia della repubblica di Firenze*, 2nd ed. 1876, i, 58-80.; translated into German). In Lyons, on the contrary, where

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New life was infused, and it found its expression in splendid architectural monuments, in a new period of prosperity, in a sudden progress of technics and invention, and in a new intellectual movement leading to the Renaissance and to the Reformation.

The life of a medieval city was a succession of hard battles to conquer liberty and to maintain it. True that a strong and tenacious race of burghers had developed during those fierce contests; true that love and worship of the mother city had been bred by these struggles, and that the grand things achieved by the medieval communes were a direct outcome of that love. But the sacrifices which the communes had to sustain in the battle for freedom were, nevertheless, cruel, and left deep traces of division on their inner life as well. Very few cities had succeeded, under a concurrence of favourable circumstances, in obtaining liberty at one stroke, and these few mostly lost it equally easily; while the great number had to fight fifty or a hundred years in succession, often more, before their rights to free life had been recognized, and another hundred years to found their liberty on a firm basis - the twelfth century charters thus being but one of the stepping-stones to freedom.<sup>15</sup> In reality,

the movement of the minor crafts took place in 1402, the latter were defeated and lost the right of themselves nominating their own judges. The two parties came apparently to a compromise. In Rostock the same movement took place in 1313; in Zurich in 1336; in Bern in 1363; in Braunschweig in 1374, and next year in Hamburg; in Lübeck in 1376-84; and so on. See Schmoller's *Strassburg zur Zeit der Zunftkämpfe* and *Strassburg's Blüthe*; Brentano's *Arbeitergilden der Gegenwart*, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1871-2; E. Bain's *Merchant and Craft Guilds*, Aberdeen, 1887, pp. 26-47, 75, etc. As to Mr Gross's opinion relative to the same struggles in England, see Mrs Green's remarks in her *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century*, ii, 190—217; also the chapter on the Labour Question, and, in fact, the whole of this extremely interesting volume. Brentano's views on the crafts' struggles, expressed especially in §§ iii and iv of his essay 'On the History and Development of Guilds', in Toulmin Smith's *English Guilds* remain classical for the subject, and may be said to have been again and again confirmed by subsequent research.

15. To give but one example - Cambrai made its first revolution in 907, and, after three or four more revolts, it obtained its charter in 1076. This charter was repealed twice (1107 and 1138), and twice obtained again (in 1127 and 1180). Total, 223 years of struggles before conquering the right to independence. Lyons - from 1195 to 1320.

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the medieval city was a fortified oasis amidst a country plunged into feudal submission, and it had to make room for itself by the force of its arms. In consequence of the causes briefly alluded to in the preceding chapter, each village community had gradually fallen under the yoke of some lay or clerical lord. His house had grown to be a castle, and his brothers-in-arms were now the scum of adventurers, always ready to plunder the peasants. In addition to three days a week which the peasants had to work for the lord, they had also to bear all sorts of exactions for the right to sow and to crop, to be gay or sad, to live, to marry, or to die. And, worst of all, they were continually plundered by the armed robbers of some neighbouring lord, who chose to consider them as their master's kin, and to take upon them, and upon their cattle and crops, the revenge for a feud he was fighting against their owner. Every meadow, every field, every river and road around the city, and every man upon the land was under some lord.

The hatred of the burghers towards the feudal barons has found a most characteristic expression in the wording of the different charters which they compelled them to sign. Heinrich V is made to sign in the charter granted to Speier in 1135, that he frees the burghers from 'the horrible and execrable law of mortmain, through which the town has been sunk into deepest poverty' (*von dem scheusslichen und nichtswürdigen Gesetze, welches gemein Budel genannt wird*, Kallsen, i, 307). The *coutume* of Bayonne, written about 1273, contains such passages as these: 'The people is anterior to the lords. It is the people, more numerous than all others, who, desirous of peace, has made the lords for bridling and knocking down the powerful ones', and so on (Giry, *Établissements de Rouen*, i, 117, quoted by Luchaire, p. 24). A charter submitted for King Robert's signature is equally characteristic. He is made to say in it: 'I shall rob no oxen nor other animals. I shall seize no merchants, nor take their moneys, nor impose ransom. From Lady Day to the All Saints' Day I shall seize no horse, nor mare, nor foals, in the meadows. I shall not burn the mills, nor rob the flour. . . . I shall offer no protection to thieves', etc. (Pfister has published that document, reproduced by Luchaire). The charter 'granted' by the Besançon Archbishop Hugues, in which he has been compelled to

enumerate all the mischiefs due to his mortmain rights, is equally characteristic.<sup>16</sup> And so on.

Freedom could not be maintained in such surroundings, and the cities were compelled to carry on the war outside their walls. The burghers sent out emissaries to lead revolt in the villages; they received villages into their corporations, and they waged direct war against the nobles. In Italy, where the land was thickly sprinkled with feudal castles, the war assumed heroic proportions, and was fought with a stern acrimony on both sides. Florence sustained for seventy-seven years a succession of bloody wars, in order to free its *contado* from the nobles; but when the conquest had been accomplished (in 1181) all had to begin anew. The nobles rallied; they constituted their own leagues in opposition to the leagues of the towns, and, receiving fresh support from either the Emperor or the Pope, they made the war last for another 130 years. The same took place in Rome, in Lombardy, all over Italy.

Prodigies of valour, audacity and tenaciousness were displayed by the citizens in these wars. But the bows and the hatchets of the arts and crafts had not always the upper hand in their encounters with the armour-clad knights, and many castles withstood the ingenious siege-machinery and the perseverance of the citizens. Some cities, like Florence, Bologna, and many towns in France, Germany and Bohemia, succeeded in emancipating the surrounding villages, and they were rewarded for their efforts by an extraordinary prosperity and tranquillity. But even here, and still more in the less strong or less impulsive towns, the merchants and artisans, exhausted by war, and misunderstanding their own interests, bargained over the peasants' heads. They compelled the lord to swear allegiance to the city; his country castle was dismantled, and he agreed to build a house and to reside in the city, of which he became a co-burgher (*com-bourgeois, con-cittadind*); but he maintained in return most of his rights upon the peasants, who only won a partial relief from their burdens. The burgher could not understand that equal rights of citizenship might be granted to the peasant upon whose food supplies he had to rely, and a deep rent was traced

16. See Tuetey, 'Étude sur le droit municipal . . . en Franche-Comté', in *Mémoires de la Société d'émulation de Montbéliard*, 2nd series, ii, 129 ff.

between town and village. In some cases the peasants simply changed owners, the city buying out the barons' rights and selling them in shares to her own citizens.<sup>17</sup> Serfdom was maintained, and only much later on, towards the end of the thirteenth century, it was the craft revolution which undertook to put an end to it, and abolished personal servitude, but dispossessed at the same time the serfs of the land.<sup>18</sup> It hardly need be added that the fatal results of such policy were soon felt by the cities themselves; the country became the city's enemy.

The war against the castles had another bad effect. It involved the cities in a long succession of mutual wars, which have given origin to the theory, till lately in vogue, namely, that the towns lost their independence through their own jealousies and mutual fights. The imperialist historians have especially supported this theory, which, however, is very much undermined now by modern research. It is certain that in Italy cities fought each other with a stubborn animosity, but nowhere else did such contests attain the same proportions; and in Italy itself the city wars, especially those of the earlier period, had their special causes. They were (as was already shown by Sismondi and Ferrari) a mere continuation of the war against the castles - the free municipal and federative principle unavoidably entering into a fierce contest with feudalism, imperialism and papacy. Many towns which had but partially shaken off the yoke of the bishop, the lord or the Emperor were simply driven against the free cities by the nobles, the Emperor and Church, whose policy was to divide the cities and to arm them against each other. These special circumstances (partly reflected on to Germany also) explain why the Italian towns, some of which sought support with the Emperor to combat the Pope, while the others sought support from the Church to resist the Emperor, were

17. This seems to have been often the case in Italy. In Switzerland, Bern bought even the towns of Thun and Burgdorf.

18. Such was, at least, the case in the cities of Tuscany (Florence, Lucca, Sienna, Bologna, etc.), for which the relations between city and peasants are best known. (Luchitzkiy, 'Slavery and Russian Slaves in Florence', in Kiev University *Izvestia* for 1885, who has perused Rumohr's *Ursprung der Besitzlosigkeit der Colonien in Toscana*, 1830). The whole matter concerning the relations between the cities and the peasants requires much more study than has hitherto been done.

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soon divided into a Ghibelin and a Guelf camp, and why the same division appeared in each separate city.<sup>19</sup>

The immense economical progress realized by most Italian cities just at the time when these wars were hottest,<sup>20</sup> and the alliances so easily concluded between towns, still better characterize those struggles and further undermine the above theory. Already in the years 1130—50 powerful leagues came into existence; and a few years later, when Frederick Barbarossa invaded Italy and, supported by the nobles and some retardatory cities, marched against Milan, popular enthusiasm was roused in many towns by popular preachers. Crema, Piacenza, Brescia, Tortona, etc., went to the rescue; the banners of the guilds of Verona, Padua, Vicenza and Trevisa floated side by side in the cities' camp against the banners of the Emperor and the nobles. Next year the Lombardian League came into existence, and sixty years later we see it reinforced by many other cities, and forming a lasting organization which had half of its federal war-chest in Genoa and the other half in Venice.<sup>21</sup> In Tuscany, Florence headed another powerful league, to which Lucca, Bologna, Pistoia, etc., belonged, and which played an important part in crushing down the nobles in middle Italy, while smaller leagues were of common occurrence. It is thus certain that although petty jealousies undoubtedly existed, and discord could be easily sown, they did not prevent the towns from uniting together for the common defence of liberty. Only later on, when separate cities became little States, wars broke out between them, as always must be the case when States struggle for supremacy or colonies.

Similar leagues were formed in Germany for the same purpose. When, under the successors of Conrad, the land was the prey of interminable feuds between the nobles, the Westphalian towns concluded a league against the knights, one of the clauses of which was never to lend money to a knight who would continue to conceal

19. Ferrari's generalizations are often too theoretical to be always correct; but his views upon the part played by the nobles in the city wars are based upon a wide range of authenticated facts.

20. Only such cities as stubbornly kept to the cause of the barons, like Pisa or Verona, lost through the wars. For many towns which fought on the barons' side, the defeat was also the beginning of liberation and progress.

21. Ferrari, ii, 18, 104 ff.; Leo and Botta, i, 432.

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stolen goods.<sup>22</sup> When 'the knights and the nobles lived on plunder, and murdered whom they chose to murder', as the *Wormser Zorn* complains, the cities on the Rhine (Mainz, Cologne, Speier, Strasbourg and Basel) took the initiative of a league which soon numbered sixty allied towns, repressed the robbers, and maintained peace. Later on, the league of the towns of Suabia, divided into three 'peace districts' (Augsburg, Constance and Ulm), had the same purpose. And even when such leagues were broken,<sup>23</sup> they lived long enough to show that while the supposed peacemakers - the kings, the emperors and the Church - fomented discord, and were themselves helpless against the robber knights, it was from the cities that the impulse came for re-establishing peace and union. The cities - not the emperors - were the real makers of the national unity.<sup>24</sup>

Similar federations were organized for the same purpose among small villages, and now that attention has been drawn to this subject by Luchaire we may expect soon to learn much more about them. Villages joined\* into small federations in the *contado* of Florence, so also in the dependencies of Novgorod and Pskov. As to France, there is positive evidence of a federation of seventeen peasant villages which has existed in the Laonnais for nearly a hundred years (till 1256), and has fought hard for its independence. Three more peasant republics, which had sworn charters similar to those of Laon and Soissons, existed in the neighbourhood of Laon, and, their territories being contiguous, they supported each other in their liberation wars. Altogether, Luchaire is of the opinion that many such federations must have come into existence in France in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but that documents relative to them are mostly lost. Of course, being unprotected by walls, they could easily be crushed down by the kings and the lords; but in certain favourable circumstances, when they found support in a league of towns and protection in their mountains, such peasant

22. J. Falke, *Die Hansa als Deutsche See- und Handelsmacht*, Berlin, 1863, pp.- 31, 55.

23. For Aachen and Cologne we have direct testimony that the bishops of these two cities - one of them bought by the enemy - opened to him the gates.

24. See the facts, though not always the conclusions, of Nitzsch, iii, 133 ff.; also Kallsen, i, 458, etc.

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republics became independent units of the Swiss Confederation.<sup>25</sup>

As to unions between cities for peaceful purposes, they were of quite common occurrence. The intercourse which had been established during the period of liberation was not interrupted afterwards. Sometimes, when the *scabini* of a German town, having to pronounce judgement in a new or complicated case, declared that they knew not the sentence (*des Urtheiles nicht weise zu sein*), they sent delegates to another city to get the sentence. The same happened also in France;<sup>26</sup> while Forli and Ravenna are known to have mutually naturalized their citizens and granted them full rights in both cities. To submit a contest arisen between two towns, or within a city, to another commune which was invited to act as arbiter, was also in the spirit of the times.<sup>27</sup> As to commercial treaties between cities, they were quite habitual.<sup>28</sup> Unions for regulating the production and the sizes of casks which were used for the commerce in wine, 'herring unions', and so on, were mere precursors of the great commercial federations of the Flemish Hansa, and, later on, of the great North German Hansa, the history of which alone might contribute pages and pages to illustrate the federation spirit which permeated men at that time. It hardly need be added, that through the Hanseatic unions the medieval cities have contributed more to the development of international intercourse, navigation, and maritime discovery than all the States of the first seventeen centuries of our era.

In a word, federations between small territorial units, as well as among men united by common pursuits within their respective guilds, and federations between cities and groups of cities constituted the very essence of life and thought during that period. The first five of the second decade of centuries of our era may thus be

25. On the Commune of the Laonnais, which, until Melleville's researches (*Histoire de la Commune du Laonnais*, Paris, 1853), was confounded with the Commune of Laon, see Luchaire, pp. 75 ff. For the early peasants' guilds and subsequent unions see R. Wilman's 'Die landlichen Schutzgilden Westphaliens', in *Zeitschrift fur Kulturgeschichte*, new series, vol. iii, quoted in Henne-am-Rhyn's *Kulturgeschichte*, iii, 249.

26. Luchaire, p. 149.

27. Two important cities, like Mainz and Worms, would settle a political contest by means of arbitration. After a civil war broken out in Abbeville, Amiens would act, in 1231, as arbiter (Luchaire, 149); and so on.

28. See, for instance, W. Stieda, *Hansische Vereinbarungen*, op. cit., p. 114.

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described as an immense attempt at securing mutual aid and support on a grand scale, by means of the principles of federation and association carried on through all manifestations of human life and to all possible degrees. This attempt was attended with success to a very great extent. It united men formerly divided; it secured them a very great deal of freedom, and it tenfolded their forces. At a time when particularism was bred by so many agencies, and the causes of discord and jealousy might have been so numerous, it is gratifying to see that cities scattered over a wide continent had so much in common, and were so ready to confederate for the prosecution of so many common aims. They succumbed in the long run before powerful enemies; not having understood the mutual-aid principle widely enough, they themselves committed fatal faults; but they did not perish through their own jealousies, and their errors were not a want of federation spirit among themselves.

The results of that new move which mankind made in the medieval city were immense. At the beginning of the eleventh century the towns of Europe were small clusters of miserable huts, adorned but with low clumsy churches, the builders of which hardly knew how to make an arch; the arts, mostly consisting of some weaving and forging, were in their infancy; learning was found in but a few monasteries. Three hundred and fifty years later, the very face of Europe had been changed. The land was dotted with rich cities, surrounded by immense thick walls which were embellished by towers and gates, each of them a work of art in itself. The cathedrals, conceived in a grand style and profusely decorated, lifted their bell-towers to the skies, displaying a purity of form and a boldness of imagination which we now vainly strive to attain. The crafts and arts had risen to a degree of perfection which we can hardly boast of having superseded in many directions, if the inventive skill of the worker and the superior finish of his work be appreciated higher than rapidity of fabrication. The navies of the free cities furrowed in all directions the Northern and the Southern Mediterranean; one effort more, and they would cross the oceans. Over large tracts of land well-being had taken the place of misery; learning had grown and spread. The methods of science had been elaborated; the basis of natural philosophy had been laid

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down; and the way had been paved for all the mechanical inventions of which our own times are so proud. Such were the magic changes accomplished in Europe in less than four hundred years. And the losses which Europe sustained through the loss of its free cities can only be understood when we compare the seventeenth century with the fourteenth or the thirteenth. The prosperity which formerly characterized Scotland, Germany, the plains of Italy, was gone. The roads had fallen into an abject state, the cities were depopulated, labour was brought into slavery, art had vanished, commerce itself was decaying.<sup>29</sup>

If the medieval cities had bequeathed to us no written documents to testify of their splendour, and left nothing behind but the monuments of building art which we see now all over Europe, from Scotland to Italy, and from Gerona in Spain to Breslau in Slavonian territory, we might yet conclude that the times of independent city life were times of the greatest development of human intellect during the Christian era down to the end of the eighteenth century. On looking, for instance, at a medieval picture representing Nuremberg with its scores of towers and lofty spires, each of which bore the stamp of free creative art, we can hardly conceive that three hundred years before the town was but a collection of miserable hovels. And our admiration grows when we go into the details of the architecture and decorations of each of the countless churches, bell-towers, gates and communal houses which are scattered all over Europe as far east as Bohemia and the now dead towns of Polish Galicia. Not only Italy, that mother of art, but all Europe is full of such monuments. The very fact that of all arts architecture - a social art above all - had attained the highest development, is significant in itself. To be what it was, it must have originated from an eminently social life.

Medieval architecture attained its grandeur - not only because it was a natural development of handicraft; not only because each building, each architectural decoration, had been devised by men who knew through the experience of their own hands what artistic

29. Cosmo Innes's *Early Scottish History* and *Scotland in Middle Ages*, quoted by Rev. Denton, op. cit., pp. 68, 69; Lamprecht's *Deutsches wirtschaftliche Leben im Mittelalter*, review by Schmoller in his *Jahrbuch*, vol. xii; Sismondi's *Tableau de Vagriculture toscane*, pp. 226 ff. The dominions of Florence could be recognized at a glance through their prosperity.

effects can be obtained from stone, iron, bronze, or even from simple logs and mortar; not only because each monument was a result of collective experience, accumulated in each 'mystery' or craft<sup>30</sup> - it was grand because it was born out of a grand idea. Like Greek art, it sprang out of a conception of brotherhood and unity fostered by the city. It had an audacity which could only be won by audacious struggles and victories; it had that expression of vigour, because vigour permeated all the life of the city. A cathedral or a communal house symbolized the grandeur of an organism of which every mason and stone-cutter was the builder, and a medieval building appears - not as a solitary effort to which thousands of slaves would have contributed the share assigned them by one man's imagination; all the city contributed to it. The lofty bell-tower rose upon a structure, grand in itself, in which the life of the city was throbbing - not upon a meaningless scaffold like the Paris iron tower, not as a sham structure in stone intended to conceal the ugliness of an iron frame, as has been done in the Tower Bridge. Like the Acropolis of Athens, the cathedral of a medieval city was intended to glorify the grandeur of the victorious city, to symbolize the union of its crafts, to express the glory of each citizen in a city of his own creation. After having achieved its craft revolution, the city often began a new cathedral in order to express the new, wider, and broader union which had been called into life.

The means at hand for these grand undertakings were disproportionately small. Cologne Cathedral was begun with a yearly outlay of but 500 marks; a gift of 100 marks was inscribed as a grand donation;<sup>31</sup> and even when the work approached completion,

30. Mr John J. Ennett (*Six Essays*, London, 1891) has excellent pages on this aspect of medieval architecture. Mr Willis, in his appendix to Whewell's *History of Inductive Sciences* (i, 261-2), has pointed out the beauty of the mechanical relations in medieval buildings. 'A new decorative construction was matured,' he writes, 'not thwarting and controlling, but assisting and harmonizing with the mechanical construction. Every member, every moulding, becomes a sustainer of weight; and by the multiplicity of props assisting each other, and the consequent subdivision of weight, the eye was satisfied of the stability of the structure, notwithstanding curiously slender aspects of the separate parts.' An art which sprang out of the *social* life of the city could not be better characterized.

31. Dr L. Ennen, *Der Dom zu Köln, seine Construction und Anstaltung*, Köln, 1871.

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and gifts poured in in proportion, the yearly outlay in money stood at about 5,000 marks, and never exceeded 14,000. The cathedral of Basel was built with equally small means. But each corporation contributed its part of stone, work, and decorative genius to *their* common monument. Each guild expressed in it its political conceptions, telling in stone or in bronze the history of the city, glorifying the principles of 'Liberty, equality and fraternity',<sup>32</sup> praising the city's allies, and sending to eternal fire its enemies. And each guild bestowed its *love* upon the communal monument by richly decorating it with stained windows, paintings, 'gates, worthy to be the gates of Paradise', as Michel Angelo said, or stone decorations of each minutest corner of the building.<sup>33</sup> Small cities, even small parishes,<sup>34</sup> vied with the big agglomerations in this work, and the cathedrals of Laon and St Ouen hardly stand behind that of Rheims, or the Communal House of Bremen, or the folkmote's bell-tower of Breslau. 'No works must be begun by the commune but such as are conceived in response to the grand heart of the commune, composed of the hearts of all citizens, united in one common will' - such were the words of the Council of Florence; and this spirit appears in all communal works of common utility, such as the canals, terraces, vineyards and fruit gardens around Florence, or the irrigation canals which intersected the plains of Lombardy, or the port and aqueduct of Genoa, or, in fact, any works of the kind which were achieved by almost every city.<sup>35</sup>

All arts had progressed in the same way in the medieval cities, those of our own days mostly being but a continuation of what had grown at that time. The prosperity of the Flemish cities was based upon the fine woollen cloth they fabricated. Florence, at the begin-

32. The three statues are among the outer decorations of Notre Dame de Paris.

33. Medieval art, like Greek art, did not know those curiosity-shops which we call a National Gallery or a Museum. A picture was painted, a statue was carved, a bronze decoration was cast to stand in its proper place in a monument of communal art. It lived there, it was part of a whole, and it contributed to give unity to the impression produced by the whole.

34. Cf. J. T. Ennett's 'Second Essay', p. 36.

35. Sismondi, iv, 172; xvi, 356. The great canal, *Naviglio Grande*, which brings the water from the Tessino, was begun in 1179, i.e. after the conquest of independence, and it was ended in the thirteenth century. On the subsequent decay, see xvi, 355.

ning of the fourteenth century, before the Black Death, fabricated from 70,000 to 100,000 *panni* of woollen stuffs, which were valued at 1,200,000 golden florins.<sup>36</sup> The chiselling of precious metals, the art of casting, the fine forging of iron, were creations of the medieval 'mysteries' which had succeeded in attaining in their own domains all that could be made by the hand, without the use of a powerful prime motor. By the hand and by invention, because, to use Whewell's words:

Parchment and paper, printing and engraving, improved glass and steel, gunpowder, clocks, telescopes, the mariner's compass, the reformed calendar, the decimal notation; algebra, trigonometry, chemistry, counterpoint (an invention equivalent to a new creation of music); these are all possessions which we inherit from that which has so disparagingly been termed the Stationary Period (*History of Inductive Sciences*, i, 252).

True that no new principle was illustrated by any of these discoveries, as Whewell said; but medieval science had done something more than the actual discovery of new principles. It had prepared the discovery of all the new principles which we know at the present time in mechanical sciences: it had accustomed the explorer to observe facts and to reason from them. It was inductive science, even though it had not yet fully grasped the importance and the powers of induction; and it laid the foundations of both mechanics and natural philosophy. Francis Bacon, Galileo and Copernicus were the direct descendants of a Roger Bacon and a Michael Scot, as the steam engine was a direct product of the researches carried on in the Italian universities on the weight of the atmosphere, and of the mathematical and technical learning which characterized Nuremberg.

But why should one take trouble to insist upon the advance of science and art in the medieval city? Is it not enough to point to the

36. In 1336 it had 8,000 to 10,000 boys and girls in its primary schools, 1,000 to 1,200 boys in its seven middle schools, and from 550 to 600 students in its four universities. The thirty communal hospitals contained over 1,000 beds for a population of 90,000 inhabitants (Capponi, ii, 249 ff.). It has more than once been suggested by authoritative writers that education stood, as a rule, at a much higher level than is generally supposed. Certainly so in democratic Nuremberg.

cathedrals in the domain of skill, and to the Italian language and the poem of Dante in the domain of thought, to give at once the measure of what the medieval city *created* during the four centuries it lived?

The medieval cities have undoubtedly rendered an immense service to European civilization. They have prevented it from being drifted into the theocracies and despotical states of old; they have endowed it with the variety, the self-reliance, the force of initiative, and the immense intellectual and material energies it now possesses, which are the best pledge for its being able to resist any new invasion of the East. But why did these centres of civilization, which attempted to answer to deeply-seated needs of human nature, and were so full of life, not live further on? Why were they seized with senile debility in the sixteenth century? and, after having repulsed so many assaults from without, and only borrowed new vigour from their interior struggles, why did they finally succumb to both?

Various causes contributed to this effect, some of them having their roots in the remote past, while others originated in the mistakes committed by the cities themselves. Towards the end of the fifteenth century, mighty States, reconstructed on the old Roman pattern, were already coming into existence. In each country and each region some feudal lord, more cunning, more given to hoarding, and often less scrupulous than his neighbours, had succeeded in appropriating to himself richer personal domains, more peasants on his lands, more knights in his following, more treasures in his chest. He had chosen for his seat a group of happily situated villages, not yet trained into free municipal life — Paris, Madrid, or Moscow — and with the labour of his serfs he had made of them royal fortified cities, whereto he attracted war companions by a free distribution of villages, and merchants by the protection he offered to trade. The germ of a future State, which began gradually to absorb other similar centres, was thus laid. Lawyers, versed in the study of Roman law, flocked into such centres; a tenacious and ambitious race of men issued from among the burgesses, who equally hated the naughtiness of the lords and what they called the lawlessness of the peasants. The very forms of the village community, unknown to their code, the very principles of federalism were repulsive to

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them as 'barbarian' inheritances. Caesarism, supported by the fiction of popular consent and by the force of arms, was their ideal, and they worked hard for those who promised to realize it.<sup>37</sup>

The Christian Church, once a rebel against Roman law and now its ally, worked in the same direction. The attempt at constituting the theocratic Empire of Europe having proved a failure, the more intelligent and ambitious bishops now yielded support to those whom they reckoned upon for reconstituting the power of the Kings of Israel or of the Emperors of Constantinople. The Church bestowed upon the rising rulers her sanctity, she crowned them as God's representatives on earth, she brought to their service the learning and the statesmanship of her ministers, her blessings and maledictions, her riches and the sympathies she had retained among the poor. The peasants, whom the cities had failed or refused to free, on seeing the burghers impotent to put an end to the interminable wars between the knights - which wars they had so dearly to pay for - now set their hopes upon the King, the Emperor, or the Great Prince; and while aiding them to crush down the mighty feudal owners, they aided them to constitute the centralized State. And finally, the invasions of the Mongols and the Turks, the holy war against the Maures in Spain, as well as the terrible wars which soon broke out between the growing centres of sovereignty — He de France and Burgundy, Scotland and England, England and France, Lithuania and Poland, Moscow and Tver, and so on - contributed to the same end. Mighty States made their appearance; and the cities had now to resist not only loose federations of lords, but strongly organized centres, which had armies of serfs at their disposal.

The worst was, that the growing autocracies found support in the divisions which had grown within the cities themselves. The fundamental idea of the medieval city was grand, but it was not wide enough. Mutual aid and support cannot be limited to a small

37. Cf. L. Ranke's excellent considerations upon the essence of Roman law in his *Weltgeschichte*, vol. iv, section 2, pp. 20-31. Also Sismondi's remarks upon the part played by the *legistes* in the constitution of royal authority, *Histoire des Français*, Paris, 1826, viii, 85-99. The popular hatred against these '*weise Doktoren und Beutelschneider des Volks*' broke out with full force in the first years of the sixteenth century in the sermons of the early Reform movement.

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association; they must spread to its surroundings, or else the surroundings will absorb the association. And in this respect the medieval citizen had committed a formidable mistake at the outset. Instead of looking upon the peasants and artisans who gathered under the protection of his walls as upon so many aids who would contribute their part to the making of the city - as they really did - a sharp division was traced between the 'families' of old burghers and the newcomers. For the former, all benefits from communal trade and communal lands were reserved, and nothing was left for the latter but the right of freely using the skill of their own hands. The city thus became divided into 'the burghers' or 'the commonalty', and 'the inhabitants'.<sup>38</sup> The trade, which was formerly communal, now became the privilege of the merchant and artisan 'families', and the next step - that of becoming individual, or the privilege of oppressive trusts - was unavoidable.

The same division took place between the city proper and the surrounding villages. The commune had well tried to free the peasants, but her wars against the lords became, as already mentioned, wars for freeing the city itself from the lords, rather than for freeing the peasants. She left to the lord his rights over the villeins, on condition that he would molest the city no more and would become co-burgher. But the nobles 'adopted' by the city, and now residing within its walls, simply carried on the old war within the very precincts of the city. They disliked to submit to a tribunal of simple artisans and merchants, and fought their old feuds in the streets. Each city had now its Colonnas and Orsinis, its Overstolzes and Wises. Drawing large incomes from the estates they had still retained, they surrounded themselves with numerous clients and feudalized the customs and habits of the city itself. And when discontent began to be felt in the artisan classes of the town, they offered their sword and their followers to settle the differences by a free fight, instead of letting the discontent find out the channels which it did not fail to secure itself in olden times.

The greatest and the most fatal error of most cities was to base their wealth upon commerce and industry, to the neglect of agri-

38. Brentano fully understood the fatal effects of the struggle between the 'old burghers' and the new-comers. Miaskowski, in his work on the village communities of Switzerland, has indicated the same for village communities.

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culture. They thus repeated the error which had once been committed by the cities of antique Greece, and they fell through it into the same crimes.<sup>39</sup> The estrangement of so many cities from the land necessarily drew them into a policy hostile to the land, which became more and more evident in the times of Edward the Third,<sup>40</sup> the French Jacqueries, the Hussite wars and the Peasant War in Germany. On the other hand, a commercial policy involved them in distant enterprises. Colonies were founded by the Italians in the south-east, by German cities in the east, by Slavonian cities in the far north-east. Mercenary armies began to be kept for colonial wars, and soon for local defence as well. Loans were contracted to such an extent as totally to demoralize the citizens; and internal contests grew worse and worse at each election, during which the colonial politics in the interest of a few families was at stake. The division into rich and poor grew deeper, and in the sixteenth century, in each city, the royal authority found ready allies and support among the poor.

And there is yet another cause of the decay of communal institutions, which stands higher and lies deeper than all the above. The history of the medieval cities offers one of the most striking illustrations of the power of *ideas* and *principles* upon the destinies of mankind, and of the quite opposed results which are obtained when a deep modification of leading ideas has taken place. Self-reliance and federalism, the sovereignty of each group, and the construction of the political body from the simple to the composite, were the leading ideas in the eleventh century. But since that time the conceptions had entirely changed. The students of Roman law and the prelates of the Church, closely bound together since the time of Innocent the Third, had succeeded in paralysing the idea - the antique Greek idea — which presided at the foundation of the cities. For two or three hundred years they taught from the pulpit, the University chair, and the judges' bench, that salvation must be

39. The trade in slaves kidnapped in the East was never discontinued in the Italian republics till the fifteenth century. Feeble traces of it are found also in Germany and elsewhere. See Cibrario, *Delia schiavitù e del servaggio*, 2 vols., Milan, 1868; Professor Luchitzkiy, 'Slavery and Russian Slaves in Florence in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', in *Izvestia* of the Kiev University, 1885.

40. J. R. Green's *History of the English People*, London, 1878, i, 455.

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sought for in a strongly centralized State, placed under a semi-divine authority;<sup>41</sup> that *one* man can and must be the saviour of society, and that in the name of public salvation he can commit any violence: burn men and women at the stake, make them perish under indescribable tortures, plunge whole provinces into the most abject misery. Nor did they fail to give object lessons to this effect on a grand scale, and with an unheard-of cruelty, wherever the king's sword and the Church's fire, or both at once, could reach. By these teachings and examples, continually repeated and enforced upon public attention, the very minds of the citizens had been shaped into a new mould. They began to find no authority too extensive, no killing by degrees too cruel, once it was 'for public safety'. And, with this new direction of mind and this new belief in one man's power, the old federalist principle faded away, and the very creative genius of the masses died out. The Roman idea was victorious, and in such circumstances the centralized State had in the cities a ready prey.

Florence in the fifteenth century is typical of this change. Formerly a popular revolution was the signal of a new departure. Now, when the people, brought to despair, insurged, it had constructive ideas no more; no fresh idea came out of the movement. A thousand representatives were put into the Communal Council instead of 400; 100 men entered the *signoria* instead of 80. But a revolution of figures could be of no avail. The people's discontent was growing up, and new revolts followed. A saviour — the 'tyran' — was appealed to; he massacred the rebels, but the disintegration of the communal body continued worse than ever. And when, after a new revolt, the people of Florence appealed to their most popular man, Gieronimo Savonarola, for advice, the monk's answer was: 'Oh, people mine, thou knowest that I cannot go into State affairs ... purify thy soul, and if in such a disposition of mind thou reformest thy city, then, people of Florence, thou shalt have inaugurated the reform in all Italy!' Carnival masks and vicious books were burned, a law of charity and another against usurers were passed - and the democracy of Florence remained where it was. The old spirit had gone. By too much trusting to government,

41. See the theories expressed by the Bologna lawyers, already at the Congress of Roncaglia in 1158.

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they had ceased to trust to themselves; they were unable to open new issues. The State had only to step in and to crush down their last liberties.

And yet, the current of mutual aid and support did not die out in the masses, it continued to flow even after that defeat. It rose up again with a formidable force, in answer to the communist appeals of the first propagandists of the reform, and it continued to exist even after the masses, having failed to realize the life which they hoped to inaugurate under the inspiration of a reformed religion, fell under the dominions of an autocratic power. It flows still even now, and it seeks its way to find out a new expression which would not be the State, nor the medieval city, nor the village community of the barbarians, nor the savage clan, but would proceed from all of them, and yet be superior to them in its wider and more deeply humane conceptions.