

old English Condottiere repaired for brief repose and to refurbish his arms, and where charity was denied to the monks who dared to ask it in the name of peace.

## XLI.

### DEATH AND FUNERAL OBSEQUIES.

[*Provisioni e Regesto dei Capitoli* of the Commune in the State Archives of Florence — PIERO MINERBETTI, *Chronicle* — D. MARIA MANNI, *Biography of Hawkwood* in the II v. of the *Appendix to MURATORI* [R. I. S.] — *Song on the death of Messere Giovanni Aguto* published by ANTONIO MEDIN in the *Archivio storico italiano* of 1886 — *Chronicle* of BENEDETTO DEL.]

1394. The Commune of Florence had favorably received the proposal of Hawkwood as to the alienation of Montecchio, and of his other fortresses in the province of Arezzo, but the negotiations were complicated, as he wanted at the same time to liquidate his annuity for a fixed sum.

After many discussions the affair was concluded by the *provisione*, approved by the Council of the Commune with 181 votes against 24; — here is the substance of it:

" Considering that Hawkwood, weary by reason of his great age, and, as he asserts, weighed down by infirmity, wishes to return to his old country, and to dispose of his pension, as well as the under mentioned among others of his possessions, and hence to make an exchange or composition (*stagnum*); taking into account the negotiations which for some months we have been making, both on the part of the Commune and on that of Sir John; and wishing to dispose of them as seems most advantageous to the Commune, the council of the Gonfalonieri together with that of the twelve Buonomini after serious deliberation ordain,

" That the recipient Commune shall by public act be liberated and absolved from the here written pensions and sums due to Sir John, in such a manner that they

shall not last longer than the present month of March, and from thenceforward shall no longer be due, but from that moment the Commune shall be free of them;

" The chamberlains of the Commune shall pay to Sir John or his procurator six thousand golden florins without any deduction, and without other formalities except the present provision, the payment of which sum shall be made as will be declared below;

" With the addition, however, that the herein mentioned fortresses, strongholds and possessions shall be held by the Commune, and to this end that all the rights appertaining to them shall be conceded by Sir John or his procurator, placing the Commune in their possession and custody.

" *Pensions and sums owing, above mentioned.*

" 1<sup>st</sup> of 1200 gold florins annually for the duration of his life, granted in 1375;

" 2<sup>nd</sup> of 2000 gold florins yearly for his life, conceded on April 1<sup>st</sup> 1391;

" 3<sup>rd</sup> of 1000 gold florins granted to the Lady Donnina wife of Sir John, as long as she lives with her children in the city, country or district of Florence (April ditto);

" 4<sup>th</sup> sum of 2000 gold florins assigned as 'dote' to the third daughter of Sir John (April ditto).

" *Fortresses and Places.*

" Castle of Montecchio;

" Stronghold or Castle of the Abbey of the Pino;

" Stronghold of *Migliaris*;

with the rights, jurisdictions, appurtenances, tribunals, men and persons etc.

" Of the said sum of six thousand gold florins two thousand to be paid immediately, the other four thousand

1394. in three rates, the first within four months, the second within eight months, the third and last within a year.

" Moreover, as it is said that Sir John wishes to leave us, and with his family to go to England whence he had his origin — that the Signoria shall appropriate a thousand gold florins to purchase the objects with which they think well to honor Sir John and his son, according to the credit and magnificence of the Commune.

" That the sums to be paid as above cannot in any manner or for any claim be sequestered under penalty of a thousand small florins.

" All questions which might arise, concerning the execution of that which is above mentioned, shall be settled by the Signoria and their decision shall have absolute force.

" That the Signoria shall dispose as to the custody, government and administration of the three castles which are ceded.

" Finally, that the contracts or acts which are stipulated in order as above shall be free from all and every tax."

Man proposes and God disposes: five days after this *provisione*, Hawkwood, who had for some time been reduced to pass his time between the bed and the couch, instead of setting out for his fatherland, departed for that journey which has no return.

*How Messer Giovanni Acuto captain of war of the Commune of Florence died, and how the Commune paid him the greatest honors and he was interred in Santa Maria del Fiore;* thus runs the title of a chapter in the chronicle of Piero Minerbetti, which assigns the date of March 16<sup>th</sup> as the day of his death, while the 17<sup>th</sup> results from documents. It may have been during the night between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. It says that Hawkwood was ill at his place outside the city (without doubt it was San Donato), but that he died from a stroke of apoplexy.

The Priors elected a commission of citizens to order

and provide splendid obsequies, without regard to expense, and they proved really grand.

All the priests of the city attended, meeting in Santa Maria del Fiore; the catafalque was gorgeous; the choir, and other convenient places of the church were full of lighted torches.

The Signoria provided handsome black dresses for his son, wife and daughters, and all the numerous household.

The bier, adorned with very rich drapery of crimson velvet and gold, was first placed on the Piazza della Signoria, where the funeral procession formed, and to which all the magistrates contributed; i. e. the Signoria sent a hundred large wax torches, a banner with the arms of the Commune, another with the arms of the people, a standard with the arms of the Commune, and the shields pertaining thereto, a helmet with a golden lion with a lily in his claw as a crest. This was a Florentine ensign, and would seem to symbolize the valour of the Condottiere who was so faithful to the Commune.

The captains of the Guelph faction sent twenty wax torches, a pennon with the Guelph arms, and a helmet with the same design as a crest.

The "Six of the Mercanzia" sent twenty wax torches, and moreover they personally attended, together with the consuls of the Arts.

The soldiers of Hawkwood's lances with fourteen caparisoned horses carried several flags and pennons with his arms, his helmet with its crest, and the pennon with the Harpy (an ensign almost too eloquent), his sword and his shield.

The bier was raised by the cavaliers of Florence, none of whom were missing, as it was to do honor to such an illustrious comrade, and was carried to fetch the corpse where it lay (probably from San Donato it had been placed in some church in the city). It was laid on the open

1394. bier robed in cloth of gold, and the cavaliers carried it to San Giovanni (the Baptistery) and placed it on the holy baptismal font covered with cloth of gold. Here Hawkwood was wept for by the women\* in the presence of a great crowd, for all the shops of Florence were closed.

He was then carried into the Duomo, and placed under the catafalque, where the clergy recited the office, and a funeral oration was pronounced.

Finally he was interred in the place temporarily ordained, and the Signoria\*\* and people returned to their houses.

The place chosen was in the choir, and here Manni observes: "This was not the present choir but the first and more ancient wooden one," and supposes every vestige of the sepulchre was lost, either when the new choir was made, or when the pavement was re-covered with marble (1519-1524).

But it is also likely that the temporary place of sepulture in the choir had no especial mark, the definite tomb having been decreed seven months before. It was not built however, as the remains were sent to King Richard II in England.

Minerbetti's description in prose is precisely analogous to that of a contemporaneous *Cantare in rima ottava*.

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\* Manni observed how Dante desired similar solemn funeral rites in the Baptistery, when he said in *Paradiso XXV*:

..... ed in sul fonte  
Del mio battesimo prenderò il cappello.

He noted the error of those who arbitrarily amplified the women weeping (*donne piangenti*) over Hawkwood's bier into noble matrons (*nobili matrone*); these were nothing more than a derivation from the Roman *prefice*, and the custom is still kept up in many places on the Mediterranean.

\*\* The diarist Simone della Tosa observed that the Signoria were accustomed never to go out of the Palace unless on occasions of the greatest solemnity.

If the *Obsequies and honors made for Messer Giovanni Aguto our captain of war* furnished the argument for popular poesy, and inspired a poem of ingenuous but decidedly elegiac character, it shows that the man was sincerely loved and esteemed in Florence. There was nothing now to hope or to fear from the dead man: the sumptuous official observances decreed by the magistrates might have been the fruit of political prudence, to shew to future condottieri, that the Commune knew how to value and recompense their fidelity; but the verses correspond to a heartfelt sentiment, to the sincere opinion of the citizens.

This is the more valuable in that the verses retained their popularity for many years afterwards. Benedetto Dei, who wrote his chronicle late in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, remarked that he knew them by heart. The poet is not known, but this matters little: he was the interpreter of all the people.

To the details described by Minerbetti the *Cantare* adds his own, from which we learn that the ensigns, flags, and helmets with crests were carried on large war chargers, draped with housings and breast plates; it is specified that the flags offered by the wife and family of Hawkwood were six in number; that the general closing of shops was ordered under penalty, and many men dressed in black by the Commune followed the bier with their heads covered with hoods, as a sign of great grief; and that a multitude of priests walked behind bearing torches and candles and singing psalms. There were the minor friars, the Servite monks, those of San Marco, Ognissanti, Monte Uliveto, the Dominicans, the monks of the Angioli, the Carmine, San Miniato and "all the rest" (*tutti quanti*), and all the bells rang out a death peal.

At the holy font of the Baptistery, the corpse was exposed on the bier, which was surrounded by thirty wax

1394. torches; a drawn sword was laid on the breast, and the *bâton* of command in the hand.

The obsequies in the Duomo being finished, the priests carried the body into the sacristy.

The *Cantare* ends by invoking from the Lord and the Madonna eternal life and supernal glory for him who had lived under the wings of victory.

## XLII.

### THE MONUMENT IN SANTA MARIA DEL FIORE.

[*Provisions* of the Commune in the State Archives of Florence — CAVALLUCCI, *Documental history of Santa Maria del Fiore* — D. MARIA MANNI, Biography of Hawkwood in v. II of the *Appendix* to MURATORI [R. I. S.] — VASARI, *Lives* etc. — POSSOMBRONI, *Memoria sul moto degli animali* — CICOGNARA, *History of painting* — BECKER, *Adventurous lives* — *Familiar letters* of SER LAPO MAZZEI published by CESARE GUASTI — RICOTTI, *History of the mercenary companies.*]

April 14. The state ceremonials of Hawkwood's funeral were costly in proportion to their grandeur: the account was made up, with a result of 410 gold florins, 1 lira, 11 soldi. There still remained to provide the monumental tomb, in conformity to the deliberations taken during Hawkwood's life, and as in those days no public work of any importance was admitted in the city unless it fulfilled the exigencies of art, the following "provision" was taken, which is mentioned by C. I. Cavallucci:

1395.

"Being desirous of renewing in a more decent manner the tomb of Piero Farnese\* and satisfying the provision of

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\* Piero Farnese, a worthy captain, died, in the service of Florence against the Pisans, in 1362 the year before the English came into Tuscany. He also was honored by the Florentines with a sepulchral monument in Santa Maria del Fiore: there is still seen his marble sarcophagous over the first lateral door to the right, adorned with the lily and the cross of Florence, the arms of the Guelph party and the Farnese lilies: formerly the sarcophagous supported a canopy over the statue of Piero Farnese mounted on a mule, to