

sion, "Now, prophet, is the moment to work a miracle." Others he saw with torches in their hands, ready to set fire to the pile which was to consume the bodies. It is said that his last words were: "O Florence! what hast thou done to-day?" "He died," says Guicciardini, "convinced of his innocence and penetrated by the most lively feelings of charity. Sustained by hope, he suffered no loss of firmness and composure. No word escaped from him either of confession or protestation." It was the 23d of May, the vigil of the Ascension, 1498, about ten o'clock in the forenoon; and he was now forty-five years of age.

The executioner, thinking to please the mob, began to act the buffoon over the dead body as it swung from the beam, and in doing so very nearly fell off the scaffold. Exclamations of horror broke from the bystanders, and the magistrates sent him a severe reproof. Some tried to kindle the pile so that the flames might reach the body before life was extinct; but he had died. One man shouted as he applied his torch, "I am at last able to burn the man who would have liked to burn me." As the flames arose, the wind blew them aside; and the excited people, ready for any prodigy, exclaimed, "A miracle! a miracle!" and many fled across the Piazza. But the wind fell, and the flames soon consumed the cords which bound his arms. His right hand and arm, raised by the action of the fire, seemed to the eyes of his adherents as though lifted up to bless the people that had murdered him. Some of them knelt down on the ground, regardless of the place and the beholders. His enemies took no less part in the scene. Showers of stones were thrown at the burning bodies, and pieces were struck off and scattered over

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