

The life of Perrens was, however, the best that had been written until Professor Villari published his "History of Girolamo Savonarola and his Times."<sup>1</sup> Whether we consider the fulness of his researches, or the true historical spirit in which Villari composed his book, it must be allowed that he has done the work almost as well as it can be done. As a book for Italians and for those who take an interest in the philosophical doctrines of Savonarola, it can hardly ever be excelled, and can never be entirely set aside.

To Signor Villari I owe much more than to any other writer, and I have hardly ever ventured to differ from him without much consideration. It will be evident, however, to careful readers that I have followed him in no servile spirit. I have done my best to understand the history and character of the man whom I have undertaken to describe, and I have endeavored to tell the story simply and plainly, as I have myself been able to understand it.

Since the fruits of my study of the life of Savonarola were first published, several contributions to the subject of considerable importance have appeared. First and chief of these is an essay on Savonarola in a volume of historico-biographical studies by the great German historian Ranke (Leipzig, 1877). Next comes a very interesting study by Père Bayonne (Paris, 1879), a member of the same order and an enthusiastic admirer of Savonarola. Finally, Professor Villari has put forth a carefully revised and almost rewritten edition of his great *Life* (Florence, 1888), in which he has made a few corrections and alterations, some of them based upon documents previously unknown.

I have been careful to consult all those modern writers from whom I expected to obtain help for my work, and I have made ample acknowledgment of my obligations

<sup>1</sup> *La Storia di Girolamo Savonarola e de' suoi tempi*, narrata da Pasquale Villari, con l' aiuto di nuovi documenti. Firenze : Le Monnier, vol. i. 1859 ; vol. ii. 1861.