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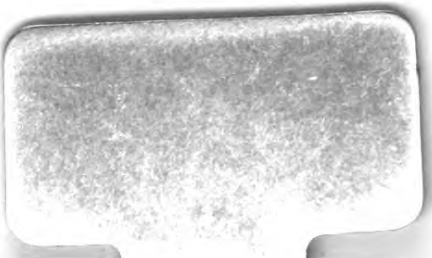


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Examined

1910



ITALIAN TALES.

T A L E S

OF

Humour, Gallantry, and Romance,

SELECTED AND TRANSLATED

FROM THE

I T A L I A N.

With sixteen illustrative Drawings by George Cruikshank.

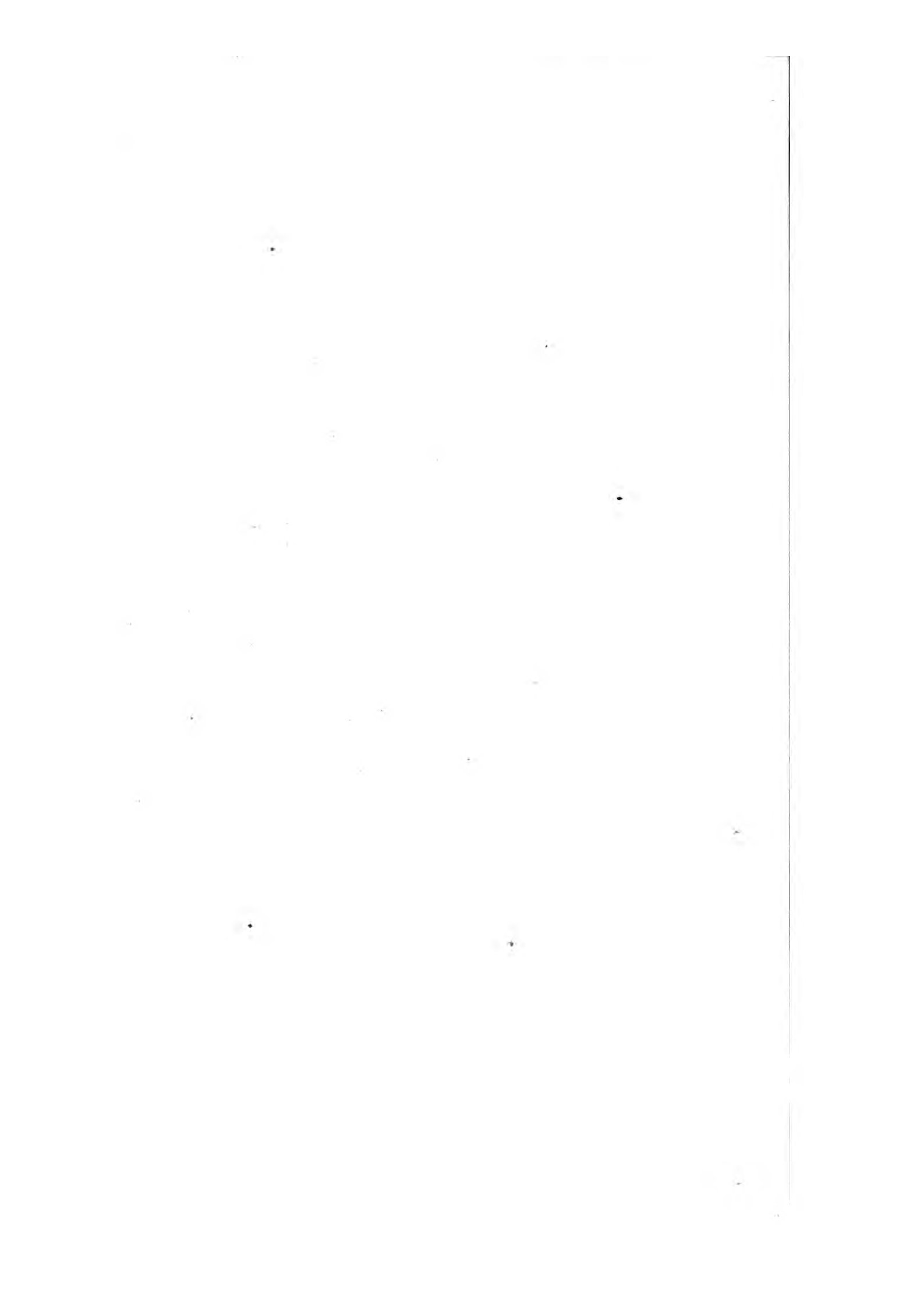
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MDCCCXXIV.

263



ADVERTISEMENT.

THESE tales are translated from a variety of authors. The translator has been chiefly led to the task by the hope of composing an entertaining volume out of materials not generally accessible. The works in which many of them are found, are by no means common, and the indelicacy with which almost all collections of Italian tales are polluted, deservedly excludes them from general perusal. Such care, has, however, been employed in the following selection, and such liberties taken with the originals, when they appeared objectionable on this account, that it is hoped this little book will escape the censure too justly cast upon Italian works of humour in general—a censure which falls heavily upon many of the otherwise admirable tales of Boccaccio. While, however, such

trifling alterations have been made as appeared necessary, these tales may still justly be considered as fair specimens of the Italian *Novella*, and like the celebrated collection already alluded to, furnish us with a very lively idea of the early manners of the Italians. Those tales, from which our great dramatist borrowed parts of his plots, and some of his incidents, have a double interest, both from their own nature, and as they illustrate the process by which his genius, "by happy alchemy of mind," turned all the materials which fell in his way to gold. Two or three of this kind have been purposely selected.

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ERRATA.

- Page 22, line 7, for 'Guibe,' read 'Giube.'
27, 1, for 'being,' read 'were.'
41, 18, for 'as him,' read 'a thing.'
44, 14, for 'room, much to his amusement. He heard,' &c
read 'room. Much to his amusement, he heard,' &c.
99, 2, for 'agreeing,' read 'it was agreed.'
— 9, for 'in,' read 'into.'

ITALIAN TALES.

THE TEACHER TAUGHT.

THERE dwelt in Rome two very intimate friends and relations of the family of Savelli, the one named Bacciuolo, and the other Pietro Paolo, both nobly born and possessed of sufficient wealth. These young men determined to go and complete their studies at Bologna ; one wished to study the common law, and the other the canon law. They accordingly took leave of their friends, and came to Bologna, and assiduously applied themselves to their respective pursuits, which they continued for some time. Now, as you no doubt know, the former improved himself much sooner than Pietro Paolo, for which reason, being now a licentiate, he determined to return to Rome, and said to Pietro Paolo—“ Brother, since I am now a licentiate, I

have resolved to return home. Peter Paul answered, "I prithee do not leave me here—oblige me by remaining the winter—then in the spring we will go together—thou in the mean time mayest learn some other science, by which means thou wilt not waste thy time." Bacciuolo willingly agreed to the proposal, and promised to wait for him. Bacciuolo, in order not to lose his time, went to the professor, and said, "Sir, having made up my mind to remain with my friend and relation, I would be glad if it pleased you to teach me some noble science during my stay." The professor answered, "that he would most willingly do it. Chuse which science you prefer, and I will teach it you with pleasure." Bacciuolo then replied, "Worthy Sir, I would learn how to make love, and to set about it. The professor, smiling, answered, "This is a good joke, thou couldst not have hit on a science in which I am a greater adept. Now then go thy ways on Sunday morning to the church of the minor friars—there thou wilt see numbers of fine women assembled, and wilt be able to pitch upon some one that may take thy fancy. When thou hast selected the one, follow her until you find out where she lives—then return to me. This is the first part of my instructions." Bacciuolo

departed, and on the following Sunday, going to the church as he had been desired, and eyeing all the pretty women, for there were many, he saw one among them that pleased him much—she being very handsome and graceful. When she left the church, Bacciuolo took care to follow her close, and saw, and marked the house where she dwelt, not, however, without the lady perceiving that the young student had taken a fancy to her. Bacciuolo returned to the professor, and said I have done as you desired me, and I have seen one whom I like very much.” Upon which the professor said he was highly pleased, and smiled at Bacciuolo, seeing what species of science he was anxious to learn, and he said to him, “ Be sure you make a point of passing by her house, as it were carelessly, two or three times every day, and have your eyes about you, and take care that no one observes you looking at her, but enjoy as much as thou mayest the sight of her, and let her perceive that thou art in love with her ; then return to me. This is the second part of my instructions.” Bacciuolo left the professor, and cautiously began to walk to and fro before the lady’s house ; so that the lady perceived that he must certainly walk to and fro before the house, for the purpose of seeing her—she,

therefore, began to eye him ; insomuch that Bacciuolo began to bow most respectfully to her, and she returned the salutation several times, the which persuaded Bacciuolo that the lady did not dislike him. He, of course, reported the whole to the professor ; who answered, “ Well, I am pleased with this, and you have ruled yourself well hitherto. Now you must endeavour to find one of those female pedlars, that sell trinkets, purses, and such like in the streets of Bologna, and set her to make the lady acquainted with your passion, how much you are devoted to her, and that there is none you could prefer to her, and how happy you would be if she would lay upon you any commands, by which you could prove your devotion to her : thou wilt hear what she says to this, and thou wilt report it to me, and I will direct thy future conduct.” Bacciuolo immediately went out and found a pedlar perfectly well acquainted with her trade, and addressed her thus:—“ I wish you to do me a great kindness, and I will reward you handsomely.” The woman answered, “ I will obey your orders, for I have nothing to look to but to get money.” Bacciuolo gave her a crown-piece, and said, “ I wish you to go to-day to a house in a street called the Maccarella ; there lives a damsel, called the Lady Giovanna,

whom I love more than any other living creature ; and I wish you to get me into her good graces, and tell her I would gladly do any thing that might give her pleasure ; and say all the pretty coaxing things, which I am sure you can say on such occasions ; therefore I entreat you to exert your skill." The little old woman answered, " Rest assured, kind Signor, I will do my best, and find a favourable opportunity for the purpose." " Go, my good woman," said Bacciuolo, " and I will wait for you here." She immediately went forth with her little basket of trinkets, and went up to the lady, whom she found sitting at her door to breathe the cool air. Courtesying to her, she said, " Lady, are there any of these trinkets that you would like to have. Take whatever you please, lady," said she, and seated herself by the lady, shewing her some purses, looking-glasses, laces, and other little things ; after looking at all the wares, she noticed a purse, and said, " If I had money about me, I should willingly purchase that purse." The little woman cried, " La Ma'am, don't think about that, take it if it pleases you, for every thing in this basket is paid for." The lady was surprised to hear this, and said, " Good woman, what do you mean, what are you saying?" The little old

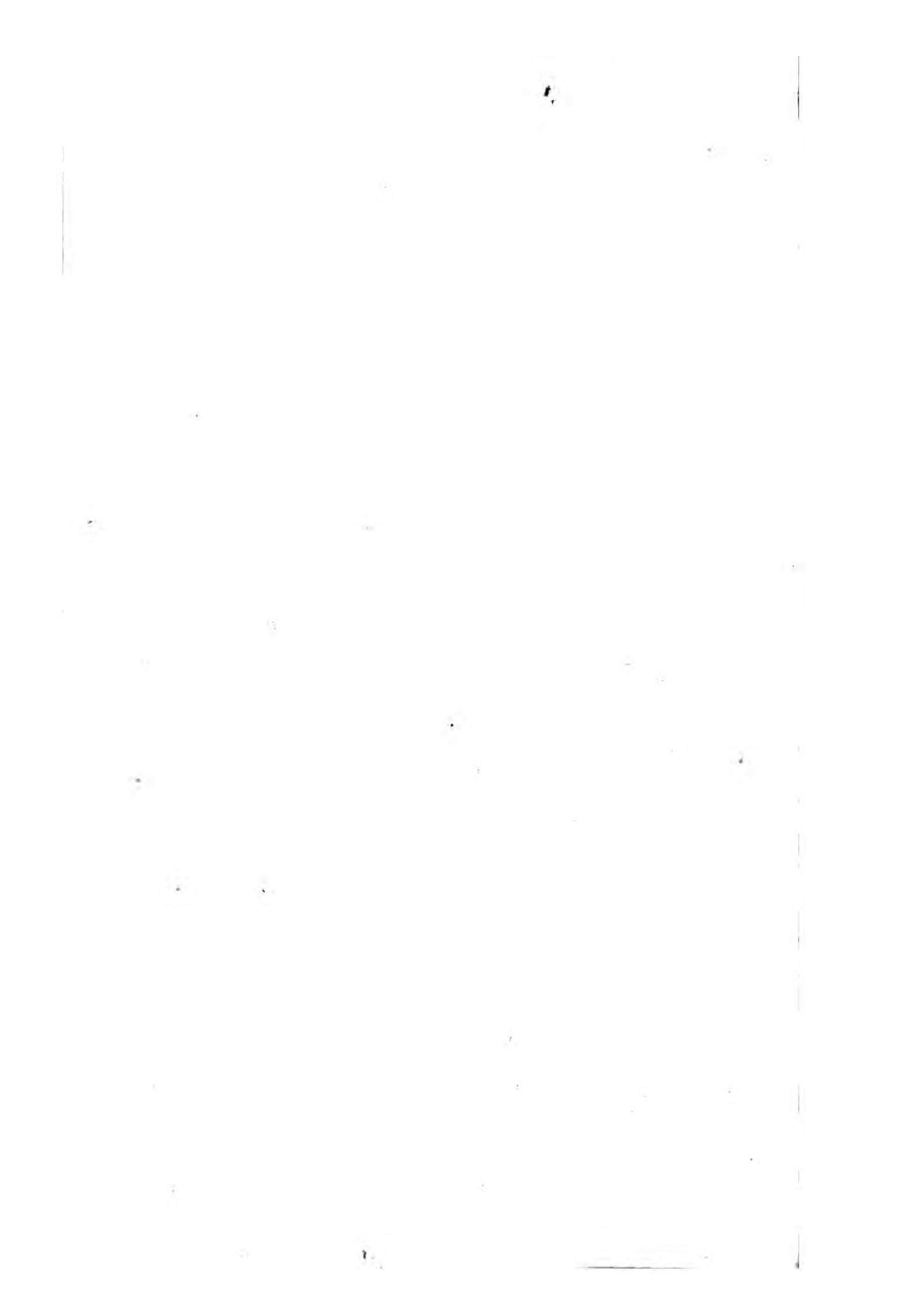
woman, with tears in her eyes, said, "Why, Madam, I will tell you. The truth is, a young gentleman, whose name is Bacciuolo, and who is desperately in love with you, has sent me. He says, you are the only creature on earth he loves, and that he would willingly do any thing to merit your regard, and that to obey any commands of yours would be the greatest happiness to him. Indeed, I fear he cannot live unless you allow him to speak to you. As for my part, I never saw so genteel a youth in my life." The lady on hearing these things blushed, and turning to the woman, said, "Were it not for my honour's sake, old woman, I would expose you to the world, and that would make you repent. Art thou not ashamed thou good-for-nothing old hag, to come on such an errand to a modest woman, a plague upon thee!"—and so saying the lady seized hold of a stick which lay behind the door to give her a beating, saying, "If ever thou comest here again, I will beat thee black and blue." Upon which the old woman quickly packed up her wares, and made off as fast as she could waddle, in a great fright, nor did she stop on the way till she got to Signor Bacciuolo.

When Bacciuolo saw her, he eagerly asked her how matters had gone with her—"Bad enough," said



Who am I?

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The Teacher taught.

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she, " I never was in such a fright. However, the case is, she will neither see nor hear you ; and had I not been pretty quick in making off, I should have had a sound beating. For my part, I will not go near her again, and I advise you to have nothing more to do with her."

Bacciuolo was quite broken-hearted at this intelligence, and went to report it to the professor, and related the whole transaction. " Be not alarmed, Bacciuolo, because the oak does not fall at the first stroke of the axe. There—go past the house this evening, and observe with what sort of an eye she views thee ; find out, by the kind of glance she casts upon thee, whether she be angry or no ; then come and tell me." Bacciuolo went forth towards the lady's house. When she saw him, she instantly called her maid, and said to her, " Go after that young man, and tell him to come to speak to me this evening, and not to fail." So the maid went to him, and told him that the Lady Giovanna desired he would come that evening to her, as she wished to speak to him. Bacciuolo was in a strange surprize, but answered that he would most willingly do so, and then immediately returned to the professor, and informed him of what had happened. The professor was a little staggered, for somehow

or other a suspicion struck him that it might be his own wife, and he thought to himself if it should!— And so it was in fact. “Well,” said he, “wilt thou go?”—“Certainly,” said Bacciuolo. “Well,” said the professor, “when you do go, go straight from here.” “Very well, so I will,” said Bacciuolo.

This lady was the wife of the professor, but Bacciuolo did not know that. The professor, however, began to feel uneasy; for, in the winter, he used to sleep at the college to lecture the students late in an evening, and his wife lived alone with her maid. “I would not,” said the professor, “that this fellow should learn to make love at my expense—but I will know further.”

Evening coming on, Bacciuolo came to him, saying, “Good Sir, I am going.”—“Well,” said the professor, “speed be with you, but be wise.” Bacciuolo said, “Leave me alone for that, you have not taught me for nothing,” and went away. He had put on a good cuirass, and provided himself with a stout rapier, and a stiletto in his girdle. When Bacciuolo was gone, the professor followed close at his heels, Bacciuolo little thinking whom he had got behind him. When arrived at the door, he tapped gently, and the lady herself instantly let him in, and the professor saw, to his astonishment, that it really

was his wife. "Oh! oh! I see," said he, "the fellow has made his progress at my cost;" and he began to think of killing him. He went back to the college, bought a sword and a stiletto, returned furiously to the house, fully determined to make Signor Bacciuolo pay for his instructions, and, reaching the door, he began to knock loudly. The lady was seated by the fire with Bacciuolo, and hearing the knocking, she immediately apprehended it might be her husband, and therefore concealed her lover under a heap of damp un-ironed linen which had been bundled up in a corner near the window. She then ran to the door, and demanded who was there. "Open the door, thou wicked woman," cried the professor from without, "and thou wilt soon know it." The lady opened the door, and, seeing him with a sword in his hand, exclaimed, "Good heavens! what means this, my dear Sir?"—"Thou well knowest whom thou hast in the house," he said. "Good heavens," cried the lady, "what is it you mean, are you mad? Look over the house," she said, "and if you find any one, I give you leave to execute your threats. How should I think of conducting myself otherwise than I always have done; beware, Sir, lest the evil spirit take possession of you, and lead you to destruction."

The husband, having got a candle, went looking about all over the house; in the cellar, behind and under all the casks, butts, and indeed in every corner: then ran up stairs like a madman; searched every part of the room, but the right one; under the bed; thrust his sword into every square inch of the bedding, yet could he not find any thing. The lady, who stuck close to him with a light in her hand, often repeated to him, "Good master! cross yourself, for assuredly the evil spirit is in you, and has tempted you to seek after what does not exist, for if I had the most distant thought of such wickedness, I would be the death of myself. Therefore, I do entreat you not to suffer yourself to be seduced by such wicked thoughts." Upon which the professor, unable to find the object of his search, and hearing what the lady had said, began to think he was mistaken in his suspicions, and so put out the light, and returned to the college.

The lady immediately brought out Bacciuolo from under the clothes, and lighted a large fire; put on it a famous fine capon to boil, and pledging each other merrily, the lady often saying, "You see, my good little man has not found us out;" and so they cheerfully spent some hours together. In the morning Bacciuolo went to the professor, and said, "Oh, my

good sir! I will make you laugh.”—“How is that?” said the professor. “Last night, after I had been a short time at the lady’s house, in came the husband, and though he hunted every where in search of me, he could not find me, for she had hidden me under a heap of damp linen, that were going to be dried; and the lady talked the poor fellow over so, that he soon went away; when we had a large capon for supper, drank some excellent wine, and had the best fun you can imagine, and I have promised to return again to night.” “Be sure,” said the professor, “when you go this evening, to let me know.” Bacciuolo answered he would, and left the professor.

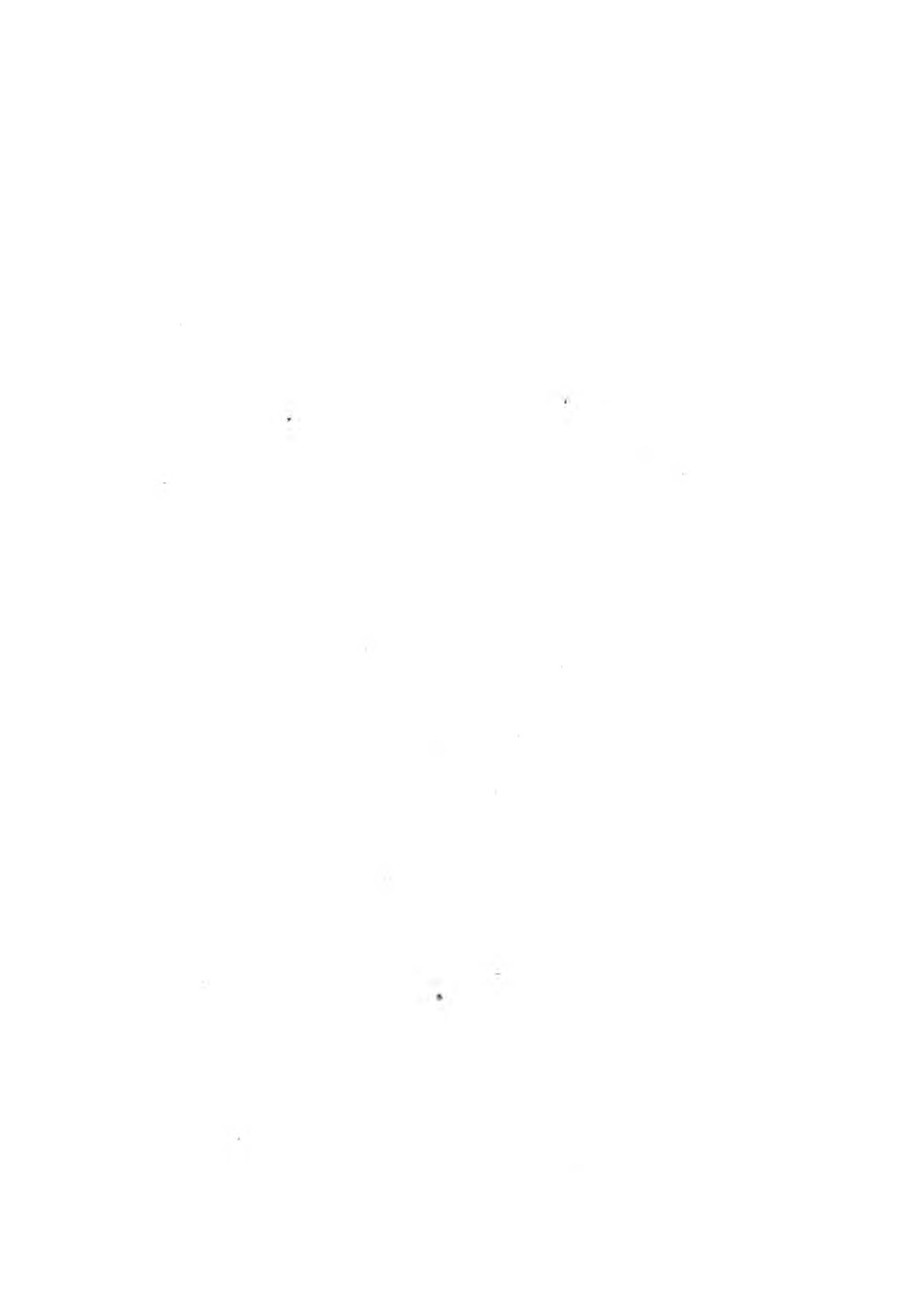
The professor meanwhile was in the utmost rage, and actually beside himself—so much so that he was not able to attend at the classes, he was so broken-hearted. However, he consoled himself with the idea that he should catch him at night. So he purchased a breast plate, a light armour, and with his cuirass, rapier, and stiletto, cut quite a martial figure. When the time came, Bacciuolo innocently went to the professor, and said, “I am going.” “Well,” said the professor, “go, and return TO-MORROW, and relate to me what may have happened.” “I will,” said Bacciuolo, and marched off to the lady’s house. The professor

put on his armour, and followed Bacciuolo close at his heels, and thought of overtaking him at the door. The lady, who was at the door on the watch, opened it quickly, let in her lover, and shut it again like lightning. When the professor reached the door he began to knock with all his might, making a tremendous noise. The lady in an instant put out the light, and made Bacciuolo slide behind her, opened the door, and clasping her arms round the neck of her husband, whirled him round and gave Bacciuolo an opportunity of slipping out; at the same time crying out, "Help! help! the man is mad, the man is mad;" still holding the poor gentleman tight round the waist. The neighbours, upon hearing this noise, ran out, and seeing the professor thus armed at all points, with his huge breast-plate, cuirass, helmet, long rapier, and stiletto, and the lady crying out, "Hold him, hold him, he is mad; he has cracked his brain with study;" thought it was really true, and that he had lost his wits. They began to say to him, "What means all this," good Signor? "go to bed and rest—do not torment yourself in this way." "How can I rest," he shouted, "when this wicked woman is harbouring a man in the house? I saw him go in with my own eyes." "Oh wretched woman that I



The Teacher Taught.

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am," cried the lady, "ask these neighbours, all, whether they have ever witnessed improper conduct in me." They all with one voice answered, both men and women—"Do not think, Signor, so base a thing, for never was a better woman born than the lady—more virtuous or more decorous." "How!" said the professor, "why I saw the man enter the house, and I am sure he is in it now."

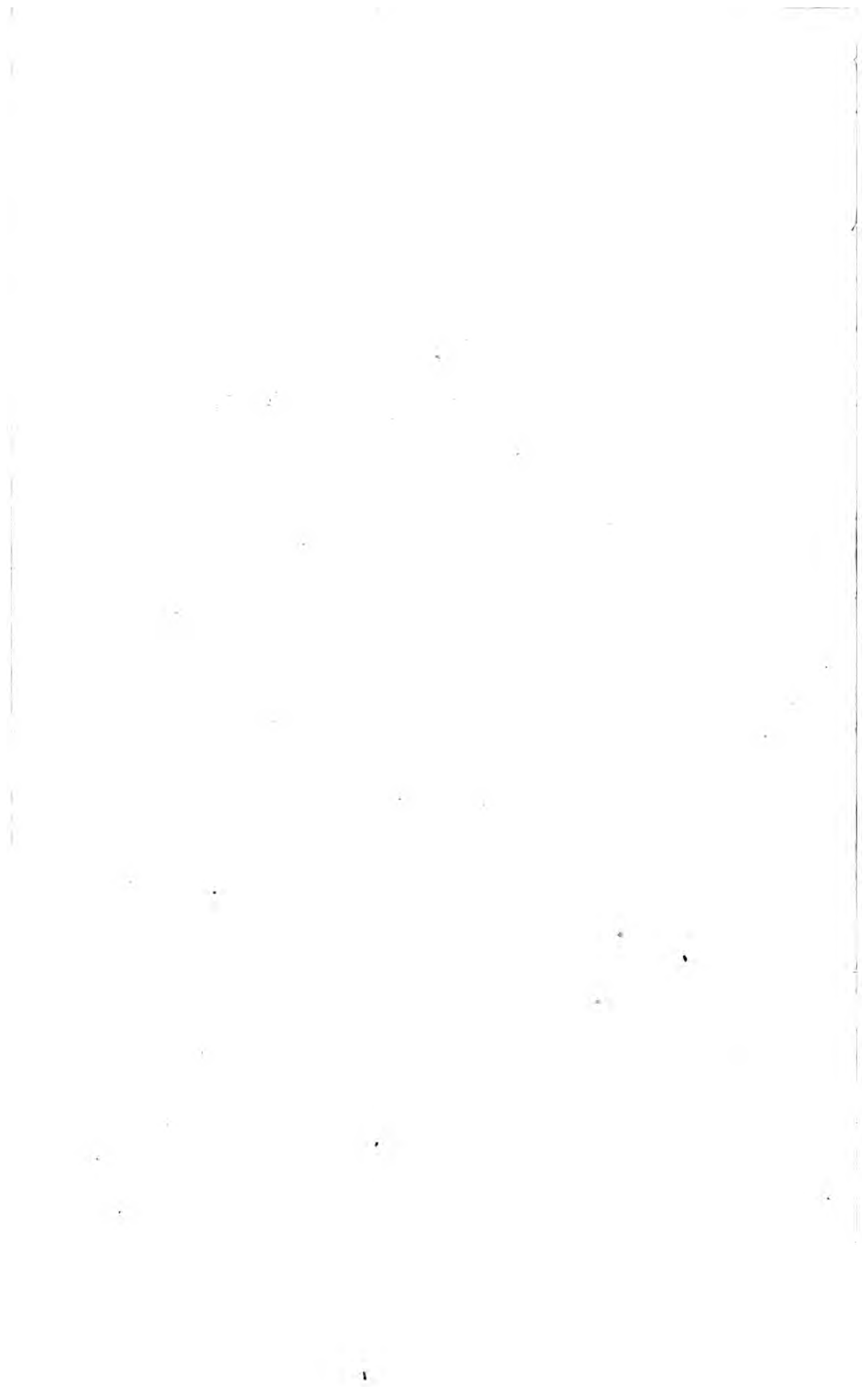
In the mean time two of the lady's brothers arrived, and when she saw them, she burst into tears, and said, "My dear brothers! this husband of mine is raving mad, and will have it that I have a man in the house, and wants to be the death of me, and you well know whether I am a woman likely to fall into such abominations." The brothers said to the armed philosopher, who foamed at the mouth with rage, "We marvel much, Sir, that you should dare suspect a sister of ours of such an act, and wonder what can make you dream of such a thing, having lived with her so long." "I tell you," said the professor, "that there *is* a man in the house, and I have SEEN him." "Well!" said the brothers, "let us hunt him out, and if he is found here, we will give her such a lesson as shall make you full amends." One of the brothers drew the lady aside, and said, "Hast thou in truth really got

any one in the house?" "Alas!" said the lady, "heaven forbid! may I die before I harbour such a thought as no woman of our family was ever guilty of. Art thou not ashamed to put such a question?" Upon which the brother felt quite happy, and the three went up to search. The professor directly made for the damp linen, pulled them about, and stabbed them through and through in every direction, hardly leaving an inch through which he did not stick his sword, and the while taunting and insulting Bacciuolo as if he had actually been under them. "Well," said the lady, "did I not tell you he was mad? see how he spoils the linen: thou hast not been at the trouble of getting them up—that is very clear." The brothers then began to think he was truly mad, and after seeking every where, and not finding any one, one brother said, "This fellow is certainly mad." The other, then said, "Signor, in truth you do an infamous injustice to this sister of ours, in giving her so vile a character." But the professor, who well knew how matters stood, being in a rage, began to quarrel violently with them, and kept his naked sword in his hand. So each of them took a good stick, and being determined to administer a little wholesome correction, they laid them about the poor professor



The Teacher taught.

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most unmercifully, and when they had nearly broken the sticks on his back, they bound him up for a madman, telling every body that he had cracked his brain by intense study, and so they tied him up all night. In the morning they sent for the doctor, who ordered him to be put to bed by a fire, and desired that he should not speak to any one, or any one to him, and that particular attention should be paid to his diet, till he recovered his senses.

The news that the Signor had gone mad soon spread all over Bologna; every body was much concerned. Some said, "I suspected it would be so, for he could not attend the lectures the other day." Others said, "I thought it would be so, I observed him so materially altered of late." The report was universally credited, and many went to see him. Bacciuolo unacquainted with what had taken place, went in the morning to the college, with the intention of telling the professor of his adventure; but on reaching the place, he was told how the Signor had become mad. Bacciuolo wondered at this, and was very sorry for it, and went to see him with the rest, and being arrived at the house, Bacciuolo began to be staggered, and almost fainted, seeing how things stood; but in order to prevent any one noticing how affected he was, he went in with them, and on

reaching the apartment, he saw the Signor all over bruises, and chained to the bed. All the students began to condole with him, and express their sorrow at seeing him in such a state. Bacciuolo's turn coming, he said, " Good Signor, I am as much grieved at your situation, as though you were my father; and if I can do any thing to relieve you, I pray you deal with me as if I were your son." Upon which the professor answered, " Bacciuolo, Bacciuolo, I pray thee go in peace, for thou hast learned much at my cost." The lady prevented farther discourse, by saying, " Do not mind him, for he has lost his wits, and does not know what he says." Bacciuolo then departed, and came to Paolo, and said, " Brother, Heaven guard thee, for I have learned so much, that nothing remains for me to learn; therefore will I return back to my home as fast as my legs can carry me."

THE UNEXPECTED REPLY.

'TIS now a few years since there were two eminent and worthy lawyers, the one was named Alano, and the other Piero; in fact, there were not in Christendom two greater men than these two, who were invariably in opposition to one another. Alano, however, always came off conqueror, being by much the greatest rhetorician then known, and one whose principles were of a sounder kind than those of Piero, who was something of a heretic, and would often have inflicted a severe blow on religion, had it not ever been defended by Alano, who knocked down all his arguments. Alano determined to go to Rome to visit the holy relics,—the pope, and his court: in consequence, taking several servants with him, clothes, and other baggage, he departed for Rome and visited the pope and his court; observed its elegance and grandeur, and wondered much, considering that it ought to be the foun-

dation of Christianity and holy faith, at seeing it so corrupted and full of simony. He was so ashamed of this, he determined to forsake the world and give himself up entirely to the service of his Maker. He therefore departed from Rome with all his servants, and when he came near Saint Chirico of Rosana, he told them to go forward towards the inn, and leave him to himself. When Alano saw them gone forward, he turned towards the mountain and galloped off, and arrived in the evening at a shepherd's cottage. Alano dismounted, and stopped that night with him; the next morning he said to the shepherd, "I will leave thee my clothes and my horse, and do thou give me thine." The shepherd thought he was in jest, and said, "Sir, I have entertained you in the best manner I am able; I pray you do not mock me." Messer Alano stripped off his clothes, and made the shepherd do the same, which he put on; left him his horse and his clothes; put on the shepherd's shoes; took his cash and stick, and set forward at a venture. His servants perceiving he did not come, after looking out for him, began to think that as it was rather an unsafe road, that he might have been robbed and murdered; and, after remaining a day or two, returned to Paris.

Alano, when he had left the shepherd, travelling on, arrived at an abbey at Maremma, and, begging some bread, the abbot asked him if he would stay and live with him. Alano answered, that he would willingly do so. "What can you do?" said the abbot. "Sir," replied Alano, "I shall do whatever you bid me." The abbot thought that he seemed a good fellow, and took him into the house, and began by sending him to fetch wood. He behaved so well, that all who were in the abbey were delighted with him, for he would willingly do any thing they asked him; neither did he seem ashamed nor reluctant. In consequence of this good behaviour, the abbot gave him a place in the monastery, and called him Don Beneditto; the life he used to lead was to fast four days in the week; never undress, and spend great part of the night in prayer; and whatever might be said or done to him, he never complained, but praised the Lord. Thus had he determined to live and serve his Maker, so that the abbot loved him extremely.

His servants, on their return to Paris, having given it out that he was dead, every body lamented the loss of so great a man, and so able a lawyer. Now, Messer Giulio Piero hearing that

Messer Alano was dead, rejoiced much at it. "Now," said he, "I shall be able to compass that which I have long meditated." So he prepared himself and went to Rome, and there proposed, in open consistory, a question which was greatly injurious to our faith; and, by his craft, endeavoured to introduce heresy in our church. Upon which the pope called the college of cardinals together, where it was determined to send for all the greatest men in Italy to attend a consistory, for the purpose of answering the questions which Messer Giulio Piero had proposed against our faith. Of course, all the bishops, abbots, and other great prelates who were canonists, were summoned to the court. Among others, this very abbot with whom Alano was living was called upon, and he prepared himself for his departure. Alano, being informed of the business he was going upon, entreated the abbot to let him go with him. "What would you do there?" said the abbot; "you, who do not even know how to read, what would you do there among all the greatest men of the church? They will speak nothing but Latin, so that thou wilt not understand one word." "I shall at least see the pope," answered Alano; "whom I never yet beheld, nor do I know what

sort of a thing he be." The abbot, perceiving how earnestly he wished it, said, " Well, I will allow thee to come with me, but wilt thou know how to ride?" " Yes, sir," replied Alano. At the proper time the abbot departed, and Alano with him. Being arrived at Rome, and the day being fixed when the consistory was to meet, upon hearing that any one might go and hear what was discussed, Messer Alano begged the abbot most solemnly to allow him to go to the said consistory. " Art thou beside thyself?" said the abbot; " how dost thou think I could take thee there, where the pope, cardinals, and all the greatest lords are?" " I will get under your cloak," said Alano; " then I shall not be seen, for I am very short, as well as very thin." " Take care," said the abbot, " the porter and servants do not give thee a good beating." " Let me alone for that," said Alano; " I warrant I'll take care of myself." When the abbot went in, there being a great crowd, Alano popped under the abbot's cloak, and went in with the rest. The abbot took his proper seat with the other abbots. Alano stood between his legs under the abbot's cloak, and peeped through the arm-hole of his robe, attentively listening to hear the question proposed. A short time after, Piero entered,

mounted the tribune in presence of the pope, cardinals, and all the others, and proposed his question, which he argued with his usual artfulness, Alano immediately recognised him, and seeing that no one answered him, or argued with him, he popped his head through the arm-hole of the abbot's cloak, and cried out "*Guibe.*" The abbot raised his hand, and gave him a good box on the ear, saying, "Hold your tongue, and the devil take you! wilt thou shame me?" Of course, all those near looked at one another with wonder, saying, "Whence came that voice?" A few minutes afterwards, Alano put out his head again, and said, "*Hear me, holy father!*" which made the abbot much ashamed and confused; for every one stared at him, and cried out, "Who is that you have got under your cloak?" The abbot said it was one of his lay brothers, who was insane. Upon which they abused him, and said, "What! do you bring a madman into the consistory?" and the guards came forth to beat and drive him away. Alano, fearing he should get some hard blows, made off from under the abbot's cloak; and rushing in among the bishops and cardinals, made his way till he got at the feet of the pope, which caused a burst of laughter among them all,



The unexpected Reply.

p. 22.

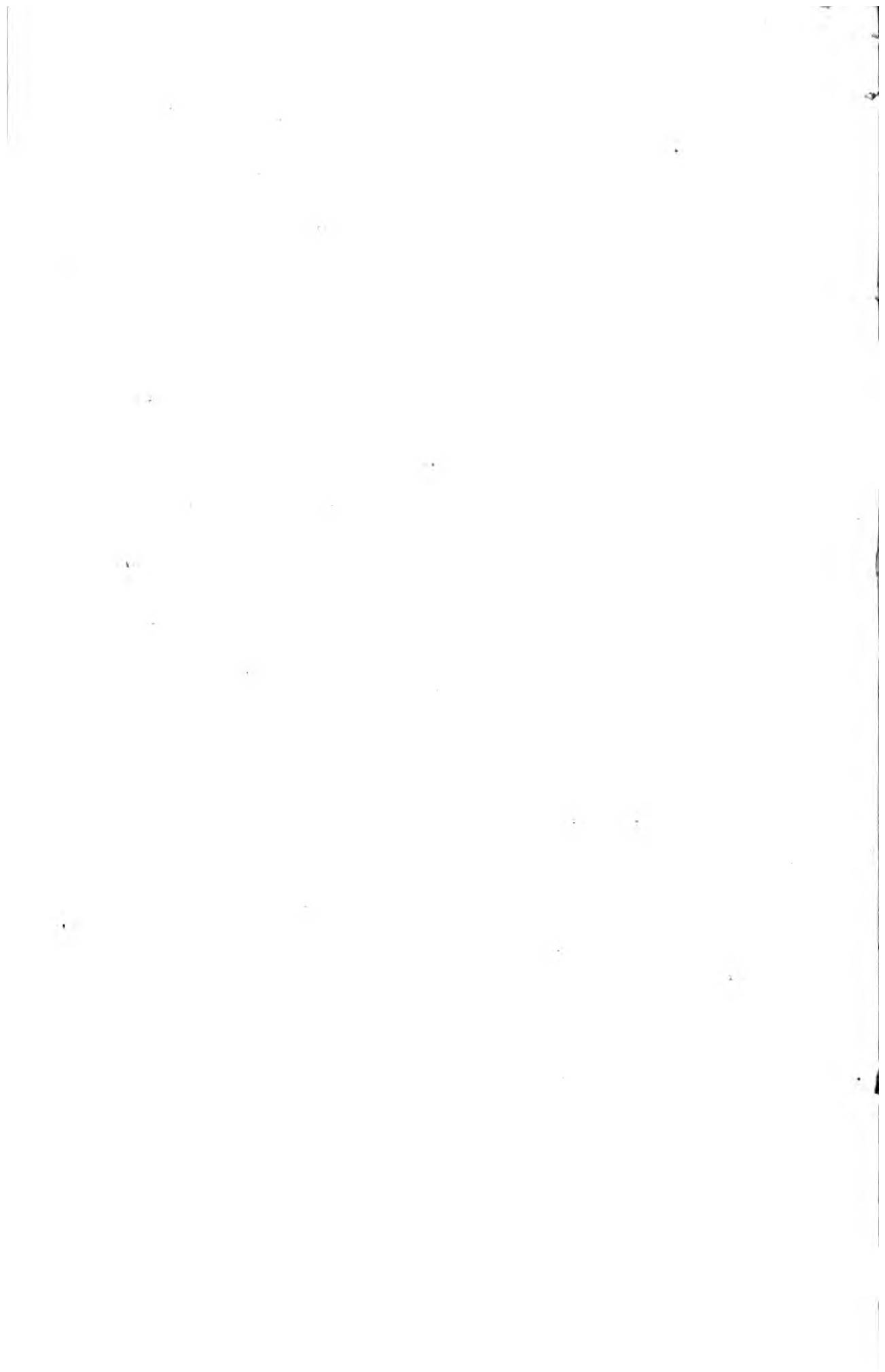


throughout the consistory. The abbot was on the point of being turned out, for having brought the fellow there, but Alano being at the pope's feet, he entreated he might be allowed to give his opinion on the case, and the pope granted his petition. Alano then mounted the tribune with alacrity, and all were gaping to hear what the madman would say. Alano opened his mouth, and began by recapitulating all his opponent had advanced, and separately answered the different parts of the question with a mild and natural, but vigorous eloquence. The whole college were in the utmost astonishment at hearing the elegant Latin he spoke, and the fine arguments which he produced against his adversary. Every one cried out, "Why, truly, this is the Lamb of God that appears to us." The pope hearing his eloquence, thanked heaven at every instant. Alano having thus confuted Piero in every argument, the latter was sorely vexed and humbled, and said, "Truly thou art the spirit of Messer Alano, or that of the devil himself." Alano answered, "I am the very Alano who many times have put to flight your conceit; but thou! thou art the true malignant spirit who wishest to fill our church with heresy." Piero replied, "Indeed, if I had known thou hadst been alive, I should never

have ventured here." The pope became anxious to know who this Alano was, and called the abbot to know how he came by this man. "Most holy father!" said the abbot, "I have had him with me a long time, and I really thought he could not even read, nor have I ever found any man possessed of so much humility as he is. He is always employed in cutting and bringing home fire-wood; sweeping the rooms; making beds; attending the sick, and taking care of the horses. He always appeared to me a very simple fellow."

The pope hearing what a holy and virtuous life he led, and what he had formerly been, wished to create him cardinal, and paid him every mark of honour, saying to him, "Had it not been for thee, our church must have suffered serious injury, therefore I wish thee to remain at our court." Alano replied, "Most holy father, I wish to live and die in this solitary life, and never more return to the world. Nay, I mean to return with my good abbot to his abbey, and follow up the life I have entered upon, and thus serve God." The abbot fell on his knees, praying him to pardon him, for he had not known him, and particularly for the box on the ear which he had given him. Messer Alano said, "There is no occasion for such a thing; the

father has an undoubted right to chastise his child." They afterwards took leave of his holiness and the cardinals, and returned to the abbey. The abbot ever after paid him the greatest respect, and he lived with him a holy life. He compiled and wrote several works on religion, and whilst he lived here, conducted himself in so virtuous a manner as to ensure to himself an eternal life hereafter.



WHO AM I?

A PARTY of young men being at supper, one Sunday, in the city of Florence, at a gentleman's house whose name was Tommaso de Pecori, a respectable, honorable, and good-humoured man, who delighted in pleasant society. This party being retired after supper by a cheerful fire, were talking merrily together, as people who meet on such occasions are apt to do:—"How happens it," said one of them, "that Manetto Ammannotini would not join us to night; yet we all asked him, and still he obstinately refused to come?" This Manetto was by trade a carver in ebony, and kept a shop in St. John's Place—a clever fellow in his trade; he had an agreeable person, was of a merry turn of mind, and about thirty-five years of age. Being tall, and rather corpulent, he was called Grasso, and was always accustomed to be of the party of jovial good fellows above-mentioned, who made themselves merry and comfortable; but

in the present instance, whether from whim or caprice, the said Manetto would not meet them. The party, however, talking the matter over, could not guess at the reason, and concluding it to be a whim, were a little piqued at it. He, who had spoken first, said, "Why should we not play him a trick, to cure him of these fancies for the future?" Another said, "But what trick could we put upon him, except make him stand a treat, or some such thing?"

In the party was one whose name was Philip of Brunelesco; this person, who was well acquainted with Grasso, and knew his situation, began to think with himself how they could play him a trick, and, ruminating for some time, he at last said, for he was a clever fellow, "Gentlemen, if you like, and if I can find in my heart to do it, we will play off a hoax on this Grasso, which will greatly divert us: what I think we must do, is to persuade him that he is transformed, and not the same Grasso, but some other person." The others answered, "But that is certainly not possible." Upon which, Philip explained the plan he meant to pursue; as he was a shrewd fellow, he persuaded them it was very possible; so they all agreed on the means and plan to be pursued by each of them, in order to prove

to Grasso that he was no other than one Matteo, one of the party. They proceeded, next night, in the following manner: it was agreed that Philip, who was more intimate with Grasso than either of the others, should go, about the time that shopkeepers generally shut up, to Grasso's shop. When he had been talking to Grasso some time, there came in, as it had been previously settled, a boy in great haste, who asked if Mr. Philip of Brunellesco was there. Philip coming forward, said he was, and that he himself was the man, and asked him what he wanted. To which the boy answered, "You must come home immediately, Sir, for, about two hours ago, your mother met with an accident, and is almost dead, therefore, hasten away with me." Philip, pretending to be very much alarmed and grieved, cried out, "Good heaven defend me!" and took leave of Grasso. Grasso, being his friend, said, "I will go with you, if I can be of any service to you; there are cases in which friends should not hold back." Philip thanked him, and said, "I do not wish that you should come now, but should any thing be wanting I will send you word to come." Philip set off as if going homewards, but, turning round a corner of the street, he went into Grasso's house,

facing the church of Santa Reparata, and opening the door with a picklock, went in and fastened the door, so that no one might enter. Grasso's mother had gone, a few days before, to a little cottage she possessed at Polirrosa, in order to wash the linen, and was expected home hourly. Grasso, after having shut up the shop, went walking up and down the Piazza of San Giovanni as he was accustomed to do, still thinking of his friend's misfortune. It being then night, he thought to himself that Philip would not be in need of any assistance as he had not sent for him, so he determined to go home, and, arriving at the door, he ascended the two steps before it, tried to open the door as usual, and being unable to do so, he perceived the door was locked in the inside; therefore, knocking, he cried out aloud, "Open the door!" thinking his mother had returned home, and had fastened the door for some reason or other, or had done it inadvertently. Philip, who was within, imitating Grasso's voice, said, "*Who is there?*" Grasso said, "Open the door!" Philip pretended as if he thought he who knocked was the identical Matteo, whom they wanted Grasso to believe himself to be; and still assuming the character of Grasso, said, "Prithee,

Matteo, go thy ways, for I am in much anxiety, for as I was in the shop talking to Philip, a boy came running to him, and told him his mother was nearly dead, therefore you see I am sadly distressed:" then turning round, he said, " Good mother Giovanni, (for thus Grasso's mother was called) do let me have some supper, for it is a shame ; you were to have been home two days ago, instead of which you arrive just at this time of the night:" thus he went on chiding, and imitating Grasso's voice. Grasso hearing this scolding, and it seeming to him to be his own voice, said to himself, " What the devil is all this, and who is he that is up there, is it I?—He says Philip was at his shop when he was told that his mother was ill, and moreover he is scolding Mother Giovanni—certainly I have lost my recollection :"—thus saying, as he went down the steps to holla up at the windows, there came up, as had been previously settled, one whose name was Donatello, a stone-mason, a great friend of Grasso, who approaching him in the dark, said, " Good night, Matteo, are you going to see Grasso—he is just gone home :—" and so saying, he left him. Grasso, if he was surprised at first when Donatello called him Matteo, was now thunder-struck, and withdrew in the Piazza of San Giovanni,

saying to himself, "I will walk about here till some one shall pass, and, knowing me, will tell me who I really am." Thus sauntering, in the greatest agitation of mind, he was met, according to agreement, by four officers of the police, a messenger, and with them a man to whom that Matteo, whom Grasso began to think himself, owed money. This man, accosting Grasso, turned to the officers and said, "Take him, this is Matteo, this is my creditor. You see I have followed thee up close. I have caught thee at last." The officers then began to seize him, and lead him away. Grasso, turning to the man who had just arrested him, said, "What have I to do with thee; you have mistaken your man; I am not he you take me to be; I am Grasso, the carver in ebony; I am not Matteo, nor do I know who your Matteo is." He was on the point of following up his words with a few hard blows, but they seized him by the arms, and held him tight. The creditor coming forward, and looking at him from head to foot, said, "What! you not Matteo! do I not know Matteo? Matteo, my debtor! don't I know who Grasso the carver is? I have thy name in my books, and have had a writ against thee this twelvemonth; so like a rogue, thou now deniest being Matteo, but an

alias will not pay me my debt; take him away, take him away, we shall soon see if thou art Matteo." Thus abusing him, they led him to prison, and as it was supper-time, they met no one on their way. Being arrived, the gaol-keeper took down the captive under the name of Matteo, and confined him among the other prisoners, who having heard his name mentioned, though without knowing him, called out, "Good night, Matteo." Grasso, hearing himself so named by every one of them, exclaimed, "What can this mean?" and really began to think that he certainly must be Matteo. The prisoners said, "Thou seest we are going to supper, take a little with us, and put off care till to-morrow." Grasso supped with them, and when supper was over, one of them gave him part of his birth, saying, "Matteo, for this night make what shift you can here, then, to-morrow morning, if you can pay your debt, well and good, if not thou must send home for a few bed-clothes." Grasso thanked him and laid himself down to rest, and began to think to himself what he should do if from Grasso he were really turned to Matteo; "Which," said he to himself, "I really think must be the case, from the different proofs I have had. If I send home to my mother, and Grasso should be

in my house, they will laugh at me, and say I am mad, and yet methinks I am really Grasso." And thus he remained all night in suspense, not knowing whether he was Grasso or Matteo, and scarcely could he get a wink of sleep. In the morning he rose and placed himself at a small grated window of the prison, in hopes that some one would pass that knew him; remaining thus, a young man called Giovanni Francesco Rucellai, who was one of the party at supper when the conspiracy was formed, and who was well acquainted with Grasso, for this man Grasso was about making a dressing-table intended for a lady, a friend of Giovanni's, who, the very day before, had been in Grasso's shop to press him to finish the work, which the carver had promised should be finished, at farthest, in four days. This person having entered a shop next the prison, popped his head out at the door that faced the grated window of the prison, which in those times was on the ground floor, and at which window Grasso stood, who having seen Giovanni, began to grin and nod at him. Giovanni stared at him, as if he had never seen him before, and said, "What art thou grinning at, friend?" It appearing to Grasso, that the man did not know him, he said, "Oh! at

nothing particular, but pray do you know one Grasso, that lives at the Piazza san Giovanni, just behind yonder place, who makes inlaid works?" "Do I know him?" said Giovanni, "don't I? why he is one of my best friends, and I am just going to him about a little job he is about for me." "Well," said Grasso, "since you are going there about your own affair, do me the favor to tell him, a friend of his is taken into custody, and beg of him, as an act of friendship, to come and speak to him." Giovanni, looking at him, and scarcely able to keep his countenance, said, "I will do it with pleasure;" and went away about his business. Grasso still remaining at the little window, said to himself, "Now I may be quite sure that I am no longer Grasso, but that I am changed to Matteo; what cursed ill fate is mine! If I speak of this matter, I shall be looked upon as a madman; and all the boys will run after me, and if I do not clear it up, a hundred blunders, such as happened to me last night, will occur again; so that either way I am in a terrible hobble: but let us see whether Grasso will come, for if he comes, I shall tell him all about it." Long did he wait in expectation, but as Grasso never came, he withdrew from the window, to make room for one of the prisoners; his

eyes at first cast down to the ground, and then looking up to heaven, with his hands clasped together. At that time, there was in prison a judge, whose name, through respect, we shall not mention, who was there for debt. This judge, although he did not know Grasso, seeing him so very disconsolate, tried every means to comfort him, and said, "Matteo, you are as down-hearted as if you were going to be hanged to-morrow morning; yet, according to what I hear, yours is but a small debt; you should not give yourself up thus to grief. Why don't you send to some friend or relation, and try to pay the money, or settle the business in some way or other, so that you may get out of prison, and not vex yourself in this manner?" Grasso, finding that he so kindly endeavoured to comfort him, determined to tell him the whole circumstance, and having drawn him into a corner of the prison, said, "Sir, although you may not know me, I know you well, and know that you are a very worthy man, therefore have I made up my mind to tell you the cause of my unhappiness, lest you should think that such a trifling debt would make me uneasy. No! I have much greater reason for sorrow;" and then he began to tell him the whole story, from beginning to end, weeping almost all

the while, and requested two things of him, the one that he would not mention the matter to any living soul; and next, that he would give him some advice, or point out some way to extricate him from so perplexing a situation; adding, "I know, Sir, you have read a great deal, and many authors who have written most extraordinary things, but have you ever heard of such a case as this!"

The worthy man having heard him, and considering the affair, it struck him it must be one of these two things, either that the poor man had lost his senses, or that this was a hoax, as it certainly was; and he immediately answered, he had read many similar things, and that to become another person was no uncommon occurrence, and by no means wonderful. "Now, then," said Grasso, "pray tell me if I am become Matteo?" "Of course," said the judge, "he must have become Grasso." "Well," said Grasso, "if it be so, I should like to see him, to quiet my mind." Whilst they were thus conversing, it being nearly the hour of vespers, two brothers of this Matteo came to the prison and asked for the turnkey, and inquired whether a brother of theirs, by name Matteo, was in the prison, and for what sum he had been arrested, because, being his brother, they had come

to pay the debt for him, and to take him away." The turnkey, who was well acquainted with the plot, being a friend of Tommasso Pecori, answered, "There was such a person; and," pretending to turn over the leaves of the book, said, "the debt is so much, due to so and so." "Well," said they, "we wish to speak to him, then we will settle every thing for him;" and going to the prison, they desired one of the prisoners, who stood at the grating, to tell Matteo that two of his brothers were here, who were come to take him out of prison. The fellow having delivered his message, Grasso came to the little window, and bowed to them. The eldest of the brothers thus addressed him, "Thou knowest, Matteo, how often we have admonished thee in respect to thy bad goings on: thou art every day getting in debt with some person or other, and never do you pay any one, because of the money you are spending in gambling, and what not, by which means thou art always left without a penny; and now that thou art in gaol, thou thinkest we have means to pay for thee, who hast consumed, within a short space, a treasure of money in all kinds of follies. Therefore, now we do say, that were it not for our honour's sake, and on account of thy mother, we would leave thee here

long enough, that thou mightest learn better ways ; but, for this once, we have determined to pay thy debt and get thee out of this dungeon, but if ever you get into such a scrape again you shall get out of it as you may. In order that we may not be seen coming from hence in the day-time, we will call this evening for thee, when there are fewer people about, in order to prevent folks from knowing our affairs, and being made to blush at this misconduct." Grasso turned to him that spoke to him, and with great humility and apparent contrition, assured him, that, for the future, he should conduct himself more prudently, and would avoid the follies he had hitherto been guilty of, and never more disgrace them ; and prayed them, for heaven's sake, when the hour should come, that they would call and fetch him away. They promised to do so, and left him. He retired from the window, and said to the judge, " This is droll enough ; here have been two brothers of Matteo, of that Matteo which I am changed to, and they have spoken to me as if to Matteo ; they have chid me much, and say they will come for me in the evening, and take me from hence ; now, if they take me from this place, where in the world shall I go ? Home I must not go, for if Grasso should be there, what

shall I say? I shall be taken for a maniac; and methinks he must be there, otherwise my mother would have inquired after me; whereas, having him with her, she does not perceive the mistake." The judge had much ado to refrain from laughter, and enjoyed the joke; and said to him, "Don't go home, but go with those who call themselves your brothers; see where they take you, and what they do with you." While they were thus talking, evening drew on, and the brothers came, pretending as if they had settled the debt and costs. The gaol-keeper arose with the keys of the prison in his hand, and said, "Which of you is Matteo?" Grasso, stepping forward, said, "'Tis I." The keeper looked at him, and said, "These, thy brothers, have paid your debt for you; therefore, you are now free;" and having opened the prison door, said, "go thy ways." Grasso came out, and it being nearly dark, went with the two brothers, who lived at Santa Felicita, at the rising of the hill San Giorgio.

Being arrived at home they went with him into a room on the ground floor. "Remain here," said they, "till supper time, as we would not let your mother see you, to distress her." One of them remained with him, and they sat down by the

fire before the table already prepared. The other went to the curate of St. Feliscita, a good worthy man, and said to him, "I come to you, reverend Sir, with that confidence due to you. It is true we are three brothers, among which is one whose name is Matteo, who, yesterday, on account of some debt, was taken to prison, and has taken it so much to heart that we really think he is losing his senses, and going mad. In every thing he appears Matteo as heretofore, except in one thing, that is, he has taken it into his head that he is become another man than Matteo. Did you ever hear of such as him? he pretends that he is a certain Grasso, a carver, well known to him, who has a shop behind San Giovanni, and his own home is St. Mario del Fiore, and no one can get this out of his noddle; so that we have got him out of prison, brought him here, and put him into a room to conceal him, lest these absurd notions should be made public: therefore, to conclude, we beg of you, for charity sake, that you would kindly come to our house to speak to him, and endeavour to cure him of this extraordinary hallucination: and, indeed, we shall feel under the greatest obligation to you for it." The priest was a good-natured soul, and answered, that he most willingly would

do it, and in speaking with him he said he should soon discover the state of the case, and by talking seriously to him, would get this maggot out of his head. He went home with them, and when arrived where Grasso was, he entered the room when he was busy with his own thoughts. Grasso no sooner saw him, than he rose ; the Priest said, " Good night, Matteo." " Good night to you," said Grasso, " what brings you this way?" " I am come to spend a little time with thee," said the Priest, and having taken a seat, " Sit by me," said he, " and I will tell thee my mind." Grasso obeyed him, and sat down. " Now," said the Priest, " I'll tell you the reason, Matteo, why I came ; it is first, because I have heard, and much it grieves me, that yesterday thou wert taken to prison on account of some debt : and, in the second place, that thou hast felt, and still feelest the greatest distress, which has almost driven thee mad ; and among other nonsense of that kind, that thou wilt not believe but that thou art no longer Matteo, and insistest that thou art another person, called Grasso, the carver. Thou art much to blame to let such a trifling thing so distress you as almost to make you mad, and suffer yourself to be laughed at to your great discredit. In truth, Matteo, I will not have

you do so, and I do desire that, for the love of me, thou wouldst promise me to give up this folly, and attend to thy business as an honourable man, like other people, by which means thou wilt delight thy brothers; for, if this circumstance were to be known, it would be said thou hadst lost thy intellect, and although thou mightest perfectly recover, yet it would ever be thought that thou wert still subject to fits of insanity, and thou wouldst be a lost man; therefore, to end the matter, determine now to be a man, not a simpleton, and give over all this nonsense; whether thou be Grasso or not Grasso, do as I advise you, for I counsel thee for thy good." Thus saying, he smiled kindly at him. Grasso having heard how benevolently he admonished him, not doubting but he must be Matteo, answered him directly, "That he certainly was disposed to do whatever he could to obey him," and he promised that, hereafter, he would exert himself, and endeavour not to think of his being any thing but Matteo, as he was; but that he wanted him to do him a very great favour, if it was possible, and this was, that he wished very much indeed to speak to that said Grasso, so as to convince himself of his own identity: to which the Priest answered, "This is all nonsense and much

against your interest; I see thou hast still this whimsy in thy head." "What the devil have you to do with the fellow? what do you want with that Grasso, that you should eternally be talking of him? the more you make this thing public the worse it will be for you;" and so much did he talk to him, that he at last prevailed on him to give up the idea of seeing him, and having left him, he told the brothers what he had said and done, and what Matteo had promised: thus taking leave of them, he made the best of his way to the church.

While the Priest had remained with Matteo, Philip of Brunelesco had come secretly into another room, much to his amusement. He heard the whole account from one of the brothers, of his going out of the prison—their conversation in their way home, and the rest: after which, putting a small powder in a cup, he said to one of the brothers, contrive, while you are at supper, to give him this in a glass of wine, or any thing else you can, so that he may not notice it. This is an opiate, which will set him so fast asleep, that though you mumbled and tumbled him ever-so-much, he would not wake for several hours; and I will be with you by five o'clock, and we will settle the rest of the business. The brothers having returned to the

room, they sat down with him to supper, and it was already three o'clock. Thus, as they supped, they gave him the potion unnoticed by him; the which so perfectly stupified him, that he was unable to keep his eyes open. The brothers then said to him, "Matteo, thou seemest to be dead asleep, thou must have had little sleep last night:" to which Grasso replied, "I protest, in the whole course of my life, I never felt so sleepy; I feel as if I had not slept for a whole month, therefore I think I had better go to bed;" and he began to undress, but scarcely was he able to pull off his shoes and stockings, and get into bed. No sooner did he get into bed but he fell fast asleep, and snored like a pig.

At the hour previously fixed upon, Philipo di Brunelesco entered the room where he was, with six of his companions, and seeing him fast asleep, they took him and placed him on a sort of litter, with all his clothes, and carried him home. No one being at home, as it happened that his mother had not returned, they took him to his bed and placed him in it; they put his clothes where he was in the habit of depositing them, but instead of laying him at the head of the bed, they placed his head at the foot. This being done, they took the

key of the shop that was hanging on a nail in the room, and they marched into the shop, where they took all the tools he used to work with, and displaced them all from their usual places; turned the sharp edges of the planes topsy-turvy; the hammers on their wrong side; the saws, and, in short, every corner of his shop was ransacked and all things turned upside-down. The shop looked as if the devil and all his imps had been at work. Having locked the shop door, they carried the key to Grasso's room, and shutting the door after them, each of them went home to bed. Grasso, in a deep sleep from the effect of the opium, slept on the whole night without ever waking. In the morning, at the ringing of Santa Maria del Fiore, the beverage having taken its due effect, Grasso awoke; it being day-light, and recollecting the sound of the bell, he opened his eyes, and seeing the light in the room, and looking about him, he became persuaded he was in his own house, and recollecting all that happened to him, he was full of astonishment. Remembering where he had gone to bed the night before, and where he then was, he began to think he had been dreaming, or was at that instant in a dream: the one seemed to be the fact at one time, and the next at another.

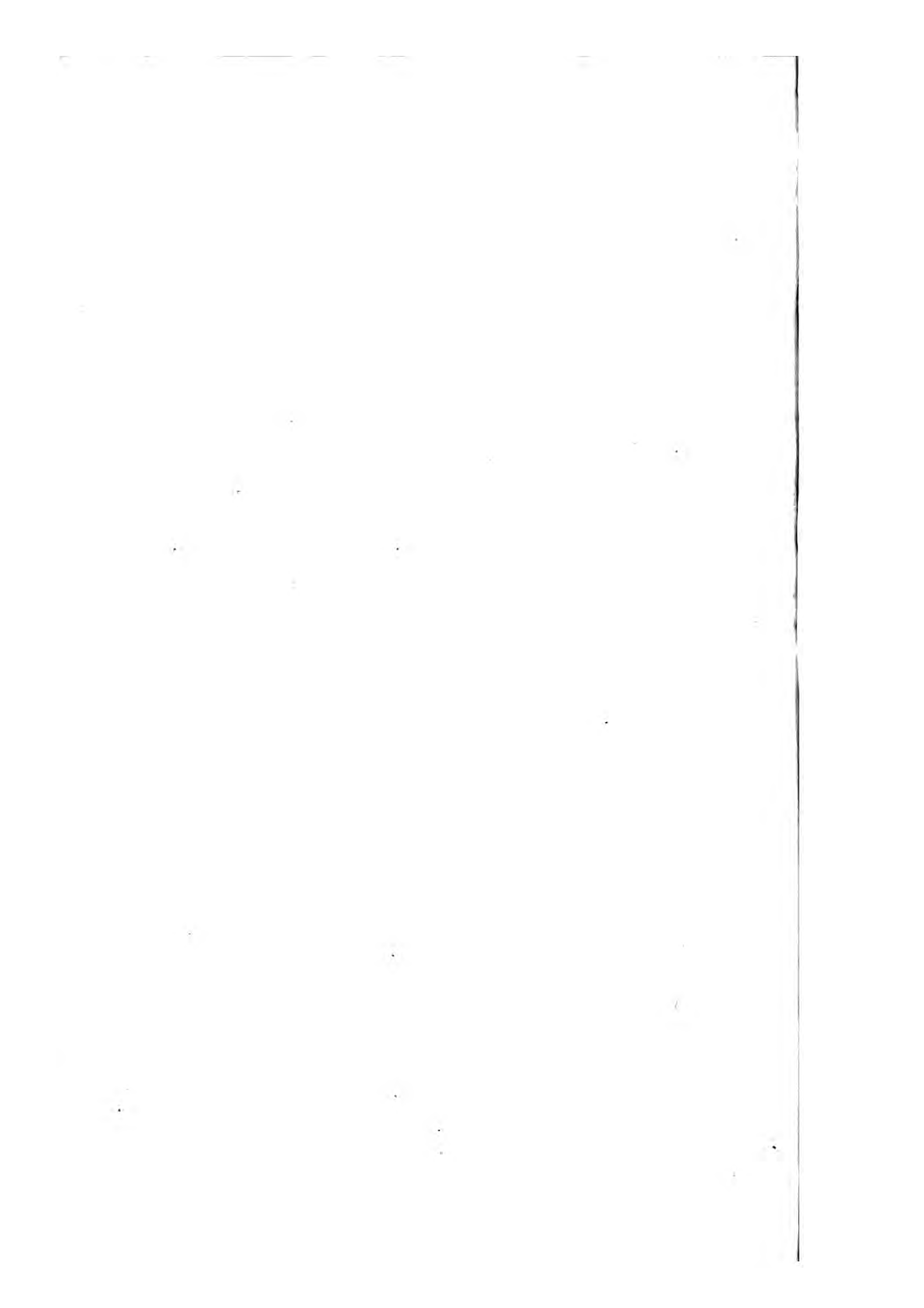
After a deep sigh from his heart, "Heaven help me," said he. Getting out of bed, and dressing himself, he took the key of the shop and went to it, and on opening it he saw all the shop in the greatest disorder, at which he stared with wonder. While he was setting them all to rights, and in their proper places, the two brothers of Matteo came in, and finding him so busy, seeming not to know him, one of them said, "Good morning, friend." Grasso turning round, looked at them, and recognising them, said, "Good morning, good morning, what are you come for?" I will tell you, said one of them. "You know we have a brother called Matteo, who, within a few days, owing to his being imprisoned for debt, has fallen into such a melancholy fit, that it has almost made him mad; and, among other foolish things, he has got it into his head that he is not Matteo, but the master of this shop, who it seems is called Grasso. Upon which, having talked to him on the subject, and likewise the priest of the parish, who is a very good sort of man, he had promised the latter he would give up this foolish whim. He went to bed last night very cheerful while we were at supper, but this morning, without our hearing him, he went out, nor do we know where he is gone; for

this reason we came to see if perchance he had come here, or you could tell us if you know any thing of him." Grasso, while the man was speaking, was bewildered; at last, turning towards them, he said, "I know not what the devil you are talking about, or what all this nonsense means. Matteo has not been here, and if he said he was I, he is a great rascal, and, by my soul, if I meet with him I'll have a brush at him: I'll know whether he be I, or I am he. What the deuce has happened within these few days?" and, in a great rage, he took up his mantle, and pulling the shop-door after him, he left them and went towards St. Maria del Fiore, swearing all the way. The brothers went about their business, and Grasso having entered into the church, walked up and down raging and fuming like a lion, so provoked and perplexed was he at all that had occurred. While he was in this state of confusion, there arrived at Florence one who had been his comrade, and who had been in Hungary, and had there made money by means of the protection of Signor Filippo Scolari, formerly called Spano, one of the citizens of Florence, who was then captain-general in the army of Gismondo, son of Charles, King of Bohemia. This Spano re-



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ceived and protected all those Florentines who had any particular talent, mechanical or intellectual, being a very worthy man who loved his nation very much, and did a great deal of good to his countrymen. This person had, as it happened, come to Florence for the purpose of engaging some able and clever mechanics to complete some work he had taken in hand. He had often talked to Grasso on this subject, begging of him to go with him, telling him that in a very few years he would become rich. As soon as Grasso saw him coming, he thought of going with him; therefore, going up to him, he said, "You have often advised me to go to Hungary with you and I always refused; now, in consequence of a certain event that has befallen me, and on account of some little difference between my mother and me, I am willing to go with you, if you are willing I should, and I must be gone to-morrow morning, for if I delay my departure will be prevented." The young man said, that he was very glad of this, but that he himself could not set off to-morrow on account of some business, but that he might go forward and wait for him at Bologna, and he would be there in a few days. Grasso was delighted, and having settled matters, he re-

turned to the shop, packed up some of his best tools, his clothes, and a little money he had; this being done he marched off to Borgo St. Lorenzo, and hired a pony as far as Bologna, and the next morning, mounting his palfrey, rode towards that city, and left a letter directed to his mother, in which he desired her to dispose of the shop to her advantage, and said that he was going to Hungary. Thus did Grasso depart from Florence, and, after waiting for his companion at Bologna, they departed for Hungary. There they did so well, that in a very few years they became quite rich considering their station, through the protection of the above-mentioned Spano, who made Grasso an engineer under the name of Manetto of Florence. Grasso returned several times to Florence, and being asked by Philip of Brunesco to tell his story, he related this tale.

THE DEAD RIDER.

AT the time when the king, Don Fernando, peaceably ruled the kingdom of Castile, there was at Salamanca, a noble and ancient city of that kingdom, a grey friar, called Maestro Diego of Revolo, who, being no less famous in the *Thomist* as the *Scotist* doctrines, was deservedly chosen, with no mean salary, to be a lecturer at the schools of the famous university of the above-mentioned city. This man obtained the greatest fame throughout the whole kingdom, and sometimes gave the most pious and useful sermons. Being young, handsome, and rather of a warm and inflammable constitution, it happened one day, that whilst he was in the pulpit he cast his eyes on a beautiful young lady, named Catherine, the wife of one of the principal cavaliers in the town, whose name was Roderigo Dangiagia. At first sight of this lady our hero was vanquished, for Cupid had shot a keen dart in his already contami-

nated heart. Descending from the pulpit, he dismissed all theological reasonings and sophistical arguments, and gave his whole soul to the thought of that divine object, and although he knew the high rank of the lady, whose wife she was, and what a mad undertaking it would be, and tried to persuade himself not to venture, yet he sometimes thought, where love asserts its empire it cares not for rank, for if that was the case princes would not so often course on our lands, therefore love must have that same privilege with us. No one foresees the wounds love inflicts, they come suddenly and unexpectedly; therefore, if Cupid, whose arrows are resistless, has found me unarmed and incapable of resistance, it must be that I am fairly conquered, and as his vassal I will enter the lists, and if I am to die, I shall be freed from this torture, and in the next world my spirit will proudly glory in having placed its affections on so high an object. Thus saying, without recurring to former nugatory arguments, he, with burning tears, took pen, ink, and paper, and wrote an elegant epistle to his beloved; first extolling her as more than divine, and speaking of her immortal charms; then telling her she had so captivated him that he must either obtain her

favours or die ; and, lastly, as he knew he could not presume, from her high rank, to be admitted in her house, yet he most earnestly entreated that she would condescend to appoint a time and place, when he might secretly visit her, or at least permit him to be her devoted servant, as he had chosen her for the only mistress of his life, adding numberless tender expressions ; he, lastly, kissed the letter over and over, sealed it, and gave it to a little friar of his, telling him whom to carry it to, and at the same time giving him his directions. Away went the friar according to order, and when arrived at the house, he found the lady surrounded by her women. Making a profound obeisance, he said, “ My master, Madam, begs his most dutiful respects to you, and entreats you to give a little of your finest flour to make hosts with, as you will find better explained in that little letter.” The lady, who was sagacious enough, on seeing the letter, pretty nearly guessed at the purport of it. Upon reading it, although very virtuous and honest, yet she could not help being a little pleased at his falling in love with her, and knowing herself to be so very great a beauty, she delighted in perusing it, and hearing her charms so praised, being one of those who strongly feel that innate passion of

females—the love of praise—and who place their whole fame, honour, and glory in being loved and exalted for their beauty, and who would rather be considered handsome, though wanting in chastity, than ugly, though with the highest reputation. The lady, however, having an extraordinary dislike to friars (and not without reason), determined, not only not to condescend to his wishes, but not even to favour him with an answer. She likewise made up her mind, for this time, not to mention it to her husband, and turning to the little friar, without seeming in the least agitation, “Tell thy master,” said she, “that the master of my flour will have it entirely to himself, and therefore he must get some elsewhere, and as to the letter, it requires no answer, but that should he wish for one, he must let me know, because when my husband comes home I will direct him to answer it as it ought.” The friar, though he received so severe an answer, was not discouraged; on the contrary, his love and ardent desire were the more increased, and instead of withdrawing himself from this undertaking, as his convent was close to her house, he so pursued her every where, that she could not go to her window without meeting his eyes; to church, or out of the house, but he was ever at her heels;

insomuch, that not only the neighbours, but the very town took notice of it: upon which she then reflected it was no longer proper to conceal it from her husband, who, if he should hear of it from another quarter, would conceive a very bad opinion of her virtue, and more serious consequences might ensue. Thus determined, she one night related the whole transaction to her husband. He, who was not less courageous than honourable, was so dreadfully enraged that he had nearly gone and set the whole convent in a blaze, and thus destroyed the whole brotherhood; yet growing a little cooler, after praising the conduct of his wife, he desired her to let the gallant know, he might come the following night, and introduce him in the best manner she could in the house, at a particular hour, in order that he might revenge his honour, without exposing his wife to any rudeness, and to leave the rest to him. The lady felt rather embarrassed, considering the consequences that might follow, yet to obey the will of her lord, she engaged to do so, and as the little friar was continually coming on the same errand, she said to him one day, "Commend me to your master and tell him that the tender affection he professes to me, and the burning tears which he writes me word he constantly sheds in thinking of

me, have at last softened my heart towards him, and made me sensible to his love, and that as fortune would have it, Messer Roderigo being gone this morning into the country, and being likely to remain till next day, that he must come as soon as the clock has struck three, as secretly as possible; that I will admit him, but that I particularly desire he would bring no one with him, not even his most intimate friend." The little monk happy beyond measure, brought this good news to his master, who thought himself the happiest fellow in the world, and every moment of the intermediate time appeared to him whole ages. The hour coming at last, dressing and perfuming himself in order that he might not smell of the friar, and providing himself with a large store of sweetmeats, &c. he went to the lady's house; there finding the door open, went in, and was led in the dark by a little girl to the dining-room, where he expected the lady would kindly receive him, instead of which he found the husband and a faithful servant of his; they having seized him, very coolly strangled him. Master Diego being dead, the cavalier repented that he had so disgraced himself, by killing a contemptible friar; but seeing that repentance was unavailing, and being

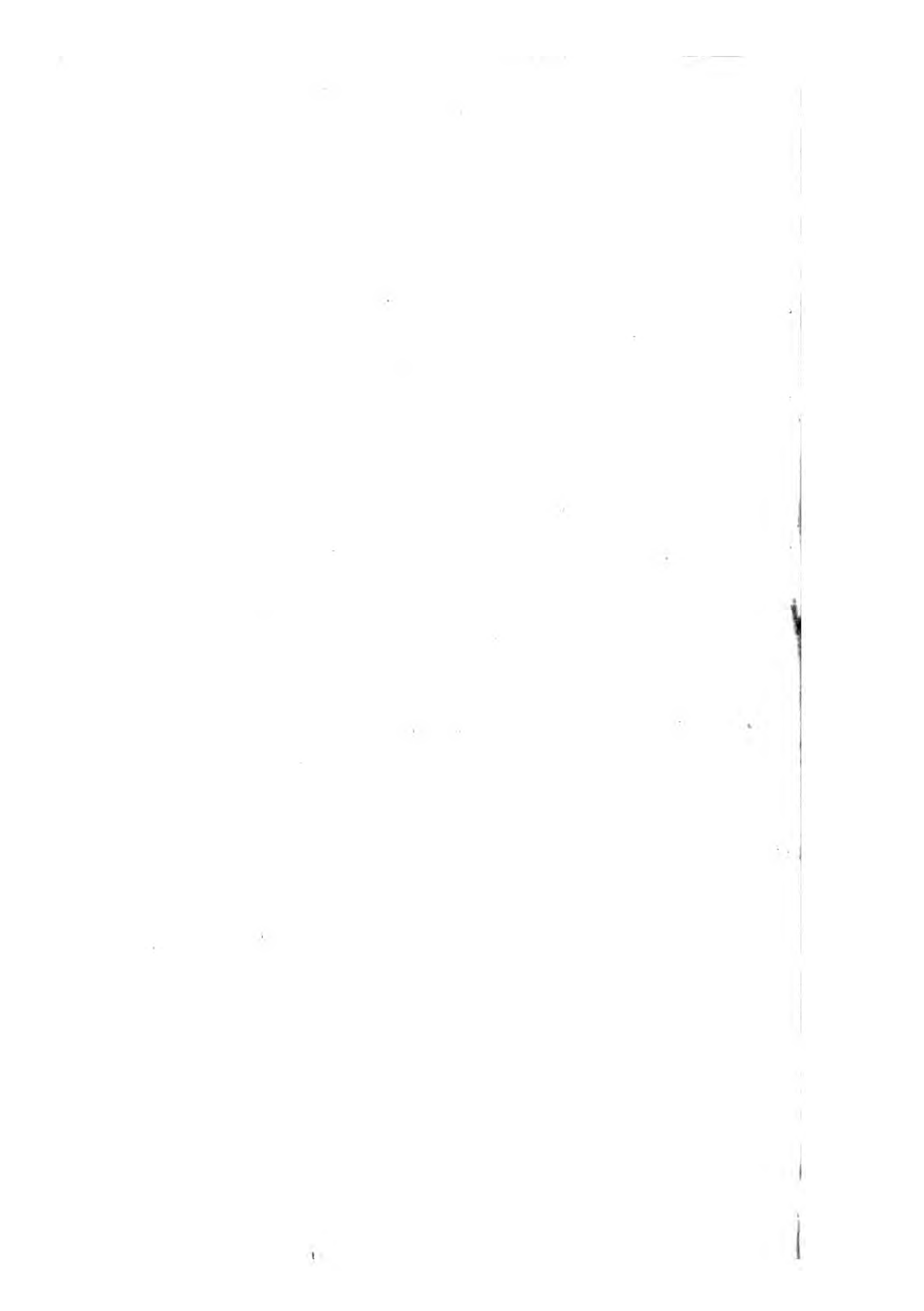
in fear of the king's displeasure, he determined to get the corpse out of the house, and carry him to his convent. The servant taking him on his shoulders, they went towards the garden of the convent, and having got in, they soon carried him to the privy, where there being but one seat left, the rest being totally destroyed, as it often happens in convents, where every place is more like a cavern or den of thieves, than the habitation of the servants to the Deity, they placed the body on it and there left him, and went home. As Messer Diego sat there in that natural attitude, a young and stout friar having occasion, in the middle of the night, to go to the privy, he lighted a taper and ran to the place where the defunct Diego sat; being recognised by the young friar, and not suspecting he was dead, he withdrew, waiting till he would have come away. Now there had been a monastical jealousy, envy, and hatred between these two, so that being much pressed, and seeing he did not move, he said to himself, "This fellow certainly sits there to spite me, and shews, even in this mean act, his contempt for me; but I declare I will wait as long as I can, and though I might go somewhere else, if he does not quit the place I'll make him." Diego, who long

since had crossed the Styx, of course never moved. "By heavens," said the young friar at last, unable to wait any longer, "I will not bear with this insult;" so saying, he picked up a large stone, threw it at the deceased's breast, and tumbled him backwards without his moving a limb. The friar perceiving the strength of the blow, and seeing him fall, suspected he had killed him; after waiting in hopes of seeing him rise, between fear and hope, he got closer to him: looking at him with the taper, he perceived he was really dead, and conceiving that their former enmity being known, he would be suspected to have killed him, he was on the point of hanging himself, yet, thinking better of it, he resolved to carry him out of the convent, and lay him down in the street to avoid any suspicion falling upon him. While he was deliberating upon this, the public and scandalous courtship of the master to Donna Catarina occurred to his mind; upon which he said to himself, where can I carry him more easily, and with less suspicion attached to me than before Messer Roderigo's door; besides, its being nearer at hand, it will certainly be believed that the fellow going to court his wife, he had got some one to kill him? Having fixed on this course, he, with some difficulty, at



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last brought him to the very door, from whence, but a few hours before, he had entered alive and in high spirits. This being done without any one seeing him, he ran as fast as his legs would carry him to the convent; he thought he was pretty safe from suspicion, but yet considered it would be better to absent himself for a few days; he therefore went immediately to the prior and said, "Reverend Father, the other day, for want of mules, I left the greater part of our gatherings at Medina, at the house of one of our fraternity; I therefore, with your holy permission, would like to take the mare of the convent, and, with God's help, I hope to return the day after to-morrow." The prior not only gave him permission, but greatly praised his forecast. The young friar having obtained leave, prepared his little travelling materials, and having the mare, was anxiously waiting for the dawn to set off. Messer Roderigo, who had scarcely closed his eyes all night thinking upon the events that had occurred, and still a little afraid of the consequences, got up, and sent his servant to inquire about the convent, and find out whether the friars had discovered the deceased Diego; the servant, on going out, found Diego right before the door, looking as if holding an

argument, the which caused him no small fright, as such things generally do; he ran up to call his master, and scarcely having the power of articulation, shewed him the dead body of Messer Diego. The cavalier stared with astonishment and fear, yet comforting himself in the idea of the justness of his case, he determined quietly to wait the issue, and, turning round to the dead man, he said, "Thou art then determined, dead or alive, to haunt my house, but to spite me; whoever brought thee here, thou shalt not have the power of returning again except on a beast, as thou wert once thyself in the world;" so saying, he ordered his servant to get from a neighbouring stable a stallion which he kept for breeding. The servant went immediately and brought the stallion, with saddle and bridle, and, as the cavalier had intended, put good Master Diego on his back; sticking him upright, and binding him tight, they put a lance in his hand on the rest, as if they were sending him to the tilt; thus equipped, they led him to the church gates, tied the horse there and went home. Scarcely had this been done than the young friar, thinking it was time to begin his journey, unlocking the gates, then mounting his mare, was stalking out, when, to his great terror,

he beheld Master Diego equipped as before-mentioned, and who with his lance seemed to threaten him with instant death. He was near falling dead with affright, in thinking that his spirit had returned into its terrestrial abode, and was perhaps intending thus to pursue him every where. While he was thus fixed to the spot, the stallion, whose instinct told him he had a female beside him, began to move, and, neighing, tried to get at her, which added to the poor friar's alarm; however, wishing to drive the mare on her way, as she turned her rump towards the stallion, she fell a kicking. The friar, who was not one of the best riders, was nearly thrown, and unwilling to meet with another shock like the first, he pressed and spurred the flanks of his mare, holding fast the pommel of the saddle, and letting loose the bridle, he suffered the mare to go where and as she pleased. The stallion, seeing his prey gallop off, struggling and foaming, broke the slight rope that bound him, and stoutly pursued her; the poor, quaking friar, hearing his enemy close behind, turned his head and saw him with his lance fixed like a fierce justler; seized with deadly fright he began crying out, "Help, help!" At this outcry, and the stamping of those furious horses, the people

all came looking out at the doors and windows, for it was now broad day-light. Every one was ready to die with laughing, seeing the chase of the two friars thus mounted, who both looked more dead than alive; the mare leaped from one side of the road to the other, and the enraged stallion after her, and of course the poor friar was often in danger of being wounded, as may well be imagined. The crowds followed close, hollowing and hooting; some threw stones, others sticks at the stallion; every one endeavoured to part them, not indeed through pity for the friars, but from curiosity to know who they were, for their race was so swift that they could not recognise them; they, however, luckily ran towards one of the city gates, where they were stopped, and the quick and the dead were both taken and recognised, to the great astonishment of all the multitude. They were both brought on horseback to the convent, and received with great grief by the friars; they buried the dead, and the living ordered for torture. The poor fellow (when bound) rather than suffer torture, confessed he had killed him on account of what has been previously related; they however, could not account for his being mounted as he was. In consequence of his confession the young friar



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was not put to the rack, but was to be confined in a dark dungeon until he could be sent to the minister of state, that he might be stripped of his orders by the bishop of the place, and to the lord chief justice to condemn him, and execute him as a murderer according to law. King Fernando did perchance arrive at Salamanca at that time; the story having been related to him, although a very chaste prince, and much distressed at the sequel, and the loss of so great a man, he could not refrain from laughing heartily, when with his barons, at the very ludicrous adventure. Near the time when the friar was to be executed, Messer Roderigo, who felt some compunction at what had happened, and still more for the fate of the innocent friar, and that his silence on the subject certainly would occasion his death, being a favourite with the king, determined on divulging the whole truth, even at the peril of his own life; therefore, presenting himself before the king and barons, he said, " My liege, the unjust and rigid sentence pronounced against the innocent friar, induces me to explain the circumstances of the accident, and if it please your majesty to pardon him who has most justly killed Messer Diego, I will bring him forth instantly, and he will truly relate what has hap-

pened." The king, who by nature was inclined to mercy, and anxious to know the truth, most generously promised a pardon, upon which the cavalier minutely related every circumstance, produced the letter of Diego, and the king having previously heard the friar's story, and conceiving it to agree with Don Roderigo's, he summoned the judge and friar before him, and after relating every thing before the baron and the people, immediately ordered the poor friar to be released and forgiven, being cleared from the crime and all imputation of guilt. The happy friar went merrily back to his convent, thanking his stars.

THE SKILFUL PHYSICIAN.

SOME few years ago, being in company with a large party of noble ladies and cavaliers, the novel of Gismonda, daughter of Tancredi, Prince of Salerno, was read by one of them, and the catastrophe having damped the spirits of most of the guests, a gentleman present, in order to enliven the company, began his tale in the following terms:—

It has always seemed to me, noble lady, that the ancient Greeks have surpassed our Italians in nobleness of heart and humanity, and having heard in the last *Novella* of the cruelty of Tancredi, Prince of Salerno, who had bereft himself of every sort of happiness, and condemned his daughter to death, a story of a Greek nobleman occurs to my mind, who was much more humane and wise than Tancredi. You must know that among the successors of Alexander the Great, there was a very powerful baron called Seleucus, who was after-

wards king of Syria. When young, he took to his wife a daughter of Ptolomæus, king of Egypt, by name Cleopatra, by whom a short time after he had a son named Antiochus, and several daughters, whom I will not now mention. When Antiochus was about fourteen, it happened that Cleopatra, his mother, fell ill and died, consequently his father Seleucus remained a widower. Being advised and stimulated by his friends, he took another lady, the daughter of Antipater, king of Macedonia, called Stratonica, whom after the usual festivities on those great occasions, he took home to his court, and lived most happily with her. Stratonica's person was beautiful, and her conversation surpassed every thing one can conceive. Being very accessible in her court, she often was in company with the young Antiochus, sometimes sporting, riding, and sharing other amusements with him, and without being conscious of it, or having even a thought of it, she excited an ardent passion in the youth, which daily increased. Antiochus, then about eighteen, but of a very reserved character, and of a noble-minded disposition, knowing that his love was not allowable on account of his father, kept his passion so secret that no one ever suspected it. In proportion as the flame was

kept under, the more it consumed him and increased; so that in a very few months he grew quite pale, and his person, which formerly was stout and vigorous, became weak and emaciated, in so much that he was often asked by his father and friends, what could be the matter with him? whether he was ill? to which the youth answered first one thing, then another, ever misleading them as to the true cause. At length he got some one to beg his father to send him to the army, saying, that bearing arms, and the toil of a military life would be a cure for his illness; that too much ease and idleness had brought it on. This and other arguments induced his father to send him to the army, attended by old men, veterans in arms. The remedy might have proved efficacious, had the youth been able to bear his heart with him, but that being fixed in its attachment to the divine features of the beautiful lady, it may truly be said, his body followed the army, but his soul dwelt at home; nor could he bestow a thought on arms, but only thought of her, and sleeping, even, he thought he was with her, and often wept at his folly in having left her. In the course of two months, such was his afflicted state that he was taken dangerously ill, became unable to quit his bed, and was obliged to be carried home in

a litter, to the no small grief of all his father's subjects, who had great hopes in the virtues of the youth, expecting, at his father's death, to have a worthy successor to the throne. A consultation of the first medical men was held upon his complaint, and although they were men of the first rate talents, and used every means in their power, they were unable to do him any good, because the root of the evil was perfectly unknown to them, nor could they heal the secret wound which love had made, but merely aimed at the cure of the body. At last, weary with useless medical assistance, they found they could not remove this unknown cause of disease. Among them was a very learned and judicious physician, by name Philip, he was the king's doctor, and a citizen of the place. As he was zealously endeavouring to find out the youth's complaint, it occurred to his mind, and this suspicion grew upon him, that it might be the passion of love, which the others called consumption.

Philip, full of this thought, and extremely anxious, used to remain long in the sick chamber, noticing with particular attention every movement of the patient. He then said to the king, that in order to divert the youth, it was necessary that the queen, and some other ladies of the court,

should go at least once a day to see him, and afford him some little amusement. Upon which the king ordered that it should be attended to. The doctor, seated by the patient's bed, held his left arm, applying his fingers to his pulse, in order to notice any sudden change that might take place. By this prudent and wise conduct, he discovered the disease of the youth; for although when many beautiful ladies came in to pay him a visit, the doctor never observed the least variation in the feeble pulse of his patient, yet, when the queen entered the room, he felt an extraordinary and strong palpitation, and struggle of nature; and when the queen had sat down near the youth, and soothed him by her kind conversations, the pulse seemed to grow still and regular; but when she arose and left the room, the pulsation grew so violent, that the doctor began to fear some dreadful consequences. The physician, looking in the face of his patient, found melancholy seated in that countenance, where but a moment before happiness had seemed peaceably to dwell; upon which the doctor became more convinced that the disease was seated in the heart, but he would not determine, till he had tried three or four times the same experiment. When he found it produced the very

same effects, he determined to speak to the youth, and acquaint him with what he had discovered. Having taken a proper opportunity, and sent every body out of the room, he thus addressed him:—
“ I thought, Antiochus, that you had so much reliance in me, that not only you would confide in me in a medical capacity, where your very existence depended, but even in any other affair, private or public, and that you would not disguise any occurrence that should concern you; but now I find I have been egregiously mistaken, and that my faithful services have not merited this proof of esteem, the which I cannot help complaining of, considering that in other respects, though you might have kept me in the dark, yet, in my profession, and in what concerned your immediate health, you ought not to have deceived me thus. Know that the root of thy disease, which from false shame thou hast concealed, is perfectly evident to me; what it is, and by whom caused, is well known to me, nor am I so unfeeling not to be aware that youth is subject to the frailties of love, and often deprived of the object of its affection; but take comfort, and you will find to a certainty that my medicine will prove an effectual cure to your disease: not by means of

pills or draughts, but by inducing your father to yield his wife to you, rather than lose his son." Whilst the doctor spoke, the youth burst into a flood of tears, and sobbing violently, entreated the doctor to let him die quietly, and thus end his sorrows; for which the doctor strongly reprov'd him, pointing out to him the grief his death would cause to his afflicted father, and the regret that the people, indeed the whole kingdom, would feel at the loss of him—they who had conceived such hopes of him, and of his virtues. The prudent doctor pointed out to him, that this was not a circumstance that ought to make him wish for death, particularly as there was an easy remedy; that he was convinced of it, and bade him be comforted, and rely on him. In such a manner did the doctor afford every consolation he could to his patient; and after making him take such nourishing food as he thought necessary in his debilitated state, he went forth to the king. The moment the doctor entered, the king anxiously inquired how his son was, and whether he had hopes of him. The doctor humbly begged to speak in private to his majesty, and having both retired to his majesty's closet, the doctor thus addressed him:—"My liege, I have discovered the disease of your son,

which we all have sought in vain ; yet I certainly wish I had not, since it has no cure." " How !" said the king ; " is it such as admits of no remedy ?" " Thus it is, my liege, and there are no means to cure it." The king insisting on knowing the case, the doctor replied, " The passion of love it is, and she whom he loves is my wife, and I will keep her to myself, and would suffer every torture rather than resign her ; therefore, there are no hopes, although I am certain that possessing her would save his life." Upon which the king, weeping bitterly, said, " Oh, Philip ! wilt thou be so hard-hearted as to suffer me to lose such a son for the sake of thy wife ? Dost thou think that in parting with her thou wilt not be able to meet with another equally handsome, nobly born, and as pleasing to thee as she ? Thou knowest that a divorce may take place under various causes and circumstances, nor could there be, perhaps, a better reason for dissolving your marriage than the present. I therefore pray thee, by the trust I repose in thee, by the honours and benefits thou hast received at my hands, the which I mean greatly to increase to thy full satisfaction, that thou wilt make up thy mind to consent to the restoring of this son of mine, my only hope, and that of my kingdom, for

thou must be aware what my fate would be should he die, and how I must hereafter feel towards thee ; how look upon thee ! With what face wilt thou be able to approach me, when thou recollectest that for the sake of a woman, where thousands might be found to charm thee, thou wilt have been the cause of such a son's death, and my everlasting misery." In proportion as the king's reasons and entreaties were irresistible, the greater was the delight of the doctor ; as the very pressing reasons he urged would avail the more against himself. Therefore, as soon as the king had ceased to speak, still looking towards the doctor, in hopes he had persuaded him, the doctor said, " My liege, your reasons are such, and so conclusive, that had I ten wives, however dear to me, I would part with them to preserve your son's life ; but I must needs use the same powerful and convincing arguments with you, my sovereign, and inform you of the real and true state of the case, which is, that your son has no other disease but that of a violent and unconquerable passion, and the object of which is Stratonica, your wife. Now, if I, who am not his father, ought to give up my wife and seek another, ought you not, my lord, who are his father, doubly to feel you should yield yours to save your own son's life ?"

The king, upon hearing this, was struck with amazement, and desired the doctor to tell him how he had come to the knowledge of these things, and being assured that the queen knew nothing of the fact, and that the youth, through shame and reverence for his father, had resolved rather to die than reveal his unlawful passion, moved by pity, and being unable to refute his own arguments, he determined, for the sake of his son, to part with his wife. In consequence, the separation having taken place, he most kindly and generously bestowed the lady on his son. The youth, who at first was in the utmost despair, as soon as he heard the kind intentions of his father, and saw the pleasure he seemed to feel at the happiness he blessed him with, soon began to cheer up, and in a few days was restored to health and spirits; and having received the hand of Stratonica, lived with her in the greatest happiness, and soon had a son and other children. The father, beholding his son saved from threatening danger and himself surrounded by his grand-children, which secured the succession of his race, lived perfectly happy, daily thankful to Providence for the resolute step he had taken, and particularly grateful to the doctor who had been the means, by his judgment and prudence,

to effect so great a purpose. Thus the humanity and tenderness of the Grecian king, who saved the life of his son, and secured happiness to himself, presents a striking contrast with the conduct of Tancredi.

THE POMEGRANATE SEED.

AT a time when Languedoc was not as yet under the power of the *fleur-de-lis*, there was at Toulouse a certain count, by name Benato, who, besides being endowed by nature with numberless advantages, was blessed with the most beautiful children that any prince could boast of; besides two sons, he had a daughter younger than either, who according to every body's opinion was the most handsome, modest, and agreeable lady that was ever known. In one thing alone heaven seemed unpropitious to him, for while he was living most happily with his wife, a sister of the count of Provence, she died before she had attained her thirty-fifth year, to his very great grief, and that of the country around. Being on the point of death, she called the count, her husband, and after humbly requesting his forgiveness of such neglect, or omissions, she might have been guilty of towards him, she recommended earnestly, with tears in her

eyes, her dear children to him ; but above all, her daughter, whose name was Bianca, adding, that as a last favor which he would grant her in this world, she begged he would make her a solemn promise, and with full determination never to violate it ; which was, never to marry her daughter to any one, although it were even the king of France himself, unless after seeing him, and becoming acquainted with him, she should like him ; adding, that to a young woman there was no blessing equal to the full liberty of selecting him who is to be her companion through life, and to whom she is to be true until death. The count having heard the kind and motherly entreaties of his beloved wife, considering these were the last words she would probably utter, and the last favor he could bestow, after many sorrowful tears, promised her solemnly that her wishes should be fulfilled, and that all should be as she desired. He then tried to soothe her last moments, though he himself was, perhaps, in greater need of consolation ; he received her expiring breath, and with due honors had her interred in the cathedral of Toulouse, as may yet be proved by the tombstone.

In those times, when Catalonia had not yet fallen into the hands of the king of Arragon and

Castile, one Don Fernando, who was count of Barcelona, and who, from the proximity of the states, and their rivalship in glory, had long waged war against the count of Toulouse, and mutually injured one another; the one being aided by the king of Spain, and the other by the king of France; nevertheless, as we very often see it happen, that wars entered upon by princes, from vain and ambitious views, come to an end, either from weariness, or poverty of the parties; they at last, though late, having considered that their warfare was nothing more than ruining themselves to enrich their neighbours, and affording satisfaction to their enemies, came to the determination to make such a peace as would be most honourable and least injurious to the mediators; and in order the better to cement the peace entered upon, it was said, that it would be highly desirable that the families so long divided, and now at peace, should be more closely united by an alliance, seeing that the count of Toulouse had but one daughter among his three children, and the count of Barcelona only one son among his. It therefore did not become necessary to argue long on the subject of this marriage, Salse and Perpignan, as some say, being the dowry, and, as others say, plenty of gold, the which

was lent him, upon a mortgage of some possessions near Arli and Terrascone, by the count of Provence, who greatly had enriched his estates by the excellent government of Romeo. These things concluded, there remained nothing more to do than for the count of Toulouse, remembering the solemn promise made to his wife, to say all should be done, provided the manners of the young count should meet with his daughter's approbation, in favour of whom he had pledged himself never to marry her without her full approbation. This appeared to all a very trifling circumstance, and by no means likely to thwart their hopes, inasmuch as this youth, besides ample possessions, noble birth, and equality of rank, possessed an elegant form, great talents, and gentlemanly manners. It was scarcely to be credited that he should have been born at Barcelona; but it was so, and is still considered as a wonder, for the like was never seen there since, or ever will be.

The young count was then sent by his father to the said nuptials, so earnestly wished for by both countries, in great pomp, and attended by a suitable retinue to Toulouse, where he was received with that cordiality and honour which was due to the favourite son of so great a lord, blended with

French politeness and Spanish dignity, which from their proximity to each other, they were well acquainted with. These first ceremonies having been attended to, the beautiful daughter of the count, elegantly dressed, was presented to him. The lady, who had spared no pains to adorn her natural charms in every possible way, received him in so courteous and fascinating a manner, that the young count was amazed, enraptured, and totally subdued by love and admiration; and, if at first by reports he was ambitious of possessing her, he now was inflamed, and scarcely able to command his feelings. The lady, previously informed of every thing by her father, now eyed him with scrutiny from top to toe, narrowly watched all his movements, as well as he did those of the lady, only she with that timidity and modesty befitting a female, while he gazed at her with all the ease and freedom of an enamoured prince. After this introduction, the dinner room was thrown open, when a table was spread, covered with all the delicacies that the season and country could afford.

Dinner being over, pomegranates were brought in golden vases, according to the custom of that country, where they are remarkably fine, to clear and sweeten the mouth and breath from the taste

of the various viands. The count having taken some, how it happened none can tell, but he dropt one single seed, which he dexterously caught up before it reached the ground, the which he did, as he said himself, and others affirmed, merely to shew his quickness and dexterity, and put it in his mouth. The lady, whether fate ordained it so, or that the action appeared to her unseemly, or ungentleman-like in a person of his rank, was much vexed and disgusted at it, and thus argued in her own breast :—This is what I have often heard said by those who certainly have means of judging; that the Catalonian people are the most sordid, miserly, and covetous set of our western countries. Although I have not perceived in him, as yet, any of the Catalonian ways, yet he may have put on this countenance, according to the practices of the Catalonians, to deceive people. Poor, indeed, is he in address, that cannot, for a short time, assume the manners and language of a cavalier, at least till he has encompassed his object; but avarice, as I have often heard one of my tutors say, as it is the mother and nurse of every vice, so it has this particular property, that it cannot totally be disguised or concealed, even by the greatest hypocrite, because he, who is by nature

of such a disposition, begrudges not only his own property, but feels as much annoyed in seeing even that of his enemy's wasted, as a liberal man would feel in seeing his taken from him; and if this knight is such, and I verily believe him to be so, considering that amidst plenty he cannot bear to lose even one single seed, how much more will he be avaricious of his own gold;—what then would be my case?—can there be a more distressing thing for a generous and noble spirited woman, than to have a sordid and avaricious husband? This would be heavy sorrow to me, and the sport of others. Heaven forbid it should ever be my case. I would sooner die an old maid, than live with such a being in continual wretchedness and sorrow for my own folly. Let my father do what he pleases, I know that she must be a fool indeed, who suffers herself to be persuaded to what would make her miserable.

Having thus resolved, she ceased to bestow a thought more on the subject. All the fetes and rejoicings having ended, the count of Toulouse, one day craving the permission of the Catalonian knight, took his daughter by the hand and led her into another room, and here, with all the tenderness of a kind father, asked her what were her sentiments respecting this young Catalonian. She firmly and

deliberately told him, she would rather live single all her days, than be united to a man whose principles and manners were so directly opposite to her own. On hearing this, the old man was sorely grieved, considering that this match having been proposed for the advantage of the whole country, by not having effect, might be the cause of ruin and eternal quarrels between the rival states. Having asked his daughter the cause of her dislike, and being answered, he thought it so very trifling a circumstance, that he could not help laughing. He several times attempted to dissuade her, but she protested that if, contrary to the sacred promise made to her mother, any attempt should be tried to force her inclinations, she would, rather than consent, destroy herself with her own hands. The old count, remembering his promise to his dying wife, and moved by the love he bore his daughter, said with tears in his eyes, "If thou art so firmly fixed, be it even as thou wilt; nor shall there be any persuasion used with thee by me." Having left the room, he endeavoured, in the politest and best way, to excuse himself with the count, observing on the dispositions of women, and particularly girls, and how often they were bent on that which was most against their own happiness,

and at last told the count of Barcelona, that she was totally averse to the match. This was a most grievous disappointment to the count, more particularly as the possibility of such a thing had never entered his head, and that he considered the thing as done in his own mind. However, concealing his wrath and disappointment, he said, smiling, this is not an extraordinary case, and many a greater man than myself has before now been the sport of a woman's caprice, but, that since that was the case, he would press no further, but take his leave, and depart for Barcelona on the morrow. He only begged, in consideration for the trouble he had had in coming, and the disappointment he had met with, that the count would tell him what it was that his daughter so mightily disliked in him. The old man was ashamed to tell it, or to keep the secret, at length, however, he told him; nor could the Catalonian help laughing, and he replied, "Well, for the future when I pay my court to the ladies, I will go when pomegranates are out of season, since, as Ceres was deprived of a daughter, I am of a wife." He praised the count for so piously attending to the promise he had made his wife, and his love for his daughter, in abstaining from using compulsion

towards her, and assured him this circumstance should not cause any dissention or alteration in their late friendly intercourse. They then entered into conversation on other subjects during the rest of the day ; the count, concealing the rancour of his heart against the lady, took leave of her and others as kindly as he could, and departed, making the speediest journey to Catalonia, and having arrived on the confine of his territories, he dismissed his retinue, giving them to understand he meant to go on a pilgrimage not many leagues off, (by some thought to have been to our Lady of Monserrato) and, as on such occasions all pomp and shew are dismissed, he took with him only two of his most intimate friends ; he informed them of the whole scheme he had planned ; they left their horses, and journeyed on foot to Toulouse, being each of them in disguise, the count in the habit of a pedler, carrying before him a box of trinkets and jewels strung to his shoulders, for he had bought many valuable jewels, and intermixed among them some precious stones of his own, which he had brought with him as presents to the bride. He did not include those of greatest value, lest he should be found out by having so much rich property, and having taken off his beard, which was then worn

very long among the great in Catalonia, he entered Toulouse alone, having dispatched his two friends to Barcelona, considering that was the best means whereby he might have the good fortune of seeing and speaking to his lady. Thus he used to go, morning and evening, about Toulouse, selling his commodities to such as chose to buy them, but he mostly took care to place himself facing the palace where the count of Languedoc dwelt, in hopes of speaking to the lady, whom, at first from love, and now from spite, he constantly dwelt upon. It was not many days, before that one evening the day having proved intensely hot, he beheld his lady, beautifully dressed in white, sitting with many of the first ladies at her door; he humbly bowing to them, asked whether any of the company chose to purchase some of the trinkets he had; offering his fine goods at a very cheap rate. The countess and other ladies agreeing, as is the custom of the country, to look at them, called him to them, and asking him what he had to sell, they all got around him, some looking at one thing, others at another. He, unaccustomed to the trade, was scarcely able to answer them; and ever endeavouring to answer the countess, evaded many answers to the others. After selling many articles they had chosen, he went his

way, vesper time being near. He continued his attendance thus for several days, and became a very great favourite, to the great annoyance of the other pedlers, who, whenever they offered their goods, were answered, "No! no! we will be true to our Navarro," for he had told the ladies he was of Navarre, not being able so to disguise his language, as to appear a Frenchman, yet he would not be known for a Spaniard. It happened that, after a few days, seeing a good opportunity, the count, unheard by any other person, said to one of the ladies of the countess whom he observed to be her greatest favourite, and much beloved by her, and to whom he had made some little trifling presents out of his wares, that he had at home one of the most valuable and extraordinary jewels, from its peculiar properties, that had ever been seen in the world, but that he never brought it about with him, lest he should be robbed of it, and that he valued it so, that were it to save his life, he never would part with it. Without saying any more he departed. The lady was distracted till she could tell the countess what Navarro had said to her. When bed-time came, while she undressed her mistress, she related to her the wonderful properties and beauty of the jewel, adding, as is usual with such people, something of



The Pomegranate Seed.

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her own to the truth, saying, that if she was the countess, she would move heaven and earth but she would have it, although he swore he never would part with it, because it was a remedy against every evil, except death. Thus, by such praising, and such accounts, she made her so eager to possess it, that the lady could not rest the whole night for thinking of this wonderful jewel. Scarcely had the dawn appeared, but she sent her maid to Navarro, to conjure him in her name; and use every means to induce him to sell it, and should she not be able to succeed, that she might persuade him, at least, to show it to her; because, on being seen, it perhaps might lose much of its value in her mind, and thereby lessen the violent desire she felt to have it. She, of course, went to Navarro, and related all that had passed. He was highly delighted at what he heard, and began again to relate the very wonderful effects and power of this jewel, swearing most positively he would sooner part with his life than with it; but that, in compliment to her, he would allow the countess a view of it. The waiting-maid, finding she could not succeed further, accepted the offer; and having fixed the time of the day when the lady could see it, she went back to the countess, and related what had

been determined upon. At the appointed time Navarro came with the beautiful jewel. It was a diamond of so large a size, and of so extraordinary a shape, as she had never seen before ; he said it had been brought to the old count of Barcelona by certain Catalonian corsairs, who had been cruising beyond the Straights of Gibraltar, and had taken it from some Normans, who proving the weakest in the fight, were made prisoners, and all their property taken from them ; many say, added he, that it had been long in the possession of the king of Naples. Greatly did he praise it before he showed it, and said, the least he valued it for was its beauty, but that it was its extraordinary properties that he esteemed, adding, he would not suffer any one else to see it but herself. He then brought it forth, still persisting he would not part with it on any account whatsoever.

The countess, holding the jewel in her hand, was admiring it, and the more she minutely examined it, the more beautiful it appeared to her ; such was the desire of possessing it, that she would have given any thing to obtain it ; yet, concealing this desire as well as she could, she begged Navarro to inform her of its virtues and properties. After many times refusing so to do, as if he had

some great objection to do so, "Madam," said he, "whenever any one is in doubt how to determine upon any thing of great moment, if they look in it, and the determination they wish to abide by is likely to be of advantage, they see this stone as clear and bright as if all the solar rays were centred within it; if the reverse, it becomes as dark as night. Some say, indeed, that it is the philosophers' stone, so long sought after in vain, while others think it is not the produce of nature, but of hermetical philosophy. There are others maintain, that it was that which Alexander the Great possessed, who never went into battle without first consulting it; and, lastly, that it was Cæsar's, and was the means of rendering both invulnerable, as you have often heard related." Having thus replied to the lady, he took the jewel back, and took his leave. Being left with her woman, she exclaimed, "Oh! who could be so happy as I, if I could but possess such a beautiful and wonderful thing! look at it, and consult it when I pleased; should I ever be asked again in marriage, as I was awhile ago by the count of Barcelona, what a blessing it would be to me to have the advice of my infallible monitor;" she then entreated her maid again, for her sake, to go and beseech

Navarro to let her purchase it at any price he should fix. Though the maid had not the least hope of success, yet she went twice without succeeding, for he even denied ever showing it again. At last, the third day, it appearing to him a proper time to execute the plan he at first had premeditated, Navarro said, "Madam, since your importunity, the beauty, and superior charms of your lady, have so won me over to part with such a wonderful jewel, go to her, and say to her, that I certainly will give it to her, provided, in return, she will admit me, for one night only, in her room, as she would a husband. Should she refuse, tell her that neither entreaties, money, or any other reward, shall ever dispossess me of it, and request her to cease to wish for it any longer, or molest me further."

The maid related the whole conversation to the countess, adding, that if she could not bring herself to agree to it, she would have no more to do in the business, as she was fully convinced, nothing less than such a sacrifice would do. The lady was seriously angry, considering herself greatly insulted in her honor, and in threatening words reprobated the presumption of the fellow, who dared to contaminate her greatness by such a proposal; with

her maid she also found fault, because she had not rebuked him for presuming to make such a proposal. The maid, rather smilingly, said, "Madam, when I first went by your order, I thought my duty was to report to both what each other should say; nor should I ever have thought it my province to alter or conceal any thing said; therefore, if you are any way displeased, it is your fault, for you should have ordered me, had he said any thing rude, not to tell you of it, and to have reprimanded him; though had you mentioned such a thing, I declare I should not have meddled in it at all; for I not only cannot punish, but cannot even blame things when they are not unjust. The gods receive alike the prayers of the just as well as the wicked; true it is, they grant it to the just when they think fit, nor did I think you would assume more to yourself. In the name of peace, what has Navarro done to you? in what has he offended you? are you not aware that asking is neither robbing nor giving? You are too young, and do not well distinguish good from evil, but were those locks of yours as grey as mine, you would talk in a very different style. Such speeches may be uttered, 'tis true, but to whom and where?—not here! nor to me! nor to any of your maids, but to strangers, who, although

they will not give credit to them, will consider you as very virtuous, and a woman who is acquainted with female arts, that is, in one word, to dissemble. But with me, who am wholly yours, and have no dearer being than you, you must not talk so; but allowing for your great youth, and bearing with your reproofs, I will proceed and tell you that if you wisely agree to Navarro's request, you will have the gem, and I really think you will have the best bargain. This pedler, although but a small trader, has in his countenance, manners, and thoughts, something more of the gentleman than the mechanic. Now if you do not take him, you will have done what you choose, but not what you ought."

With such arguments and discourse did the old lady's-maid spur on and seduce her mistress; so that wearied at last with her reasoning and importunities, though she thought it a monstrous difficult thing to manage, she, after many *nays* and *yesses*, *ifs* and *buts*, said to her, "Do what you list, but settle it so that it be only for one night, and late enough, that it may not occasion any mischief to me, and danger to thee; for really when once you begin upon a thing, there is no way of getting rid of you, and one's obliged to

give way." The lady made no answer, but went to Navarro, and arranged so, that the following evening, after midnight, he should come to the garden-gate behind the house, and she would direct the rest, and not to forget the jewel; all of which was duly performed, and at night when he had given the gem, he said, he had more of equal value which he saved for her, and would dispose of at the same price; the which being heard by her woman, she so teased her mistress, pointing out to her that repetitions would not make things worse, that she earned a beautiful ruby and an emerald, the one of which Navarro said possessed the virtue of counter poison, the other an antidote to the plague, the which often occurs in Languedoc. But as it often happens that we get that which we do not look for, a few weeks after the countess actually found that she was not likely to escape with impunity, upon which she entered into counsel with her adviser, who afforded her all the consolation she could, and told her that she must keep her own secret, and all things should be provided against, and all go well; that she was not the first by far, and would certainly not be the last, to whom such things had happened, who afterwards, for a true maiden, was taken as a wife.

The flush of shame rising upon the countess's cheek, she cried, " Let others do what they may ; heaven forbid, that since I could not guard against the first transgression, I should gloss it over by a second ; I never will be the wretch to deceive one that shall think me honourable. The sin shall fall on the sinner, and that fruit shall be his that sowed it. Too long have I followed thy silly counsels, therefore, without any farther consultations, if thou wishest not to offend me, go and bring Navarro to me, for since I have so degraded myself as to become his, though late, I will be noble enough never, by deceit, to become another's, and am fully determined to submit to that fate which thy ill advice, and my want of discretion and prudence, have led me to." The waiting-maid perceiving the countess's resolution was fixed, though she endeavoured to soothe and persuade her, brought Navarro, who, perhaps, having seen the countess much altered, had well guessed the cause. The countess, almost overcome with grief, yet, without shedding a tear, with the greatest firmness, not like a silly girl, said to him, " My friend, since thy good fortune and my ill one, thy great prudence and my want of it, has led me, nobly born as I am, rather than deceive God and man, to

become the wife of a pedler, and thou, whoever thou art, to become the husband of a count's daughter; I pray thee not to turn thy back on me, but to prepare thyself to become mine. I am pregnant, and do not mean to remain here, a burden and nuisance to others, and an eternal cause of shame and sorrow to myself; I am therefore resolved upon going with thee, living poorly, and labouring for my bread, rather to injure this guilty body, than live in ease and plenty, to the detriment of my soul; therefore prepare all things so, that by to-morrow night we may go from hence, and having by me thy gems, many of my own, and a little money, we will go as well as we can, sheltered from hunger, until I can see to what better fate the destinies have decreed me. The count of Barcelona, whom henceforward we shall no longer call Navarro, though much pleased, for it was this which he wished above all things, considering within himself, had he been what she really thought him, what would have been her fate; to what fortune leads us; how often it happens, and how easy it is to deceive women, though they think themselves so wise, and particularly girls. He felt so much pity for her that he was ready to do that, which she, though a woman, had too much

pride to do, that is actually to weep :—and, in great agitation, he said to her, “Madam, I am a poor pedler, as you have clearly seen, and as such I have made up my mind to live and die a bachelor, therefore I intreat you not to molest me with such thoughts, nor bring upon yourself this disgrace. He would have proceeded, but compassion for her, the desire of possessing her, and the fear she should repent what she had proposed, actually choked his utterance. “My friend,” said she, “I will only say that the most fortunate man in the world has scarcely ever more than one such a lucky opportunity, as thy good fortune offers thee to my great disadvantage ; beware of her frowning upon thee for thy folly, should thou, a poor pedler, refuse to marry her who but very lately refused the count of Barcelona.” These last words so fired the soul of the count, and so excited him to vengeance, that he no longer refused, and said that since she wished it, he would be ready to obey, and that she must prepare herself to lead a life suitable to one who was his wife, and not as her father’s daughter ; walking on foot without any other companion ; inasmuch as not only his profession demanded, but also because it was necessary to avoid the danger to which the carrying

away the daughter of a count would expose him. Agreeing, without saying a word to any one except the countess's maid, that they would sally forth, each under a pilgrim's dress, to St. James of Gallicia the next night. The bustle and wonder at Toulouse and the adjacent parts were very great when this accident was discovered; but no one being willing to credit it, it was thought that through devotion she had retired in some religious house; for since she had perceived her situation, she had been much more attentive to her religious duties than usual, avoiding, as far as she could, all company; the which circumstance gave additional credit to the belief: and the maid, who had remained, had so well managed her story, intimating her displeasure at being so deceived, that every one thought that was actually the fact; therefore, in consequence of this belief, the couple being soon out of the territory of Languedoc, they were not found out, although closely pursued. It would be tedious to relate the many trials and sufferings of the poor unhappy lady; on their march, she who had for years scarcely moved a step without her carriage, and being assisted by several cavaliers of her father's court, was now, in the parching month of July, obliged to walk on flinty stones, besides being

pretty large, and enduring every possible suffering on the road which a poor person must bear. The count now and then would make her rest, but in such a harsh tone, and then so uncourteously made her resume her journey, that it went to her very soul; but on the day they left Toulouse she made up her mind patiently to bear every insult of fortune. Proceeding thus on her journey, they reached the inn where she hoped to rest from the fatigues of the day; whether from the bad accommodations in that country, or that the count chose to have it so, she could not close her eyes, and it became rather an encrease of sufferings, than an alleviation either to body or mind. After several days, being arrived at Barcelona, there he found his friends, whom he had sent off with speed, the very day he left Toulouse, to provide the poorest lodging they could find for him and his lady, but, however, at a good and religious woman's, though there are but few of those. Having slept with her the first night, and stayed with her the whole day, in the evening he made her believe that some business would detain him out the next day, and that he could not possibly be with her till night, desiring her to attend with the old woman to her work, so that she might provide for her scanty living, for he

did not mean to sell any of his jewels, nor waste his money ; on the contrary, as he spared from his trade by industry, she must do the same, if she wished for peace and quietness ; the unhappy countess sighed from her inmost soul, recollecting how many poor people her father supported, while she was in such a distressed situation, as to be obliged to work for her daily support ; yet, with a sweet smile, she answered she should do as he desired. The count, in a pilgrim's dress, left her and went to his home, where, as one that had been lost, without hopes of being seen again, he was most tenderly received by his father and mother, for he had considerably lengthened the proposed time of his absence. Thus then did the count jovially spend the days with his friends and courtiers, never omitting, however, returning in his pilgrim's dress to his lady at night, and commanding her new duties, and ordering her to be always ready to help the hostess in the kitchen and household work. Not being as yet satisfied, he determined to heap upon her new injuries ; he therefore said to her one evening, to-morrow I mean to treat a friend of mine, a skinner, at a tailor's, where I must, of course, purchase the bread, and as bread is very dear in this part of the world, and I don't

like to be at the expense, I have thought that to-morrow morning, after you have helped the hostess in baking, you must pretend to have dropped something, and hide four rolls in your pocket under your petticoat, and keep them for me, and two or three hours after dinner I'll come and fetch them. This appeared a most vile and degrading thing to the noble-minded countess, and had it not been that she had heard much of the idle and lazy habits of the Spaniards and Navarrese, she would have thought he was in jest, yet thinking, after all, it was spoken in good earnest, she intreated him for heaven's sake, not to compel her to such an act; to which he churlishly answered, "What! have you not yet forgotten you are the daughter of the count of Toulouse, eh! yet the first day we left the place I told thee, and thou didst promise, that forgetting the past thou wouldst only remember that thou wert the poor wife of Navarro; now I tell thee again, that if thou wishest to be happy, thou must make up thy mind to do this, and any thing else I shall command thee, otherwise I will leave thee here alone, and shall go elsewhere to seek my fortune." Thus was she compelled to obey; and, in the morning, as she had been desired, so she did. The count every evening used to ride

about at his pleasure, and, on that day, calling on one of the two friends who were at Toulouse with him, and who was somewhat related to him, told him what he was to do. The count passed by the poor dwelling of his lady, and there stopped awhile at a distance, while his companion, who had directions how to act, drew near the old woman, who happened to be at the door, at work with the countess; "Mistress," said he, "who is this young woman sitting by you?" When the old woman had told him who she was, and when she had arrived there; "Oh," said the gentleman, "you seem to me to be old in the world, but with very little knowledge of it; this female seems to me to be one of the wickedest women I ever saw, and, if you do not mind, she will strip you of every thing you have in the world;" the which the old woman denied, and bestowed great praise upon her. "Nay," said the gentleman, "I will convince you with your own eyes before I go; now, only raise her upper petticoat a little, and look in her pocket and see what she has there, and that will prove to you that I have not been studying necromancy at Toledo seven years for nothing;" and as he seemed approaching, to convince her himself, she, out of regard to the countess, rather than suspicion,

searched her pocket, where she found the four rolls, at which she was much amazed, and endeavoured to apologize for her to the gentleman. After a little chat, and laughing on the subject, he departed: the reader may well imagine how confounded and ashamed the countess was. She almost swooned in seeing herself so detected and degraded. Having afterwards been gently reprov'd by the old woman, she, weeping, asked her pardon, and promised never to be guilty of the like sin again, but carefully concealing who it was that had made her do so. At night the count said he had not had any occasion for them, and pretended to be much displeas'd at the shame she had brought upon herself, saying, that it was in consequence of her ill-will to do it, and her awkwardness. The countess of Catalonia, his mother, at that time had some curious works which she was to consecrate as a vow to a saint at Barcelona, to be added as ornaments to the various figures, animals, &c. represented on it; now, it occurred to the count that this would be an excellent opportunity of mortifying still more the poor countess; he therefore told his mother that he knew a poor French woman that understood these things remarkably well, and would send her on the following day; and, in the

evening, he told the countess to prepare, and commanded her to steal as many of the pearls as she possibly could. She burst into a flood of tears on hearing this, for the adventure of the rolls was too fresh in her memory, and considering that she was going to the house of him whom she, but scarcely nine months since, had scorned and refused, and where she might easily be discovered, weeping bitterly, she begged him not to insist; but upon his threatening vengeance against her should she not obey, she was compelled to consent; and the better to conceal the theft, it was agreed she should put the pearls in her mouth, under her tongue, for however few she might take, these being so very valuable, it would still be a great gain.

In the morning she was introduced and set to work by the count's mother; her manners and behaviour were so genteel, that such as beheld her agreed that she must have been of noble birth, and well brought up, from her readiness and grace in every thing that belongs to a female; she, little caring for their praises, these being rather as so many daggers to her heart, attended to the concerted plan, and had already got three of the finest pearls under her tongue, when she beheld

the very gentleman that had occasioned the bread scene to take place, for he had been sent by the count. The said gentleman began to converse with the old countess, then looking at the poor creature now at work, said he was much astonished that such a vile woman should be admitted in her house; relating to her the story of the rolls, and presently proceeded to tell the old countess what she had robbed her of, which the poor creature, to her great confusion, was compelled to bear; but the lady, excusing her on account of her poverty, paid her for the work she had done, and dismissed her. The angry count at last thought he had sufficiently avenged the insult he had suffered from his wife, and punished the rash opinion she had formed of him; she now feeling that she had been guilty of much more meanness than the picking up a seed of pomegranate, and knowing she was near her time, determined no longer to torment her, and having related all the whole story to his father and mother, and that she had been persuaded to become his prey, not from avarice, but by artful means; likewise, considering how much pain and grief he had heaped upon her in punishment for her offence, he said, that the next day, he intended, it being agreeable to them, to bring her

home as the daughter of the count of Toulouse, and his wife. The old folks were as much delighted at hearing this, as they had been grieved when they had heard the match had been broken off, and without giving any reason for it, a grand and elegant fete was ordered to be prepared in the evening. The count of Barcelona said to his wife, "To-morrow there will be a grand fete at the house of the count of this country, on account of his marrying the eldest daughter of the king of Arragon, one of the handsomest and most beautiful women in the world; indeed, he may thank heaven that thou didst spurn him from thee, for he has much improved his riches and dignity by this alliance." The poor creature at this could not repress a deep sigh, considering what she formerly had been, and what she now was. The count proceeded: "To-morrow will be a holiday, there is no work done, therefore I have been thinking that thou and the good old woman should come and spend your time there, for here alone thou wouldst be moped, and meanwhile thou wilt be able to see if any thing can be got at there without being detected; as thou art a woman, though thou hast been seen there, no harm will come of it, but a little shame, that will soon be overcome,

and which a poor creature as thou art must make up thy mind to." Although the countess had suffered so much from the other vexatious scenes she had gone through, she now thought this the most cruel of all, and, in the greatest agony, said, she could be prepared to meet death, rather than do such a thing: but the count, who was fully determined on this last trial, swore, threatened, and abused her so, that she was at last forced to submit, and promised she would not fail to be there. He having apprised the hostess of his design, told her at what hour, and where she was to go the next morning; this done, he returned home. On the following day, all the first nobles and ladies of Barcelona having assembled at the old count's to honour the festival, before the tables were prepared, various amusements took place. The old hostess, as previously agreed with the count, brought, most reluctantly, and, as it were, by force, the young countess a full hour before dinner. The poor creature had scarcely entered the great room, retiring as much as possible amidst the least conspicuous among them, than the count, sumptuously dressed, joyful and happy, going graciously up to her, said aloud, so that he might be distinctly heard by all, "Welcome, the lady countess, my bride! It is

now high time that your pedler, Navarro, should be transformed into the count of Barcelona, and that you, a poor pedler's wife, should become the daughter and wife of a count!" At these words, struck dumb with wonder, shame, fear, and hope, the countess looked around to see whether these words were addressed to any person besides her; yet, in a moment recognising his voice and manners, uncertain what she should do, the words died on her lips: upon which the count added, " My lady, if the having been refused by you, had enraged me so as to make me more cruel towards you than you might consider justifiable, yet, I think, had you been in like circumstances, as much in love as I, and undeserving to be so indignantly treated, I should obtain not only your pardon, but that you would plead my excuse: therefore, as I have found more true nobleness of mind in you, in this low state you have been reduced to, than I at first was able to discover in your higher situation, I do entreat you to forget, as I do, the first offence, my former treatment, and cast into eternal oblivion every revengeful deed of mine, and be pleased, in the presence of my father, mother, and this noble company, to give me in Barcelona that which you refused me in Toulouse, and which I

stole from you by the dint of art. The countess recovering from her astonishment, replied, with a noble countenance, manner, and good sense, and like a princess; "Happy am I, my true lord, to know on this day how far greater my good fortune has been than my judgment; since I find you what you really are, not what I at first looked upon you to be; most willingly do I forget the merited wrongs I have suffered, and ready am I to bestow publicly, before this noble and honourable assembly, that which before was granted in Toulouse before less honourable witnesses. I am, therefore, ready to be yours, if it so pleases you, and if it be approved by your father and the lady your mother, whose generous pardon I crave for former offences, and will ever honour and hold dear as a loving daughter." She would have proceeded, had not the tears of the old count, countess, and bystanders, interrupted her. Her tattered garments were then thrown aside; she was elegantly dressed; the fete became a complete scene of happiness; the count of Toulouse was apprised of every thing, and the alliance joyfully confirmed, the ample portion given, and the former friendship newly cemented, and, a very few days after, the countess was delivered of a beautiful son, and several other

children in the course of time: she lived most happily with her husband, and became almost adored throughout the country.

This story is distinctly and circumstantially recorded in both countries, and I leave it to the hearers to determine which was most to be admired—the virtue of Toulouse, or the courtesy of Catalonia.

THE FATAL MISTAKE.

THERE lived at Salerno a nobleman of the name of Marino, who had from his lady, Placida by name, one only son, who was scarcely two years old when his father became dangerously ill, so much so that all the doctor's skill could not avail. Finding that it was impossible for him to recover, he called his wife, and requested her to bring his boy to him. When his wife came to him, he raised himself in the bed as well as he could, gave one hand to his wife, and held the boy's in the other, and said to her, " Placida, I am come unto my last hour, therefore am aware I shall not be able to take care of our boy; bring him up, and train him to virtuous pursuits, in which thing I had placed all my future happiness, and in doing for him all that which his tender age required of me; seeing that I must leave him so young, I should feel my approaching dissolution with real dismay, were I not convinced that your principles and prudence will amply make up for the loss of his father. I,

therefore, consign unto thy care and power this dear son, in whom I still hope to live again; and I entreat thee, by the dear remembrance of the extraordinary blessings and happiness we have enjoyed hitherto, that as thou hast ever been the tenderest parent, thou wilt now be both father and mother to him; and since it does not please heaven that we should be continued together in this happy state, I do entreat that thou bestow on him all that tender love and affection that thou wouldst have bestowed on me had I lived to old age; do but this, and I shall depart happy!" Thus saying, he embraced his wife, kissed the boy, and placed him on her bosom. "Marino," said the afflicted wife, "thou carriest away with thee the better part of me; would it had pleased heaven to have taken us both at the same time; but since it has otherwise decreed, and perhaps in order that our child might not remain entirely bereft of protection, I will be to him the tenderest of mothers. True it is, he would have needed thy assistance more than mine in educating him, and in directing his mind and heart, but nothing shall be wanting in me to justify the reliance and good opinion thou placest in me, or to induce the dear boy, in whom I see thy beloved image impressed, to imitate thy many virtues. Oh! that

I could, by the sacrifice of my life, lengthen thine !
Rest assured that I will preserve my faith in the
care of the charge thou hast given me, while I
live, as truly as I have to thee during this life."

Much did he praise and commend her, and would have said more, but to the great grief of Placida, he expired soon after in her arms.

After the funeral was over, Placida took great care to do every thing that could be conducive to the child's future welfare. The boy was naturally of a good temper, clever, fond of his mother, and very obedient to her, the which made him improve so much in learning and manners, that every one was astonished, and gave great credit to his mother for the care she had taken of him.

When the boy entered his twelfth year, he was seized with a fever, which by changing its symptoms, induced the medical men to fear it would turn to a consumption, and cause his dissolution. The poor mother, meanwhile, did not omit any one thing that could tend to his recovery, but was wasting away with grief as much as her son was by the fever. The physicians used every means to prevent the disorder from increasing, and the mother took care to give him every morning the medicines that had been ordered in certain por-

tions of endive water, nor would she suffer any of the servants to do it for her. She, therefore, got up every morning, mixed the draught with her own hands, and gave it to him ; but, by the sequel, it will be perceived how unavailing is prudence when ill-fortune pursues us. Placida, although yet young, for she was scarcely more than thirty, and though beautiful, and truly virtuous, was most anxious to preserve that beauty which nature had so liberally bestowed on her; for which purpose she was in the habit of using a cosmetic to clear the skin, and prevent the wrinkles which age naturally brings on. It unfortunately happened that after using this wash, she gave it to her maid to put in its proper place. As the latter was going out of the room with the bottle, one of the servants came in, and gave her the bottle of endive water intended for the patient's mixture ; having both hands full, she placed one bottle, as she thought, in the place where the wash used to be deposited, and the other she gave to her mistress, who laid it where she usually put her son's mixture.

The next morning Placida went to her son, and gave him the medicine which she had prepared as usual, but he had not taken it more than an hour when he began to feel the most excruciating pain,

and was tortured almost to death. The mother, in the greatest alarm, sent for the physicians, and related to them the strange effect produced that day on the patient by the draught which had before appeared so serviceable to him. The medical men were at a loss how to account for this extraordinary circumstance, but on examining the effect produced on the patient, they concluded there were signs of poison having been taken. "Good lady," said they, "your son has not taken his usual medicine; but poison has been given to him; it is that which has brought him to such a state." "What! poison!" cried she, "wretch that I am!—Gentlemen, you must be mistaken, for none but I ever administer the draughts." "It may be," said they, "that the person that fetched it may have deceived you, and put poison in the draught."

The servant, upon this, was immediately called up; he said that he had brought that which the apothecary had given him, without looking into what it might be, and that he would rather die than have done such a thing; being extremely fond of the youth; and besides a very worthy servant, he was easily credited. The apothecary was next sent for, but he positively asserted he had sent the same draught as usual. No one could imagine how

this could have happened ; the physicians, however, determined to come to the bottom of it, desired the bottles to be brought to them, and dipping in the finger, and tasting the dregs, they immediately tasted the sublimate of the cosmetic. " Good lady," said they, " you have been deceived, this is not the endive decoction, but real poison." The lady, examining the bottle more minutely, immediately suspected it was that wherein the wash used to be ; terror seized her ; she called the maid, and it was discovered that she had given her mistress the wrong bottle. The physicians instantly used every means in their power, but the poison had had too much time to work on the vital parts, and nothing could save him. The disconsolate mother threw herself on her lifeless child, and remained there till they really thought she had expired ; the doctors, however, used their skill, and soon recovered her, but the poor creature, instead of feeling thankful for their kind offices, reproached them for not allowing her to die ; but, said she, that which grief will not do, my hand shall accomplish. Thus saying, she caught a knife that lay on the table, and was in the act of destroying herself, when they all interposed. She called them most cruel in wishing her

to endure life ; cursed her hard fate, and her ill fortune ; accused heaven ; raved ; insisted that her maid should be brought to her, that she might strangle her with her own hands, since her carelessness had brought her beloved son to the grave. Those present endeavoured to remind her that it was not any ill intention, but a mistake ; and that, therefore, the girl did not deserve so severe a punishment. She insisted, however, that she should be taken up, and examined ; but the judge, finding her more silly than guilty, absolved her. This did not satisfy dame Placida, and they were obliged to remove the young woman from her service, who was sorely grieved at her careless conduct, having been the cause of so fatal an accident. After this delirium and rage against the poor girl had subsided, she began to reflect on herself, and considering that her pride, in wishing to preserve her beauty, had been the sole cause, she tore her hair, scratched her face, and totally disfigured herself, and talked of nothing but killing herself ; “ No !” said she, “ I, who have murdered my child, do not deserve to live !” She constantly entreated those who had the care of her to kill her. Finding this would not avail, she determined to starve herself, and would neither

eat nor drink, and they were obliged to force some nourishing liquid down her throat. She at last went downright mad, and, in her madness, was ever calling upon her beloved son. She continued so a few years, and was at last happily released; happily, it must be allowed, since she would have suffered the most agonising pain and anguish of heart had she lived.

THE DEAD ALIVE.

THERE was, not many years ago, at a village called Valdistrove near Siena, a countryman of about thirty years of age, a fine stout and sturdy fellow, and industrious too, who never lost an hour in idleness, and one of the best labourers about the place. Santi-grande was his name, grande being added from a nick name given to his father. This fellow was extraordinarily strong and powerful, but the greatest ninny that ever lived; nature had certainly endowed him with strength of body, but had left his upper rooms totally unfurnished, in so much that he became the sport of the villagers, who delighted in playing him all sorts of tricks—no uncommon thing in villages, where an idiot or so is usually to be met with. Even gentlemen of the neighbourhood would often play him some trick or other. Poor Santi took it all very quietly—insensible of his inaptitude. Some time since a favorite goat, which he prided himself in, had brought

forth two kids; he was highly delighted, and thought himself a Croesus in the possession of these, and planned what was to be done with the money they would fetch, when they were grown to a proper size. He said to his brother, "Simon! get me those two kids ready by the morning, for I will go to Siena to-morrow, and sell them." Santi was so elated, that he could not sleep the whole night. Simon, who wished to humour him, got the kids ready for him, saying to him, "Now don't ye go and make a foolish bargain, for they are well worth three livres; they are stout little creatures." "Leave that to me," said the poor silly fellow, "I knows how to make a bargain, I warrant you;" and away he went, singing. It so happened that when he came to the Porta del Diavolo two of his neighbours met him, and being in a merry humour, determined to have a little sport with him. Aware of his errand, one of them said, "Well, Santi, have you capons to sell there?" "Faith," said Santi, "unless my brother has played me a trick I think they are two fine kids;" so saying, he was feeling their ears and shooting horns. Our two humourists observing that Santi was a little in doubt about their identity, were inclined to carry on the joke. "Nay," said one, "feel again, for they are capons to

a certainty." A porter that happened to be near him, seeing what was going on, cried out, "Here, master, will you sell your capons? What do you ask for them?" Santi stopped short in amazement at the question; the fellow drawing near, said, "Well, will you sell them?" "No," said Santi, "I won't; they are not capons, they are kids." One of the youngsters kept close in conversation with Santi, asking him how he came to be so tricked; while the other, mending his pace, persuaded all those he met with, to ask the man if he would sell his capons? the which they all did. When the fellow got to the inn of the Angel, he told the landlord of the joke, and all the stable-boys and waiters came forth, crying out, "Will you sell your capons, Santi?" and all seeming anxious to buy them. Poor Santi looked hard at the kids, and could not be persuaded that they could be capons, therefore made the same answer, that they were kids not capons; "For," said he, "I told brother to pack up the kids, not capons." "Why," said the youngster, "they are well worth the kids, but if thou attemptest to sell them for kids, every one will think thou art mad." His companion, meanwhile, had gone forward to the city gate to tell the custom-house officers the joke, so that when Santi came to the

gate, they demanded the duty for the capons, which was one penny each: "But," said Santi, "these are kids." "Oh! let him alone," said one of the officers, "he is mad, and wants to pay the duty for kids instead of capons." "You silly fellow," said one of them, "if they were kids you would have five pence duty to pay, don't think we should cheat ourselves." In the meantime numbers of people crowded around, and enjoying the sport, vociferated that they were capons, so that at last Santi began to think they really were. "Yet," said he to a driver, that was talking to him, "I thought I I heard them cry, *ba, ba.*" "True," said the driver, "but were not the capons and kids in the same place?" "Yes," said Santi. "Well, the capons learned to *ba* from the goat and kids, as children learn to prate from their mothers and nurses. However, were I you, now we are near the town, I would not attempt to offer them as kids, for they will think you mad." "A plague on that brother of mine, but I will serve him a trick for this," said Santi. The two young men, when they came to the gates of the town, left Santi and the driver talking on, and went their way, when they met Girolino Palmieri a very frolicksome fellow, though rather old.

On hearing the jest they had put upon Santi, and his business leading him that way, he determined to carry on the farce, and have a little sport; having met Santi, he asked him what he would sell the two capons for? Santi, who no longer considered them as kids, though he had been asked the price of the kids, bargained with Girolino for three livres, the which being two fine ones, he bought, rather to prevent some one else from having the bargain, paid Santi for them, and led him to a cousin of his in the market-place, took him up stairs, saying to him, "What is the matter with you? are you not well? are you in any pain? how pale you look; will you have a glass of wine? why, thou art not the same man, how changed!" at these words, and in thinking of the capons, Santi became wild, and thought that, like the kids who had turned capons, he also had turned to something frightful. The young men, who had noticed that Girolino had bought the kids, were determined to inquire how the matter ended, and went to Girolino's house, and there found Santi drinking. "Well, how is it," said the one; but before he could well answer, Girolino said, "I have made him take a glass, for he feels very ill." "Poor fellow!" said one of the men, "where do you

feel pain? how deadly thou dost look, thou art surely dying." " He ought to be put to bed," said the other. Hearing this, and much more to the same purpose, Santi, almost maddening, thought he began to feel very ill, and conceiving he was dying, cried out, " My head aches! my body! my back! my legs! oh dear! oh dear! I am going." " Art thou cold?" said Girolino. " He must be so," said the one, " though it be intensely hot." " Indeed, I do begin to feel cold," quoth Santi. Girolino, still determined to go on with it, ordered a maid servant to warm a bed for him; when put to bed, they said, " Santi, how long is it since thou hast confessed? hast thou been to confess this year?" " Yes," said he. " Well, but," said one of them, " if thou diest, where wilt thou be buried?" Santi, thinking he was either dead or dying, said, " Let me be buried at St. Giulia, where my dad lies; and let the money I got for the capons go to mother, for I won't let brother have a farthing." Girolino perceiving that Santi thought he was actually dying, ordered a large old sheet, and he and the other two cut out and sewed up a winding-sheet, and took it unto Santi, saying, " Look ye, Santi, I will have ye die like a gentleman; put this on quick, or it will

be too late." Santi, who had no notion that dying was a serious thing, put it on, and in so doing, said, "Why its too long! I never shall get it on." Having thus equipped him, they said, "Now, Santi, that thou art dead, lay still, shut your eyes, and don't speak, and we will get thee carried to the ground where your dad lies." While they were laying him on a sort of hearse, and four men were sent for to carry him, they alternately cried out, "Poor Santi is dead; poor fellow, he is really dead!" The porters, who thought they were carrying a corpse, went through the gates quietly without being stopped, intending to take him to Strove, his own village: as they went on, there happened to pass by a carrier belonging to the cavalier Cappacci, who knew Santi well, but not recognising him in that state, asked the man who it was that died. They not knowing, answered they could not tell; however, the carrier getting near to the hearse, knew Santi instantly, and cried out, "Why it's that booby Santi del Grande, how came the mad fellow to die so soon, a stupid dog." Santi hearing himself thus abused, could not abstain from answering, yet without moving, he opened his eyes, and cried out, "If I was alive, instead of being dead as I now am, I'd let you know who

Santi del Grande is." On hearing the dead man holla thus, the porters dropped their load, and ran off as if the very devil was after them; Santi, meanwhile, lay on the ground weeping and groaning, and as many came round him to see this living dead, and asked him what was the matter, the only thing he could say was, "Take and bury me where my daddy lies." A cousin of his, who had returned from market, where he had been to sell some wood, seeing him in that state, bound him safe on the hearse and had him taken home. His mother and brother seeing him in that condition, asked him what was the matter, and how he came to be in such a state; to which he only answered, "Oh! I am dead, bury me—bury me where my daddy lies." His brother, suspecting some one had played him a trick, and made him believe that he was really dead, adopted the only means he thought could bring him to his senses, and, taking a horsewhip, began to lay it thick and thin on Santi's back; upon which Santi, roused by the blows, cried out, "Villain that thou art, thou hast caused my death by giving me two capons instead of the kids I asked thee for;" and, upon this he run after his brother, and both fell to it. The mother hearing the bustle came in with some neigh-

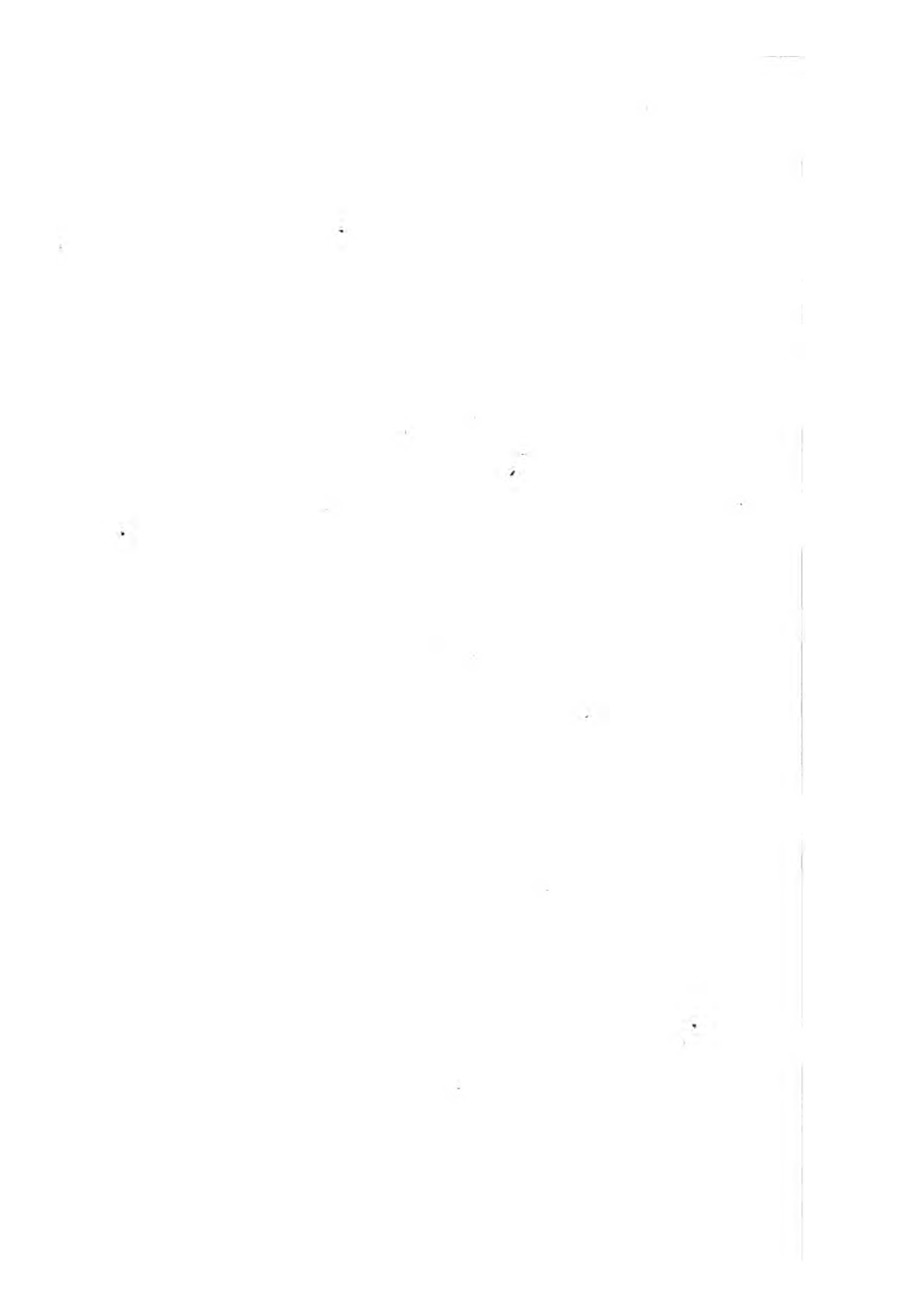


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bours, and parted them at last. Santi much bruised with the rope that had fastened him on, and the shock of the hearse when it fell, in addition to the horse-whipping, was put to bed black and blue. After two or three days he recovered, went to his usual work, but swore he never would go and sell any thing at market again.



THE FALSE CHAMPION.

THERE was in Provence, not many years ago, a certain Signor Carsivallo, a nobleman who possessed several manors; a man of great merit and judgment, much beloved and respected by the barons and nobles of the place, the more so on account of the antiquity of his family, who were descendants of the Balzos, in Provence. This gentleman had a daughter, named Lisetta, who was one of the greatest beauties in Provence. Many barons and lords, who were young, and of elegant appearance, had solicited her hand. But the said Carsivallo refused them all, nor would he marry her to any of them.

There was at that time a Count Aldobrandini, who was lord of all Venisi, containing many cities and castles, and who was above seventy years old, and had neither wife or children. He was possessed of so much riches that they exceeded all belief. This Count Aldobrandini hearing of this

beautiful daughter of Carsivallo, fell in love with her, and would willingly have married her but was ashamed to solicit her hand on account of his age, knowing that so many young and noble knights had sought to obtain her, and had been refused. However, he felt his love increasing, and could find no way to obtain her. It happened that giving a grand treat, Carsivallo, as his friend and humble servant, called to see him; the count received him with open arms, and honoured him much, gave him hunters, hawks, hounds, and various other presents; after which the count bethought himself he would in a friendly manner ask him for his daughter.

Being one day by themselves the count began, half in jest and half in earnest, "My good friend, Carsivallo, I will open my mind to thee without any further preface, as I know I may venture to speak freely to thee, although, perhaps, I may be a little ashamed on account of one thing, and that alone—that I am not quite so stout as I was; but be that as it may, I would willingly, if it met thy pleasure, marry thy daughter." Carsivallo answered, "My good lord, I would most willingly give her unto you, but that I should feel very awkward in so doing, considering that those who have solicited her hand are all young men, from

eighteen to twenty, who would become my enemies; besides, her mother, brothers, and relations, would not be pleased, nor do I know the girl would be at all gratified, when others so young and blooming might have had her." The count replied, "Thou sayest right, but thou mightest tell her, she shall be mistress of all I possess in the world; meanwhile we will contrive to find some way of succeeding, therefore, let us think upon this to-night." "Yes," said Carsivallo, "I am most willing, and to-morrow morning we will communicate the result to each other." The count could not close his eyes all night, but planned an excellent scheme, and the next morning he called Carsivallo, and said, "I have found an excellent plan that will afford you a good excuse, and do you great honour." "How is that, my lord?" said Carsivallo. "Do thou," said the count, "order a tournament to be publicly cried, and let it be known that he who wishes to marry your daughter must come on such a day, and whoever shall be the conqueror, shall have the lady, and leave the rest to me. I will find means to become the victor, and by this contrivance thou wilt be excused by all." Carsivallo said, "Well, I am agreeable to it." He left the

count, thus saying, and went home ; and, when he thought it was time, he called his wife, and other relations and friends, and said to them, “ Methinks it is high time to marry Lisetta ; what mean you to do, considering how many there are who offer themselves ; if we bestow her on one, the others will be affronted, and become enemies, saying, ‘ Am I not as good as he ;’ and so will they all, and we shall only create foes where we try to gain friends ; what think you of proclaiming a tournament in the spring, and of bestowing her to him who shall win her ?” The mother, and the rest of the friends, said they were of the same opinion, and approved of the plan. Carsivallo ordered the tournament to be proclaimed, stating, that whoever wished to marry his daughter, should come on the first of May, in the city of Marseilles, to the tournament, and that he who should prove the victor, should have the lady. In consequence of which, Aldobrandini sent to France, praying the king that he might be pleased to send one of his best squires, who was most valiant and expert at the tournaments. The king, considering the count had always been a faithful servant to the crown, and, over and above, a relation, sent him one of his knights, whom he had himself brought up from

his infancy ; his name was Ricardo, a descendant of the ancient and famous family of Mont Albano, and ordered him to obey the count in every thing he should desire. This youth came to the count, who received him with great kindness, then told him the reason why he had sent for him. "Milord," said Ricardo, "I am commanded by his majesty strictly to obey you, therefore, command me, and I will boldly undertake it." "We have ordered a tournament at Marseilles, where I mean you to be the conqueror; then will I come in the field of battle to fight with thee; thou must manage so that I be the victor in the contest." Ricardo answered, he would do so. The count concealed him within the palace till it was time, then said, "Take such arms as thou listest, and go to Marseilles, and give thyself out for a traveller; provide thyself with money, horses, &c., and take care to be true." "Let me alone, Milord," said Ricardo, and away he went to the stable; there he saw a fine horse that had not been rode for some months; he had it saddled, mounted it, and, taking such retinue as he thought proper, set off for Marseilles, where great preparations had been made for the intended tournament. Many gentlemen had already arrived on the occasion, all

mounted as superbly as they could possibly be with numbers of trumpets, fifes, &c. that stunned the hearers. A great spot of ground was palisadoed for the tournament, adorned with numbers of elegant booths for the ladies and gentlemen spectators. On the first of May, the noble lady, Lisetta, made her appearance, and, like another sun, eclipsed all the other ladies, as much by her noble manners as her superior beauty. All those that were anxious to obtain her, came forth with different devices, and began to thump at one another most gloriously. Ricardo advanced in the ring, mounted on the above-mentioned horse, forcing his way through all the combatants. The tournament lasted the best part of the day, and Ricardo was always victor, being more expert, and used to the sport; he boldly attacked, defended himself, and wheeled round with the agility of one well trained to the sport. Every one enquiring who he was, they were told he was a foreign nobleman, just arrived. He, however, remained victor, and all the others were defeated; one went one way, the other another, but all much despirited; and, shortly after, Count Aldobrandini entered the list, covered with his armour, and ran up to Ricardo and challenged him, and Ricardo

counter-challenged; and, after a seeming hard contest, as had been first agreed, the said Ricardo suffered himself to be dismounted, but never had he done any thing with more regret, for he had fallen in love himself with the lady; but he was bound to obey the king, and, of course, the commands of Aldobrandini. The count, remaining the conqueror, rode round the ring, sword in hand, his suit and barons coming into the ring to attend him, and greeting him. When he pulled off his vizor, every one was struck with amazement, and more particularly the lady. Thus did the count gain the lovely Lisetta, and took her home, where great rejoicings were continued for some time. Ricardo, returning to the king, was asked what had occurred; "Please your majesty," said Ricardo, "I am just come from a tournament, in which the count mischievously introduced me." "How!" said the king? "I have been pimp to the count;" and Ricardo related the story, which very much surprised the king. "Be not astonished, my liege, at what has happened, but rather be surprised that I should have done such a thing, for I never in my life did any thing I regret so much, and felt so much grief, for so extremely beautiful is she whom the count has so silyly gained. The king

thought awhile, then said, "Ricardo, do not be down-hearted, this will prove a fortunate event to thee."

It happened a little while after that the said Count Aldobrandini died without heir; the lady Lisetta, being left a widow, was taken home to her father, but he scarcely ever spoke or looked at her; the lady began to wonder very much at this, and being unable to bear it any longer, she said to her father—"Father, I wonder much at your behaviour to me, recollecting that I was your darling child, that you loved me better than all your other children, and leaped with joy whenever you beheld me—that is, while I was a maiden; now, I know not what can be the cause, you scarcely seem able to look at me." Her father answered, "Thou canst not wonder so much at me as I wonder at thee, for I thought thee more wise, considering why, and by what contrivances, I married thee to the count, merely that thou mightest have children, and remain possessed of his riches."

It so happened that all Aldobrandini's possessions fell to the king of France, who, remembering the generous conduct of Ricardo, sent to Provence to signify unto Carsivallo, that he wished to give his daughter to a squire of his, who, by right, ought

to be her husband. Carsivallo, who understood the matter, answered the king, that he was master to do as his majesty pleased. The king mounted his horse, and with a large retinue went to Provence, and conducted Ricardo with him, and formed this match, that is, that Lisetta should be his wife, after which he created him count, and bestowed on him the county which Aldobrandini had been lord of. This match gave great satisfaction to all, but especially to the lady, and so they lived together in happiness and comfort.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

THERE was at Florence, of the family of the Seali, a merchant whose name was Biondo, who had been several times to Alexandria and other parts of Egypt, and all those long voyages which merchants generally take with their cargoes. This Biondo was very rich, and had three sons, and being on his death bed, called his eldest and his second son, and made his will in their presence, leaving those two heirs to all he possessed, but left nothing to the youngest. The will being made, the younger, whose name was Gianetto, went to his father, who lay in his bed, and said, " My dear father, I wonder much at what you have done, and at your not remembering me in your will." His father answered, " My dear boy, there is no one of you I love more than yourself, for this reason I do not wish you to remain here ; on the contrary, I intend you, when I am dead, to go to Venice, to a godfather of yours, whose name is

Messer Ansaldo, who has not any children, and has often written to me to desire me to send you to him; and I can tell you, he is one of the richest merchants among the Christians there. I therefore desire, as soon as I am laid low, that you will go to him, and present him with this letter, and be sure if you conduct yourself with propriety, you will become a rich man." The son answered, "Father, I am ready to obey you:" upon which his father gave him his blessing, and after a few days died. His sons lamented much his death, and paid due honors to his memory. After a few days, the two eldest brothers called Gianetto, and thus addressed him:—"Brother, it is true our father made his will, left us his heirs, and made no mention whatever of thee, yet thou art, nevertheless, our brother, and what belongs to us is equally thine." "Brothers," answered Gianetto, "I thank you for your offer; but for my part I have made up my mind to try my fortune elsewhere, and have so fixed; therefore do you keep the property, and heaven prosper you with it." The brothers seeing him bent on this purpose, gave him a horse and cash to bear all his expences. Gianetto took leave of them, and went to Venice, found Messer Ansaldo's counting-house, and delivered him the

letter his father had given him. On reading the letter, Ansaldo found that the bearer was the son of his worthy and beloved Biondo, and embraced him most affectionately, saying, "Welcome, my god-child, whom I have so long wished to see;" then he asked him about his father; upon which Gianetto answered, he was dead. Ansaldo shed tears; embraced him again, and said, "Much am I grieved at the death of Biondo, for greatly did he contribute to the gains I have made in trade; but such is the joy I feel in having thee, my boy, with me, that it greatly alleviates my sorrow." He ordered him to be taken to his house, and commanded all his household to obey, and wait on Gianetto, as they would even upon himself. He gave him the key of the bureau, and said, "My son! do thou dispose of the money as thou shalt think meet; clothe thyself as thou thinkest most becoming; keep open house for all such gentlemen as thou shalt think proper, and make thyself known. I leave such things entirely to thy care, and the more thou wilt make thyself known and beloved, the more happy shall I feel." Gianetto, therefore, began to get acquainted with the noble youths in Venice, and to give sumptuous dinners; assisted and clothed several families; bought fine horses; entered

the ring, and revelled as one used and well practised in the style of a gentleman. He was never remiss in paying due honour where it was required, and more particularly to Messer Ansaldo, whom he treated as his real father; and so well did he conduct himself towards persons of every rank, that he became endeared even to the lower classes in Venice. Seeing how gracious, courtly, and affable he was, both ladies and gentlemen were delighted with him, his manners were so pleasing. Messer Ansaldo thought but of him; nor were there any parties, sports, or festivals in Venice, but Gianetto was sure to be invited, so much was he beloved. Two friends of his, at that time, wished to go to Alexandria with their cargoes in two ships, as they were wont to do every year, and told Gianetto of it, saying, "You ought to take this voyage with us, and see the world; particularly, you should see Damascus, and various countries beyond." "Indeed, I should delight in it," replied Gianetto, "if my godfather Ansaldo would permit me." "We will contrive," said one of them, "that he shall;" and they both went to him, saying, "Messer Ansaldo, we are about to entreat you to allow Gianetto to go with us next spring on our voyage to Alexandria, to freight him a ship, and suffer him to see a little

of the world." "Well," said Ansaldo, "I am willing, if he wishes it." "Sir," said they, "he is most anxious to do so." Messer Ansaldo, in pursuance of this scheme, ordered a beautiful vessel to be got ready, loaded with the finest goods, and decorated in the best possible style. When all was ready, Ansaldo desired the captain and all the crew to obey Gianetto in every thing; "he should command, because I do not send him for the purpose of gain, but solely that he may see the world, and enjoy himself." When Gianetto was ready to embark, all Venice came in throngs to the shore for it was many years since a ship was seen so well and so finely fitted out for sea. His departure grieved all that knew him; however, he took leave of Messer Ansaldo and his friends, and cheerfully sailed towards Alexandria.

These three friends were each in his ship, and sailing along one morning before day-light, when Gianetto espied a gulf, with a beautiful harbour, and asked the captain the name of it, to which he made answer, and said, "That place belongs to a noble widow who has been the cause of the ruin of many gentlemen." "How," said Gianetto? "Sir," said the captain, "this is a most beautiful and enchanting lady, who has established as a law in

her domains, that whoever lands there must lay with her, and if he can pass the night without sleep, he is at liberty to marry her, and then becomes master of the harbour, and all the estate; whereas, if he do not, he loses his cargo and every thing he has brought with him." Gianetto paused awhile, then said, "You must manage how you can, but sail into that harbour." "Sir," said the captain, "think well on what you are saying, for many a gentleman has gone there who has been driven away penniless." "Do not concern yourself about that, but do as I desire you," said Gianetto. Of course the thing was done, and on they sailed, without their companions noticing the course they had taken.

On the morning the news was spread that this fine ship had reached the harbour, so that all the people came to see it: the lady was soon informed of it, and sent for Gianetto, who immediately presented himself respectfully to her. The lady took him by the hand, asked him who he was, whence he came, and whether he knew the usage of the place? Gianetto answered he did, and only came there in consequence of this knowledge. A thousand times welcome, said the virtuous lady, and honoured and entertained him nobly, sending

for the barons, counts, and knights, to welcome and amuse him. Gianetto's manners delighted all around him, and the day was spent in dancing, singing, and festivity, by the court, in honour of Gianetto, and one and all would have been pleased to have him for their lord. Evening coming on, the lady took him by the hand, and led him into an apartment, saying, "Methinks it seems time to withdraw." "Madam," said Gianetto, "I am at your commands." Two young damsels came, the one bringing wine in her hand, and the other some sweetmeats. "I know," said the lady, "you must be thirsty, therefore drink." Gianetto took some of the sweetmeats, and drank some of the wine, which had been prepared as a sleeping draught, but he knew it not. He drank half a goblet, for it seemed very pleasant to him; and then he soon undressed himself and went to bed; no sooner had he laid down, than he fell asleep; the lady laid herself down by the side of the youth, who never woke till the next morning about three o'clock.

The lady got up as soon as it was daylight, and ordered the ship to be unladen, which she found contained a store of rich and good wares. It being now past three, the lady's maid went into

Gianetto's room, and made him rise, and told him he might depart, for that he had lost the ship, and all it contained; upon this he felt quite ashamed, and he thought he had certainly acted wrong. The lady ordered a horse and money to be given to him, and dismissed him, and he departed overwhelmed with sorrow. He arrived at Venice, but being ashamed, he would not go home, but in the evening went to a friend, who wondering, said, "Alas, Gianetto, what means this?"—"My ship," said he, "dashed in the night against a rock, and went to pieces; all was lost; some saved themselves as well as they could; I caught fast hold of a plank that brought me on shore, and have come home by land, and here I am." Gianetto remained several days with his friend, who sometime after paid a visit to Messer Ansaldo, whom he found quite disconsolate. Ansaldo said, "I am in great apprehension that this son of mine is dead, or ill from the voyage; the love I bear him is such, that I have no peace or comfort from this fear." The young man answered, "I can bring you news of him. He has been shipwrecked, and lost every thing except his life." "Well," said Messer Ansaldo, "heaven be praised, provided he lives, I care not for any thing that is lost; where is he?"—"He is

at my house," replied the young man; and Ansaldo immediately would go to him; and as soon as he saw him, he ran to embrace him, saying, "My son, don't be ashamed before me, for it is often the case that ships founder, therefore do not fret, for since thou hast not suffered any personal injury, I am at ease;" so saying, he took him home, consoling him as much as he could on the way.

The news of Gianetto's misfortune soon got wind, and grieved all that knew him. It happened that a little while after this, his companions returned from Alexandria, both very rich, and on their arrival enquired for their friend Gianetto. They were no sooner told the whole circumstance, than they ran to him, and embracing him, said, "How camest thou to leave us, and where didst thou go? for we never could hear any thing of thee. We sailed back, to and fro, but never could see, or hear where thou wast gone. Indeed we have been most melancholy on our return, for we thought thou wast dead." Gianetto answered, "A heavy gale arose that drove my ship into a creek, right on a rock near land, and I scarcely could save myself—all was lost!" This was the excuse Gianetto gave in order to conceal his silly

conduct. They both were thankful that he had escaped, and said, "Next spring, with heaven's blessing, we will gain as much more as thou hast lost, therefore let us be merry as usual, and give sorrow to the wind." Yet Gianetto could not help thinking how he could return to the lady, saying, "I must have her for my wife, or die for it." With such thoughts he could not give way to mirth. Ansaldo, therefore, often said to him, "Do not fret, we have still wherewithal to live at ease." "Sir," said Gianetto, "I never can be happy if I do not make another voyage." Ansaldo hearing this, and that such was his anxious wish, when the time came, he provided him with a ship laden with still more property than before, insomuch that he put on board almost the whole of his possessions.

His companions, when their ships were stored, set sail in company with Gianetto: as they were sailing, Gianetto looked out with anxiety for the harbour of his lady, which was called the port of the Lady Belmonte, and arriving one evening at the mouth of the creek, Gianetto soon recognized it, and ordered the ship to be steered into the harbour, so that his friends did not perceive it.

The lady, on rising in the morning, looking to

the harbour, saw the ship, and the colours playing in the wind, which recognising, she called her woman, and said, "Dost thou know those colours?"—"Madam," said the waiting woman, "it seems the same ship that brought that young man about a year ago, who had such riches on board." "True," said the lady, "I believe thou art right, and certainly this youth must be downright in love with me, for I have never seen any one return here again." "I," said the maid, "never saw a more graceful or courteous fellow than he is." The lady sent several equerries and damsels to him, who paid him homage, and led him joyfully to the castle, and into the presence of the lady. When she saw him, she embraced him affectionately, and he most respectfully saluted her. All the nobles were invited to partake of the day's pleasure in honour of Gianetto. They all admired how well he led a dance, and the ladies were quite charmed at the elegance of his person and manners, and thought he must be the son of some great lord.

But the same thing happened again. He lost his ship and all his property, and arrived at Venice without a ducat.

In the evening he went to his friend, who was thunderstruck at sight of him. "Alas! what does

this mean," said he? "My cursed ill-luck," said Gianetto, "that I should ever have come into this country." "Well mayst thou curse thy ill stars," said his friend, "for thou hast ruined poor Messer Ansaldo, who was one of the richest Christian merchants, and worst of all is the discredit."

Gianetto remained concealed several days at his friend's house, without knowing what to say or what to do, and was inclined to return to Florence, without letting Messer Ansaldo know it; but after a little reflection he bethought him he would go to him, and did so.

When Messer Ansaldo saw him, he arose, and ran to embrace him, and said, "Welcome, my son." Gianetto, weeping, embraced him; but when Ansaldo had heard the account, he said, "Do not repine; as I have got thee again, I am not downhearted; there remains still enough for us to hold up, and be comfortable; the ocean will sometimes take from the one and give to another." The news, however, soon spread itself in Venice, every one spoke of it, and grieved at the losses he had had, and Messer Ansaldo was compelled to sell many possessions he had, to pay the creditors who had furnished him with the goods. It happened that those companions of Gianetto returned from

Alexandria very rich, and on their arrival at Venice, were informed of Gianetto's situation, and how he had lost every thing, which they very much wondered at, saying, "This is the strangest thing that ever was heard of." However, they went to Messer Ansaldo and Gianetto, and comforting him, said, "Signor, do not be disheartened, we intend to go next year, and trade for you, for we are partly the cause of these your losses, since it was we who induced Gianetto to go with us in the first instance; therefore be under no apprehension, and whilst we have property, command it as your own." Messer Ansaldo thanked them, and said that he had still wherewith to live well. Gianetto, meanwhile, dwelling night and day on the dismal prospect and losses he had sustained, could not possibly conceal his chagrin, the which Ansaldo perceiving, he asked him what was the matter with him?—"I shall never be happy, if I do not recover that which I have lost." "My son," replied Ansaldo, "I will not have thee go again because it is better that we rest quietly with what little remains to us, than to run any more risks." "I am fully resolved," said Gianetto, "to do my utmost, and should be quite ashamed, and think myself dishonourable if I did not, and remained in this situation."

Ansaldo perceiving it was his fixed determi-

nation, prepared to sell out whatever he had remaining, and freight the youth another fine ship. As he was short of ten thousand ducats, he went to a Jew and borrowed the sum on the following conditions (having no other security to give): that if he did not return the sum within that midsummer-day twelvemonth, the Jew might cut off one pound of flesh from any part of his body; which the Jew accepting, Ansaldo was relieved: the Jew took care to have this agreement drawn up, and authenticated in all due form before witnesses, with all the precaution that men of business usually take in such matters; then counted over the ten thousand ducats in gold to Messer Ansaldo, who supplied the ship with every thing that was requisite, and though the two last were beautiful, yet this was much richer than either. The two friends loaded theirs with full intention that the produce should be for Gianetto.

When the moment for their departure came, Messer Ansaldo said to Gianetto, "My son, thou art going, and thou knowest under what penalty I labour; I do pray thee, that though any misfortune should again happen to thee, that thou comest to me, and let me behold thee ere I die; then shall I rest content." "Messer Ansaldo," said the youth, "I shall do every thing that will make you

happy." Ansaldo gave him his blessing, they took leave of each other, and he embarked.

The two friends narrowly watched Gianetto's ship, and he was carefully looking out for the port of Belmonte, and at last succeeded in persuading the captain to strike into the said harbour during the night. When the dawn appeared, the two friends looked about for Gianetto's ship, and, not seeing it, said, " Really this poor fellow is truly unfortunate." Not knowing how to find him out, they agreed it were safer to follow their voyage, seeing there were no hopes of meeting with him; the ship being arrived in the port, all came forth to see it, on hearing that Gianetto had returned, and wondering very much at it, said, " This must be the son of some great lord, if we reflect that he comes every year with such rich cargoes, and such fine ships—would to heaven he were our lord." Thus was he courted by all the barons and knights of that land; the lady was soon informed that Gianetto had returned; she advanced to the window, and beheld the beautiful ship, and recognised the colours; crossing herself, she said, " Surely this is the great man who has so enriched this country;" and she sent for him, and he went to her; they embraced and saluted each other, and the

whole day was spent in joy ; and to honour Gianetto, a grand tilt was ordered ; and Gianetto would also be one among them, and did wonders by the elegance and activity of his person. So far did he excel, that all the barons were most anxious that he should prove their lord. The usual time approaching, the lady said, “ I think it is fit we go to rest,” and took his hand to lead him into the room, when one of the lady’s women, who was much grieved at Gianetto’s mischances, whispered at the threshold of the door, as he was following the lady, and said, “ Pretend as if you were drinking, but do not drink to-night.” Gianetto heard the whisper, and went in with the lady. “ I know,” said she, “ you are thirsty, therefore, I will have you drink before you go to rest. Two beautiful creatures immediately entered, bringing wine and sweetmeats, and presented, as usual, the wine and cakes, and he said, “ How could any one abstain from drinking this wine, handed as it is by two such beautiful maidens ;” which saying made the lady laugh ; and Gianetto took the goblet, and, pretending to drink, he let the wine drop down into his bosom. The lady, thinking he had drank it off, said within herself, thou must return with another cargo, for this is lost to thee ;

but Gianetto went to bed, and felt himself quite wakeful, and it seemed an age before the lady came to bed; and he kept saying to himself, by the mass I have caught you now, fair lady, you have reckoned this time without your host: and as the lady delayed some time coming to bed, he began to snore as if asleep; therefore, the lady said to herself, this is all as it should be, and immediately undressed, and laid herself down by Gianetto, who, the moment she was under cover, shewed he was awake, and thus he remained the whole night. The lady rose before morning, and sent for all the barons, knights, and citizens, to the council chamber, and said to them, "Gianetto is your lord, therefore, rejoice and make merry." This being spread abroad, nothing was heard but the general cry of, "Long live our lord," and the ringing of bells, and sounds of various instruments. Several barons who were absent from the castle were sent for to pay homage to their lord, and a great rejoicing took place; and Gianetto, when he came from his room, was knighted, placed in the seat of honour with the bâton in his hand, and hailed as sovereign lord; and when all the nobility were arrived at court, he was married to the lady amidst such festivity as can scarcely

be credited, for all the barons, knights, and gentry, were invited to the tilts, the sham-fights, dances, music, singing, and every thing that is usual on such extraordinary occasions. Gianetto, being a noble-spirited youth, began to bestow presents of rich silks, and other things which he had brought, and took upon himself a manly conduct; made himself obeyed, and enforced the laws towards all his subjects, and was enjoying all the pleasures and comforts, without once thinking of poor Ansaldo, who had pledged himself for ten thousand ducats to the Jew. However, being one day looking out of the window with his lady, he saw a number of persons carrying small torches who were going with offerings in great pomp. Gianetto said to his bride, "Pray, lady, what means this?" the lady replied, "That is a procession of mechanics who are going to carry their offerings to the church of St. John, this day being his festival:" this called to Gianetto's mind the case of Ansaldo. He withdrew from the window, and heaved a deep sigh, and grew quite pale, walking to and fro in the room, thinking of the circumstance. On the lady's asking him what was the matter with him, Gianetto answered, "Nothing." The lady then began to consider him attentively:—"Certainly,"

said she, "something ails you, and you will not own it;" and so she coaxed him so much, that at last Gianetto related to her how Messer Ansaldo had pledged himself to the amount of ten thousand ducats; and this very day, said he, is the day fixed, and I am distracted at the thought my poor father should die on my account, for if to-day the sum is not paid, he loses one pound of flesh cut off from his body. The lady replied, "Take horse directly, and go by land, which will be the quickest, and take with you such attendants as you like, with an hundred thousand ducats, and rest not till you arrive at Venice, and, if he be not dead, do you endeavour to bring him here." The horn was quickly blown; he mounted his steed, accompanied by twenty attendants, and, having taken money enough, journeyed with speed to Venice. The Jew had caused Messer Ansaldo to be arrested, and wanted to have the pound of flesh; upon which Ansaldo entreated him to delay his death for a few days, that, in case Gianetto should come, he might see him. The Jew said, "I am willing to grant what you ask as to the delay, but were he to come an hundred times over, I will have the pound of flesh from your body, as agreed on in the note." Ansaldo answered that he

was satisfied. The news of this having spread itself through Venice, several merchants agreed to pay the money, but the Jew would not consent, being determined on his death, that he might say he had been the death of the first and greatest Christian merchant. However, it happened that when Gianetto started in great haste to come to Venice, his lady followed close after him, dressed as a judge, with two servants with her. Gianetto, when he arrived at Venice, went directly to the Jew, and embraced Messer Ansaldo; then said to the Jew, that he wished to give him the money, and so much beside as he might require; the Jew replied that he would not receive the money, since it was not paid at the proper time; that he would have the pound of flesh: and here was the great question; every one was against the Jew, but still, as Venice was considered the seat of justice, and the Jew had it plainly on his side, and in proper form, none dared to oppose him, but by entreaties; so that all the merchants went to the Jew to beg and pray him to desist, but as he was the more obstinate, Gianetto offered him twenty thousand, yet he would not consent; thirty thousand were then offered—forty thousand—fifty thousand—till at last he was offered one hundred

thousand. "Look ye, sirs," said the Jew, "if you were to offer me as many more ducats as are to be found in Venice, I would not take them; on the contrary, I will abide by what the agreement states." While they were thus arguing the point, the lady arrived at Venice, dressed in the habit of a judge, and alighted at an inn; the landlord asked one of the attendants who the gentleman was. The servant, who had been previously instructed in what he had to say, replied, "This is a gentleman, a judge returning from Bologna, where he has studied the law, and is now going home." The landlord hearing this, paid him every attention; and, when at table, he said to the landlord, "What is the government of your city, landlord?" The landlord answered, "There is too much law, sir." "How?" said the judge. "I will tell you," replied the landlord; "there was a youth that came here from Florence, whose name was Gianetto; he went to his godfather, whose name is Ansaldo; this youth was so genteel and well bred, that he became the darling of all that knew him, but never did a more unfortunate man walk this city; three times did his godfather freight ships to a great amount, and every time he lost his all; so that at the last, wanting money,

Ansaldo borrowed ten thousand ducats of a Jew, under a promise that if he did not return them on St. John's day, in June to come, the said Jew should have a right to take from his body one pound of flesh, wherever he might choose; now, this blessed youth is returned, and has offered one hundred thousand ducats, instead of the ten thousand, and the scoundrel of a Jew will not take them; all the best men in Venice have gone to entreat, but to no purpose." The judge said, " But this question is easy to determine." The host said, " If you will take the task on yourself, and end this business, so as to save the good man's life, you will acquire the friendship and love of the most noble and virtuous youth that ever was born, beside the blessing of all the people in this city." The feigned judge ordered it to be posted up through Venice, that if any critical and extraordinary law-case should occur, that they might come to him and he would make out a clear case. The news of this being carried to Gianetto, that there had arrived a judge from Bologna, who would determine any law question, Gianetto called on the Jew, and said to him, " Let us go to this said judge." " Well," said the Jew, " let us go; but whatever he or any one may say or do, I will

abide by the written agreement." When they came to the judge, Gianetto did not recognise him, but she knew him well. Gianetto and the Jew both related their own story; the judge, after reading the agreement, said to the Jew, "I advise you to take the offered hundred thousand ducats, and let this good man free, who will ever feel indebted to you:" to which the Jew answered, "No, not I, I will do no such a thing." "That is the best thing you can do." "No! no!" replied the Jew, "I'll do no such thing." Upon this they all went to the court, where such matters were brought to issue. The feigned judge taking upon himself the defence of Ansaldo, said, "Order Ansaldo to come into court;" which being done, the judge said, "Do thou take now one pound of flesh from him, where thou wilt, and go thy ways;" upon which the Jew ordered him to be stripped; took a razor in his hand, which he had brought for the purpose, when Messer Gianetto turned to the judge and said, "This, sir, was not what I entreated you would do for me." "Make yourself easy," said the judge, "he has not yet cut off the pound of flesh." In the meanwhile the Jew was eying Ansaldo all over to see where he should cut. "Mind what you are about," said the judge,

“ for, should you take more or less than one pound, I’ll have you hanged. I tell thee, Jew, if thou spillest one single drop of blood thou shalt die, for thy agreement does not mention thou art to shed one drop of blood; moreover, it states thou art to take one pound of flesh, neither more nor less; therefore, if thou art wise, beware what thou dost;” and he immediately sent for the executioner; ordered the handcuffs and fetters to be brought to him, saying, “ If I see one single drop of blood fall, thy head shall be severed from thy body.” The Jew then began to quake, and Gianetto to leap with joy; but, after some contention, the Jew said, “ Your worship has outwitted me, therefore let me have the hundred thousand ducats, and I will be satisfied.” “ No,” said the judge, “ I will have thee take the pound of flesh, as the paper states, for I will not give thee a stiver; thou shouldst have taken them when they were offered to thee.” The Jew then said, “ nine hundred thousand;” then, “ eight hundred thousand;” but still the judge was inflexible. “ Let us give him what he asks,” said Gianetto, “ provided he let him free.” “ Let me alone,” said the judge. The Jew then said, “ Give me five hundred thousand.” “ I would not give thee a brass farthing,” said the



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judge. "Well then," said the Jew, "give me my ten thousand ducats, and a curse be with you all." "Hast thou not heard me," said the judge, "I will not give thee a doit; take thou the pound of flesh if thou wilt, if thou wilt not, I'll make thee cancel the writing." All present were overjoyed, and laughed at the Jew, in seeing the biter so completely bit.

The Jew, finding he could not compass his malicious intent, took the papers, and, being desperately enraged, tore them to bits, and threw them on the ground. Thus was Messer Ansaldo liberated and conducted home by Gianetto; then immediately taking the one hundred thousand ducats, went to the judge, and found him in his room ready to go home again; upon which Messer Gianetto said to him, "Sir, you have rendered me the greatest service, and done me the greatest kindness; therefore, I request you to take this money along with you, for you have well earned it." "I thank you kindly, Messer Gianetto," said the judge, "but I am not the least in want of it; take it back with you, that your wife may not say you have made a hard bargain." "Upon my faith," said Gianetto, "if I were to spend four times as much, she is so noble-minded,

kind, and generous, she would not in the least be displeased, for she wished me to offer more, if needful." "How do you feel towards her," said the judge? "There is not a woman on earth I could love so much, she is so chaste, and as beautiful as nature could possibly make her, and if you will oblige me so far, you will come and see her. You will be charmed with her, and the great politeness she will shew you, and you will then judge whether what I say is true or not." "As to coming with you I cannot, for I have other things to attend to, but since you say she is so benevolent, when you see her present my best respects to her." "I will," said Gianetto, "but I wish you to take some of this money; and while he was speaking the judge perceived a ring on his finger, and said, "I wish to have that ring, nor will I have any thing else from you." Gianetto answered, "I am agreeable to it, yet I give it you somewhat unwillingly, because it is the gift of my wife, and she desired I would always wear it for her sake, and should she notice I have it not, she will think I gave it to some woman I am in love with, and I love her more than myself." "I think," replied the judge, "that if she loves you so truly, she will readily believe you, when you tell her you gave

it to me; but, perhaps, you yourself wish to give it away to some favourite lady in Venice." "The love I bear her," said Gianetto, "is such, that there is not the woman created that I would prefer to her, so good, so beautiful is she;" and so saying, he took the ring from his finger and presented it to the judge, embracing him. "I entreat you," said the latter, "to do me a favor." "Mention it, I pray you," said Gianetto. "Do not stay here, but return soon to your lady." "Indeed," said Gianetto, "it seems to me an age since I have seen her;" and thereupon they parted. The judge stepped into the gondola, and went in peace. Gianetto treated all his acquaintance, made them presents, and kept open house; then took leave of all his Venetian connexions, taking with him Messer Ansaldo, and many of his former friends, and set off for Belmonte. Most of those of both sexes he left behind, grieved much at his departure, so nobly had he behaved while with them. Now it happened that the lady had arrived several days previous, and had ordered great preparations to be made. The houses were all hung with tapestry; several companies of armed troops were posted here and there, and when Messer Gianetto and Ansaldo arrived, all the knights and barons, with the rest of the court,

went to meet him, crying out, "Long live our worthy lord!" and when he reached Belmonte, the lady embraced Ansaldo, and shammed a little coolness towards Gianetto, whom still she loved so dearly. Great rejoicings took place; tilting, sham fights, dancing, music, and singing among the ladies and damsels that were present. Gianetto seeing his lady did not look so kindly towards him as she was wont to do, went into his own room and sent for her. "What is the matter with you?" said he. "There is no occasion for this outward show of tenderness," said the lady, "for I know you have found out your old favourite lady." Gianetto began to exculpate himself. The lady said, "Where is the ring I gave you?" "Well," said Gianetto, "what I anticipated is come to pass; I said, I was sure you would be displeased, but I solemnly swear to you, by all that is sacred, that I gave the ring to the judge that extricated Ansaldo from his difficulties." "And I swear," said she, "by all which I hold most dear, that thou hast given it to a woman. I know it well, and thou oughtest to be ashamed to perjure thyself thus." "May I die this moment," said Gianetto, "if I do not tell thee true; and, besides, I told the judge how it would turn out." "Thou

might have stayed where thou wert, and have sent Ansaldo here by himself, and enjoyed thyself among thy damsels, for I hear they all wept at thy departure." Messer Gianetto began to be greatly distressed, and could not refrain from tears, saying, "Thou swearest what is not true, and what could not be." The lady, however, seeing he was in great agitation, and quite miserable, it went to her heart, and she ran to embrace him, laughing immediately, and showing him the ring, and repeated to him every thing he had said to the judge, and how she herself had acted the part of the judge, and in what manner he had given him the ring. Gianetto marvelled at this account, but seeing it was all true, he began to feel relieved, and extremely pleased, and going out of the room, related the story to some of his friends, and the adventure increased their mutual affection, and thus they lived happily together, surrounded by friends, and not forgetting to pay all kind attention to Ansaldo.

**THERE IS A SKELETON IN EVERY
HOUSE.**

THERE was at Naples a lady of the name of Corsina, born at Capovana, and wife of a noble cavalier, whose name was Messer Ramondo del Balzo. It happened after some years that heaven was pleased to deprive this lady of her husband, and she was left a widow, with an only son, whose name was Carlo. This youth possessing all the excellent qualities and endowments of his father, became the mother's idol and only care. She bethought herself that it would be greatly to his advantage to send him to Bologna, to pursue his studies, in order that he might hereafter become a great man. Having made up his mind to this, she gave him a tutor, provided him with books, and every thing that would make him comfortable, and sent him away with a tender mother's blessing. There, for several years, she maintained him with every comfort he could wish. The youth, having

every advantage, improved greatly, and became an excellent scholar, and by his gentleman-like manners, correct conduct, and great talents, had gained the affection of all his fellow collegians. It happened, that having become, after some years, a doctor in law, and being nearly on the eve of his return to Naples, he was taken seriously ill, whereupon all the best physicians of Bologna anxiously endeavoured to save his life, but had no hopes of success. Carlo, perceiving he was a lost man, said to himself, I do not care so much for myself, as for my poor, dear mother, who will no longer have a son, for whom she has sacrificed her all, and whom she expected would become her consolation, who might form some great alliance, and thereby restore our family name. Now if she hears I am dead, and has not the comfort of seeing me once again, she will assuredly die with excessive grief. This reflection, more than the loss of his own life, overwhelmed him with sorrow. This thought ever uppermost in his mind, suggested the idea to him of contriving some means to prevent his mother from being overpowered by her grief; he therefore immediately wrote to her in the following words:—" My dearest mother, I do entreat that you would be kind enough to get me a

shirt made by the most beautiful and the most happy lady you can find in Naples, she who is most free from the cares or sorrows of this world." The letter being dispatched, and coming to hand, the mother immediately considered of the means of satisfying this request, and how she could find one; she enquired among all her acquaintances where she could meet such an unconcerned, and indifferent, and easy-minded woman; but the task was arduous, yet she was determined to do her son's will. The lady, however, searched to such effect, that she at last found one, who appeared so cheerful, so beautiful, and so happy, and so unconcerned, that she seemed incapable of feeling a single unpleasant thought. Madame Corsina, fancying she had found the very person she was in search of, went to the lady, who received her very politely. Madame Corsina said to her, "Can you guess what I am come for? it is because looking upon you as the most cheerful lady in Naples, and the freest from painful thoughts or troubles; I wish to ask you a very great favour, that is, that you would make a shirt for me with your own hands, that I may send it to my son, who has earnestly entreated me to get it made by such a one as yourself." The young lady answered, "You say you

consider me the most cheerful young woman in Naples." "Yes," said Madame Corsina. "Now," added the lady, "I will prove to you it is quite the reverse, and that there never was born, perhaps, a more unfortunate woman than myself, or who has more sorrows and heavy afflictions, and that you may be convinced of this," said she, "come with me;" and, taking her hand, she led her into an inner chamber, where, drawing aside a curtain, she pointed to a skeleton which was hanging from a beam: upon which Madame Corsina exclaimed, "Oh, heavens! what means this?" The young lady mournfully sighed, then said, "This was a most worthy youth, who was in love with me; my husband finding him with me, caused him directly to be hung as you see; and, to increase my agonies, he compels me to come and see the unfortunate youth every night and morning; think what must be my anguish at being obliged to see him thus daily; yet, if you wish it, I will do that you desire; but, as to being the most cheerful, unconcerned, and happy person, I am, on the contrary, the most wretched woman that ever was on earth." The dame remained in perfect astonishment, and said, "Well, I see clearly that no one is free from troubles and calamities, and that those that



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appear the most happy to us, are often the most wretched." She therefore took leave of the lady, returned home, and wrote to her son, that he must excuse her if she could not send the shirt, for she could not find a single individual who was free from troubles and sorrows. After a few days a letter arrived, stating that her son was dead; she, therefore, wisely thought to herself, that as she clearly saw no one was ever free from misfortunes and tribulations, even the very best of women; she would therefore take comfort, more especially, as she perceived she was not the only one, and thereby quieted her mind, and lived more happily by her submission to the decree of heaven.

THE ELOPEMENT.

THE Cavalier Nimagri à Revescio, a descendant of a noble Venetian family, whose name it is immaterial to mention, more particularly as the fact happened only some fifty years ago, being on his way to Rome, passed through Caserta, and being in want of a servant, his valet having been taken dangerously ill on the road, enquired of the host, where he alighted, whether he could recommend him such a one? The host said he would enquire, and towards the evening brought a man up, who he said wanted a place. The host having retired, the Cavalier Nimagri asked the man what he could do? To which Gasparo, the servant, answered, "Nothing, sir." "Nothing," said the cavalier, "can you dress hair, shave, &c.?" "No, sir, but have good will, and will learn any thing." "But what has been your employment?" "A very bad one," said Gasparo, "but I am heartily sick of it, and am determined to get my bread honestly,

and live in the fear of God." "But what are you; where do you come from?" "Oh, sir," he continued, "I am a Sicilian, Gasparo is my name; take pity on a poor repentant sinner! hitherto I have been only a thief and a murderer, who for a ducat or two would have murdered any man." Don Nimagri was astonished at the singularity of the case, and not a little staggered at the horrible countenance before him, wherein his former trade was strikingly depicted; but being a young man of uncommon courage, and being altogether struck with the candour and simplicity of the fellow's tale, as well as the unaffected repentance he showed, he hired him, and he has often been heard to say, in his life he never met with a more trusty or faithful servant.

The next day the cavalier pursued his intended journey to Rome; on the second evening, having stopped at one of the best inns at Mecerra, while Don Nimagri was at supper, the host came in, and having apologized for the intrusion, said, "Signor Cavalier, there is a very noble youth below, just arrived, who, upon hearing I had but one gentleman traveller in the house, has begged I would ask your excellency, whether you would allow him the pleasure of your society: I assure you, sir,"

said the host, " he is a very handsome young man, and, I dare say, the son of some nobleman of the first rank, who has been playing some thoughtless pranks ; run away from college, or some such trick." Don Nimagri, who was naturally of a kind disposition, desired the host to give his compliments to the gentleman, and say, he should be very happy in his company. In a few minutes the host introduced the guest, a very elegant youth, seemingly about eighteen, whose genteel and prepossessing appearance bespoke him of high birth ; he was in stature rather short, delicate, but well proportioned, of a fair complexion, with beautiful and animated eyes ; after the usual compliments on such occasions, an addition was ordered to the supper. Don Nimagri's curiosity was a good deal excited by the manners and conversation of his guest ; it was sensible, but reserved. Don Nimagri was too well bred to pry into his guest's affairs, but there was a visible uneasiness about the youth that distressed him ; he endeavoured to rouse him by every means in his power, but the stranger answered but little ; scarcely eat any thing ; sighed deeply ; and, upon the whole, seemed to be greatly agitated. Don Nimagri, however, imagining he might have some affair of honour on

his hands, generously offered the stranger every assistance in his power. Supper being ended, the youth got up, paced awhile along the room, and, at last, addressing the cavalier, said in a hurried tone, " Noble signor, I have a favour to ask you: will you allow me, if the host can accommodate us with a double-bedded room, to sleep in the same apartment?" Don Nimagri hesitated not an instant, but rang for the host, and enquired for a room with two beds; the host answered, that he was sorry to say he had no such thing in the inn. Don Nimagri perceiving the host's answer very much encreased the youth's inquietude, though he could not rightly guess at the cause, said, " Well, signor, we must do as well as we can, the night is very hot; for my part I only mean to take off my coat and boots, slip on my dressing gown, and lay on the bed, for I propose starting very early, and to travel in the cool of the morning;" and, as Gasparo came in to receive orders, he desired his horse to be ready by five o'clock. These matters being settled, they retired to rest. Don Nimagri would have been glad to have had a few hours sleep, but our youth was so restless as he lay on the bed, that it seemed impossible. Sleep, however, had at last over-

powered the signor cavaliero; he had scarcely slept two hours, when he was roused by a tremendous noise, as if the whole inn was in arms; he listened, and the noise still increasing, he jumped up; scarcely was he on his feet, when a loud rap was heard at the room door, and two voices demanded admittance. The youth, at the sound of the voices, ran to Don Nimagri, and hardly able to articulate a word, caught hold of his arm and cried, "Oh, save me, signor! I am an unfortunate young *woman!*" and fell at his feet. The cavalier had not a moment to think, for they threatened to break open the door; upon which Don Nimagri called to them, and said if they dared to force the door, without a proper order from the magistrate, he would blow their brains out, and that he was well prepared to encounter a host of them; to which they replied they had. "If you have," said the cavalier, "thrust it under the door, and if it is a true one, I will open the door:" but that was not the case, they were not in possession of any such a thing. After many useless threats, they said they would fetch a police officer, and retired. Meanwhile Gasparo, on the first hearing of the bustle, had equipped himself with two large pistols in his belt,

a poignard, a huge sword which he always wore, and came in to his master: what was to be done with the lady was the first question; the host was called, a purse of ducats put into his hand, (the best pleaders for protection); the state of the case being told him, he proposed, while they were gone, to procure an order, which he had no doubt they would obtain, as the magistrate of the place was by no means invulnerable against the attack of a full purse; that the lady should be hidden in the hay-loft under some trusses properly arranged for the purpose. This being done, the cavalier threw himself carelessly on the bed, and waited in great anxiety to hear of the lady's safety, till Gasparo ran in, and cried out, "*Il Diavlo istesso non la troverebbe,*"—the devil himself could not find her out, she is so well concealed. It was but a short time after every thing was settled, that the two gentlemen returned, accompanied by an officer, who was desired to thrust the warrant under the door, if he really had one. Don Nimagri finding that it was a magistrate's order, and knowing the lady was safe, ordered Gasparo to open the door; the strangers judging by the appearance of Don Nimagri, and Gasparo's terrible figure, that the one was a person of some consequence, and well protected,

began to apologize, stating that they were in search of a sister who had run away from home to avoid an union with a nobleman of her father's choice, and whom they were determined to secure. They searched every where, and as one of the brothers was looking under the bed, Gasparo, who was perhaps seized with an itching after his old habits, was winking and blinking at his master, with a piteous, imploring face, to let him have a pop or two at them; and it was with difficulty he was able, by threatening looks, and a grasp of his arm, to prevent him from discharging both his pieces at them. Being disappointed in their search, the three gentlemen withdrew. As soon as Don Nimagri thought they were safe, Gasparo and himself went to release the affrighted lady, who was more dead than alive; some refreshments being brought in, Donna Colomba, having recovered a little, related her story to her protector, informed him that her cruel father, for the sake of interest, insisted she should marry an old dotard, who was old enough to be her grandfather, and whose vices and character she abhorred. "But what do you intend to do?" said our young champion. "Signor," added she, with a bewitching grace, and tears glistening in her fine eyes, "I am under your protection; the interest you

have shown for my safety, repels every idea of fear in me, and I have no hesitation in entrusting my life and my honor in your hands, if you will but escort me with your servant as far as Benevento; I have, at a short distance from thence, an aunt, an abbess, under whose sacred care I shall be safe, and where I mean to take the veil: do but this, and I will ever be grateful to you." Don Nimagri was too much of a man and a cavalier to withstand the entreaties of a distressed fair one; he immediately gave orders for a carriage to be got ready, desired Gasparo to saddle their horses, look to the pistols in both saddles, and be quick. Gasparo flew; the chaise being ready, the host liberally paid, the better to seal his lips, Donna Colomba and Don Nimagri leaped into the vehicle, and drove off full gallop. Whether the brothers had had scent by some stable-boy or other, that a lady had been at the inn is not certain; but they had laid watch, the which was easy enough, as there was but one road; but being afraid, they placed themselves in ambush and suffered them to pass, and followed behind at a small distance, expecting to overtake them at the rising of the hill, which was about three miles off, when the horses would be tired. By the time they got within a quarter of a mile from the hill, Gasparo

who was following, leading his master's steed, hearing a trampling of horses, looked back, saw them, and instantly gave the alarm, crying as loud as he could, "Here they are, here they are, we shall have fine sport." Don Nimagri looked out of the window, stopped the carriage, got out, mounted his horse, ordered the postillion to drive as fast as he could out of reach, the which he had no occasion to repeat, for he was gone before Don Nimagri could well turn his horse to face the enemy. The sbirro darting forward, pistol in hand, ordered them to stand. Gasparo, who was more expert at this work than his master, fired his pistol, but missing his aim, only shot the horse; down fell the sbirro. Gasparo dismounted in an instant; put his horse's bridle into his master's hand; ran up to the sbirro, and with his stiletto most charitably put him out of misery, for the poor devil had broken his arm in the fall. Don Nimagri meanwhile fired at the brothers who had advanced upon him. Gasparo seeing the danger of his master in this unequal match, fired his other pistol so successfully, that whether one alone, or both were wounded, was never heard, for both set spurs to their horses, like the valiant knight who ran away, to live and fight another day.

Don Nimagri finding that the enemy were fled, did not think it necessary to follow them, but turned his attention to the lady. They rode up to the carriage as fast as they could, and found the lady in the greatest terror; she eagerly enquired whether her brothers were safe, for cruel as they were, she could not but feel as a sister. Don Nimagri assured her they had both run away safe and sound. There being no time to be lost, lest they might have run off under the idea of getting assistance, he ordered the postillion to proceed to the next post, where they rested some time, the lady being overcome by the fright, fatigue, and distress of mind. As soon as she was recovered they set off, and arrived safe at Benevento, but although it was in the middle of the night, no entreaty or remonstrance could prevail on the lady to remain there till morning; she was so alarmed at the idea of being surprised, and carried away by her brothers, whom she had reason to fear were still pursuing, or perhaps some more powerful dread in the breast of a virtuous female, now she was discovered, that with tears she entreated Don Nimagri to proceed to the convent she had mentioned, to which he reluctantly agreed, apprehending the consternation and fright such an arrival, and at such an hour, would

create. The sisterhood of the convent, as he conjectured, when they arrived, had just retired again to rest after their midnight prayer, and were scarcely fallen into a doze, when they were terrified by the violent ringing of the great convent bell. What could be the matter? was the general cry. The alarm spread like wild-fire; some fell on their marrow-bones, praying to St. Jenajo; some ran with half their garments into the chapel; some concealed themselves in the vaults, while the poor abbess lay trembling in her bed, counting her beads. At last the portress came to the gate, and through the little grating enquired what was the matter. Don Nimagri said Donna Colomba, the abbess's relation, was pursued, and begged protection. While the good nun went up to deliver the message, the gates were opened, and the chaise drove in. But poor Gasparo was shut out, and thereby exposed to his fate, had there been any one at their heels; but luckily for him, they had been too much terrified to venture a second attack. Shortly after the fugitives were introduced into the chapel, for the abbess seeing the girls running helter-skelter in every direction, did not dare to introduce a man into any room, lest some of them might have sought refuge there. Therefore, into the chapel they

went; two or three of those innocent creatures, who had run into it in their fright, now scampered away as fast as they could, at sight of a man, and at that time of the morning. When the abbess had heard Donna Colomba's account, she thanked Don Nimagri for his very kind and humane attention, expressed great regret at not being able to allow him to stay the night, but offered to send to a neighbouring farm, and obtain accommodation for him and his servant; entreated him to come in the morning that they might have an opportunity of giving him some testimony of the gratitude they felt for his kind protection to her relation. Don Nimagri, highly pleased at his success in saving the lady, departed. Receiving a message from the abbess in the morning, he attended her and was presented to the whole sisterhood as the saviour of Donna Colomba's life and honor, and much gratified with the blessings and thanks of all these pretty creatures, who vied with each other in little presents of relics, sweet-meats, &c. The lady abbess presented him with a very handsome crucifix set in diamonds. Donna Colomba could not find words to express herself, but requested his acceptance of a beautiful diamond ring in remembrance of her; and loaded him with blessings. Gasparo, I must say,

was not neglected by the inferior nuns. Although not a very prepossessing personage, the account he gave of his glorious exploits so delighted them, for ladies are fond of valour, that he did not lack wine, cakes, and the good things usually met with in convents. After a few hours Don Nimagri took leave of the ladies and sisterhood, and arrived safe and sound at Rome.

THE FRIAR ENTRAPPED.

AT Arezzo, a city of Tuscany, there formerly lived a friar, who was styled Master Stefano. He was, in fact, a Mantuan, but he had dwelt so long at Arezzo that most people considered him an Aretine. He was a handsome fellow, about thirty, extremely bold, and eloquent, and, as most of the preaching friars are, I mean the wickeder part of them, inclined to trick his best friend out of his wife's affections. Although in the pulpit they preach up chastity, reprobate the sin of disturbing the happiness of married life, and dwell upon the merit of alms-giving, all this is in order to be more securely admitted into families, and to gain a character for sanctity, by which people may be induced to leave their property to the church, and deprive their rightful heirs of their due. Thus they enrich themselves, and laugh in their sleeves at the fools who are deluded by their hypocrisy.

Instead of paying regard to the divine precept, which directs all those of their profession not to provide food for the morrow, they are for ever begging, and grasping at every thing within their reach; and if perchance they should confess a dying person, who has detained that which was not his own, they will make him believe it is more meritorious and good for his soul, to give it to the church, than restore it to its owner. This Master Stefano was one of these fine fellows. He fell in love with a beautiful and virtuous lady, named Emilia, who was married to as worthy a man, Girolamo de Brendali. The lady, who thought that Stefano led so pure and holy a life, never suspected that he could entertain such unworthy intentions, and received him every day with the greatest marks of kindness, both on account of her husband's partiality to him, and, moreover, because for two years past he had been her confessor. The friar, however, being unable to moderate the ardour of his passion, determined to make her acquainted with it, having that opportunity at command every day. Still he thought it would be better to wait awhile, because it was carnival time; after which she was in the habit of going to church to confess, thinking it much more safe on account of the

sanctity of the place, in case any thing should be suspected, rather than her own house.

About eight days after the carnival, the lady, as was her custom, went to the church. The friar hastened to lead her to the remotest confessional he could pitch upon. After a few words of civility had passed, he began to interrogate her cursorily and lightly, touching the mortal sins, except that of incontinence, upon which he long dwelt, being highly delighted with an opportunity of expatiating on the subject, after the manner of too many confessors, who, under the pretence of interrogating, gratify their own prurient imaginations with indecent explanations, and circumstantial detail. Thus did the friar dwell on his favourite subject as long as he could, in order to forward the discovery of his passion to the lady. At last, breathing a deep sigh, he said, "Lady, heaven knows I have many a time hesitated to give you absolution, because I have from your confession found you so chaste and free from the sin of incontinence." "How, father," said she, "is it then a sin to be faithful to one's husband, and to be chaste?" "The reason is," said the friar, "because so beautiful as you are, I cannot believe but you must have numbers of admirers, and surely you cannot have resisted them

all. I have often thought, that through shame you have not told the truth, perhaps for fear (though heaven forbid that I should ever do such a thing) lest I should tell your husband, or lest I should refuse you absolution, of which, however, you would be unworthy only by disguising from me the truth. Therefore, speak to me with sincerity, let no fear prevent you, for I promise you, that instead of the reproof you might expect, you will find praise and approbation; for I think it a much greater sin to let a poor unfortunate fellow of a lover die, than to break through that which has been prescribed merely to make us live a little more regularly, than if all things were in common; or, perhaps, because we set less value upon those things which we can obtain with ease." The lady was greatly astonished at hearing these words, and being a virtuous and sensible woman, she began to suspect what the hypocritical friar was driving at; but resuming her serenity of countenance, which had been a little ruffled by his discourse, she resolved to answer him, without giving him the least suspicion that she understood his meaning, in order not to check him from saying what he had in his mind. So with a smile she said, "Alas! father, saidst thou that thou dost not believe I am the honest

and virtuous woman which I am?" "Nay, it is quite the reverse," quoth the friar, "I do think you a more worthy lady than you would seem, and that you would not be so cruel, as to suffer any one to languish and die for the sake of preserving that virtue." "Heaven preserve you," said the lady, "who do you think would die on my account? Who would cast on me a look of tenderness?" "Oh!" groaned the friar, "who is it can look on you and not lose his heart. As for my part, (and pray pardon me if I offend you), since I have been blessed with a sight of you, there has not been a day or night that I have spent without thinking of your beauty, or without petitioning mighty Love to afford me an opportunity (though at the risque of my life) of telling you how great is the tender affection I bear you. Should my ill-fate order it so that my passion should offend, lay the blame not on me, but on those transcendent charms and noble manners which have brought me to such a crisis, that I can no longer live unless you take pity on me. Should you delay this compassion, lady, too long, perhaps it may come too late, for I must surely die." Besides that Emilia was a virtuous woman; she was doubly offended at the friar's speech, on

account of the friendship which her husband bore him, and for this reason resolved on his punishment. She told him she could not give credit to such wonderful things; neither did she believe in his affection, nor in the charms he alluded to. Having parted from the friar, the lady went home, and related every word to her husband Girolamo, having previously made him solemnly swear that he would not meditate any serious revenge, but merely inflict some slight punishment on him, and let him go. Girolamo considering what he could do to the worthy preacher, which should not be a serious injury, and yet a great disgrace, he hit upon a plan which will soon appear. He told his wife to contrive to let the friar come to her some night, and related to her his plan. To this she agreed, and, in consequence, to prevent the friar from having any suspicion, and in order that the plot might the better succeed, she sent the friar some little trifling presents by her maid—perfumes, flowers, and green and black ribbons, such as ladies are used to send their lovers.

Our innamorato accepted every thing with joy and rapture, and had no scruple in sending as many back by a little convenient brother. The friar, now thinking he was at home to a peg, deter-

mined one Saturday to pay her a visit, for, on that day, it was his custom to rest from his duty; therefore, taking with him the little friar, on the Saturday before the Sunday of St. Lazarus, he marched off to the Lady Emilia. It so happened that, exactly as he wished it, Girolamo had gone out; he joyfully went up stairs, and sent word to Emilia, that he had waited upon her; the lady received him with very great kindness and affection; upon which our worthy friar, after a few sweet words, reminded her of his anguish and his hopes; to which Emilia, who had been taught by her husband what to say, replied, "Holy father! heaven knows I have always thought infidelity to my husband a great crime, but as you have assured me that there is no sin in it, and that you bear me such great love, I have determined to reward your passion, but on condition of inviolable secrecy; indeed, to shew you that I am in earnest, I would say that, were not to-morrow the Sunday of Lazarus, when you are to preach, you might come this very evening between eleven and twelve o'clock, my husband being gone to Villa Cavalca; I would not fail to open the door to you, at that time all the servants will be gone to bed and fast asleep." The worthy friar, who wished for nothing

more ardently, and to whom every minute seemed an age, said, "Dear lady, if this be your kind intention, do not let my preaching prevent you, for if you will let me out a little before day-light, I will preach a sermon to-morrow that shall delight and melt the hearts of my hearers." He departed, and, in order to make himself the more agreeable to the lady, he went to refresh and perfume himself; the lady, meanwhile, related all the particulars to her husband, who, after telling his lady how she should act, left the house, and went to sup with an intimate friend. At the hour appointed, the friar tapped at the door, which was opened to him, and he was led gently up stairs to the bedchamber where Girolamo and his wife usually slept; here she left him, desiring him to undress, saying that she would come to him as soon as she had arranged some trifling matters. Scarcely had our amorous lover stripped himself to his shirt, when Girolamo, who, with the friend with whom he had supped, had watched the friar, knocked furiously at the door. Emilia, on hearing this, rushed into the room, threw open the window, and demanded who was there, pretending to be in a dreadful fright. Girolamo answering, desired to be admitted, saying it was her husband. Emilia

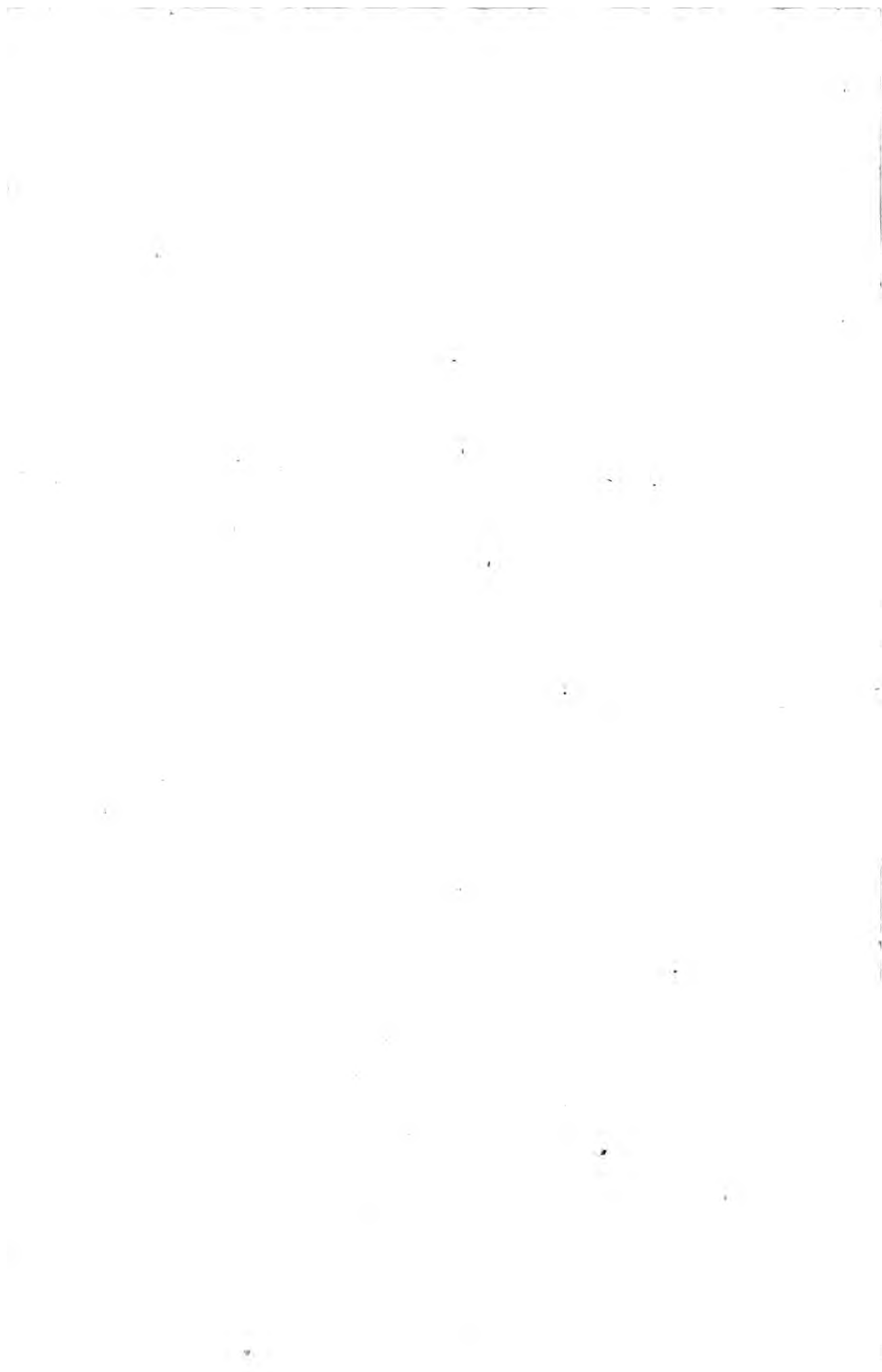
began to call out that she was undone, ran up to the father, who was more dead than alive through fright, bid him get up quick, and said, "We are as good as dead; I cannot think how it is, but my husband, whom I thought ten miles off, is now knocking at the door." "For heaven's sake," said she, "slip into that chest," shewing him a large one in the room, "and lie there until I see what may be done; meanwhile I will hide your clothes somewhere or other as well as I am able; heaven knows, I fear more for your holy person than I do for my own life." The unfortunate wretch, seeing himself reduced to such a pass, did as the lady desired. Meanwhile the servants awoke, got up, and let their master in, who, pretending that he had been attacked, along with his companion, when out of Arezzo, by some banditti, said he had caused the city gates to be opened by giving a crown to the guard; the which had delayed him for more than three hours, on account of his being obliged to go to the castle to get the keys. After ordering a bed for his companion, he went into bed to his wife, while the poor fellow remained in the chest. Day-light coming, the church bells began to ring for prayers, which greatly annoyed our captive, who was to preach at the cathedral.

Girolamo and his friend having risen, ordered two servants to carry the chest to the church, and place it in the middle, saying they were ordered to do so by the preacher; and that unlocking the chest without raising the lid, they should leave it there; all which the fellows did very neatly: every body stared, and wondered what all this could mean, some said one thing, and some another. At last the bell having ceased to ring, and no one appearing in the pulpit, or any other part of the church, a young man rose and said, "Really this preacher of ours makes us wait too long; pray let us see what he has ordered to be brought in this chest:" having said thus much, he, before all the congregation, lifted up the lid, and looking in, beheld the friar in his shirt, pale, almost frightened to death, and certainly appearing more dead than alive, and as if buried in the chest. He, however, finding himself discovered, collected his mind as well as he could, and stood upright to the great astonishment of all present; and, having taken his text from the Sunday of Lazarus, he thus addressed his congregation:—"My dear brethren, I am not at all astonished at your surprise and amusement in seeing me brought before you in this chest, or



The Friar entrapped.

p. 200.



rather at my ordering myself to be brought thus : ye know that this is the day in which our holy church commemorates the wonderful miracle our Lord performed on the person of Lazarus, in raising him from the dead who had been buried four days. I was desirous in your favour to present myself to you, as it were, in the form of Lazarus, in order that seeing me in this chest, which is no other than an emblem of the sepulchre wherein he had been buried, you might be moved more effectually to the consideration of what perishable things we are, and that seeing me stripped of all worldly decorations, thus, in my shirt, you may be convinced of the vanity of the things in this world, the which if duly considered, may tend greatly to the amending of your lives. Will you believe that, since yesternight, I have been a thousand times dead, and revived as Lazarus was ; and, considering my dreadful situation, remember that we must all die, and trust to Him who can bestow upon us life eternal ; but first ye must die to sin, to avarice, to rapine, and all those sinful deeds to which our nature prompts us ; and, above all, avoid seducing the wives of others, as none who so act can be saved." In such language, and in this manner did the friar continue

his sermon. Much praise did the Aretines heap upon him, more especially Girolamo and his friend, who had come to see how the trick would succeed, and who were astonished at the extraordinary presence of mind which the friar displayed, and laughed heartily at his success in persuading his audience of his wonderful chastity in respect of other men's wives. Girolamo, in consideration of the adroitness of the culprit, did not attempt any other revenge, but took very good care to shut his door in future against all such double-faced hypocrites.

ANTONIO AND VERONICA.

I REMEMBER having heard my old uncle relate a story as strictly true, that in the time of Charles the Second, there was at Salerno a noble knight, of an ancient family, called Messer Mazzeo, a chief justice, extremely rich both in money and lands, whose wife being rather old, died, and left an only daughter, whose name was Veronica, youthful, handsome, and very virtuous. Her father, whether from affection, or that he wished to marry her advantageously, kept her single at home, though she had many offers. It happened that a youth, named Antonio Marcello, of noble birth, who had been familiar in the house from his infancy, under the sanction of a certain relationship between him and Messer Mazzeo's lady, became so enraptured with Veronica, that he was almost mad. Antonio, although reserved and virtuous, and dearly beloved as a worthy son could be, yet unable to resist all powerful love, and having op-

portunities which his weak resolution could not withstand, this pair of youthful lovers forgot what was due to their father and themselves. Though they continued, with the greatest caution, this guilty intercourse, yet their utmost care could not guard them from the cruel storm which fate was raising against them. One night being together, and not suspecting any thing, it happened that one of the servants espied them, and immediately went to his master, and having related the fact, the former, full of indignation, went with some of his servants to the place where the couple were, who, being thrown into the utmost consternation, were both seized, but Antonio being very strong and courageous, disengaged himself, and, sword in hand, rushed forth and made his escape, unhurt and unseen, and went home. Messer Mazzeo, grieved to death on seeing how matters stood, insisted on knowing from his daughter who the young man was. She very prudently, knowing the temper of her father, and that the death of her lover must be the consequence, determined rather to expose her own life than his, and finally told her father that she would suffer every torment, and even death itself, rather than let the youth's name be known. The father, in the greatest rage, after having tor-

tured her in various ways, seeing her obstinately determined to be silent, although parental feeling moved him at times, determined upon her death, and, without seeing her more, he commanded two of his trusty servants immediately to drag her into a boat, and throw her overboard, when they should be some miles from shore. The men, though most unwillingly, bound her hands, and forced her to the sea side, and while they were making the boat ready, one of them being moved to compassion, sifted the other, who was equally sorry at the cruel circumstance, and talking over the matter, they agreed not only to spare her life, but to set her at liberty; and having unbound her, they told her that being strongly moved to pity, they could not execute the cruel sentence her father had ordered, and begged of her, as a return for the liberty they restored to her, that she would expatriate herself, so that her father might never hear of their having saved her. The poor young lady finding she received life through the humanity of her own servants, and that she was unable to reward them sufficiently, poured forth her prayers to heaven to send them blessings equal to the inestimable gift they bestowed upon her; and after recovering from her fright and terror she swore to them, by that

life they had saved her, that she would conduct herself in such a manner, that not only her merciless father, but no living soul should ever be apprised of the circumstance.

After having cut her hair, and dressed her up as well as they could with their own clothes, and giving her what trifle of money they had about them, they directed her on the way to Naples, and left her with tears; and having returned home with her clothes, they asserted, that with a large stone tied to her neck, they had plunged her into the sea about ten miles off. The noble lady, who had never before been out of the city, felt herself nearly fainting at every step she took; the thoughts of leaving her poor Antonio without the hope of ever seeing him again, together with many other tender thoughts, nearly induced her to turn back; but recollecting the kindness she experienced, and the solemn promise she had made to them, gratitude, that blossom of every virtue, had such power over her feelings, that every such thought was dismissed. She therefore went on, not knowing where, and praying to heaven to help her, she walked the remaining part of the night. About dawn, being near Nocera, she was overtaken by a party who were going on to Naples, and joined

company with them ; among these was a Calabrian gentleman, who was taking some sparrow hawks to the Duke of Calabria. The youth (for so the lady appeared) seeming to him a pleasant young man, he asked her what countryman he was, and whether he wanted employment? Veronica, who in sport had learned in her youth to imitate the language of an old woman of Apulia, who was in her father's house, thought she would make use of those Pugliese words which she recollected, as often as she could in the course of her conversation with him, and answered, " I am a native of Apulia, and came forth from home only to get a situation, but, as I am the son of a noble father, I would not wish to undertake too menial a place." To which the Calabrian said, " Would you like to be keeper of the hawks ?" This question highly delighted Veronica, having at her father's house had the care of several; she answered, that from her infancy she had been accustomed to the care of them. After some conversation as they went along, she took the care of one, and being arrived at Naples, and clad so that she appeared a very neat and elegant little squire, whether fate had so decreed it, or that her likely appearance captivated him, the duke would have both the hawks and the young

Pugliese keeper who managed them so well, and, consequently, he was installed in the family with a young Neapolitan. She so carefully fulfilled her duty, and was so exact in her attendance, that in a short time she became the greatest favourite, and was much valued by the duke; insomuch that she remained with him till fortune directed another course for her.

Her old father, meanwhile, torn with grief and remorse, for the fatal story had got wind, remained mostly shut up in his house or at his country villa, secluded from all society. Antonio, after bitterly sorrowing for the death of his dear Veronica, and finding that the old man had never discovered who the cavalier was who had escaped on that fatal night, determined, after a few days, as well to prevent suspicion, as moved by compassion, to visit the old man; he generally accompanied him to his villa, and shewed himself as kind, obedient, and dutiful, as if he had been his own son, the which Mazzeo felt the more sensibly, as the youth seemed to be the only one who had not forsaken him in his dire calamity, and therefore loved him as he would have done his own, and could not rest one hour without his dear Antonio. As the latter persevered in his kindness and

attentions to him, it occurred to the old man, that since his ill fortune had deprived him of an heir, he would adopt him as such. Full of this thought he made his will, and left Antonio heir to every thing he possessed, and died shortly after. Antonio having thus acquired immense property, and occupying the house of the deceased, met with numberless objects that recalled to his mind the tender and heroic affection of his dear Veronica, who rather met her death, than reveal his name. His grief and gratitude were such, that he vowed he never would marry. Meanwhile the duke determined to go to Calabria, which thing enraptured the Pugliese (Veronica), as she would not only see her dear country again, but might perchance hear of her lover, and of her father, whom she still loved, in spite of his cruelty, and of whom she had made no enquiry lest her secret should be known. Being arrived at Salerno, and the duke's retinue accommodated with lodgings according to their rank, it happened, as it pleased fortune to ordain, in order to put an end to their long sufferings, and finally make Antonio happy, that it fell to the lot of Antonio Marcello to accommodate the Pugliese and his companions with lodgings, which circumstance we may naturally suppose was no small joy

to Veronica. They were honorably and courteously entertained by Antonio ; at night he provided an elegant supper, and in the very apartment where he was wont to spend such happy moments with Veronica. As these two were looking anxiously on each other, Antonio thought he traced in the countenance of the Pugliese some of the features of his beloved, and recollecting her death, every word he uttered was broken by the deepest sighs. Veronica, seeing herself in her own house, though delighted at beholding her lover in possession of all the property, yet not seeing her father nor any of the family she had left, felt much afflicted and became very desirous of hearing something about him. While she remained thus agitated, in the course of the supper, her companion asked Antonio whether those painted arms in the hall were his, to which Antonio answered in the negative, and said they were those of a noble lord, named Messer Mazzeo, first judge, who having died in old age without children, had bequeathed all his property to him, for which reason having been adopted by him, he had taken possession, not only of the property, but assumed the name, as if he had been his own father. When Veronica heard this, her heart leaped with joy, and she could scarcely refrain from shedding tears ;

she, however, calmed herself till supper was over, when she thought it was high time she should fold her beloved to her arms, whom fortune had so kindly preserved to her; and taking Antonio by the hand, leaving her companions with the rest of the company, they entered an adjoining room, where she wished to say something to him by which he might recognise her. She attempted to speak, but could not utter a syllable from excess of joy and tears. Thus exhausted by contending feelings, she fell into his arms, exclaiming; "Oh! Antonio, my love, is it possible thou dost not know me?" He, who as I have said before, thought he recognized some features of his dear Veronica, upon hearing those words, immediately became convinced of what he only at first surmised, and overcome with the tenderest feelings, said, "My soul, art thou really living?" So saying he swooned in her arms. After caressing each other for a time with endearments, and relating their adventures, Antonio considering it fit to divulge the whole circumstances, and herself being of the same mind, they went out of the room to her companions, and although it was late, Antonio sent to all his own friends and Veronica's, desiring them to attend directly at his house, on business of the greatest importance.

They being arrived, he requested them to attend him as far as the palace of the duke, as he meant to request him to put him in possession of an estate formerly belonging to Messer Mazzeo, from which no fruit or advantage had been derived for many years past. The whole group having willingly agreed so to do, when before the duke, Antonio, taking his Veronica by the hand, in the presence of all, related every circumstance that had happened, without concealing the least particular; declaring afterwards how, from the very beginning of their love, they had pledged their faith as man and wife, and meant, with their lord's approbation, to celebrate publicly this marriage. The duke, barons, relations, and strangers present, hearing these extraordinary events were much surprised, and heartily rejoiced at the happy issue. The conduct and constancy of Antonio and Veronica were highly praised; they took leave of the duke, and next day high mass was celebrated in the presence of his highness, and Antonio and Veronica were both married; noble presents were sent by the duke, and they in love, and with many beautiful children, lived, and terminated this life at a very old age.

BELPHAGOR.

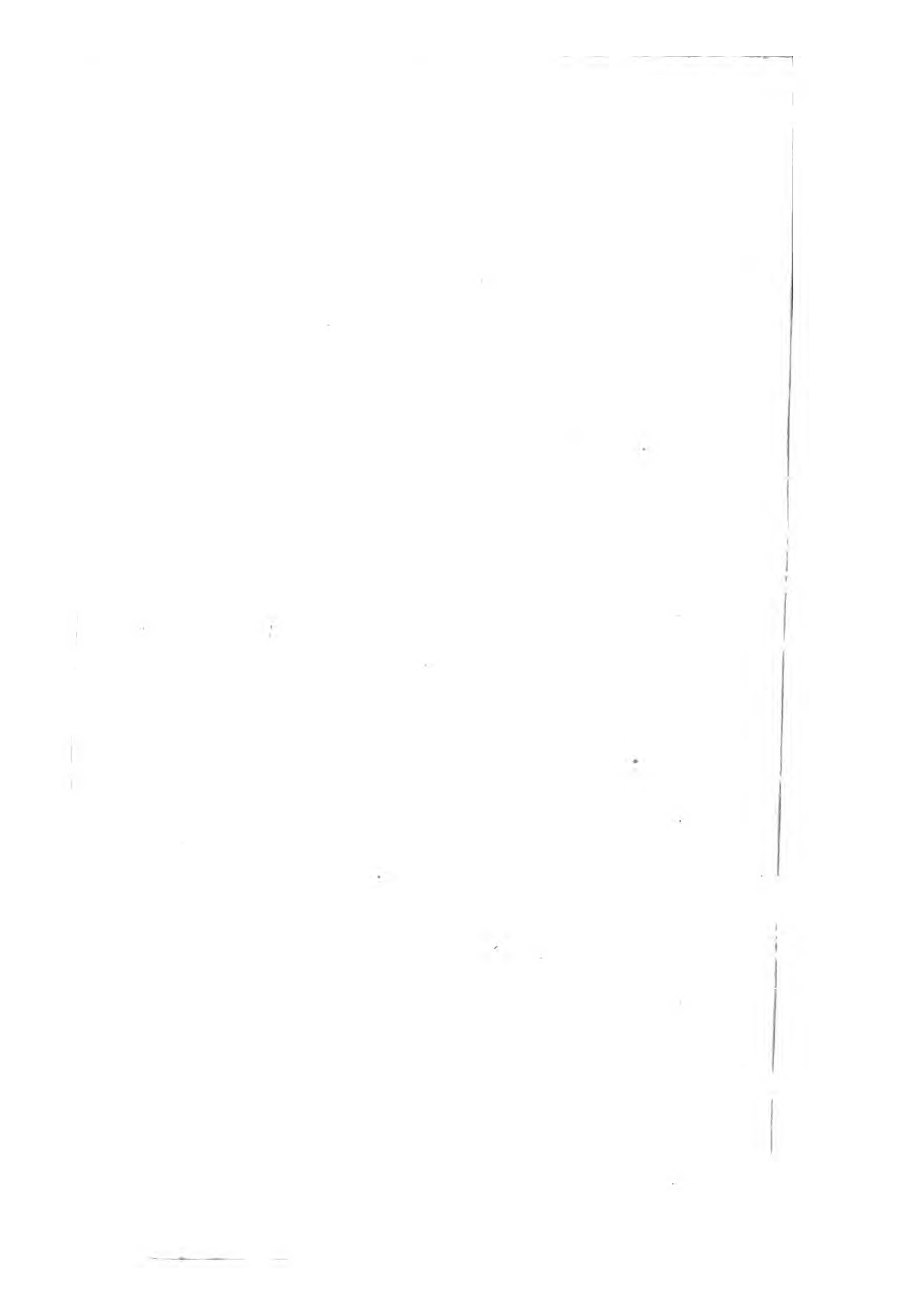
WE find in the ancient records of Florence, that a most holy man, whose life was, in after years, celebrated for sanctity, being one night deeply engaged in meditation, fell into a dream and saw numbers of the souls of wretched mortals, who had died under the displeasure of the gods, and inhabited the dark regions of Pluto, complaining, at least most part of them, of having been driven to such misery by marriage; the which greatly surprised Minos, Radamanthus, and other infernal judges, as they did not credit those falsehoods against the sex. But these complaints increasing daily, after informing Pluto of it, it was resolved to hold a council of all the infernal deities upon the subject, and ultimately determine upon what might be best to do, in order to ascertain the whole truth of the case. These being called to council, Pluto spoke in the following manner:—
“Although, my dearly beloved, by celestial power

and irrevocable fate, I possess this realm, and am wholly unaccountable to any celestial or mortal being, yet as it is more wise to listen to the opinions of others, I have resolved to take your advice in a case that might eventually be of great dishonour to our empire; all the souls of men that come into our infernal kingdom, say that their wives are the cause of it; this appearing impossible to us, we therefore fear that in passing sentence on this subject, we may, perhaps, be accused of too much cruelty, or of not being sufficiently severe, and unfriendly to justice; being desirous to avoid both these charges, we have called upon you for your advice and assistance, in order that this realm may remain, as it ever hath been, without disgrace." It appeared to all the infernal lords that it was a most momentous case, and they unanimously agreed that it ought to be sifted to the very bottom, but disagreed about the means and manner of carrying the investigation into effect; some were of opinion that one of them should be sent into the world, in the shape of a man, to ascertain personally the truth; others thought it might be done with less difficulty, by compelling several souls, by various torments, to tell the truth; but the majority decreeing that some one should be sent, they de-



Belphagor.

p. 214.



cided upon the former opinion. No one being inclined to take this business upon himself, it was settled that chance should determine, the which fell to the lot of the arch-devil Belphagor, who, before he was kicked out of heaven, was called archangel; he, though against his will, was compelled by Pluto's power to accept the office, and prepared to do that which the council should determine, and bound himself to such compacts as had solemnly been stipulated between them; the which were, that he who should be deputed should immediately receive a hundred thousand ducats, with which he was to come into the world with the features of man—take to him a wife—live ten years with her—then, feigning death, should return; and, by his own experience, prove to his superiors, what are the sorrows and comforts of the married state. It was moreover fixed, that he should be subject to all the misfortunes, and all the evils incident to man—that of poverty, imprisonment, diseases, and other calamities which men draw on themselves, unless he could extricate himself from them by deceit or cunning. Belphagor, having assumed the man, and taken the cash, came to the world, and after having ordered his horses and attendants, he made cheerfully towards Florence, the

which city he chose in preference to any other, as the one where roguery and usury were most likely to thrive; and, taking the name of Roderigo, he hired a house in the Borgo d'Ogrissanti. In order that they might not enquire who he was, he gave out that he had quitted Spain, when very young, and going to Syria, had gained all his wealth at Aleppo, and that his object in coming to Italy was to take a wife, as being a more civilized country, and more congenial to his feelings. Roderigo was a very handsome man, about thirty, and being in a very few days known to possess immense riches, and it appearing that he was liberal and humane, many noble citizens who had plenty of daughters, and a scarcity of money, made offers to him; out of the number, Roderigo selected a most beautiful young lady called Onesta, daughter of Amerigo Donati, who had three other daughters almost marriageable, and three sons grown to man's estate. Although he was of a noble family, and greatly esteemed in Florence, yet, in consequence of a style of living suited to his rank, he was very poor.

Roderigo's wedding was most splendid; nothing usual on such occasions was forgotten or neglected; it having been decreed before he left

the dark regions, that he should be subject to all the passions of men, he soon took delight and pride in the pomp and vanities of the world, and the praises of men, the which cost him dear enough; besides this, he had not been long with his wife before he fell desperately in love with her, and was wretched if she happened to look otherwise than cheerful, or was displeased at any thing. Madonna Onesta had not only brought youth and beauty to Roderigo, but such a share of pride, that he, who was a tolerable judge, thought the pride of Lucifer himself was a mere nothing to it; this greatly increased the very instant she perceived how much her husband doated upon her, and as she thought she could rule him as she pleased, she commanded him imperiously, nor did she hesitate, if he denied her any thing, to abuse and maltreat him, the which greatly annoyed him, yet the ties of matrimony, and the love he bore her, made him endure all with patience. I make no mention of the very enormous expenses he was at to please her in new fashions, which naturally often vary in this our city, and which he was obliged to submit to for the sake of peace. He was compelled to help his father-in-law in portioning the other girls; then again, to be on good terms

with her, he was compelled to equip one brother for the Levant with clothes, &c., and the other to the west with silks; and, lastly, to open a gold-beater's shop for the third, all of which consumed the best part of his fortune. Moreover, in the carnival time and festival of St. John, when the whole city is nothing but feasting and revels, and when the noblemen treat each other with splendid entertainments, Madonna Onesta would not yield to any lady in splendour and show, but insisted that her Roderigo should outdo them all in magnificence. Quietly did Roderigo bear all these things for the reasons above-mentioned—peace and quietness; nor would he have grudged the expense, though very annoying, nay, would have even borne more, could he but have had peace in the house; or could he have waited quietly the moment of his ruin: but, on the contrary, it was quite the reverse, for besides the ruinous extravagance she led him into, her diabolical nature wearied him daily, nor was there a servant in the house that could stay any time. Roderigo, of course, suffered much in not being able to keep a single servant that could take care of his property, for the very devils he had brought with him, under the shape of servants, rather chose to return to

hell, among their native fire and smoke, than dwell in the world under her controul. Roderigo going on in this dismal way, and having wasted all his property in the above manner, began to live on the hopes of remittances from the east and west, which he expected to receive, but being put to shifts and having good credit still, he borrowed on promissory notes. At this juncture the intelligence arrived from the east and west that one of the Madonna Onesta's brothers had gambled away all Roderigo's property, and that the other, on his return with a ship laden with goods uninsured, had been drowned, and the ship sunk. The instant the news was made known, the creditors assembled, and judging he was a ruined man, they being prevented from making any demands, the notes not being as yet due, agreed it was proper to keep a watchful eye over him, in order that he might not give them the slip. Roderigo, on the other hand, seeing his situation desperate, and thinking of the infernal law that bound him to this sublunary world, determined to be off at any rate. He mounted his horse one morning, and living near the gate Alprato, he rode through on his way. No sooner was his departure heard of, than the creditors were roused

up to action, and applying to the magistrate, they flew with the police, and even the populace, after him. Roderigo was scarcely one mile off, when he heard the outcry behind him. Conceiving the road was but an indifferent protection, he thought that striking across the fields would be a far safer way; but in so doing he found so many ditches in his road, the which are frequent in that part, that he alighted, left his horse, and ran on foot through fields covered with vines and reeds, with which that country abounds. He arrived at Peretola, at the house of Matteo del Bricea, a labourer of Giovanni del Bene, and as chance would have it, found Matteo feeding the oxen. Roderigo begged of him to save him from the hands of his enemies, who, he said, pursued him, to take him and shut him up in gaol to die; promising him a great reward, and adding, that he would enrich him, and would, before he left him, give him such proofs that he could no longer doubt; and should he not keep his word, he would allow him to deliver him up to his pursuers. Matteo, though but a labourer, was a man of spirit, and kind-hearted; and thinking he could lose nothing by protecting him, he promised so to do, and concealed him behind a dunghill, covered him up with lumber, and sticks which he had brought for fire-

wood. Roderigo had scarcely time to conceal himself properly, before his pursuers reached the place, who, however, could not obtain from Matteo an avowal that he had seen any such a one as they described. They, therefore, continued their way; being unsuccessful in their search, after two days pursuit, they returned back to Florence. When the bustle was over, Matteo took him out of his concealment. Roderigo said to him, "Matteo, I am under the greatest obligation to you, and will reward you, and that thou mayest believe me, I will tell thee who I am:"—upon this he related to him who he was, and the orders he had received on going out of hell; his taking a wife; the eternal plague he had with her, and, moreover, the means he should use to enrich him, which was this:—when he should hear that there was a young woman possessed with the devil, to be quite assured that it was he who was within her, and that he should not cast himself from her until he himself should come, by which means he might get such payment from her friends as he might choose. Thus agreed, he disappeared. Very few days had elapsed, when it was reported in Florence that a daughter of Ambrogio Amadeo, who had married Buonijuto Zebalducci, was possessed by the devil. The friends, of course, tried

all the remedies usually recurred to in such cases, such as placing the head of Saint Zarobi on her head, and Saint John of Gualberto's cloak, which things were rendered of no avail by Roderigo, and to make it clear that the deceased had really and truly an evil spirit within her, he made her speak Latin, and hold a disputation on philosophy. She made public the sins of people, and particularly those of a monk, who had kept a female more than four years under the dress of a young friar; which things people much marveled at. Messer Ambrogio, however, was truly miserable, and had lost all hopes of a cure, when Matteo having heard of the case, came to him, and told him that if he would give him five hundred florins to purchase a little farm at Ponterolo, he would restore the lady to her perfect senses. Ambrogio accepted the offer, upon which Matteo having ordered several masses to be said, and numerous mysterious ceremonies to be performed, in order the better to conceal the business, he accosted the lady, and whispering into her ear, said, "Roderigo, I am now come to thee that thou mayest perform thy promise:" to which Roderigo answered, "But this sum is not enough to make thee rich, therefore as soon as I depart from this, I will cast myself into the daughter of

Charles, King of Naples, nor will I depart from her until thou comest to me. Thou wilt then make thy own demand to the king, and after this never trouble me more." This said, he came forth from the lady, to the great amazement and joy of all present. It was but a few months after, that the news was spread through Italy of the accident which had befallen King Charles's daughter. All the attempts of the monks proving ineffectual to relieve her, and the king having heard of Matteo, immediately dispatched a messenger to Florence to fetch him. Matteo arrived soon at Naples, and, after some artful practices, removed the evil spirit from the lady; but before Roderigo quitted his hold, he said, "Matteo, thou seest I have kept my word with thee in enriching thee; I therefore am now under no obligations whatever to thee; do not thou ever attempt to appear before me, because I might hereafter do thee much harm, instead of the good I have done thee." Matteo, returning to Florence very rich, for the king had given him fifty thousand ducats, thought of enjoying his wealth in comfort, unconscious that Roderigo would ever do him any injury; but this hope was soon frustrated by news arriving that the daughter of Louis the Seventh of France was possessed of the

evil spirit; this quite upset the mind of Matteo, considering the power of that king, and coupling, withall, the threat of Roderigo, if ever he appeared before him. Meanwhile, Louis unable to find a cure for his daughter, and being told of Matteo's power of exorcism, sent at first a messenger to request his attendance; but Matteo alleging indisposition as an excuse, the king was obliged to apply to the government, who compelled Matteo to obedience. In great grief and perturbation of mind did Matteo arrive at Paris; he told the king that certainly there were such things by which he had formerly cured persons possessed with the devil, but that was not the case with all such, because there were some of so wicked a nature, that neither threats, exorcism, or religious ceremonies could move them; yet that he would certainly do his best, but, that should his endeavours prove useless, he entreated his majesty to pardon him. The king, greatly disappointed and incensed, replied, that if he did not cure his daughter, he certainly should be hanged. Matteo, of course, felt much alarmed at his ticklish situation; nevertheless, summoning up his whole stock of courage, he desired the lady might be called in, and with all humility, in a whisper, entreated Roderigo to

take pity on him, reminding him of what he had formerly done by him : to which Roderigo answered, “ Treacherous villain, hast thou the boldness to appear before me? dost thou forget I made thee the rich man thou art? I will now show thee and the world how I can bestow gifts, and bereave mortals of them at my pleasure, and before thou quittest this place, I’ll have thee gibbeted.” Matteo, conceiving he was lost, and seeing no other means of escape, determined to try his fortune in another way; therefore, desiring the lady might be dismissed, he said to the king, “ Sire, I have already told your majesty that there are such malignant spirits, against which nothing will avail, and this is one; however, I will try one last experiment, which, should it succeed, will make your majesty and myself most happy; should it fail, I hope your majesty will feel that compassion towards me that my innocence deserves. To this effect your majesty will please to order that a large platform be erected at the piazza of *Our Lady*, large enough to contain all your barons and clergy, decking the railing with cloths, silks, and gold fringes; in the middle of this platform I wish an altar to be placed, and on Sunday morning next

I wish your majesty to attend in solemn and royal pomp, with all your barons and clergy in their richest canonicals, when high mass shall be chaunted, and the lady brought forth. Besides these things, I do request that a group of at least twenty persons be placed at one corner of the square, with each a trumpet, horn, bugle, cymbals, drums, kettle-drums, or other terrific instruments, who at the waving of my hat, shall immediately strike up and walk on towards the platform; this and certain other exorcisms will, I hope, drive the evil spirit from the lady. Every thing was ordered by his majesty which Matteo desired; on the Sunday morning the king, barons, clergy, and populace being assembled, the mass was celebrated, and the lady brought up to the platform by two bishops, and several noblemen. Roderigo, when he beheld such a multitude collected together, was almost confounded: "What the devil does this dastardly scoundrel mean to do," said he to himself; "does he think to frighten me by all this show and bustle; does he not know that I am used to the pomp and splendour of heaven, and the fire and furies of hell? but I will punish him, that I will." Matteo approached him, and entreated him to be gone.

“What do you mean,” said Roderigo, “do you think to terrify me by all these preparations? dost thou think to shelter thyself from my power and the king’s rage? wretch! scoundrel that thou art! I will have thee hanged cost what it may;” and at it they went, abusing each other, till at last Matteo thought it would be useless to lose any more time, and gave the signal by waving his hat. All those that had been ordered played up, and with an infernal noise approached the scaffold. Roderigo, at this horrid cry and noise, pricked up his ears, and remained stupified, not knowing what it could mean, and asking Matteo what all that meant. Matteo, seeming quite alarmed, said, “Oh, Roderigo, *it is your wife, it is your wife* that is coming to you!” At the hearing of his wife’s name, no one would credit the agitation, fright, and terror it threw him into; and without considering the improbability of its being so, he was so thunderstruck that he instantly made off in a bustle, and left the lady *free*, preferring to go back to hell and give an account of his mission, to encountering the vexations, spite, troubles, hardships, and dangers to which the marriage yoke had subjected him. Thus Belphagor returned to

the infernal regions, gave a true and circumstantial account of all the evils which a wife brings into a house, and Matteo, highly delighted at his exploit, and at having outwitted the devil, returned home in raptures.

THE SLEEPING DRAUGHT.

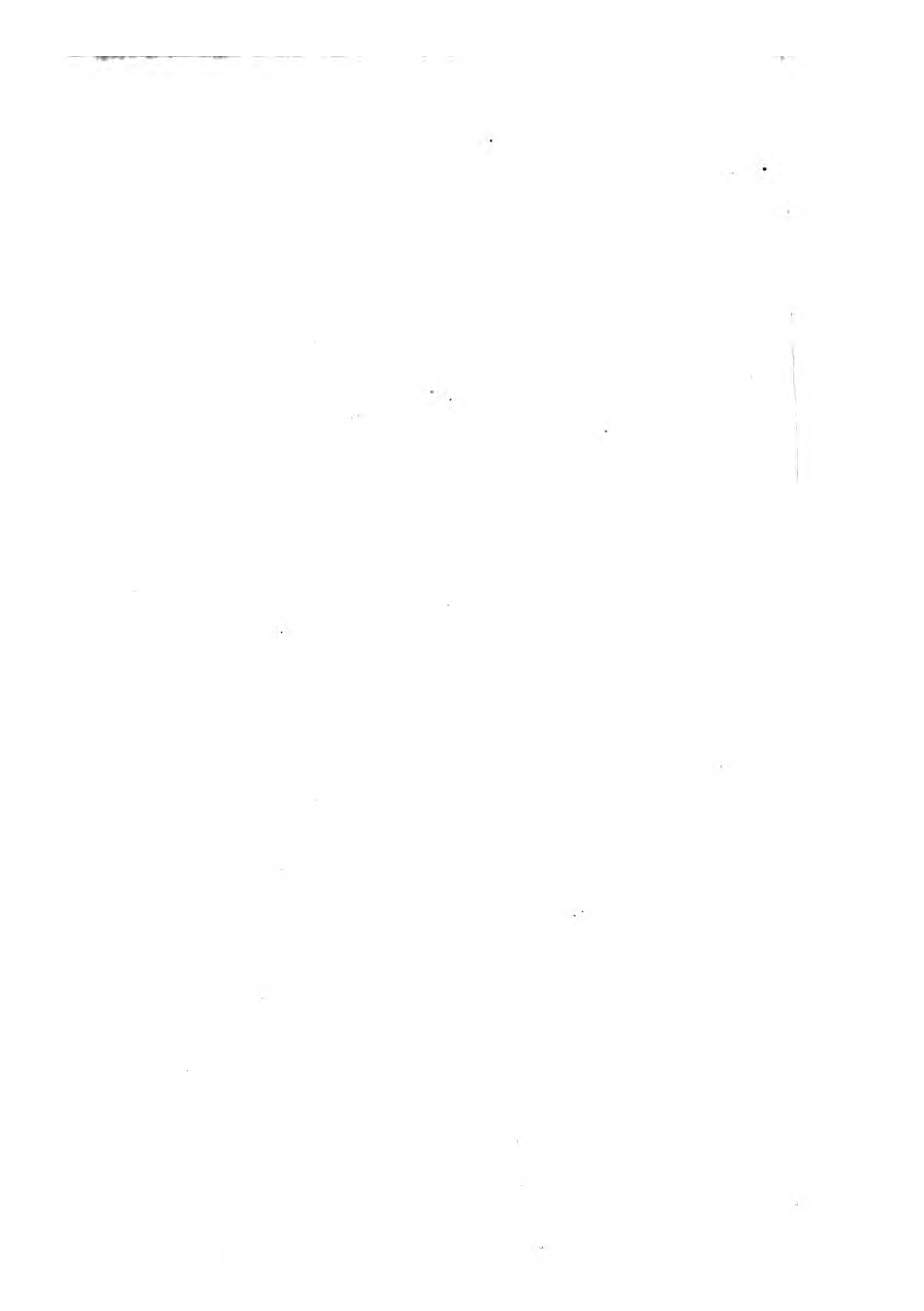
THERE was in Siena, not many years ago, a young man, the son of respectable parents, named Marriotto Mignelli, who fell violently in love with a young lady by name Gianozza, the daughter of one of the most respectable and worthy citizens, descended from the family of the Saraceni; in the course of time his assiduity and constancy were returned by the lady with equal ardour. They, for some time, remained satisfied with the joys of reciprocal protestations, and the sight of each other alone was a blessing beyond their most ardent wishes,—but this lasted but a short time; in what manner they should proceed to complete their views of happiness they could not devise, knowing the repulse they should meet from the parents of the lady. At last the lady, who was as prudent as she was handsome, resolved on secretly being married to him, and thus, should they be detected, to sanction their secret intrigue under the cloak of

a marriage. In order to accomplish this object, they bribed an Augustin friar, by whose means they were married. Having, for a time, enjoyed the fruits of this sly, and partly unlawful marriage, it happened that fortune, contrary to their expectations, turned all their joys to bitter sorrow. Marriotto one day coming to high words with a respectable citizen, blows ensued, and Marriotto unfortunately struck the man a severe blow with his stick on the head, of which the unhappy man died a few days after: Marriotto, therefore, carefully concealed himself. As the sbirri, who were sent in quest of him, could not find him, he was outlawed by the magistrates, and condemned to die if found within their jurisdiction.

What were the sorrows of the loving pair, may more easily be conceived than described; the bitter tears that were shed at their parting, under the impression they never should meet again, would have melted a heart of stone; and, in their last embrace, they both seemed expiring in each other's arms. At length Marriotto tried to comfort his mournful bride, by intimating a hope that, by some fortunate event, he might return to his country. He, at last, determined not only to absent himself from Tuscany, but to fly from Italy

altogether, and go over to Alexandria to an uncle, named Mignanelli, he had there, a great merchant. After settling with his wife on the best means of carrying on a correspondence between them, the unhappy couple parted in tears. The distracted Marriotti made his way to the nearest port, to set sail for Alexandria, after leaving a letter for his brother, to inform him of the whole secret. He most pressingly entreated him carefully to watch over the safety of his dear Giannozza, and to protect her. In due time he arrived at Alexandria, was kindly received by his uncle, and related his misfortunes to him; Mignanelli was much grieved, not so much at the murder of the man, as on account of the offence given to the relations of the lady by this secret union, and whose power was much to be dreaded; but thinking it was useless to reproach him for things past, they endeavoured to quiet each other's minds. The uncle initiated him in the trade, and having every month letters constantly from his beloved Giannozza, and now and then seeing his brother, he was comparatively happy. In the interim, the father of Giannozza being solicited and importuned by many to marry his daughter, she continually objected to one, then to another; being at last pressed by

her father to choose a husband, and, in such a manner, that it would have been needless to resist, she became almost distracted; to tell the truth would have but added fuel to fire. In this dreadful situation, a thought struck her, not only dangerous and cruel, but, perhaps, never yet heard of. She told her father she was ready to obey his commands, and immediately went to the friar Augustin, who had favoured their scheme, and cautiously imparted to him her project, and entreated his assistance; upon which he assumed that modest caution and timidity natural to the cloth, and, by some, highly admired; and humm'd and hah'd, but the enchanting powers of a well lined purse soon emboldened him, and he manfully entered into the scheme. He hastened home and made up (for he was an adept in the science) a draught, that not only would send a person to sleep for three days, but would give the real appearance of a corpse; having made up this draught, he sent it to the lady, with proper directions. Giannozza wrote a letter to Marriotto, to inform him of every particular the friar had done by her express command; then swallowed the draught, which, in a short time, threw her into a stupor, and she fell as if dead amidst her women;





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their cries soon brought her father and all the family into the room ; the distracted old man sent for medical assistance, but nothing could avail ; she was to all appearance dead, and the doctors were of opinion it was from the gout that had seized the chest. The next day, and the succeeding one, she was carefully watched, to see if any signs of life appeared, but none being visible, to the great grief of her aged parent, and amidst the tears and lamentations of friends and relations, she was buried in the church of St. Augustin. About midnight the friar, assisted by one of his trusty brethren, took her out of the coffin into his room, and at the hour when the operation of the draught must be nearly over, they, by friction and other means, restored her to life. Being completely restored to sense and feeling in a few days, dressed in a friar's garment, she set forth with the Augustin friar to port Pisano, where they found the galley Aquamorta, that was to touch at Alexandria in her voyage. Having taken their passage, they embarked forthwith, but as navigation is very precarious, and merchant vessels are often detained by landing, or freighting goods, contrary winds, and other casualties, they did not arrive till some months later than they expected.

The unfortunate Marriotto had, however, received, by several merchants, letters from Gargano his brother, who, anxious to keep up the correspondence he had promised, had written to him every particular of the melancholy event, adding, that the afflicted and broken-hearted old father had died with grief. On the other hand, the vessel by which Giannozza's letter had been sent was carrying corn to Alexandria, and was taken by pirates. Having no other information than his brother's, he concluded it was all as stated in his letters. Reader, if thou hast a heart, thou wilt easily picture to thyself the distraction of Marriotto; so overpowering were his sorrows, that he determined not to outlive his misfortune, and in spite of his uncle's entreaties, he resolved to return to Siena, to conceal himself in disguise, and there, where he thought his dear Giannozza lay, to bathe her tomb with his tears, and die. He embarked in a Venetian galley that was sailing to Naples; being arrived there, he went by land into Tuscany, entered Siena unknown, in a pilgrim's dress, and without going to any of his relations, went to the church of St. Augustin, where his beloved had been buried; there he wept and lamented, and would fain have buried himself with her in the tomb.



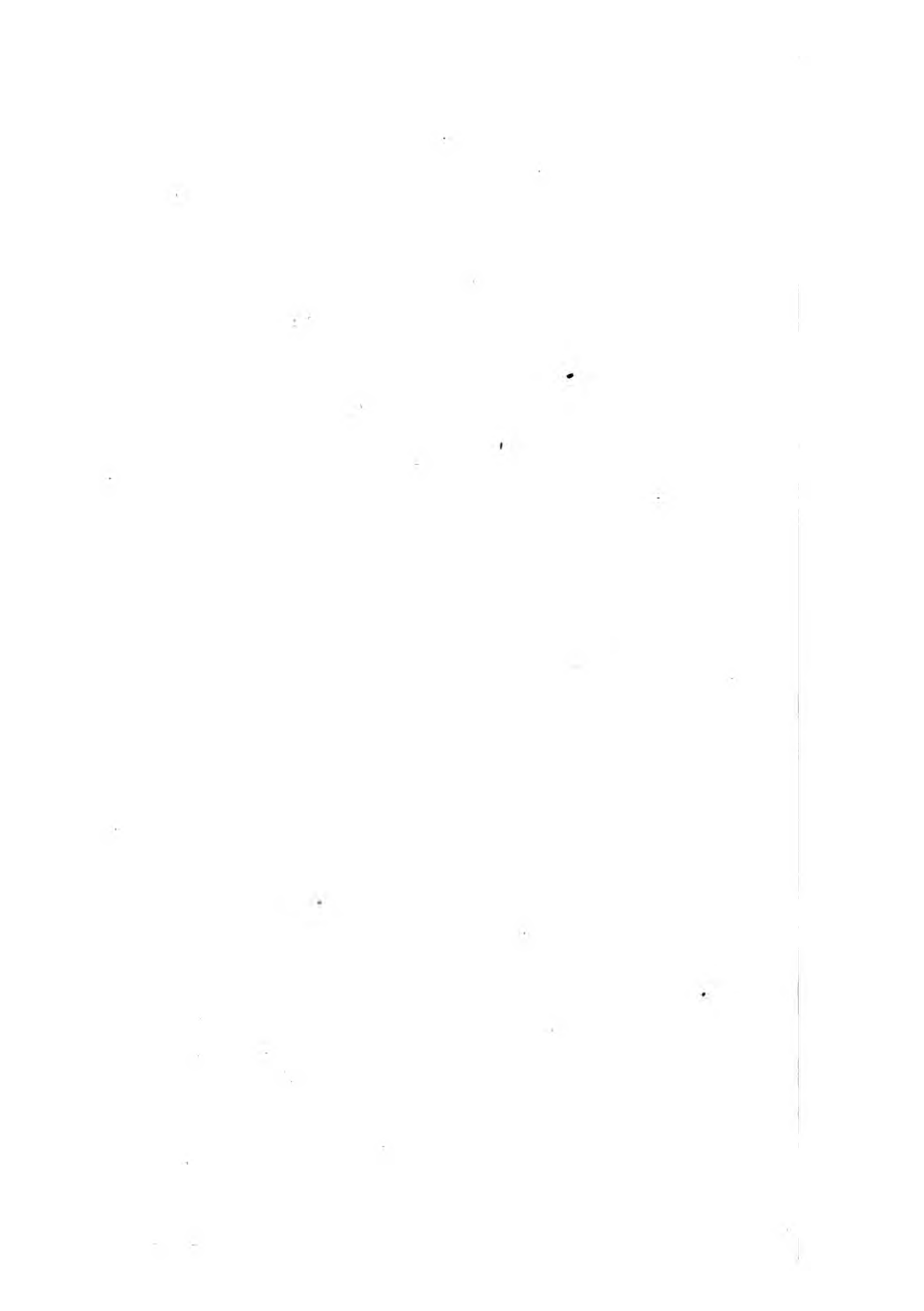
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The following evening he provided himself with an iron tool and wrench, and had nearly succeeded in opening the tomb, when the sexton, who was come to ring the bell for midnight prayers, hearing a noise, hastened to the place, and found the unfortunate Marriotto hard at his work; taking him to be a robber of the tombs, he halloed lustily, "*Stop thief, stop thief!*" that all the fraternity were soon down into the church, some in their night-caps, others in their shirts; and although he was in tatters, he was immediately recognised to be Marriotto Mignelli. Here he was kept fast till the morning. It was soon divulged in Siena, and reaching the ears of the magistrates, they instantly sent the sbirri to seize him. They brought him before the judge, and he had scarcely felt the first torture, when he confessed, rather than endure more torments, the cause of his desperate resolution to return home. Although he was universally pitied, and more particularly by the fair sex, who looked upon him as a phenomenon of true love, and wept bitterly for his fate, yet the magistrate ordered that on the first execution day he should be hung. Thus, the interposition of his friends being unavailing, he submitted to his fate. After some months had elapsed Giannozza, and her con-

ductor arrived, after great sufferings, at Alexandria, enquired for Niccolo Mignanelli, and having found him made herself known to him, and told him all her misfortunes, and the purpose of her voyage. The good uncle was petrified with amazement, and grieved to the heart. After he had made her take her usual woman's garments, and kindly treated the friar, he then related to the distressed Giannozza how Marriotto, led away by despair, had left him, and had gone back, without giving him the least intimation, fully determined to die, and how much he had grieved at his departure, knowing that such was his fixed resolve. Reader, you will surely conceive that this last misfortune outweighed every past suffering, and almost overwhelmed the unfortunate widow. After the bitterness of her sorrow was alleviated by scorching tears, Niccolo advised that they should both immediately take shipping, go to Siena, and find out Marriotto, dead or alive, and use every means to clear the honor of the lady. Having settled some little business, he made her take men's clothes, embarked her, and after a prosperous voyage they arrived at Leghorn, and went from thence as speedily as they could to a little estate near Siena, which Niccolo possessed. Having enquired into many

particulars, they were informed, to their very great grief, that Marriotto had three days before been executed. This fatal news was, indeed, a last stroke of cruel fortune. This was too much; tears could no longer flow; death and despair were indelibly traced in her countenance. Niccolo tried to comfort her, and at last determined, as secretly as possible, to place her in a convent, where, without making her known to the abbess, she might be taken care of. In this he succeeded; but intense grief, which totally deprived her of sleep and food, in a few days relieved her from all her sorrows, and she expired calling on her beloved Marriotto.



THE COUNTERPARTS.

MESSER Basilio, of Milan, who had fixed his residence in Pisa, on his return from Paris, where he had pursued the study of physic, having accumulated, by industry and extraordinary skill, a good fortune, married a young woman of Pisa, of very slender fortune, and fatherless and motherless; by her he had three sons, and a daughter who in due time was married in Pisa; the eldest son was likewise married, the younger one was at school; the middle one, whose name was Lazarus, although great sums had been spent upon his education, made nothing of it; he was naturally idle and stupid, of a sour and melancholy disposition; a man of few words, and obstinate to such a degree, that if once he had said NO to any thing, nothing upon earth could make him alter his mind. His father, finding him so extremely troublesome, determined to get rid of him, and sent him to a beautiful estate he had lately bought at a small distance from town.

There he lived contented, more proud of the society of clowns and clodpoles, than the acquaintance of civilized people. While Lazarus was thus living quietly in his own way, there happened about ten years after a dreadful mortality in Pisa; people were seized with a violent fever, they then fell into a sleep suddenly, and died in that state. The disease was catching; Basilio, as well as other physicians, exerted their utmost skill, as well for their own interest as the general good; but ill fortune would have it that he caught the infection and died. The contagion was such that not one individual of the family escaped death, except an old woman servant. The raging disease having ceased at last, Lazarus was induced to return to Pisa, where he inherited the extensive estates and riches of his father. Many were the efforts made by the different families to induce him to marry their daughters, notwithstanding they were aware of his boorish disposition; but nothing would avail. He said he was resolved to wait four years before he would marry; so that his obstinate disposition being well known, they ceased their importunities. Lazarus, intent upon pleasing himself alone, would not associate with any living soul. There was, however, one poor man, named Gabriel, who lived

in a small house opposite to him, with his wife Dame Santa. This poor fellow was an excellent fisherman and birdcatcher, made nets, &c. and what with that, and the assistance of his wife, who spun, he made shift to keep his family, consisting of two children, a boy of five, and a girl of three years old. Now it happened that this Gabriel was a perfect likeness of Lazarus; both were red haired, had the same length of beard, every feature, size, gait, and voice so perfectly alike, that one would have sworn they were twins; and had they both been dressed alike, certainly no one but would have mistaken the one for the other; the wife herself would have been deceived, but for the clothes—those of Lazarus being fine cloth, and her husband's of coarse wool of a different colour. Lazarus, observing this extraordinary resemblance, could not help fancying that there must be something in it, and began to familiarise himself with his society, sent his wife presents of eatables, wines, &c. and often invited Gabriel to dinner or supper with him, and conversed with him. Gabriel, though poor and untaught, was shrewd and sagacious, and knew well how to get on the blind side of any one; he so humoured him, that at last Lazarus could not rest an instant without his com-

pany. One day, after dinner, they entered into conversation on the subject of fishing, and the different modes of catching fish, and at last came to the fishing by diving with small nets fastened to the neck and arms; and Gabriel told him of the immense numbers of large fish which were caught in that manner, insomuch that Lazarus became very anxious to know how one could fish diving, and begged of him to let him see how he did it. Upon which Gabriel said he was very willing, and it being a hot summer's day, they might easily take the sport, if he too were willing. Having risen from table, Gabriel marched out, fetched his nets, and away they went. They arrived on the borders of the Arno, in a shady place surrounded by elders; there he requested Lazarus to sit and look on. After stripping, and fastening the nets about him, he dived in the river, and being very expert at the sport, he soon rose again with eight or ten fish of terrible size in his nets. Lazarus could not think how it was possible to catch so many fish under water; it so astonished him, that he determined to try it himself. The day was broiling hot, and he thought it would cool him. By the assistance of Gabriel he undressed, and the latter conducted him in at a pleasant part of the shore, where the

water was scarcely knee deep. There he left him with nets, giving him charge not to go farther than the stake which he pointed out to him. Lazarus, who had never before been in the water, was delighted at its coolness, and observing how often Gabriel rose up with nets full of fish, bethought himself one must see under as well as above water, otherwise it would be impossible to catch the fish in the dark, therefore, in order to ascertain the point, without thinking of consequences, he put his head under water, and dashed forward beyond the stake. Down he went like a piece of lead; not aware he should hold his breath, and knowing nothing of swimming, he struggled hard to raise himself above the surface. He was almost stifled with the water he had swallowed, and was carried away by the current so that he very shortly lost his senses. Gabriel, who was very busy catching a great deal of fish in a very good place, did not care to leave it; therefore, poor Lazarus, after rising half dead two or three times, sunk at last never to rise again. Gabriel, after he had got as much fish as he thought would do for him, joyfully turned round to show Lazarus his sport; he looked round and did not see him, he then sought him every where but not finding him, he became quite alarmed, and

terrified at the sight of the poor fellow's cloaths that were laid on the bank. He dived, and sought the body, and found it at last driven by the current on the beech ; at the sight he almost lost his senses ; he stood motionless, not knowing what to do, for he feared, that in relating the truth, people would think it was all a lie, and that he had drowned him, himself, in order to get his money. Driven thus almost to despair, a thought struck him, and he determined to put it in instant execution. There was no witness to the fact, for every one was asleep, it being the heat of the day ; he, therefore, took the fish, and put them safe in a basket, and for that purpose, took the dead body on his shoulders, heavy as it was, laid him on some grass, put his own breeches on the dead limbs, untied the nets from his own arms, and tied them tight to the arms of the corpse. This done, he took hold of him, dived into the water, and tied him fast with the nets to the stake under water. He then came on shore, slipped on Lazarus's shirt, and all his clothes, and even his fine shoes, and sat himself down on a bank, determining to try his luck first in saving himself from his perilous situation, and next to try whether he might not, from his extreme likeness to Lazarus, make his fortune and

live at ease. Being a bold and sagacious fellow, he immediately undertook the daring and dangerous experiment, and began to cry out with all his might and main, " Oh ! good people, help ! help ! run and help the poor fisherman, who is drowning." He roared out so, that at last the miller, who lived not far off, came running with I know not how many of his men. Gabriel spoke with a gruff voice, the better to imitate that of Lazarus, and weepingly related that the fisherman, after diving and catching a good deal of fish, had gone again, and that as he had been above an hour under water, he was afraid he was drowned ; they, enquiring what part of the river he had gone to, he shewed them the stake and place. The miller, who could swim very well, rushed in towards the stake, and found the corpse, but being unable to extricate it from the stake, rose up again and cried out, " Oh ! yes he is dead sure enough, but I cannot get him up by myself:" upon which two others stripped, and got the body out, whose arms and limbs were lacerated by the nets, which (as they thought) had entangled him, and caused his death. The news being spread abroad, a priest came, the corpse was put in a coffin and carried to a small church, that it might be owned by the

family of Gabriel. The dreadful news had already reached Pisa, and the unfortunate wife, with her weeping children, came to the church, and there beholding her beloved husband, as she thought, she hung over him, wept, sobbed, tore her hair, and became almost frantic, insomuch that the bystanders were moved to tears. Gabriel, who was a most loving husband and father, could scarce refrain from weeping, and seeing the extreme affliction of his wife, came forward, keeping Lazarus's hat over his eyes, and his handkerchief to his face as it were to wipe away his tears, and approaching the widow, who took him, as well as others, for Lazarus, he said, in the hearing of all the people, " Good woman, do not give way to such sorrow, nor weep so, for I will not forsake you ; as it was to oblige me, and afford me pleasure that he went a fishing to-day against his inclination, methinks it is partly to me he owed his death, therefore I will ever be a friend to thee and thine ; all expenses shall be paid, therefore, return home and be comforted, for while I live thou shalt never want, and should I die I will leave thee enough to make thee as comfortable as any of thy equals." Thus he went on, weeping and sobbing, as if regretting the loss of Gabriel, and really agonized by the distress of his

widow. He was inwardly praised by all present, who believed him to be Lazarus.

The poor widow, after the funeral was performed, returned to Pisa, much comforted by the promises of him, whom she considered as her neighbour Lazarus. Gabriel, who had been long acquainted with the deceased's ways, manners, and mode of living, entered Lazarus's house, as if the master of it; without uttering a syllable, ascended into a very beautiful room that looked over a fine garden, pulled out of the dead man's coat he had on a bunch of keys, and opened several chests, and finding some smaller keys, he opened several desks, bureaus, money chests, and found, independent of trunks filled with cloth, linen and jewels, which the old father, the physician, and brothers of the deceased had left, nearly to the value of two thousand gold florins, and four hundred of silver. He was in raptures all the night, and began to think of the best means to conceal himself from the servants, and appear as the real Lazarus. About the hour of supper he came out of his room, weeping; the servants, who had heard the dreadful situation of the Widow Santa, and that it was reported that their master had partly been the cause of the accident, were not much surprised at seeing

him thus afflicted, thinking it was on account of Gabriel. He called the servant and desired him to take a couple of loaves, two bottles of wine, and half his supper to the Widow Santa, the which the poor widow scarcely touched. When the servant returned, Gabriel ordered supper but ate sparingly, the better to deceive the servants, as Lazarus was a very little eater; then left the room without saying a word, and shut himself up in his own room as the deceased used to do. The servants thought there was some alteration in his countenance and voice, but attributed it to the sorrowful event that had occurred. The widow, after having tasted of the supper, and considering the care that had been taken of her, and the promises made by Lazarus, began to take comfort, parted with her relations, who had come to condole with her, and retired to bed. Gabriel, full of thought, could not sleep a wink, and got up in the morning at Lazarus's usual hour, and in all things imitated him. But being informed by the servants that Santa was always in grief, weeping and comforted, and being a fond husband, and loving her tenderly, he was miserable upon hearing this, and determined to comfort her. Thus resolved, one day after dinner he went to her, and found a cousin of

her's with her. Having given her to understand he had some private business with her, the cousin knowing how much she was indebted to him, and her expectations, left the room, and departed, saying, he begged she would be advised by her worthy neighbour.

As soon as he was gone, he shut the door, went into his room and motioned her to follow; she, struck with the singularity of the case, and fearing for her honor, did not know what to do, whether she should, or she should not follow; yet thinking of his kindness, and the hopes she had from his liberality, and taking her eldest son by the hand, she went into the room, where she found him lying on a little bed, on which her husband used to lie when tired; upon which she started and stopped. Gabriel, seeing her come with her son, smiled with pleasurable feelings at the purity of his wife's conduct; one word that he uttered, which he was in the habit of using, staggered the poor Santa, so that she could not utter a syllable. Gabriel, pressing the boy to his breast, said, "Thy mother weeps unaware of thy happy fate, her own, and her husband's." Yet not daring to trust himself before him, though but a child, he took him into the next room, gave him money to play with, and left him

there. Returning to his wife, who had caught his words, and partly recognized him, he double-locked the door, and related to her every circumstance that had happened, and how he had managed every thing: she, delighted and convinced from the repetition of certain family secrets, known to themselves alone, embraced him, giving him as many kisses as she had bestowed tears for his death, for both were loving and tenderly attached. After reciprocal marks of each other's affection, Gabriel said to her that she must be perfectly silent, and pointed out to her how happy their life would hereafter prove; he told her of the riches he had found, and what he intended to do, the which highly delighted her. In going out, Santa pretended to cry on opening the street door, and said aloud, that she might be heard by the neighbours, "I recommend these poor fatherless children to you, signor!" to which he answered, "Fear not, good Mrs. Santa," and walked away, full of thoughts on his future plans. When evening came on, observing the same uniform conduct of his predecessor, he went to bed, but could not sleep for thinking. No sooner did the dawn appear than he rose and went to the church of St. Catherine, where a devout and worthy pastor

dwelt, and who was considered by all the Pisanians as a little saint: friar Angelico appearing, Gabriel told him he wanted to speak to him on particular business, and to have his advice upon a very important and singular case that had happened to him. The kind friar, although he did not know him, led him into his room. Gabriel, who well knew the whole genealogy of Lazarus, son of Basilio of Milan, related it fully to the friar, likewise the dreadful accident, adding, that he considered himself as a principal cause of it, making him believe it was he who induced the unfortunate man to go a fishing against his will; he represented the mischief which resulted from it to the widow and children of the deceased, and that he considered himself so much the cause of it, and felt such a weight on his conscience, that he had made up his mind, though Santa was of low condition, and poor, to take her for his wife, if she and her friends approved of it, and to take the children of the poor fisherman under his care as his own; bring them up with his own children, should he have any, and leave them co-heirs with them; this, he said, would reconcile him to himself and his Maker, and be approved by men. The holy man, seeing the worthy motives which

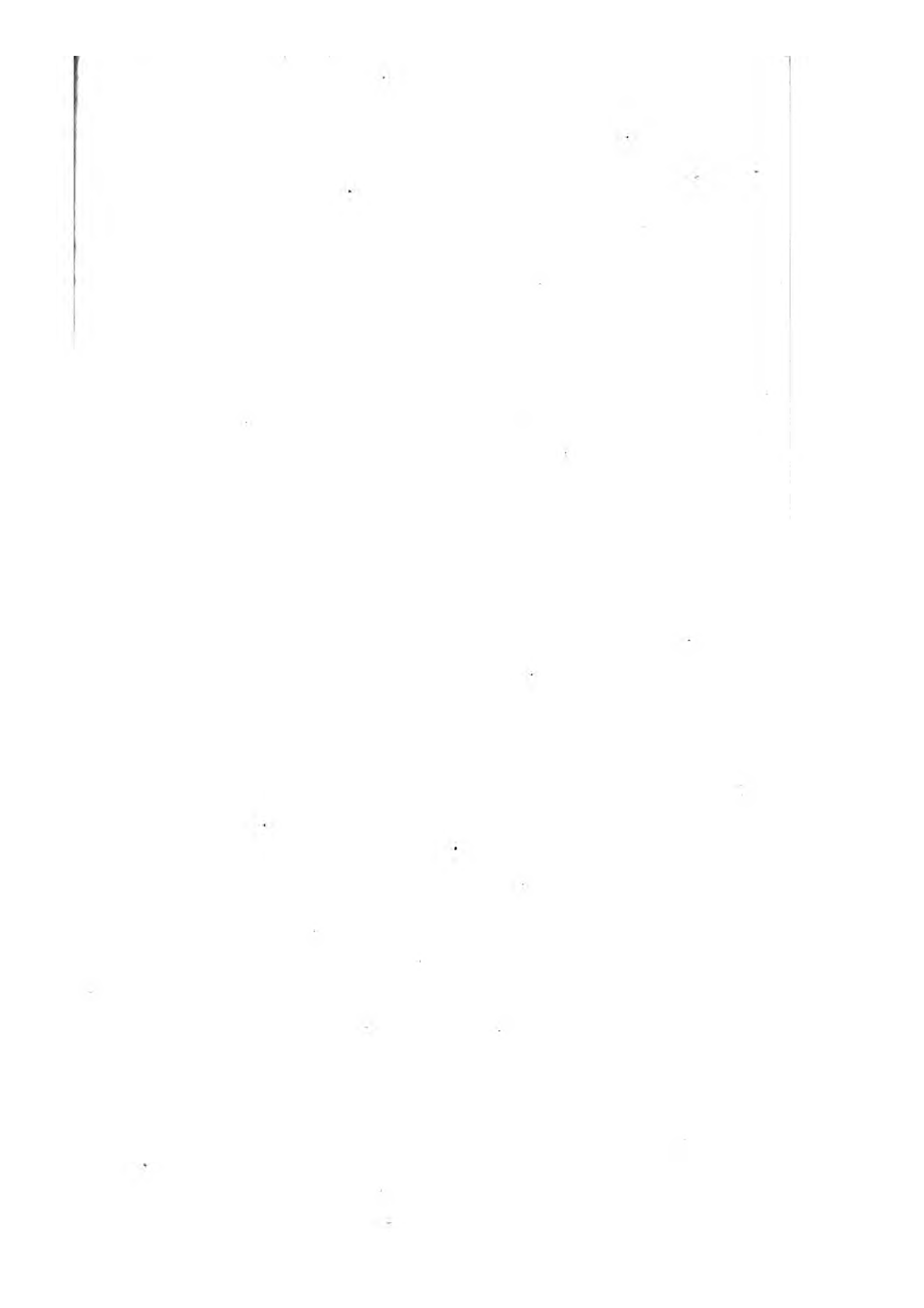
actuated him, approved of his intention, and recommended as little delay as possible, since he would thereby meet with forgiveness. Gabriel, in order the more effectually to secure his ready cooperation, threw down thirty pieces of money, saying, that in the three succeeding Mondays he wished high mass to be sung for the soul of the deceased. At this tempting sight the friar, although a very saint, leaped with joy, took the cash, and said, "My son, the masses shall be sung next Monday; there is nothing more to attend to now but the marriage, a ceremony which I advise thee to hasten as much as thou canst; do not think of riches or noble birth; thou art, thank heaven! rich enough; and as to birth, we are all children of one father; true nobility consists in virtue and the fear of God, nor is the good woman deficient in either; I know her well, and most of her relations." "Good father," said Gabriel, "I am come to you for the very purpose, therefore, I pray you, put me quickly in the way to forward the business." "When will you give her the ring?" said the holy man. "This very day," he answered, "if she be inclined." "Well," said the friar, "go thy ways, and leave all to me; go home, and stir not from thence—these blessed nup-

tials shall take place." Gabriel thanked him, received his blessing, and went home. The holy father carefully put the cash in his desk, then went to an uncle of Dame Santa, a shoemaker by trade, and a cousin of hers, a barber, and related to them what had happened; after which they went together to Dame Santa, and used every possible argument to persuade her to consent to the match, the which she feigned great difficulty in consenting to, saying that it was merely for the advantage of her children that she submitted to such a thing. I will only add, that the very same morning, by the exertions of the friar, they were married a second time; great rejoicings took place, and Gabriel and his wife laughed heartily at the simplicity of the good friar, and the credulity of the relations and neighbours. They happily lived in peace and plenty, provided for and dismissed the old servants; were blessed with two more children, whom he named *Fortunatus*, and from whom afterward sprung some of the most renowned men, both in arms and letters.

THE END.



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