THE

CLOISTER AND THE HEARTH

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THE

CLOISTER AND THE HEARTH

A Tale of the Middle Ages

BY

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IN FOUR VOLUMES

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AMONG strangers Margaret Brandt was comparatively happy. And soon a new and unexpected cause of content arose: a civic dignitary being ill, and fanciful in proportion, went from doctor to doctor, and having arrived at Death's door, sent for Peter. Peter found him bled and purged to nothing. He flung a battalion of bottles out of window, and left it open; beat up yolks of eggs in neat Schiedam, and administered it in small doses; followed this up by meat stewed in red wine and water, shredding into both mild febrifugal herbs that did no harm. Finally his patient got about again, looking something between a man and a pillow-case, and being a voluble dignitary, spread Peter's fame in every street; and that artist, who had long merited a reputation in vain,
made one rapidly by luck. Things looked bright. The old man's pride was cheered at last, and his purse began to fill. He spent much of his gain, however, in sovereign herbs and choice drugs, and would have so invested them all, but Margaret white-mailed a part. The victory came too late. Its happy excitement was fatal.

One evening, in bidding her good-night, his voice seemed rather inarticulate. The next morning he was found speechless, and only just sensible.

Margaret, who had been for years her father's attentive pupil, saw at once that he had had a paralytic stroke. But not trusting to herself, she ran for a doctor. One of those who, obstructed by Peter, had not killed the civic dignitary, came, and cheerfully confirmed her views. He was for bleeding the patient. She declined. 'He was always against bleeding,' said she, 'especially the old.'

Peter lived, but was never the same man again. His memory became much affected, and of course he was not to be trusted to prescribe. And several patients had come; and one or two that were bent on being cured by the new doctor and no other, awaited his convalescence. Misery stared her in the face. She resolved to go for
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advice and comfort to her cousin William Johnson, from whom she had hitherto kept aloof out of pride and poverty. She found him and his servant sitting in the same room, and neither of them the better for liquor. Mastering all signs of surprise, she gave her greetings, and presently told him she had come to talk on a family matter, and with this glanced quietly at the servant by way of hint. The woman took it, but not as expected.

'Oh, you can speak before me. Can she not, my old man?'

At this familiarity Margaret turned very red, and said, 'I cry you mercy, mistress. I knew not my cousin had fallen into the custom of this town. Well, I must take a fitter opportunity;' and she rose to go.

'I wot not what ye mean by custom o' the town,' said the woman, bouncing up. 'But this I know: 'tis the part of a faithful servant to keep her master from being preyed on by his beggarly kin.'

Margaret retorted, 'Ye are too modest, mistress. Ye are no servant. Your speech betrays you. 'Tis not till the ape hath mounted the tree that she shows her tail so plain. Nay, there sits the servant; God help him! And while so it is, fear not thou his kin will ever be
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so poor in spirit as come where the likes of you can flout their dole.' And casting one look of mute reproach at her cousin for being so little of a man as to sit passive and silent all this time, she turned and went haughtily out; nor would she shed a single tear till she got home and thought of it.

And now here were two men to be lodged and fed by one pregnant girl; and another mouth coming into the world. But this last, though the most helpless of all, was their best friend.

Nature was strong in Margaret Brandt,—that same nature which makes the brutes, the birds, and the insects so cunning at providing food and shelter for their progeny yet to come. Stimulated by nature she sat and brooded, and brooded, and thought, and thought, how to be beforehand with destitution. Ay, though she had still five gold pieces left, she saw starvation coming with inevitable foot.

Her sex, when, deviating from custom, it thinks with masculine intensity, thinks just as much to the purpose as we do. She rose, bade Martin move Peter to another room, made her own very neat and clean, polished the glass globe, and suspended it from the ceiling, dusted the crocodile, and nailed him to the outside wall; and after duly instructing Martin, set him to play
the lounging sentinel about the street door, and
tell the crocodile-bitten that a great and aged
and learned alchemist abode there, who in his
moments of recreation would sometimes amuse
himself by curing mortal diseases.

Patients soon came, and were received by
Margaret, and demanded to see the leech.
‘That might not be. He was deep in his
studies, searching for the grand elixir, and not
princes could have speech of him. They must
tell her their symptoms, and return in two
hours.’ And, oh, mysterious powers! when
they did return, the drug or draught was always
ready for them. Sometimes, when it was a
worshipful patient, she would carefully scan his
face, and feeling both pulse and skin, as well
as hearing his story, would go softly with it to
Peter’s room, and there think, and ask herself
how her father, whose system she had long
quietly observed, would have treated the case.
Then she would write an illegible scrawl with
a cabalistic letter, and bring it down, reveren-
tially, and show it the patient, and ‘Could he
read that?’ Then it would be either ‘I am no
reader,’ or, with admiration, ‘Nay, mistress,
nought can I make on ‘t.’

‘Ay, but I can. ’Tis sovereign. Look on
thyself as cured!’
If she had the materials by her, — and she was too good an economist not to favour somewhat those medicines she had in her own stock, — she would sometimes let the patient see her compound it, often and anxiously consulting the sacred prescription lest great Science should suffer in her hands. And so she would send them away relieved of cash, but with their pockets full of medicine, and minds full of faith, and humbugged to their heart's content. 'Populus vult decipi.' And when they were gone, she would take down two little boxes Gerard had made her; and on one of these she had written To-day, and on the other To-morrow, and put the smaller coins into 'To-day,' and the larger into 'To-morrow,' along with such of her gold pieces as had survived the journey from Sevenbergen, and the expenses of housekeeping in a strange place. And so she met current expenses, and laid by for the rainy day she saw coming, and mixed drugs with simples, and vice with virtue. On this last score her conscience pricked her sore, and after each day's comedy, she knelt down and prayed God to forgive her 'for the sake of her child.' But lo and behold! cure after cure was reported to her; so then her conscience began to harden.
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Martin Wittenhaagen had of late been a dead weight on her hands. Like most men who have endured great hardships, he had stiffened rather suddenly. But, though less supple, he was as strong as ever, and at his own pace could have carried the doctor herself round Rotterdam city. He carried her slops instead. In this new business he showed the qualities of a soldier, — unreasoning obedience, punctuality, accuracy, despatch, and drunkenness. He fell among 'good fellows.' The blackguards plied him with Schiedam; he babbled, he bragged.

Doctor Margaret had risen very high in his estimation. All this brandishing of a crocodile for a standard, and setting a dotard in ambush, and getting rid of slops, and taking good money in exchange, struck him not as Science but something far superior, — Strategy; and he boasted in his cups, and before a mixed company, how 'me and my General we are a-biting of theburghers.'

When this revelation had had time to leaven the city, his General, — Doctor Margaret, — received a call from the constables. They took her, trembling and begging subordinate machines to forgive her, before the burgomaster; and by his side stood real physicians, a terrible row, in long robes and square caps, accusing
her of practising unlawfully on the bodies of the duke's lieges. At first she was too frightened to say a word. Novice-like, the very name of 'Law' paralyzed her. But being questioned closely, but not so harshly as if she had been ugly, she told the truth: she had long been her father's pupil, and had but followed his system, and she had cured many. 'And it is not for myself in very deed, sirs; but I have two poor, helpless, honest men at home upon my hands, and how else can I keep them?' Ah, good sirs, let a poor girl make her bread honestly; ye hinder them not to make it idly and shamefully. And oh, sirs, ye are husbands, ye are fathers; ye cannot but see I have reason to work and provide as best I may.' And ere this woman's appeal had left her lips, she would have given the world to recall it, and stood with one hand upon her heart and one before her face, hiding it, but not the tears that trickled underneath it. All which went to the wrong address. Perhaps a female bailiff might have yielded to such arguments, and bade her practise medicine, and break law, till such time as her child should be weaned, and no longer.

'What have we to do with that,' said the burgomaster, 'save and except that if thou wilt pledge thyself to break the law no more, I will
remit the imprisonment; and exact but the fine.'

On this Doctor Margaret clasped her hands together, and vowed most penitently never, never, never to cure body or beast again; and being dismissed with the constables to pay the fine, she turned at the door, and courted, poor soul, and thanked the gentlemen for their forbearance.

And to pay the fine the 'to-morrow' box must be opened on the instant; and with excess of caution she had gone and nailed it up, that no slight temptation might prevail to open it. And now she could not draw the nails; and the constables grew impatient, and doubted its contents, and said, 'Let us break it for you.' But she would not let them. 'Ye will break it worse than I shall.' And she took a hammer, and struck too faintly, and lost all strength for a minute, and wept hysterically; and at last she broke it; and a little cry broke from her when it broke: and she paid the fine, and it took all her unlawful gains and two gold pieces to boot.

And, when the men were gone, she drew the broken pieces of the box, and what little money they had left her, all together on the table, and her arms went round them, and her rich hair escaped and fell down all loose, and she bowed
her forehead on the wreck, and sobbed, 'My love's box, it is broken, and my heart withal;' and so remained. And Martin Wittenhaagen came in, and she could not lift her head, but sighed out to him what had befallen her, ending, 'My love his box is broken, and so mine heart is broken.'

And Martin was not so sad as wroth. Some traitor had betrayed him. What stony heart had told, and brought her to this pass? Whoever it was should feel his arrow's point. The curious attitude in which he must deliver the shaft never occurred to him.

'Idle chat! idle chat!' moaned Margaret, without lifting her brow from the table. 'When you have slain all the gossips in this town, can we eat them? Tell me how to keep you all, or prithee hold thy peace, and let the saints get leave to whisper me.' Martin held his tongue, and cast uneasy glances at his defeated General.

Toward evening she rose, and washed her face and did up her hair, and doggedly bade Martin take down the crocodile, and put out a basket instead.

'I can get up linen better than they seem to do it in this street,' said she; 'and you must carry it in the basket.'
'That will I, for thy sake,' said the soldier.
'Good Martin! forgive me that I spake shrewishly to thee.'

Even while they were talking came a man for advice. Margaret told him the mayor had interfered, and forbidden her to sell drugs. 'But,' said she, 'I will gladly iron and starch your linen for you, and — I will come and fetch it from your house.'

'Are ye mad, young woman?' said the man. 'I come for a leech, and ye proffer me a washerwoman;' and he went out in dudgeon.

'There is a stupid creature,' said Margaret, sadly.

Presently came a woman to tell the symptoms of her sick child. Margaret stopped her.

'We are forbidden by the bailiff to sell drugs. But I will gladly wash, iron, and starch your linen for you; and — I will come and fetch it from your house.'

'Oh, ay,' said the woman. 'Well, I have some smocks and ruffs foul. Come for them; and when you are there, you can look at the boy.' And she told her where she lived, and when her husband would be out; yet she was rather fond of her husband than not.

An introduction is an introduction. And two or three patients out of all those who came and
were denied medicine, made Doctor Margaret their washerwoman.

'Now, Martin, you must help. I'll no more cats than can slay mice.'

'Mistress, the stomach is not a-wanting for 't, but the head-piece, worse luck.'

'Oh, I mean not the starching and ironing, — that takes a woman and a handy one; but the bare washing. A man can surely contrive that. Why, a mule has wit enough in 's head to do 't with his hoofs, an ye could drive him into the tub. Come, off doublet, and try.'

'I am your man,' said the brave old soldier, stripping for the unwonted toil. 'I'll risk my arm in soapsuds, an you will risk your glory.'

'My what?'

'Your glory and honour as a washerwoman.'

'Gramercy! if you are man enough to bring me half-washed linen t' iron I am woman enough to fling 't back i' the suds.'

And so the brave girl and the brave soldier worked with a will, and kept the wolf from the door. More they could not do. Margaret had repaired the 'to-morrow' box, and as she leaned over the glue, her tears mixed with it, and she cemented her exiled lover's box with them, at which a smile is allowable, but an intelligent smile tipped with pity, please, and not the
empty guffaw of the nineteenth-century jackass, burlesquing Bibles, and making fun of all things except fun. But when mended it stood unreplenished. They kept the weekly rent paid, and the pot boiling, but no more.

And now came a concatenation. Recommended from one to another, Margaret washed for the mayor. And bringing home the clean linen one day she heard in the kitchen that his worship's only daughter was stricken with disease, and not like to live. Poor Margaret could not help cross-questioning; and a maid servant gave her such of the symptoms as she had observed. But they were too general. However, one gossip would add one fact, and another another. And Margaret pondered them all.

At last one day she met the mayor himself. He recognized her directly. 'Why, you are the unlicensed doctor.'

'I was,' said she, 'but now I'm your worship's washerwoman.' The dignitary coloured, and said that was rather a come-down. 'Nay, I bear no malice; for your worship might have been harder. Rather would I do you a good turn. Sir, you have a sick daughter. Let me see her.'

The mayor shook his head. 'That cannot be.
The law I do enforce on others I may not break myself.'

Margaret opened her eyes. 'Alack! sir, I seek no guerdon now for curing folk; why, I am a washerwoman. I trow one may heal all the world, an if one will but let the world starve one in return.'

'That is no more than just,' said the mayor. He added, 'An ye make no trade on 't, there is no offence.'

'Then let me see her.'

'What avails it? The learnedst leeches in Rotterdam have all seen her, and bettered her nought. Her ill is inscrutable. One skilled wight saith spleen; another, liver; another, blood; another, stomach; and another, that she is possessed. And in very truth, she seems to have a demon: shunneth all company; pineth alone; eateth no more victuals than might diet a sparrow; speaketh seldom, nor hearkens them that speak; and weareth thinner and paler, and nearer and nearer the grave, well-a-day!'

'Sir,' said Margaret, 'an if you take your velvet doublet to half a dozen of shops in Rotterdam, and speer is this fine or sorry velvet, and worth how much the ell, those six traders will eye it and feel it, and all be in one story to a letter. And why? Because they know their
trade. And your leeches are all in different stories. Why? Because they know not their trade. I have heard my father say each is enamoured of some one evil, and seeth it with his bat's eyn in every patient. Had they stayed at home and ne'er seen your daughter, they had answered all the same, spleen, blood, stomach, lungs, liver, lunacy, or, as they call it, possession. Let me see her. We are of a sex, and that is much.' And when he still hesitated, 'Saints of Heaven!' cried she, giving way to the irritability of a breeding woman, 'is this how men love their own flesh and blood? Her mother had ta'en me in her arms ere this, and carried me to the sick-room.' And two violet eyes flashed fire.

'Come with me,' said the mayor, hastily.

'Mistress, I have brought thee a new doctor.'

The person addressed, a pale young girl of eighteen, gave a contemptuous wrench of her shoulder, and turned more decidedly to the fire she was sitting over.

Margaret came softly and sat beside her.

'But 'tis one that will not torment you.'

'A woman!' exclaimed the young lady, with surprise and some contempt.

'Tell her your symptoms'
'What for? You will be no wiser.'
'You will be none the worse.'
'Well, I have no stomach for food, and no heart for anything. Now cure me, and go.'
'Patience awhile! Your food, is it tasteless like in your mouth?'
'Ay. How knew you that?'
'Nay, I knew it not till you did tell me. I trow you would be better for a little good company.'
'I trow not. What is their silly chat to me?'

Here Margaret requested the father to leave them alone, and in his absence put some practical questions. Then she reflected. 'When you wake i' the morning you find yourself quiver, as one may say?'
'Nay. Ay. How knew you that?'
'Shall I dose you, or shall I but tease you a bit with my "silly chat"?'
'Which you will.'
'Then I will tell you a story. 'T is about two true lovers.'
'I hate to hear of lovers,' said the girl; 'nevertheless canst tell me. 'T will be less nauseous than your physic, maybe.'

Margaret then told her a love story. The maiden was a girl called Ursel, and the youth one Conrad; she an old physician's daughter,
he the son of a hosier at Tergou. She told their adventures, their troubles, their sad condition. She told it from the feminine point of view, and in a sweet and winning and earnest voice that by degrees soon laid hold of this sullen heart, and held it breathless; and when she broke it off her patient was much disappointed.

'Nay, nay, I must hear the end. I will hear it.'

'Ye cannot, for I know it not; none knoweth that but God.'

'Ah, your Ursel was a jewel of worth,' said the girl, earnestly. 'Would she were here.'

'Instead of her that is here?'

'I say not that;' and she blushed a little.

'You do but think it.'

'Thought is free. Whether or no, an she were here, I'd give her a buss, poor thing.'

'Then give it me, for I am she.'

'Nay, nay, that I'll be sworn y' are not.'

'Say not so; in very truth I am she. And prithee, sweet mistress, go not from your word, but give me the buss ye promised me, and with a good heart; for oh, my own heart lies heavy, — heavy as thine, sweet mistress.'

The young gentlewoman rose and put her arms round Margaret's neck and kissed her.

'I am woe for you,' she sighed. 'You are a
good soul; you have done me good, — a little.'
A gulp came in her throat. 'Come again I come often!'
Margaret did come again, and talked with her, and gently, but keenly, watched what topics interested her, and found there was but one. Then she said to the mayor, 'I know your daughter's trouble, and 't is curable.'
'What is 't? The blood?'
'Nay.'
'The stomach?'
'Nay.'
'The liver?'
'Nay.'
'The soul fiend?'
'Nay.'
'What then?'
'Love.'
'Love? Stuff! Impossible! She is but a child; she never stirs abroad unguarded. She never hath from a child.'
'All the better; then we shall not have far to look for him.'
'I trow not. I shall but command her to tell me the caitiff's name that hath by magic arts ensnared her young affections.'
'Oh, how foolish be the wise!' said Margaret. 'What I would ye go and put her on her
guard? Nay, let us work by art first; and if that fails, then 't will still be time for violence and folly.'

Margaret then with some difficulty prevailed on the mayor to take advantage of its being Saturday, and pay all his people their salaries in his daughter's presence and hers.

It was done. Some fifteen people entered the room, and received their pay with a kind word from their employer. Then Margaret, who had sat close to the patient all the time, rose and went out. The mayor followed her.

'Sir, how call you yon black haired lad?'
'That is Ulrich, my clerk.'
'Well, then, 't is he.'
'Now, Heaven forbid! a lad I took out of the streets.'

'Well, but your worship is an understanding man. You took him not up without some merit of his.'

'Merit? Not a jot! I liked the looks of the brat, that was all.'

'Was that no merit? He pleased the father's eye; and now he hath pleased the daughter's. That has oft been seen since Adam.'

'How know ye 't is he?'
'I held her hand, and with my finger did lightly touch her wrist; and when the others
came and went, 't was as if dogs and cats had fared in and out. But at this Ulrich's coming her pulse did leap and her eye shine; and when he went, she did sink back and sigh; and 't was to be seen the sun had gone out of the room for her. Nay, burgomaster, look not on me so scared. No witch nor magician I, but a poor girl that hath been docile, and so bettered herself by a great neglected leech's art and learning. I tell ye all this hath been done before, thousands of years ere we were born. Now bide thou there till I come to thee; and prithee, prithee, spoil not good work wi' meddling.'

She then went back and asked her patient for a lock of her hair.

'Take it,' said she, more listlessly than ever.

'Why, 't is a lass of marble. How long do you count to be like that, mistress?'

'Till I am in my grave, sweet Peggy.'

'Who knows? Maybe in ten minutes you will be altogether as hot.'

She ran into the shop, but speedily returned to the mayor and said, 'Good news! He fancies her, and more than a little. Now, how is 't to be? Will you marry your child or bury her; for there is no third way, sith shame and love they do rend her virgin heart to death.'
The dignitary decided for the more cheerful rite, but not without a struggle; and with its marks on his face, he accompanied Margaret to his daughter. But as men are seldom in a hurry to drink their wormwood, he stood silent. So Doctor Margaret said cheerfully, 'Mistress, your lock is gone. I have sold it.'

'And who was so mad as to buy such a thing?' inquired the young lady, scornfully.

'Oh, a black-haired laddie wi' white teeth. They call him Ulrich.'

The pale face reddened directly, brow and all.

'Says he, "Oh, sweet mistress, give it me." I had told them all whose 't was. "Nay," said I, "selling is my livelihood, not giving." So he offered me this, he offered me that; but nought less would I take than his next quarter's wages.'

'Cruel,' murmured the girl, scarce audibly.

'Why, you are in one tale with your father. Says he to me when I told him, "Oh, an he loves her hair so well, 't is odd but he loves the rest of her. Well," quoth he, "'t is an honest lad, and a shall have her, gien she will but leave her sulks and consent." So, what say ye, mistress? Will you be married to Ulrich, or buried i' the kirkyard?'}
‘Father! father!’

‘’T is so, girl; speak thy mind.’

‘I—will—obey—my father—in all things,’ stammered the poor girl, trying hard to maintain the advantageous position in which Margaret had placed her. But nature, and the joy and surprise, were too strong even for a virgin’s bashful cunning. She cast an eloquent look on them both, and sank at her father’s knees, and begged his pardon, with many sobs, for having doubted his tenderness.

He raised her in his arms, and took her, radiant through her tears with joy and returning life and filial love, to his breast; and the pair passed a truly sacred moment. And the dignitary was as happy as he thought to be miserable,—so hard is it for mortals to foresee. And they looked round for Margaret, but she had stolen away softly.

The young girl searched the house for her.

‘Where is she hid? Where on earth is she?’

Where was she? Why, in her own house dressing meat for her two old children, and crying bitterly the while at the living picture of happiness she had just created.

‘Well-a-day! the odds between her lot and mine; well-a-day!’
Next time she met the dignitary, he hemm'd and hawed, and remarked what a pity it was the law forbade him to pay her who had cured his daughter. 'However, when all is done, 't was not art; 't was but woman’s wit.'

'Nought but that, burgomaster,' said Margaret, bitterly. 'Pay the men of art for not curing her. All the guerdon I seek, that cured her, is this: go not and give your foul linen away from me by way of thanks.'

'Why should I?,' inquired he.

'Marry, because there be fools about ye will tell ye she that hath wit to cure dark diseases cannot have wit to take dirt out o' rags; so pledge me your faith.'

The dignitary promised pompously, and felt all the patron.

Something must be done to fill 'to-morrow's' box. She hawked her initial letters and her illuminated vellums all about the town. Printing had by this time dealt caligraphy in black and white a terrible blow in Holland and Germany; but some copies of the printed books were usually illuminated and lettered. The printers offered Margaret prices for work in these two kinds.

'I'll think on 't,' said she.
She took down her diurnal book, and calculated that the price of an hour's work on those arts would be about one fifth what she got for an hour at the tub and mangle. 'I'll starve first,' said she. 'What! pay a craft and a mystery five times less than a handicraft?'

Martin, carrying the dry-clothes basket, got treated, and drunk. This time he babbled her whole story. The girls got hold of it, and gibed her at the fountain.

All she had gone through was light to her, compared with the pins and bodkins her own sex drove into her heart whenever she came near the merry crew with her pitcher, and that was every day. Each sex has its form of cruelty. Man's is more brutal and terrible; but shallow women, that have neither read nor suffered, have an unmuscular barbarity of their own, where no feeling of sex steps in to overpower it. This defect, intellectual perhaps rather than moral, has been mitigated in our day by books, — especially by able works of fiction; for there are two roads to that highest effort of intelligence, Pity: Experience of sorrows, and Imagination, by which alone we realize the grief we never felt. In the fifteenth century girls with pitchers had but one, — Experience; and at sixteen years of age or so, that road had scarce
been trodden. These girls persisted that Margaret was deserted by her lover. And to be deserted was a crime. (They had not been deserted yet.) Not a word against the Gerard they had created out of their own heads. For his imaginary crime they fell foul of the supposed victim. Sometimes they affronted her to her face. Oftener they talked at her backward and forward with a subtle skill, and a perseverance which, 'oh, that they had bestowed on the arts,' as poor Ague-cheek says.

Now, Margaret was brave, and a coward,—brave to battle difficulties and ill fortune; brave to shed her own blood for those she loved. Fortitude she had. But she had no true fighting courage. She was a powerful young woman, rather tall, full, and symmetrical; yet had one of those slips of girls slapped her face, the poor fool's hands would have dropped powerless, or gone to her own eyes instead of her adversary's. Nor was she even a match for so many tongues; and, besides, what could she say? She knew nothing of these girls, except that somehow they had found out her sorrows, and hated her; only she thought to herself they must be very happy, or they would not be so hard on her. So she took their taunts in silence; and all her struggle was, not to let them see their power to
make her writhe within. Here came in her fortitude; and she received their blows with well-feigned, icy hauteur. They slapped a statue.

But one day, when her spirits were weak,—as happens at times to women in her condition,—a dozen assailants followed suit so admirably that her whole sex seemed to the dispirited one to be against her, and she lost heart, and the tears began to run silently at each fresh stab.

On this their triumph knew no bounds, and they followed her half way home, casting barbed speeches.

After that exposure of weakness the statue could be assumed no more. So then she would stand timidly aloof out of tongue-shot, till her young tyrants' pitchers were all filled, and they gone; and then creep up with hers. And one day she waited so long that the fount had ceased to flow. So the next day she was obliged to face the phalanx, or her house go dry. She drew near slowly, but with the less tremor that she saw a man at the well talking to them. He would distract their attention, and, besides, they would keep their foul tongues quiet, if only to blind the man to their real character. This conjecture, though shrewd, was erroneous. They
could not all flirt with that one man; so the outsiders indemnified themselves by talking at her the very moment she came up.

'Any news from foreign parts, Jacqueline?'

'None for me, Martha. My lad goes no farther from me than the town wall.'

'I can't say as much,' says a third.

'But if he goes t' Italy I have got another ready to take the fool's place.'

'He'll not go thither, lass. They go not so far till they are sick of us that bide in Holland.'

Surprise and indignation, and the presence of a man, gave Margaret a moment's fighting courage. 'Oh, flout me not, and show your ill-nature before the very soldier. In Heaven's name, what ill did I ever to ye, what harsh word cast back, for all you have flung on me, a desolate stranger in your cruel town, that ye flout me for my bereavement and my poor lad's most unwilling banishment? Hearts of flesh would surely pity us both, for that ye cast in my teeth these many days, ye brows of brass, ye bosoms of stone.'

They stared at this novelty, resistance; and ere they could recover and make mincemeat of her, she put her pitcher quietly down, and threw her coarse apron over her head, and
stood there grieving, her short-lived spirit oozing fast.

'Halloo!' cried the soldier. 'Why, what is your ill?'

She made no reply. But a little girl, who had long secretly hated the big ones, squeaked out, 'They did flout her; they are aye flouting her. She may not come nigh the fountain for fear o' them; and 't is a black shame.'

'Who spoke to her? Not I for one.'

'Nor I. I would not bemean myself so far.'

The man laughed heartily at this display of dignity. 'Come, wife,' said he, 'never lower thy flag to such light skirmishers as these. Hast a tongue i' thy head as well as they.'

'Alack! good soldier, I was not bred to bandy foul terms.'

'Well, but hast a better arm than these. Why not take 'em by twos across thy knee, and skelp 'em till they cry Meculpee?'

'Nay, I would not hurt their bodies for all their cruel hearts.'

'Then ye must e'en laugh at them, wife. What! a woman grown, and not see why mes-dames give tongue? You are a buxom wife; they are a bundle of thread-papers. You are fair and fresh; they have all the Dutch rim
under their bright eyes, that comes of dwelling in eternal swamps. There lies your crime. Come gi'e me thy pitcher; and if they flout me, shalt see me scrub 'em all wi' my beard till they squeak holy mother.'

The pitcher was soon filled, and the soldier put it in Margaret's hand. She murmured, 'Thank you kindly, brave soldier.'

He patted her on the shoulder. 'Come, courage, brave wife, the divell is dead!' She let the heavy pitcher fall on his foot directly. He cursed horribly, and hopped in a circle, saying, 'No, the Thief's alive and has broken my great toe.'

The apron came down, and there was a lovely face all flushed with emotion, and two beaming eyes in front of him, and two hands held out clasped.

'Nay, nay, 'tis nought,' said he, good-humouredly, mistaking.

'Denys?'

'Well? But — halloo! How know you my name is —'

'Denys of Burgundy!'

'Why, ods-bodikins! I know you not, and you know me.'

'By Gerard's letter. Crossbow; beard; handsome; the divell is dead.'
'Sword of Goliath! this must be she, — red hair, violet eyes, lovely face. But I took ye for a married wife, seeing ye —'

'Tell me my name,' said she, quickly.

'Margaret Brandt.'

'Gerard? Where is he? Is he in life? Is he well? Is he coming? Is he come? Why is he not here? Where have ye left him? Oh, tell me! prithee, prithee, prithee, tell me!'

'Ay, ay, but not here. Oh, ye are all curiosity now, mesdames, eh? Lass, I have been three months a-foot travelling all Holland to find ye, and here you are. Oh, be joyful!' and he flung his cap in the air, and seizing both her hands kissed them ardently. 'Ah, my pretty she-comrade, I have found thee at last. I knew I should. Shalt be flouted no more. I'll twist your necks at the first word, ye little trollops. And I have got fifteen gold angels left for thee; and our Gerard will soon be here. Shalt wet thy purple eyes no more.'

But the fair eyes were wet even now, looking kindly and gratefully at the friend that had dropped among her foes as if from heaven: Gerard's comrade. 'Prithee come home with me, good, kind Denys. I cannot speak of him before these.'

They went off together, followed by a chorus.
and the Hearth.

' She has gotten a man. She has gotten a man at last. Hoo! hoo! hoo!'

Margaret quickened her steps; but Denys took down his crossbow and pretended to shoot them all dead. They fled quadrivious, skrieking.
CHAPTER II.

THE reader already knows how much these two had to tell each other. It was a sweet yet bitter day for Margaret, since it brought her a true friend, and ill news; for now first she learned that Gerard was all alone in that strange land. She could not think with Denys that he would come home; indeed, he would have arrived before this.

Denys was a balm. He called her his she-comrade, and was always cheering her up with his formula and hilarities; and she petted him and made much of him, and feebly hectored it over him as well as over Martin, and would not let him eat a single meal out of her house, and forbade him to use naughty words. 'It spoils you, Denys. Good lack! to hear such ugly words come forth so comely a head. Forbear, or I shall be angry; so be civil.' Whereupon Denys was upon his good behaviour, and ludicrous the struggle between his native politeness and his acquired ruffianism.
And as it never rains but it pours, other persons now solicited Margaret's friendship. She had written to Margaret Van Eyck a humble letter telling her she knew she was no longer the favourite she had been, and would keep her distance; but could not forget her benefactress's past kindness. She then told her briefly how many ways she had battled for a living, and in conclusion, begged earnestly that her residence might not be betrayed, 'least of all to his people. I do hate them; they drove him from me. And even when he was gone, their hearts turned not to me as they would an if they had repented their cruelty to him.'

The Van Eyck was perplexed. At last she made a confidante of Reicht. The secret ran through Reicht, as through a cylinder, to Catherine.

' Ay, and is she turned that bitter against us?' said that good woman. 'She stole our son from us, and now she hates us for not running into her arms. Nathless, it is a blessing she is alive and no farther away than Rotterdam.'

The English princess, now Countess Charo-lois, made a stately progress through the northern states of the duchy, accompanied by her step-daughter the young heiress of Bur-
gundy, Marie de Bourgogne. Then the old duke, the most magnificent prince in Europe, put out his splendour. Troops of dazzling knights, and bevies of fair ladies gorgeously attired, attended the two princesses; and minstrels, jongleurs, or story-tellers, bards, musicians, actors, tumblers, followed in the train; and there was fencing, dancing, and joy in every town they shone on.

Giles, a court favourite, sent a timely message to Tergou, inviting all his people to meet the pageant at Rotterdam. They agreed to take a holiday for once in a way, and setting their married daughter to keep the shop, came to Rotterdam. But to two of them, not the great folk but little Giles was the main attraction. They had been in Rotterdam some days when Denys met Catherine accidentally in the street, and after a warm greeting on both sides, bade her rejoice, for he had found the she-comrade, and crowed; but Catherine cooled him by showing him how much earlier he would have found her by staying quietly at Tergou than by vagabondizing it all over Holland. ‘And being found, what the better are we? Her heart is set dead against us now.’

‘Oh, let that flea stick. Come you with me to her house.’
and the Hearth.

No, she would not go where she was sure of an ill welcome. 'Them that come unbidden sit unseated.' No, let Denys be mediator, and bring the parties to a good understanding.

He undertook the office at once, and with great pomp and confidence. He trotted off to Margaret and said, 'She-comrade, I met this day a friend of thine.'

'Thou didst look into the Rotter then, and see thyself.'

'Nay, 't was a woman, and one that seeks thy regard; 't was Catherine, — Gerard's mother.'

'Oh, was it?' said Margaret; 'then you may tell her she comes too late. There was a time I longed and longed for her; but she held aloof in my hour of most need, so now we will be as we ha' been.'

Denys tried to shake this resolution. He coaxcd her; but she was bitter and sullen, and not to be coaxcd. Then he scoldcd her well; then, at that, she went into hysterics.

He was frightened at this result of his eloquence, and being off his guard, allowed himself to be entrapped into a solemn promise never to recur to the subject. He went back to Catherine crestfallen, and told her. She fired up, and told the family how his overtures had been received. Then they fired up. It be-
came a feud and burned fiercer every day. Little Kate alone made some excuses for Margaret.

The very next day another visitor came to Margaret, and found the military enslaved and degraded, Martin up to his elbows in soapsuds, and Denys ironing very clumsily, and Margaret plaiting ruffs, but with a mistress's eye on her raw levies. To these there entered an old man, venerable at first sight, but on nearer view keen and wizened.

'Ah,' cried Margaret. Then swiftly turned her back on him and hid her face with invincible repugnance. 'Oh, that man! that man!'

'Nay, fear me not,' said Ghysbrecht; 'I come on a friend's errand. I bring ye a letter from foreign parts.'

'Mock me not, old man,' and she turned slowly round.

'Nay, see,' and he held out an enormous letter.

Margaret darted on it, and held it with trembling hands and glistening eyes. It was Gerard's handwriting.

'Oh, thank you, sir, bless you for this. I forgive you all the ill you ever wrought me.' And she pressed the letter to her bosom
with one hand, and glided swiftly from the room with it.

As she did not come back, Ghysbrecht went away, but not without a scowl at Martin. Margaret was hours alone with her letter.
CHAPTER III.

WHEN she came down again she was a changed woman. Her eyes were wet, but calm, and all her bitterness and excitement charmed away.

‘Denys,’ said she, softly, ‘I have got my orders. I am to read my lover’s letter to his folk.’

‘Ye will never do that?’

‘Ay, will I.’

‘I see there is something in the letter has softened ye toward them.’

‘Not a jot, Denys, not a jot. But an I hated them like poison I would not disobey my love. Denys, ’t is so sweet to obey; and sweetest of all to obey one who is far, far away and cannot enforce my duty, but must trust my love for my obedience. Ah, Gerard, my darling, at hand I might have slighted thy commands, misliking thy folk as I have cause to do; but now, didst bid me go into the raging sea and read thy
sweet letter to the sharks there, I 'd go. Therefore, Denys, tell his mother I have got a letter; and if she and hers would hear it, I am their servant. Let them say their hour, and I 'll seat them as best I can, and welcome them as best I may.'

Denys went off to Catherine with this good news. He found the family at dinner, and told them there was a long letter from Gerard. Then in the midst of the joy this caused, he said, 'And her heart is softened, and she will read it to you herself; you are to choose your own time.'

'What! does she think there are none can read but her?' asked Catherine. 'Let her send the letter and we will read it.'

'Nay, but, mother,' objected little Kate; 'mayhap she cannot bear to part it from her hand. She loves him dearly.'

'What! thinks she we shall steal it?'

Cornelis suggested that she would fain wedge herself into the family by means of this letter.'

Denys cast a look of scorn on the speaker. 'There spoke a bad heart,' said he. 'La Camarade hates you all like poison. Oh, mistake me not, dame; I defend her not, but so 'tis. Yet maugre her spleen, at a word from Gerard she proffers to read you his letter with her own
pretty mouth, and hath a voice like honey; sure 't is a fair proffer.'

'T is so, mine honest soldier,' said the father of the family, 'and merits a civil reply; therefore hold your wisht ye that be women, and I shall answer her. Tell her I, his father, setting aside all past grudges, do for this grace thank her, and, would she have double thanks, let her send my son's letter by thy faithful hand, the which will I read to his flesh and blood, and will then to her so surely and faithfully return, as I am Eli à Dierich à William à Luke, free burgher of Tergou, like my forebears, and, like them, a man of my word.'

' Ay, and a man who is better than his word,' cried Catherine; 'the only one I ever did forgather.'

' Hold thy peace, wife.'

'Art a man of sense, Eli, a dirk, a chose, a chose!' 1 shouted Denys. 'The she-comrade will be right glad to obey Gerard and yet not face you all, whom she hates as wormwood, saving your presence. Bless ye, the world hath changed; she is all submission to-day. "Obedience is honey," quoth she. And in sooth 't is a sweetmeat she cannot but savor, eating so little on't; for what with her fair face and her

1 Anglice, a Thing-em-bob.
mellow tongue, and what wi' flying in fits and terrifying us that be soldiers to death, an we thwart her, and what wi' chiding us one while and petting us like lambs t'other, she hath made two of the crawlingest slaves ever you saw out of two honest swashbucklers. I be the ironing ruffian, t'other washes.'

'What next?'

'What next? Why, whenever the brat is in the world I shall rock cradle, and t'other knave will wash tucker and bib. So, then, I'll go fetch the letter on the instant. Ye will let me bide and hear it read, will ye not?'

'Else our hearts were black as coal,' said Catherine.

So Denys went for the letter. He came back crestfallen. 'She will not let it out of her hand neither to me nor you, nor any he or she that lives.'

'I knew she would not,' said Cornelis.

'Whisht! whisht!' said Eli, 'and let Denys tell his story.'

'"Nay," said I, "but be ruled by me." "Not I," quoth she. "Well, but," quoth I, "that same honey Obedience ye spake of." "You are a fool," says she. "Obedience to Gerard is sweet; but obedience to any other body, who ever said that was sweet?"
The Cloister

'At last she seemed to soften a bit, and did give me a written paper for you, mademoiselle. Here 'tis.'

'For me?' said little Kate, colouring.

'Give that here!' said Eli; and he scanned the writing, and said almost in a whisper, 'These be words from the letter. Hearken!

'And, sweetheart, an if these lines should travel safe to thee, make thou trial of my people's hearts withal. Maybe they are somewhat turned toward me, being far away. If 't is so, they will show it to thee, since now to me they may not. Read, then, this letter! But I do strictly forbid thee to let it from thy hand; and if they still hold aloof from thee, why, then say nought, but let them think me dead. Obey me in this; for, if thou dost disrespect my judgment and my will in this, thou lovest me not.'

There was a silence, and Gerard's words copied by Margaret were handed round and inspected.

'Well,' said Catherine, 'that is another matter. But methinks 'tis for her to come to us, not we to her.'

'Alas, mother! what odds does that make?'

'Much,' said Eli. 'Tell her we are over many to come to her, and bid her hither,—the sooner the better.'
When Denys was gone, Eli owned it was a bitter pill to him. 'When that lass shall cross my threshold, all the mischief and misery she hath made here will seem to come in adoors in one heap. But what could I do, wife? We must hear the news of Gerard. I saw that in thine eyes, and felt it in my own heart. And she is backed by our undutiful but still beloved son, and so is she stronger than we, and brings our noses down to the grindstone, the sly, cruel jade. But never heed. We will hear the letter, and then let her go unblessed, as she came unwelcome.'

'Make your mind easy,' said Catherine. 'She will not come at all.' And a tone of regret was visible.

Shortly after Richart, who had been hourly expected, arrived from Amsterdam, grave and dignified in his burgher's robe and gold chain, ruff and furred cap, and was received not with affection only, but respect; for he had risen a step higher than his parents, and such steps were marked in mediæval society almost as visibly as those in their staircases.

Admitted in due course to the family council, he showed plainly, though not discourteously, that his pride was deeply wounded by their having deigned to treat with Margaret Brandt. 'I
see the temptation,' said he. 'But which of us hath not at times to wish one way and do another?'

This threw a considerable chill over the old people, so little Kate put in a word. 'Vex not thyself, dear Richart. Mother says she will not come.'

'All the better, sweetheart. I fear me, if she do, I shall hie me back to Amsterdam.'

Here Denys popped his head in at the door, and said, 'She will be here at three on the great dial.'

They all looked at one another in silence.
CHAPTER IV.

'NAY, Richart,' said Catherine at last, 'for Heaven's sake let not this one sorry wench set us all by the ears. Hath she not made ill blood enough already?'

'In very deed she hath. Fear me not, good mother. Let her come and read the letter of the poor boy she hath by devilish arts bewitched, and then let her go. Give me your words to show her no countenance beyond decent and constrained civility, — less we may not, being in our own house, — and I will say no more.' On this understanding they awaited the foe. She, for her part, prepared for the interview in a spirit little less hostile.

When Denys brought word they would not come to her, but would receive her, her lip curled, and she bade him observe how in them every feeling, however small, was larger than the love for Gerard. 'Well,' said she, 'I have not that excuse; so why mimic the petty burgh-
er's pride,—the pride of all unlettered folk? I will go to them for Gerard's sake. Oh, how I loathe them!'

Thus poor good-natured Denys was bringing into one house the materials of an explosion.

Margaret made her toilet in the same spirit that a knight of her day dressed for battle, he to parry blows, and she to parry glances,—glances of contempt at her poverty, or of irony at her extravagance. Her kirtle was of English cloth, dark blue, and her farthingale and hose of the same material, but a glossy roan, or claret colour. Not an inch of pretentious fur about her, but plain snowy linen wristbands, and curiously-plaited linen from the bosom of the kirtle up to the commencement of the throat; it did not encircle her throat, but framed it, being square, not round. Her front hair still peeped in two waves much after the fashion which Mary Queen of Scots revived a century later; but instead of the silver net, which would have ill become her present condition, the rest of her head was covered with a very small tight-fitting hood of dark blue cloth, hemmed with silver. Her shoes were red; but the roan petticoat and hose prepared the spectator's mind for the shock, and they set off the arched instep and shapely foot. (Beauty knew its business then as now.) And
with all this she kept her enemies waiting, though it was three by the dial.

At last she started, attended by her he-comrade. And when they were half way, she stopped and said thoughtfully, 'Denys!'

'Well, she-general?'

'I must go home,' — piteously.

'What I have ye left somewhat behind?'

'Ay.'

'What?'

'My courage. Oh, oh, oh!'

'Nay, nay, be brave, she-general. I shall be with you.'

'Ay, but wilt keep close to me when I be there?'

Denys promised, and she resumed her march, but gingerly.

Meantime they were all assembled, and waiting for her with a strange mixture of feelings.

Mortification, curiosity, panting affection, aversion to her who came to gratify those feelings, yet another curiosity to see what she was like, and what there was in her to bewitch Gerard, and make so much mischief.

At last Denys came alone, and whispered, 'The she-comrade is without.'

'Fetch her in,' said Eli. 'Now whist, all of ye. None speak to her but I.'
They all turned their eyes to the door in dead silence.

A little muttering was heard outside,—Denys's rough organ, and a woman's soft and mellow voice. Presently that stopped; and then the door opened slowly, and Margaret Brandt, dressed as I have described, and somewhat pale, but calm and lovely, stood on the threshold, looking straight before her.

They all rose but Kate, and remained mute and staring.

'Be seated, mistress,' said Eli, gravely, and motioned to a seat that had been set apart for her.

She inclined her head, and crossed the apartment; and in so doing her condition was very visible, not only in her shape, but in her languor.

Cornelis and Sybrandt hated her for it. Richart thought it spoiled her beauty.

It softened the women somewhat.

She took her letter out of her bosom, and kissed it as if she had been alone; then disposed herself to read it with the air of one who knew she was there for that single purpose.

But, as she began, she noticed they had seated her all by herself like a leper. She looked at Denys, and putting her hand down
by her side, made him a swift furtive motion to come by her. He went with an obedient start as if she had cried 'March!' and stood at her shoulder like a sentinel; but this zealous manner of doing it revealed to the company that he had been ordered thither, and at that she coloured. And now she began to read her Gerard, their Gerard, to their eager ears, in a mellow but clear voice, so soft, so earnest, so thrilling, her very soul seemed to cling about each precious sound. It was a voice as of a woman's bosom set speaking by Heaven itself.

'I do nothing doubt, my Margaret, that long ere this shall meet thy beloved eyes, Denys, my most dear friend, will have sought thee out, and told thee the manner of our unlooked-for and most tearful parting. Therefore I will e'en begin at that most doleful day. What befell him after, poor faithful soul, fain, fain would I hear, but may not. But I pray for him day and night next after thee, dearest. Friend more stanch and loving had not David in Jonathan than I in him. Be good to him for poor Gerard's sake.'

At these words, which came quite unexpectedly to him, Denys leaned his head on Margaret's high chair, and groaned aloud.

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She turned quickly as she sat, and found his hand, and pressed it.
And so the sweetheart and the friend held hands while the sweetheart read.

'I went forward all dizzied, like one in an ill dream; and presently a gentleman came up with his servants, all on horseback, and had like to have rid o'er me. And he drew rein at the brow of the hill, and sent his armed men back to rob me. They robbed me civilly enough; and took my purse and the last copper, and rid gayly away. I wandered stupid on, a friendless pauper.'

There was a general sigh, followed by an oath from Denys.

'Presently a strange dimness came o'er me. I lay down to sleep on the snow. 'T was ill done, and with store of wolves hard by. Had I loved thee as thou dost deserve, I had shown more manhood. But, oh, sweet love, the drowsiness that did crawl o'er me desolate, and benumb me, was more than nature. And so I slept; and but that God was better to us than I to thee, or to myself, from that sleep I ne'er had waked; so all do say. I had slept an hour
or two, as I suppose, but no more, when a hand did shake me rudely. I awoke to my troubles; and there stood a servant-girl in her holiday suit. "Are ye mad," quoth she, in seeming choler, "to sleep in snow, and under wolves' nozen? Art weary o' life, and not long weaned? Come, now," said she, more kindly, "get up like a good lad;" so I did rise up. "Are ye rich, or are ye poor?" But I stared at her as one amazed. "Why, 't is easy of reply," quoth she. "Are ye rich, or are ye poor?" Then I gave a great, loud cry, that she did start back. "Am I rich, or am I poor? Had ye asked me an hour agone, I had said I am rich; but now I am so poor as sure earth bear-eth on her bosom none poorer. An hour agone I was rich in a friend, rich in money, rich in hope and spirits of youth; but now the Bastard of Burgundy hath taken my friend and another gentleman my purse, and I can neither go forward to Rome nor back to her I left in Holland. I am poorest of the poor." "Alack!" said the wench. "Natheless, an ye had been rich ye might ha' lain down again in the snow for any use I had for ye; and then I trow ye had soon fared out o' this world as bare as ye came into 't. But being poor, you are our man; so come wi' me."
Then I went because she bade me, and because I recked not now whither I went. And she took me to a fine house hard by, and into a noble dining-hall hung with black; and there was set a table with many dishes, and but one plate and one chair. "Fall to!" said she, in a whisper. "What, alone?" said I. "Alone? And which of us, think ye, would eat out of the same dish with ye? Are we robbers o' the dead?" Then she speered where I was born. "At Tergou," said I. Says she, "And when a gentleman dies in that country, serve they not the dead man's dinner up as usual, till he be in the ground, and set some poor man down to it?" I told her nay. "She blushed for us then. Here they were better Christians." So I behooved to sit down. But small was my heart for meat. Then this kind lass sat by me and poured me out wine; and, tasting it, it cut me to the heart Denys was not there to drink with me. He doth so love good wine, and women good, bad, or indifferent. The rich, strong wine curled round my sick heart; and that day first I did seem to glimpse why folk in trouble run to drink so. She made me eat of every dish. "'T was unlucky to pass one. Nought was here but her master's daily dinner." "He had a good stomach, then," said I. "Ay, lad,
and a good heart. Leastways, so we all say now he is dead; but, being alive, no word on 't e'er heard I." So I did eat as a bird, nibbling of every dish. And she hearing me sigh, and seeing me like to choke at the food, took pity, and bade me be of good cheer: I should sup and lie there that night. And she went to the hind, and he gave me a right good bed. And I told him all, and asked him would the law give me back my purse. "Law!" quoth he; "law there was none for the poor in Burgundy. Why, 't was the cousin of the Lady of the Manor, he that had robbed me. He knew the wild spark. The matter must be judged before the lady; and she was quite young, and far more like to hang me for slandering her cousin, and a gentleman, and a handsome man, than to make him give me back my own. Inside the liberties of a town a poor man might now and then see the face of justice; but out among the grand seigneurs and dames, never." So I said, "I'll sit down robbed, rather than seek justice and find gallows." They were all most kind to me next day; and the girl proffered me money from her small wage to help me toward Rhine.'

'Oh, then he is coming home! he is coming home!' shouted Denys, interrupting the reader.
She shook her head gently at him, by way of reproof.

'I beg pardon, all the company,' said he, stiffly.

'T was a sore temptation; but, being a servant, my stomach rose against it. "Nay, nay," said I. She told me I was wrong: "'T was pride out o' place; poor folk should help one another; or who on earth would?" I said if I could do aught in return 't were well; but for a free gift, nay. I was overmuch beholden already. Should I write a letter for her? "Nay, he is in the house at present," said she. Should I draw her picture, and so earn my money? "What, can ye?" said she. I told her I could try; and her habit would well become a picture. So she was agog to be limned, and give it her lad. And I set her to stand in a good light, and soon made sketches two, whereof I send thee one, coloured at odd hours. The other I did most hastily, and with little conscience, daub, for which may Heaven forgive me; but time was short. They, poor things, knew no better, and were most proud and joyous; and both kissing me after their country fashion ('t was the hind that was her sweetheart), they did bid me God-speed; and I toward Rhine.'
Margaret paused here, and gave Denys the coloured drawing to hand round. It was eagerly examined by the women on account of the costume, which differed in some respects from that of a Dutch domestic. The hair was in a tight linen bag, a yellow half kerchief crossed her head from ear to ear, but threw out a rectangular point that descended the centre of her forehead, and it met in two more points over her bosom. She wore a red kirtle with long sleeves, kilted very high in front, and showing a green farthingale and a great red leather purse hanging down over it; red stockings, yellow leathern shoes, ahead of her age, —for they were low-quartered and square-toed, secured by a strap buckling over the instep, which was not uncommon, and was perhaps the rude germ of the diamond buckle to come.

Margaret continued:

'But, oh, how I missed my Denys at every step! Often I sat down on the road and groaned. And in the afternoon it chanced that I did so set me down where two roads met, and with heavy head in hand, and heavy heart, did think of thee, my poor sweetheart, and of my lost friend, and of the little house at Tergou,
where they all loved me once, though now it is turned to hate."

_Catherine._ 'Alas I that he will think so.'

_Eli._ 'Whist, wife!'

'And I did sigh loud, and often. And me sighing so, one came carolling like a bird adown t'other road. "Ay, chirp and chirp," cried I, bitterly. "Thou hast not lost sweetheart and friend, thy father's hearth, thy mother's smile, and every penny in the world." And at last he did so carol, and carol, I jumped up in ire to get away from his most jarring mirth. But ere I fled from it, I looked down the path to see what could make a man so light-hearted in this weary world; and lo! the songster was a hump-backed cripple, with a bloody bandage o'er his eye, and both legs gone at the knee.'

'He! he! he! he! he!' went Sybrandt, laughing and cackling.

Margaret's eyes flashed; she began to fold the letter up.

'Nay, lass,' said Eli, 'heed him not! — Thou unmannery cur, offer 't but again and I put thee to the door.'

'Why, what was there to gibe at, Sybrandt?' remonstrated Catherine, more mildly. 'Is not
and the Hearth.

our Kate afflicted, and is she not the most content of us all, and singeth like a merle at times between her pains? But I am as bad as thou. Prithee read on, lass, and stop our gabble wi' somewhat worth the hearkening.'

"Then," said I, "may this thing be?" And I took myself to task. "Gerard, son of Eli, dost thou well to bemoan thy lot, that hast youth and health, and here comes the wreck of nature on crutches, praising God's goodness with singing like a mavis?"

Catherine. 'There, you see.'
Eli. 'Whist, dame, whist!'

'And whenever he saw me he left carolling, and presently hobbled up and chanted, "Charity, for love of Heaven; sweet master, charity," with a whine as piteous as wind at keyhole. "Alack! poor soul," said I, "charity is in my heart, but not my purse; I am poor as thou." Then he believed me none, and to melt me undid his sleeve, and showed a sore wound on his arm, and said he, "Poor cripple though I be, I am like to lose this eye to boot, look else." I saw, and groaned for him, and to excuse myself let him wot how I had been robbed of my
last copper. Thereat he left whining all in a moment, and said, in a big manly voice, "Then I'll e'en take a rest. Here youngster, pull thou this strap. Nay, fear not!" I pulled, and down came a stout pair of legs out of his back; and half his hump had melted away, and the wound in his eye no deeper than the bandage."

'Oh!' ejaculated Margaret's hearers, in a body.

'Whereat, seeing me astounded, he laughed in my face, and told me I was not worth gulling, and offered me his protection. "My face was prophetic," he said. "Of what?" said I. "Marry," said he, "that its owner will starve in this thievish land."

'Travel teaches e'en the young wisdom. Time was I had turned and fled this impostor as a pestilence; but now I listened patiently to pick up crumbs of counsel. And well I did; for nature and his adventurous life had crammed the poor knave with shrewdness and knowledge of the homelier sort,—a child was I beside him. When he had turned me inside out, said he, "Didst well to leave France and make for Germany; but think not of Holland again.
Nay, on to Augsburg and Nurnberg, the Paradise of craftsmen; thence to Venice, an thou wilt. But thou wilt never bide in Italy nor any other land, having once tasted the great German cities. Why, there is but one honest country in Europe, and that is Germany; and since thou art honest, and since I am a vagabond, Germany was made for us twain." I bade him make that good: how might one country fit true men and knaves? "Why, thou novice," said he, "because in an honest land are fewer knaves to bite the honest man, and many honest men for the knave to bite. I was in luck, being honest, to have fallen in with a friendly sharp. Be my pal," said he. "I go to Nurnberg; we will reach it with full pouches. I'll learn ye the cul de bois, and the cul de jatte, and how to maund, and chant, and patter, and to raise swellings, and paint sores and ulcers on thy body would take in the divell." I told him, shivering, I 'd liever die than shame myself and my folk so.'

Eli. 'Good lad! good lad!'

'Why, what shame was it for such as I to turn beggar? Beggary was an ancient and most honourable mystery. What did holy
monks and bishops and kings, when they would win Heaven's smile? Why, wash the feet of beggars, those favourites of the saints. "The saints were no fools," he told me. Then he did put out his foot. "Look at that! That was washed by the greatest king alive, Louis of France, the last holy Thursday that was. And the next day, Friday, clapped in the stocks by the warden of a petty hamlet." So I told him—my foot should walk between such high honour and such low disgrace, on the safe path of honesty, please God. Well, then, since I had not spirit to beg, he would indulge my perversity. I should work under him, he be the head, I the fingers. And with that he set himself up like a judge, on a heap of dust by the road's side, and questioned me strictly what I could do. I began to say I was strong and willing. "Bah!" said he, "so is an ox. Say, what canst do that Sir Ox cannot?" I could write; I had won a prize for it. "Canst write as fast as the printers?" quo' he, jeering. "What else?" I could paint. "That was better." (I was like to tear my hair to hear him say so, and me going to Rome to write.) I could twang the psaltery a bit. "That was well. Could I tell stories?" Ay, by the score. "Then," said he, "I hire you from this mo-
ment.” “What to do?” said I. “Nought crooked, Sir Candour,” says he. “I will feed thee all the way, and find thee work, and take half thine earnings,—no more.” “Agreed,” said I, and gave my hand on it. “Now, servant,” said he, “we will dine. But ye need not stand behind my chair for two reasons: first, I ha’ got no chair; and next, good fellowship likes me better than state.” And out of his wallet he brought flesh, fowl, and pastry, a good dozen of spices lapped in flax paper, and wine fit for a king. Ne’er feasted I better than out of this beggar’s wallet, now my master.

‘When we had well eaten I was for going on. “But,” said he, “servants should not drive their masters too hard, especially after feeding, for then the body is for repose, and the mind turns to contemplation;” and he lay on his back gazing calmly at the sky, and presently wondered whether there were any beggars up there. I told him I knew but of one, called Lazarus. “Could he do the cul de jatte better than I?” said he, and looked quite jealous like. I told him nay; Lazarus was honest, though a beggar, and fed daily of the crumbs fall’n from a rich man’s table, and the dogs licked his sores. “Servant,” quo’ he, “I spy a foul fault in thee: thou liest without discretion. Now, the end
of lying being to gull, this is no better than fumbling with the divell's tail. I pray Heaven thou mayest prove to paint better than thou cuttest whids, or I am done out of a dinner. No beggar eats crumbs, but only the fat of the land; and dogs lick not a beggar's sores, being made with spearwort, or ratsbane, or biting acids, from all which dogs, and even pigs, abhor. My sores are made after my proper receipt; but no dog would lick e'en them twice. I have made a scurvvy bargain. Art a cozening knave, I doubt, as well as a nincompoop." I deigned no reply to this bundle of lies, which did accuse heavenly truth of falsehood for not being in a tale with him.

'He rose and we took the road; and presently we came to a place where were two little wayside inns, scarce a furlong apart. "Halt," said my master. "Their armories are sore faded; all the better. Go thou in. Shun the master; board the wife, and flatter her inn sky high, all but the armories, and offer to colour them dirt cheap." So I went in and told the wife I was a painter, and would revive her armories cheap; but she sent me away with a rebuff. I to my master. He groaned. "Ye are all fingers and no tongue," said he; "I have made a scurvvy bargain. Come and hear
me patter and flatter." Between the two inns was a high hedge. He goes behind it a minute and comes out a decent tradesman. We went on to the other inn, and then I heard him praise it so fulsome as the very wife did blush. "But," says he, "there is one little, little fault: your armories are dull and faded. Say but the word, and for a silver franc my appren-
tice here, the cunningest e'er I had, shall make them bright as ever." Whilst she hesitated, the rogue told her he had done it to a little inn hard by, and now the inn's face was like the starry firmament. "D' ye hear that, my man?" cries she, "the Three Frogs have been and painted up their armories: shall the Four Hedgehogs be outshone by them?"

'So I painted, and my master stood by like a lord, advising me how to do, and winking to me to heed him none, and I got a silver franc. And he took me back to the Three Frogs, and on the way put me on a beard and disguised me; and flattered the Three Frogs, and told them how he had adorned the Four Hedgehogs, and into the net jumped the three poor simple frogs, and I earned another silver franc. Then we went on, and he found his crutches, and sent me for-
ward; and showed his "cicatrices d'emprunt," as he called them, and all his infirmities, at the
Four Hedgehogs, and got both food and money. "Come, share and share," quoth he; so I gave him one franc. "I have made a good bargain," said he. "Art a master limner, but takest too much time." So I let him know that in matters of honest craft things could not be done quick and well. "Then do them quick," quoth he. And he told me my name was Bon Bec; and I might call him Cul de Jatte, because that was his lay at our first meeting.

"And at the next town my master, Cul de Jatte, bought me a psaltery, and sat himself up again by the roadside in state like him that erst judged Marsyas and Apollo, piping for vain glory. So I played a strain. "Indifferent well, harmonious Bon Bec," said he, haughtily. "Now tune thy pipes." So I did sing a sweet strain the good monks taught me; and singing it reminded poor Bon Bec, Gerard erst, of his young days and home, and brought the water to mine een. But, looking up, my master's visage was as the face of a little boy whipped soundly, or sipping foulest medicine. "Zounds! stop that belly-ache blether," quoth he. "That will ne'er wile a stiver out o' peasants' purses; 't will but sour the nurses' milk, and gar the kine jump into rivers to be out of earshot on 't. What I false knave, did I buy thee a fine new psaltery to be
minded o' my latter end withal? Hearken! these be the songs that glad the heart, and fill the minstrel's purse." And he sung so blasphemous a stave, and eke so obscene, as I drew away from him a space that the lightning might not spoil the new psaltery. However, none came, being winter; and then I said, "Master, the Lord is débonair. Held I the thunder, yon ribaldry had been thy last, thou foul mouthed wretch." "Why, Bon Bec, what is to do?" quoth he. "I have made an ill bargain. Oh, perverse heart, that turneth from doctrine." So I bade him keep his breath to cool his broth; ne'er would I shame my folk with singing ribald songs. "Then," says he, sulkily, "the first fire we light by the wayside, clap thou on the music-box! so 't will make our pot boil for the nonce; but with your, —

Good people, let us peak and pine,
Cut tristful mugs, and miaul and whine
Thorough our noses chants divine,

never, never, never. Ye might as well go through Lorraine crying, Mulleygrubs, Mulleygrubs, who 'll buy my Mulleygrubs?" So we fared on, bad friends. But I took a thought, and prayed him hum me one of his naughty ditties again. Then he brightened, and broke —
forth into ribaldry like a nightingale. Finger in ears stuffed I. "No words; nought but the bare melody." For, oh, Margaret! note the sly malice of the Evil One: still to the scurviest matter he weddeth the tunablest ditties."

**Catherine.** 'That is true as Holy Writ.'
**Sybrandt.** 'How know you that, mother?'
**Cornelis.** 'He! he! he!'
**Eli.** 'Whisht, ye uneasy wights, and let me hear the boy. He is wiser than ye,—wiser than his years.'

"'What tomfoolery is this," said he; yet he yielded to me, and soon I garnered three of his melodies. But I would not let Cul de Jatte wot the thing I meditated. "Show not fools nor bairns unfinished work," saith the byword. And by this time 't was night, and a little town at hand, where we went each to his inn; for my master would not yield to put off his rags and other sores till morning, nor I to enter an inn with a tatterdemalion. So we were to meet on the road at peep of day. And, indeed, we still lodged apart, meeting at morn and parting at eve, outside each town we lay at. And waking at midnight and cogitating, good thoughts came down to me, and sudden my heart was en-
lightened. I called to mind that my Margaret had withstood the taking of the burgomaster's purse. "'T is theft," said you; "disguise it how ye will." But I must be wiser than my betters; and now that which I had as good as stolen, others had stolen from me. As it came, so it was gone. Then I said, "Heaven is not cruel, but just;" and I vowed a vow to repay our burgomaster every shilling an I could. And I went forth in the morning sad, but hopeful. I felt lighter for the purse being gone.

'My master was at the gate becrutched. I told him I'd liever have seen him in another disguise. "Beggars must not be choosers," said he. However, soon he bade me untruss him, for he felt sadly. His head swam. I told him, forcefully to deform nature thus could scarce be wholesome. He answered none; but looked scared, and hand on head. By-and-by he gave a groan, and rolled on the ground like a ball, and writhed sore. I was scared, and wist not what to do, but went to lift him; but his trouble rose higher and higher: he gnashed his teeth fearfully, and the foam did fly from his lips; and presently his body bended itself like a bow, and jerked and bounded many times into the air. I exorcised him; it but made him worse. There was water in a ditch hard by,
not very clear; but, the poor creature struggling between life and death, I filled my hat withal, and came flying to souse him. Then my lord laughed in my face. "Come, Bon Bec, by thy white gills, I have not forgotten my trade." I stood with watery hat in hand, glaring. "Could this be feigning?" "What else?" said he. "Why, a real fit is the sorriest thing, —but a stroke with a feather compared with mine. Art still betters nature." "But look, e'en now blood trickleth from your nose," said I. "Ay, ay; pricked my nostrils with a straw." "But ye foamed at the lips." "Oh, a little soap makes a mickle foam." And he drew out a morsel like a bean from his mouth. "Thank thy stars, Bon Bec," says he, "for leading thee to a worthy master. Each day his lesson. Tomorrow we will study the cul de bois and other branches. To-day, own me prince of demoniacs, and indeed of all good fellows." Then, being puffed up, he forgot yesterday's grudge, and discoursed me freely of beggars, and gave me, who eftsoons thought a beggar was a beggar, and there an end, the names and qualities of full thirty sorts of masterful and crafty mendicants in France and Germany and England, —his three provinces (for so the poor, proud knave yclept those kingdoms three), wherein his throne
it was the stocks, I ween. And outside the next village one had gone to dinner and left his wheelbarrow. So says he, "I'll tie myself in a knot, and shalt wheel me through; and what with my crippledom and thy piety, a-wheeling of thy poor old dad, we'll bleed the bumpkins of a dacha-salteee." I did refuse. I would work for him; but no hand would have in begging. "And wheeling an 'asker' in a barrow, is not that work?" said he; "then fling yon muckle stone in to boot. Stay! I'll soil it a bit, and swear it is a chip of the holy sepulchre, and you wheeled us both from Jerusalem." Said I, "Wheeling a pair o' lies, one stony, one fleshly, may be work, and hard work, but honest work 'tis not. 'T is fumbling with his tail you wot of. And," said I, "master, next time you go to tempt me to knavery, speak not to me of my poor old dad." Said I, "You have minded me of my real father's face, the truest man in Holland. He and I are ill friends now, worse luck. But though I offend him, shame him I never will." Dear Margaret, with this knave saying, "your poor old dad," it had gone to my heart like a knife. "'T is well," said my master, gloomily; "'I have made a bad bargain." Presently he halts, and eyes a tree by the wayside. "Go spell me what is writ on yon tree." So
I went, and there was nought but a long square drawn in outline. I told him so. "So much for thy monkish lore," quoth he. A little farther, and he sent me to read a wall. There was nought but a circle scratched on the stone with a point of nail or knife, and in the circle two dots. I said so. Then said he, "Bon Bec, that square was a warning. Some good Truand left it, that came through this village faring west; that means 'dangerous.' The circle with the two dots was writ by another of our brotherhood; and it signifies as how the writer, soit Rollin Trapu, soit Triboulet, soit Catin Cul de Bois, or what not, was becked for asking here, and lay two months in Starabin." Then he broke forth, "Talk of your little snivelling books that go in pouch. Three books have I, — France, England, and Germany; and they are writ all over in one tongue, that my brethren of all countries understand; and that is what I call learning. So sith here they whip sores and imprison infirmities I to my tiring-room." And he popped behind the hedge, and came back worshipful.

'We passed through the village, and I sat me down on the stocks, and even as the barber's apprentice whets his razor on a block, so did I flesh my psaltery on this village, fearing great
and the Hearth.

cities. I tuned it, and coursed up and down the wires nimbly with my two wooden strikers; and then chanted loud and clear, as I had heard the minstrels of the country, —

“Qui veut ouïr qui veut Savoir,”

some trash, I mind not what. And soon the villagers of both sexes thronged about me; thereat I left singing, and recited them to the psaltery a short but right merry tale out of “The Acts of the Saints,” which it is my handbook of pleasant figments; and this ended, instantly struck up and whistled one of Cul de Jatte’s devil’s ditties, and played it on the psaltery to boot. Thou knowest Heaven hath bestowed on me a rare whistle, both for compass and tune. And with me whistling bright and full this sprightly air, and making the wires slow when the tune did gallop, and tripping when the tune did amble, or I did stop and shake on one note like a lark i’ the air, they were like to eat me; but looking round, lo! my master had given way to his itch, and there was his hat on the ground, and copper pouring in. I deemed it cruel to whistle the bread out of Poverty’s pouch, so broke off and away; yet could not get clear so swift but both men and women did slobber me sore, and smelled all of garlic.
"There, master," said I, "I call that cleaving the divell in twain and keeping his white half." Said he, "Bon Bec, I have made a good bargain." Then he bade me stay where I was while he went to the Holy Land. I stayed, and he leaped the churchyard dike, and the sexton was digging a grave, and my master chaffered with him, and came back with a knuckle bone. But why he 'clept a churchyard Holy Land, that I learned not then, but after dinner. I was colouring the armories of a little inn; and he sat by me most peaceable, a cutting and filing, and polishing bones, sedately. So I speered was not honest work sweet? "As rain water," said he, mocking. "What was he a-making?" "A pair of bones to play on with thee; and with the refuse a Saint Anthony's thumb and a Saint Martin's little finger for the devout." The vagabond!

'And now, sweet Margaret, thou seest our manner of life faring Rhineward. I, with the two arts I had least prized or counted on for bread, was welcome everywhere; too poor now to fear robbers, yet able to keep both master and man on the road. For at night I often made a portraiture of the innkeeper or his dame, and so went richer from an inn,—the which it is the lot of few. But my master de-
spised this even way of life. "I love ups and downs," said he. "And certes he lacked them not. One day he would gather more than I in three; another, to hear his tale, it had rained kicks all day in lieu of "saltees," and that is pennies. Yet even then at heart he despised me for a poor mechanical soul, and scorned my arts, extolling his own,—the art of feigning.

'Nathless, at odd times was he ill at his ease. Going through the town of Aix we came upon a beggar walking, fast by one hand to a cart-tail, and the hangman a-lashing his bare bloody back. He, stout knave, so whipped, did not a jot relent; but I did wince at every stroke; and my master hung his head.

"'Soon or late, Bon Bec," quoth he. "Soon or late." I, seeing his haggard face, knew what he meant. And at a town, whose name hath slipped me, but 't was on a fair river, as we came to the foot of the bridge, he halted and shuddered. "Why, what is the coil," said I? "Oh, blind," said he, "they are justifying there." So nought would serve him but take a boat, and cross the river by water. But 't was out of the frying-pan, as the word goeth; for the boatmen had scarce told us the matter, and that it was a man and a woman for stealing glazed windows out of housen, and that the man
was hanged at daybreak, and the quean to be drowned, when lo! they did fling her off the bridge, and fell in the water not far from us. And, oh, Margaret, the deadly splash! It rangeth in mine ears even now. But worse was coming; for, though tied, she came up, and cried, "Help! help!" and I, forgetting all, and hearing a woman's voice cry "Help!" was for leaping in to save her, and had surely done it but the boatmen and Cul de Jatte clung round me, and in a moment the bourreau's man, that waited in a boat, came and entangled his hooked pole in her long hair, and so thrust her down and ended her. Oh, if the saints answered so our cries for help! And poor Cul de Jatte groaned; and I sat sobbing, and beat my breast and cried, "Of what hath God made men's hearts?"

The reader stopped, and the tears trickled down her cheeks. Gerard crying in Lorraine made her cry at Rotterdam. The leagues were no more to her heart than the breadth of a room.

Eli, softened by many touches in the letter, and by the reader's womanly graces, said kindly enough, 'Take thy time, lass. And methinks some of ye might find her a creepie to rest her foot, and she so near her own trouble.'
and the Hearth.

'I'd do more for her than that an I durst,' said Catherine. 'Here, Cornelis,' and she held out her little wooden stool; and that worthy, who hated Margaret worse than ever, had to take the creepie and put it carefully under her foot.

'You are very kind, dame,' she faltered. 'I will read on; 'tis all I can do for you in turn.'

'Thus seeing my master ashy and sore shaken, I deemed this horrible tragic act came timeously to warn him, so I strove sore to turn him from his ill ways, discoursing of sinners and their lethal end. "Too late!" said he, "too late!" and gnashed his teeth. Then I told him "too late" was the divell's favourite whisper in repentant ears. Said I, —

"The Lord is débonair,  
Let sinners nought despair."

"Too late!" said he, and gnashed his teeth, and writhed his face, as though vipers were biting his inward parts. But, dear heart, his was a mind like running water; ere we cleared the town he was carolling. And outside the gate hung the other culprit from the bough of a little tree, and scarce a yard above the ground; and that stayed my vagabond's music. But ere we had gone another furlong, he feigned to have
dropped his rosary, and ran back, with no good intent, as you shall hear. I strolled on very slowly, and often halting, and presently he came stumping up on one leg, and that bandaged. I asked him how he could contrive that, for 't was masterly done. "Oh, that was his mystery. Would I know that I must join the brotherhood." And presently we did pass a narrow lane, and at the mouth on 't espied a written stone telling beggars by a word like a wee pitchfork to go that way. "'T is yon farmhouse," said he. "Bide thou at hand." And he went to the house, and came back with money, food, and wine. "This lad did the business," said he, slapping his one leg proudly. Then he undid the bandage, and with prudish face showed me a hole in his calf you could have put your need in. Had I been strange to his tricks, here was a leg had drawn my last penny. Presently another farmhouse by the road. He made for it. I stood and asked myself should I run away and leave him, not to be shamed in my own despite by him? But, while I doubted, there was a great noise, and my master well cudgelled by the farmer and his men, and came toward me hobbling and hallooing; for the peasants had laid on heartily. But more trouble was at his heels. Some mischievous wight
loosed a dog as big as a jackass colt, and came roaring after him, and downed him momently. I deeming the poor rogue's death certain, and him least fit to die, drew my sword and ran shouting. But, ere I could come near, the muckle dog had torn away his bad leg, and ran growling to his lair with it; and Cul de Jatte slipped his knot, and came running like a lapwing, with his hair on end, and so striking with both crutches before and behind at unreal dogs as 't was like a windmill crazed. He fled adown the road. I followed leisurely, and found him at dinner. "Curse the quiens," said he. And not a word all dinner-time but "Curse the quiens!" I said I must know who they were before I would curse them. "Quiens? Why, that was dogs. And I knew not even that much? He had made a bad bargain." "Well, well," said he; "to-morrow we shall be in Germany. There the folk are music-bitten; and they molest not beggars, unless they fake to boot, and then they drown us out of hand that moment, curse 'em!" We came to Strasbourg, and I looked down Rhine with longing heart. The stream how swift! It seemed running to clip Sevenbergen to its soft bosom. With but a piece of timber and an oar, I might drift at my ease to thee, sleeping yet gliding still. 'T was
a sore temptation. But the fear of an ill welcome from my folk, and of the neighbours' sneers, and the hope of coming back to thee victorious, not, as now I must, defeated and shamed, and thee with me, it did withhold me; and so, with many sighs, and often turning of the head to look on beloved Rhine, I turned sorrowful face and heavy heart toward Augsburg.'

'Alas, dame, alas! Good master Eli, forgive me! But I ne'er can win over this part all at one time. It taketh my breath away. Well-a-day! Why did he not listen to his heart? Had he not gone through peril enow, sorrow enow? Well-a-day! well-a-day!'

The letter dropped from her hand, and she drooped like a wounded lily.

Then there was a clatter on the floor, and it was little Kate going on her crutches, with flushed face, and eyes full of pity, to console her. 'Water, mother,' she cried. 'I am afeard she shall swoon.'

'Nay, nay, fear me not,' said Margaret, feebly. 'I will not be so troublesome. Thy good will it maketh me stouter hearted, sweet mistress Kate. For if thou carest how I fare, sure Heaven is not against me.'

Catherine. 'D'ye hear that, my man?'
Eli. 'Ay, wife, I hear; and mark to boot.'
Little Kate went back to her place, and Margaret read on:—

'The Germans are fonder of armorials than the French. So I found work every day. And whiles I wrought, my master would leave me, and doff his raiment and don his rags and other infirmities, and cozen the world, which he did clepe it "plucking of the goose;" this done, would meet me and demand half my earnings, and with restless piercing eye ask me would I be so base as cheat my poor master by making three parts in lieu of two, till I threatened to lend him a cuff to boot in requital of his suspicion; and thenceforth took his due, with feigned confidence in my good faith, the which his dancing eye belied. Early in Germany we had a quarrel. I had seen him buy a skull of a jailer's wife, and mighty zealous a-polishing it. Thought I, "How can he carry yon memento, and not repent, seeing where ends his way?" Presently I did catch him selling it to a woman for the head of Saint Barnabas, with a tale had cozened an Ebrew. So I snatched it out of their hands, and trundled it into the ditch. "How, thou impious knave," said I, "wouldst sell for a saint the skull of some dead thief, thy
brother." He slunk away. But shallow she did crawl after the skull, and with apron reverently dust it for Barnabas, and it Barabbas; and so home with it. Said I, "Non vult anser velli, sed populus vult decipi."

_Catherine._ 'Oh, the goodly Latin!'
_Eli._ 'What meaneth it?'
_Catherine._ 'Nay, I know not; but 'tis Latin. Is not that enow? He was the flower of the flock.'

'Then I to him, "Take now thy psaltery, and part we here, for art a walking prison, a walking hell." But lo! my master fell on his knees, and begged me for pity's sake not turn him off. "What would become of him? He did so love honesty." "Thou love honesty?" said I. "'Ay," said he, "not to enact it, — the saints forbid! but to look on. 'T is so fair a thing to look on! Alas! good Bon Bec," said he; "'adst starved peradventure but for me. Kick not down thy ladder! Call ye that just? Nay, calm thy choler! Have pity on me! I must have a pal; and how could I bear one like myself after one so simple as thou? He might cut my throat for the money that is hid in my belt. 'T is not much; 't is not much. With thee I
walk at mine ease; with a sharp I dare not go before in a narrow way. Alas! forgive me. Now I know where in thy bonnet lurks the bee, I will ware his sting; I will but pluck the secular goose." "So be it," said I. "And example was contagious; he should be a true man by then we reached Nurnberg. 'T was a long way to Nurnberg." Seeing him so humble, I said, "Well, doff rags, and make thyself decent; 't will help me forget what thou art." And he did so; and we sat down to our none-mete. Presently came by a reverend palmer with hat stuck round with cockle-shells from Holy Land, and great rosary of beads like eggs of teal, and sandals for shoes. And he leaned aweary on his long staff, and offered us a shell apiece. My master would none; but I, to set him a better example, took one, and for it gave the poor pilgrim two batzen, and had his blessing. And he was scarce gone when we heard savage cries, and came a sorry sight,—one leading a wild woman in a chain, all rags, and howling like a wolf. And when they came nigh us, she fell to tearing her rags to threads. The man sought an alms of us, and told us his hard case. 'T was his wife, stark raving mad; and he could not work in the fields, and leave her in his house to fire it, nor cure her could he

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without the saintys help, and had vowed six pounds of wax to Saint Anthony to heal her, and so was fain beg of charitable folk for the money. And now she espied us, and flew at me with her long nails, and I was cold with fear, so devilish showed her face and rolling eyes and nails like birdys talons. But he with the chain checked her sudden, and with his whip did cruelly lash her for it, that I cried, "Forbear! forbear! She knoweth not what she doth," and gave him a batz. And being gone, said I, "Master, of those twain I know not which is the more pitiable." And he laughed in my face. "Behold thy justice, Bon Bec," said he. "Thou railest on thy poor, good, within-an-ace-of-honest master, and bestowest alms on a 'vopper.' " "Vopper?" said I; "what is a vopper?" "Why, a trull that feigns madness. That was one of us, that sham maniac; and, wowl but she did it clumsily. I blushed for her and thee. Also gavest two batzen for a shell from Holy Land, that came no farther than Normandy. I have culled them myself on that coast by scores, and sold them to pilgrims true and pilgrims false, to gull flats like thee withal." "What!" said I; "that reverend man?" "One of us!" cried Cul de Jatte; "one of us! In France we call
them 'Coquillarts,' but here 'Calmierers.' Railest on me for selling a false relic now and then, and wastest thy earnings on such as sell nought else. I tell thee, Bon Bec," said he, "there is not one true relic on earth's face. The saints died a thousand years agone, and their bones mixed with the dust. But the trade in relics, it is of yesterday; and there are forty thousand tramps in Europe live by it,—selling relics of forty or fifty bodies (oh, threadbare lie!) and of the true Cross enow to build Cologne Minster. Why, then, may not poor Cul de Jatte turn his penny with the crowd? Art but a scurvy tyrannical servant to let thy poor master from his share of the swag with your whorson pilgrims, palmers, and friars, black, gray, and crutched; for all these are of our brotherhood, and of our art, only masters they, and we but poor apprentices, in guile." For his tongue was an ell and a half.

"A truce to thy irreverend sophistries," said I, "and say what company is this a-coming." "Bohemians," cried he. "Ay, ay, this shall be the rest of the band." With that came along so motley a crew as never your eyes beheld, dear Margaret. Marched at their head one with a banner on a steel-pointed lance, and girded with a great long sword, and in velvet
doublet and leathern jerkin (the which stuffs ne'er saw I wedded afore on mortal flesh), and a gay feather in his lordly cap, and a couple of dead fowls at his back,—the which an the spark had come by honestly, I am much mistook. Him followed wives and babes on two lean horses, whose flanks still rattled like parchment drum, being beaten by kettles and caldrons. Next an armed man a-riding of a horse, which drew a cart full of women and children; and in it, sitting backward, a lusty lazy knave, lance in hand, with his luxurious feet raised on a holy-water pail that lay along, and therein a cat, new kittened, sat glowing o'er her brood, and sparks for eyes. And the cart-horse cavalier had on his shoulders a round bundle, and thereon did perch a cock, and crowed with zeal, poor ruffler, proud of his brave feathers as the rest, and haply with more reason, being his own. And on an ass another wife and new-born child; and one poor quean a-foot scarce dragged herself along, so near her time was she, yet held two little ones by the hand, and helplessly helped them on the road. And the little folk were just a farce; some rode sticks, with horses' heads, between their legs, which pranced and caracoled, and soon wearied the riders so sore they stood stock still and wept, which
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Cavaliers were presently taken into cart and cuffed. And one more grave, lost in a man's hat and feather, walked in Egyptian darkness, handed by a girl; another had the great sauce-pan on his back, and a tremendous three-footed clay pot sat on his head and shoulders, swallowing him so as he too went darkling, led by his sweetheart three foot high. When they were gone by, and we had both laughed lustily, said I, "Nathless, master, my bowels they yearn for one of that tawdry band,—even for the poor wife so near the down-lying, scarce able to drag herself, yet still, poor soul, helping the weaker on the way."

Catherine. 'Nay, nay, Margaret. Why, wench, pluck up heart. Certes thou art no Bohemian.'

Kate. 'Nay, mother; 't is not that, I trow, but her father. And, dear heart, why take notice to put her to the blush?'

Richard. 'So I say.'

'And he derided me. "Why, that is a 'bil-treger,'" said he, "and you waste your bowels on a pillow or so forth." I told him he lied. "Time would show," said he; "wait till they camp." And rising after meat and meditation,
The Cloister

and travelling forward, we found them camped between two great trees on a common by the wayside: and they had lighted a great fire, and on it was their caldron; and, one of the trees slanting o'er the fire, a kid hung down by a chain from the tree-fork to the fire, and in the fork was wedged an urchin turning still the chain to keep the meat from burning; and a gay spark with a feather in his cap cut up a sheep; and another had spitted a leg of it on a wooden stake; and a woman ended chanti-leer's pride with wringing of his neck. And under the other tree four rufflers played at cards and quarrelled, and no word sans oath; and of these lewd gamblers one had cockles in his hat, and was my reverend pilgrim. And a woman, young and comely, and dressed like a butterfly, sat and mended a heap of dirty rags. And Cul de Jatte said, "Yon is the 'vopper.'" And I looked incredulous, and looked again, and it was so; and at her feet sat he that had so late lashed her,—but I ween he had wist where to strike, or woe betide him; and she did now oppress him sore, and made him thread her very needle, the which he did with all humility; so was their comedy turned seamy side without. And Cul de Jatte told me 't was still so with "voppers" and their men in camp; they would
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... don their bravery though but for an hour, and with their tinsel, empire; and the man durst not the least gainsay the "vopper," or she would turn him off at these times, as I my master, and take another tyrant more submissive. And my master chuckled over me. Nathless, we soon espied a wife set with her back against the tree, and her hair down, and her face white; and by her side a wench held up to her eye a new-born babe, with words of cheer; and the rough fellow, her husband, did bring her hot wine in a cup, and bade her take courage. And just o'er the place she sat, they had pinned from bough to bough of those neighbouring trees two shawls, and blankets two, together, to keep the drizzle off her. And so had another poor little rogue come into the world; and by her own particular folk tended gipsywise, but of the roasters, and boilers, and "voppers," and gamblers, no more noticed, — no, not for a single moment, — than sheep which droppeth her lamb in a field, by travellers upon the way. Then said I, "What of thy foul suspicions, master? Over-knavery blinds the eye as well as over-simplicity." And he laughed and said, "Triumph, Bon Bec, triumph. The chances were nine in ten against thee." Then I did pity her, to be in a crowd at such a time; but he rebuked me. "I should
pity rather your queens and royal duchesses, which by law are condemned to groan in a crowd of nobles and courtiers, and do writhe with shame as well as sorrow, being come of decent mothers, whereas these gipsy women have no more shame under their skins than a wolf ruth, or a hare valour. And Bon Bec," quoth he, "I espy in thee a lamentable fault. Wastest thy bowels. Wilt have none left for thy poor good master, which doeth thy will by night and day."

'Then we came forward; and he talked with the men in some strange Hebrew cant whereof no word knew I; and the poor knaves bade us welcome, and denied us nought. With them, and all they had, 't was lightly come and lightly go; and when we left them my master said to me, "This is thy first lesson, but to-night we shall lie at Hansburgh. Come with me to the 'rot-boss' there, and I'll show thee all our folk and their lays, and especially ' the lossners,' ' the dutzers,' ' the schleppers,' ' the gickisses,' ' the schwanfelders' (whom in England we call 'shivering Jemmies'), ' the sünvegers,' ' the schwiegers,' ' the joners,' ' the sessel-degers,' ' the genschrerers' (in France ' marcandiers or rifodés'), ' the veranerins,' ' the stabulers,' with a few foreigners like ourselves, — such as ' pietres,'
'francmitoux,' 'polissons,' 'malingreux,' 'traters,' 'rufflers,' 'whipjalks,' 'dommerars,' 'glymmerars,' 'jarkmen,' 'patricos,' 'swadders,' 'autem morts,' 'walking morts,'—" "Enow," cried I, stopping him, "art as gleesome as the Evil One a-counting of his imps. I'll jot down in my tablet all these caitiffs and their accursed names, for knowledge is knowledge; but go among them, alive or dead, that will I not with my good will. Moreover," said I, "what need, since I have a companion in thee who is all the knaves on earth in one?" and thought to abash him; but his face shone with pride, and hand on breast he did bow low to me. "If thy wit be scant, good Bon Bec, thy manners are a charm. I have made a good bargain."

'So he to the "rotboss," and I to a decent inn, and sketched the landlord's daughter by candle-light, and started at morn batzen thre the richer, but could not find my master, so loitered slowly on, and presently met him coming west for me, and cursing the quiens. Why so? Because he could blind the culls but not the quiens. At last I prevailed on him to leave cursing and canting, and tell me his adventure. Said he, "I sat outside the gate of yon monastery, full of sores, which I showed the passers-by. Oh,
Bon Bec, beautifuller sores you never saw; and it rained coppers in my hat. Presently the monks came home from some procession, and the convent dogs ran out to meet them, curse the quiens!" "What! did they fall on thee and bite thee, poor soul?" "Worse, worse, dear Bon Bec. Had they bitten me, I had earned silver. But the great idiots, being, as I think, puppies, or little better, fell on me where I sat, downed me, and fell a-licking my sores among them; as thou, false knave, didst swear the whelps in heaven licked the sores of Lazy-bones, a beggar of old." "Nay, nay," said I, "I said no such thing. But tell me, since they bit thee not, but sportfully licked thee, what harm?" "What harm, noodle? Why, the sores came off." "How could that be?" "How could aught else be, and them just fresh put on? Did I think he was so weak as bite holes in his flesh with ratsbane? Nay, he was an artist,—a painter like his servant,—and had put on sores made of pig's blood, rye meal, and glue. So when the folk saw my sores go on tongues of puppies, they laughed; and I saw cord or sack before me. So up I jumped, and shouted, 'A miracle! a miracle! The very dogs of this holy convent be holy, and have cured me. Good fathers,' cried I, 'whose day
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is this?’ ‘Saint Isidore’s,’ said one. ‘Saint Isidore!’ cried I, in a sort of rapture. ‘Why, Saint Isidore is my patron saint, so that accounts.’ And the simple folk swallowed my miracle as those accursed quiens my wounds. But the monks took me inside and shut the gate, and put their heads together. But I have a quick ear; and one did say, ‘Caret miraculo monasterium,’ which is Greek patter, I trow,—leastways it is no beggar’s cant. Finally they bade the lay brethren give me a hiding, and take me out a back way and put me on the road, and threatened me did I come back to the town to hand me to the magistrate and have me drowned for a plain impostor. ‘Profit now by the Church’s grace,’ said they, ‘and mend thy ways.’ So forward, Bon Bec, for my life is not sure nigh hand this town.” As we went he worked his shoulders: “Wow! but the brethren laid on. And what means yon piece of monk’s cant, I wonder?” So I told him the words meant, “The monastery is in want of a miracle,” but the application thereof was dark to me. “Dark,” cried he, “dark as noon! Why, it means they are going to work the miracle, my miracle, and gather all the grain I sowed. Therefore these blows on their benefactor’s shoulders; therefore is he that wrought their scurvy miracle
driven forth with stripes and threats. Oh, cozening knaves!" Said I, "Becomes you to complain of guile." "Alas! Bon Bec," said he, "I but outwit the simple; but these monks would pluck Lucifer of his wing feathers." And went a league bemoaning himself that he was not convent-bred like his servant, — "he would put it to more profit," — and railing on quiens. "And as for those monks, there was One above." "Certes," said I, "there is One above. What then?" "Who will call those shavelings to compt, one day," quoth he. "And all deceitful men," said I.

'At one that afternoon I got armories to paint; so my master took the yellow jaundice and went begging through the town, and with his oily tongue, and saffron-water face, did fill his hat. Now, in all the towns are certain licensed beggars, and one of these was an old favourite with the townsfolk; had his station at St. Martin's porch, the greatest church, — a blind man; they called him blind Hans. He saw my master drawing coppers on the other side the street, and knew him by his tricks for an impostor, so sent and warned the constables; and I met my master in the constables' hands, and going to his trial in the town hall. I followed, and many more; and he was none abashed, neither by the
pomp of justice nor memory of his misdeeds, but demanded his accuser like a trumpet. And blind Hans's boy came forward, but was sifted narrowly by my master, and stammered, and faltered, and owned he had seen nothing, but only carried blind Hans's tale to the chief constable. "This is but hearsay," said my master. "Lo ye now, here standeth Misfortune backbit by Envy. But stand thou forth, blind Envy, and vent thine own lie." And blind Hans behooved to stand forth, sore against his will. Him did my master so press with questions, and so pinch and torture, asking him again and again, how, being blind, he could see all that befell, and some that befell not, across a way; and why, an he could not see, he came there holding up his perjured hand, and maligning the misfortune, that at last he groaned aloud and would utter no word more. And an alderman said, "In sooth, Hans, ye are to blame; hast cast more dirt of suspicion on thyself than on him." But the burgomaster, a wondrous fat man, and methinks of his fat some had gotten into his head, checked him and said, "Nay, Hans we know this many years; and be he blind or not, he hath passed for blind so long, 'tis all one. Back to thy porch, good Hans, and let the strange varlet leave the town incon-
tinent on pain of whipping." Then my master winked to me; but there rose a civic officer in his gown of state and golden chain, a dignity with us lightly prized, and even shunned of some, but in Germany and France much courted, save by condemned malefactors,—to wit the hangman; and says he, "An't please you, first let us see why he weareth his hair so thick and low." And his man went and lifted Cul de Jatte's hair, and lo! the upper gristle of both ears was gone. "How is this, knave?" quoth the burgomaster. My master said, carelessly, he minded not precisely; his had been a life of misfortunes and losses. "When a poor soul has lost use of his leg, noble sirs, these more trivial woes rest lightly in his memory." When he found this would not serve his turn, he named two famous battles, in each of which he had lost half an ear, a fighting like a true man against traitors and rebels. But the hangman showed them the two cuts were made at one time, and by measurement. "'T is no bungling soldier's work, my masters," said he; "'t is oun." Then the burgomaster gave judgment: "The present charge is not proven against thee; but, an thou beest not guilty now, thou hast been at other times,—witness thine ears. Wherefore I send thee to prison for one month,
and to give a florin toward the new hall of the guilds now a-building, and to be whipped out of the town, and pay the hangman's fee for the same." And all the aldermen approved, and my master was haled to prison, with one look of anguish. It did strike my bosom. I tried to get speech of him, but the jailer denied me. But lingering near the jail I heard a whistle, and there was Cul de Jatte at a narrow window twenty feet from earth. I went under, and he asked me what made I there? I told him I was loath to go forward and not bid him farewell. He seemed quite amazed; but soon his suspicious soul got the better. That was not all mine errand. I told him not all: the psalter. "Well, what of that?" "T was not mine, but his; I would pay him the price of it. "Then throw me a rix-dollar," said he. I counted out my coins, and they came to a rix-dollar and two batzen. I threw him up his money in three throws; and when he had got it all he said softly, "Bon Bec." "Master," said I. Then the poor rogue was greatly moved. "I thought ye had been mocking me," said he; "oh, Bon Bec, Bon Bec. if I had found the world like thee at starting I had put my wit to better use, and I had not lain here." Then he whimpered out, "I gave not
quite a rix-dollar for the jingler;" and threw me back that he had gone to cheat me of,—honest for once, and over late; and so, with many sighs, bade me God-speed. Thus did my master, after often baffling men's justice, fall by their injustice; for his lost ears proved not his guilt only, but of that guilt the bitter punishment; so the account was even. Yet they for his chastisement did chastise him. Nathless, he was a parlous rogue. Yet he holf to make a man of me. Thanks to his good wit I went forward richer far with my psaltery and brush than with yon as good as stolen purse; for that must have run dry in time, like a big trough, but these a little fountain.'

Richart. 'How pregnant his reflections be; and but a curly pated lad when last I saw him. Asking your pardon, mistress. Prithee read on.'

'One day I walked alone, and, sooth to say, light hearted; for mine honest Denys sweetened the air on the way, but poor Cul de Jatte poisoned it. The next day, passing a grand house, out came on prancing steeds a gentleman in brave attire and two servants; they overtook me. The gentleman bade me halt. I laughed in
my sleeve; for a few batzen were all my store. He bade me doff my doublet and jerkin. Then I chuckled no more. "Bethink you, my lord," said I, "'t is winter. How may a poor fellow go bare and live?" So he told me I shot mine arrow wide of his thought; and off with his own gay jerkin, richly furred, and doublet to match, and held them forth to me. Then a servant let me know it was a penance: his lordship had had the ill-luck to slay his cousin in their cups. Down to my shoes he changed with me; and set me on his horse like a popinjay, and fared by my side in my worn weeds, with my psaltery on his back. And said he, "Now, good youth, thou art Count Detstein; and I, late count, thy servant. Play thy part well, and help me save my blood-stained soul! Be haughty and choleric, as any noble; and I will be as humble as I may." I said I would do my best to play the noble. But what should I call him? He bade me call him nought but Servant. That would mortify him most, he wist. We rode on a long way in silence; for I was meditating this strange chance that from a beggar's servant had made me master to a count, and also cudgelling my brains how best I might play the master without being run through the body all at one time like his cousin.

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For I mistrusted sore my spark's humility,—your German nobles being, to my knowledge, proud as Lucifer and choleric as fire. As for the servants, they did slyly grin to each other to see their master so humbled—'

'Ah! what is that?'

A lump, as of lead, had just bounced against the door, and the latch was fumbled with, unsuccessfully; another bounce, and the door swung inward, with Giles arrayed in cloth-of-gold sticking to it like a wasp. He landed on the floor, and was embraced, but on learning what was going on, trumpeted that he would much liever hear of Gerard than gossip.

Sybrandt pointed to a diminutive chair.

Giles showed his sense of this civility by tearing the said Sybrandt out of a very big one, and there ensconced himself, gorgeous and glowing. Sybrandt had to wedge himself into the one which was too small for the magnificent dwarf's soul, and Margaret resumed. But as this part of the letter was occupied with notices of places, all which my reader probably knows, and, if not, can find handled at large in a dozen well-known books, from Munster to Murray, I skip the topography, and hasten to that part where it occurred to him to throw his letter into a
journal. The personal narrative that intervened may be thus condensed:

He spoke but little at first to his new companions, but listened to pick up their characters. Neither his noble servant nor his servants could read or write; and as he often made entries in his tablets, he impressed them with some awe. One of his entries was, 'Le peu que sont les hommes;' for he found the surly inn-keepers licked the very ground before him now. Nor did a soul suspect the hosier's son in the count's feathers, nor the count in the minstrel's weeds. This seems to have surprised him; for he enlarged on it with the naïveté and pomposity of youth. At one place, being humbly requested to present the inn with his armorial bearings, he consented loftily, but painted them himself, to mine host's wonder, who thought he lowered himself by handling brush. The true count stood grinning by, and held the paint-pot, while the sham count painted a shield with three red herrings rampant under a sort of Maltese cross made with two ell-measures. At first his plebeian servants were insolent. But this coming to the notice of his noble one, he forgot what he was doing penance for, and drew his sword to cut off their ears, heads included. But Gerard interposed and saved them, and
rebuked the count severely. And finally they all understood one another, and the superior mind obtained its natural influence. He played the barbarous noble of that day vilely; for his heart would not let him be either tyrannical or cold. Here were three human beings. He tried to make them all happier than he was; held them ravished with stories and songs, and set Herr Penitent & Co. dancing, with his whistle and psaltery. For his own convenience he made them ride and tie, and thus pushed rapidly through the country, travelling generally fifteen leagues a day.

**DIARY.**

'This first of January I observed a young man of the country to meet a strange maiden, and kissed his hand, and then held it out to her. She took it with a smile, and lo! acquaintance made; and babbled like old friends. Greeting so pretty and delicate I ne'er did see. Yet were they both of the baser sort. So the next lass I saw a-coming, I said to my servant lord, "For further penance bow thy pride. Go meet yon base-born girl; kiss thy homicidal hand, and give it her; and hold her in discourse as best ye may." And my noble servant said
humbly, "I shall obey my lord." And we drew rein and watched while he went forward, kissed his hand, and held it out to her. Forth-with she took it smiling, and was most affable with him, and he with her. Presently came up a band of her companions. So this time I bade him doff his bonnet to them, as though they were empresses; and he did so. And lo! the lasses drew up as stiff as hedge-stakes, and moved not nor spake.'

Denys. 'Aie! aie! aie! Pardon, the company.'

'This surprised me none; for so they did dis-countenance poor Denys. And that whole day I wore in experimenting these German lasses; and 't was still the same. An ye doff bonnet to them they stiffen into statues,—distance for distance; but accost them with honest freedom, and with that customary, and, though rustical, most gracious proffer of the kissed hand, and they withhold neither their hands in turn nor their acquaintance in an honest way. Seeing which I vexed myself that Denys was not with us to prattle with them; he is so fond of women.'

'Are you fond of women, Denys?' And the reader opened two great violet eyes upon him with gentle surprise.
Denys. ‘Ahem! He says so, she-comrade. By Hannibal’s helmet! ’t is their fault, not mine. They will have such soft voices and white skins and sunny hair and dark blue eyes, and —’

Margaret. (Reading suddenly.) ‘Which their affability I put to profit thus: I asked them how they made shift to grow roses in yule. For know, dear Margaret, that throughout Germany the baser sort of lasses wear for head-dress nought but a crantz, or wreath of roses, encircling their bare hair, as laurel Caesar’s; and though of the worshipful scorned, yet is braver, I wist, to your eye and mine, which painters be, though sorry ones, than the gorgeous, uncouth, mechanical head-gear of the time, and adorns, not hides her hair, — that goodly ornament fitted to her head by craft divine. So the good lasses, being questioned close, did let me know the rose-buds are cut in summer and laid then in great clay pots, thus ordered: first bay-salt, then a row of buds, and over that row bay-salt sprinkled; then another row of buds placed crosswise (for they say it is death to the buds to touch one another); and so on, buds and salt in layers. Then each pot is covered and soldered tight, and kept in cool cellar. And on Saturday night the master of the house, — or mistress, if mas-
ter be none,—opens a pot, and doles the rose-
buds out to every woman in the house, high or
low, withouten grudge; then solders it up again.
And such as of these buds would full-blown roses
make, put them in warm water a little space, or
else in the stove, and then with tiny brush and
soft, wetted in Rhenish wine, do coax them till
they ope their folds. And some perfume them
with rose-water. For, alack! their smell, it is
fled with the summer; and only their fair bodyes
lie withouten soul, in tomb of clay, awaiting
resurrection.

' And some with the roses and buds mix nut-
megs gilded, but not by my good will; for gold,
brave in itself, cheek by jowl with roses, is but
yellow earth. And it does the eye's heart good
to see these fair heads of hair come, blooming
with roses, over snowy roads and by snow-
capped hedges, setting winter's beauty by the
side of summer's glory. For what so fair as
winter's lilies, snow yclept, and what so brave
as roses? And shouldst have had a picture
here but for their superstition. Leaned a lass
in Sunday garb, cross-ankled, against her cot-
tage corner, whose low roof was snow-clad,
and with her crantz did seem a summer flower
sprouting from winter's bosom. I drew rein,
and out pencil and brush to limn her for thee.
But the simpleton, fearing the evil eye, or glamour, claps both hands to her face and flies panic-stricken. But, indeed, they are not more superstitious than the Sevenbergen folk, which take thy father for a magician. Yet softly, sith at this moment I profit by this darkness of their minds; for at first sitting down to write this diary, I could frame nor thought nor word, so harried and deaved was I with noise of mechanical persons, and hoarse laughter at dull jests of one of these party-coloured “fools,” which are so rife in Germany. But, oh, sorry wit that is driven to the poor resource of pointed ear-caps, and a green and yellow body. True wit, methinks, is of the mind. We met in Burgundy an honest wench, though over free for my palate, a chambermaid, had made havoc of all these zanies, droll by brute force. Oh, Digressor! Well, then, I, to be rid of roaring rusticalls and mindless jests, put my finger in a glass and drew on the table a great watery circle, whereat the rusticalls did look askant, like venison at a cat; and in that circle a smaller circle. The rusticalls held their peace. And beside these circles cabalistical, I laid down on the table solemnly yon parchment deed I had out of your house. The rusticalls held their breath. Then did I look as glum as might be, and muttered slowly
thus: "Videamus — quam diu tu fictus morio — vosque veri stulti — audebitis — in hac aula morari, strepitantes ita — et olentes — ut dulcissimae nequeam miser scribere." They shook like aspens, and stole away on tiptoe one by one at first, then in a rush and jostling, and left me alone; and most scared of all was the fool. Never earned jester fairer his ass's ears. So rubbed I their foible, who first rubbed mine; for of all a traveller's foes I dread those giants twain, Sir Noise, and eke Sir Stench. The saints and martyrs forgive my peevishness. Thus I write to thee in balmy peace, and tell thee trivial things scarce worthy ink, also how I love thee, which there was no need to tell, for well thou knowest it. And, oh, dear Margaret, looking on their roses, which grew in summer, but blow in winter, I see the picture of our true affection: born it was in smiles and bliss; but soon adversity beset us sore with many a bitter blast. Yet our love hath lost no leaf, thank God, but blossoms full and fair as ever, proof against frowns and jibes and prison and banishment, as those sweet German flowers a-blooming in winter's snow.

'January 2. — My servant the count, finding me curious, took me to the stables of the prince that rules this part. In the first court was a
horse-bath, adorned with twenty-two pillars, graven with the prince’s arms; and also the horse-leech’s shop, so furnished as a rich apothecary might envy. The stable is a fair quadrangle, whereof three sides are filled with horses of all nations. Before each horse’s nose was a glazed window, with a green curtain to be drawn at pleasure, and at his tail a thick wooden pillar with a brazen shield, whence by turning of a pipe he is watered, and serves too for a cupboard to keep his comb and rubbing clothes. Each rack was iron, and each manger shining copper, and each nag covered with a scarlet mantle, and above him his bridle and saddle hung, ready to gallop forth in a minute; and not less than two hundred horses, whereof twelve score were of foreign breed. And we returned to our inn full of admiration, and the two valets said sorrowfully, “Why were we born with two legs?” And one of the grooms that was civil, and had of me trinkgeld, stood now at his cottage door and asked us in. There we found his wife, and children of all ages from five to eighteen, and had but one room to bide and sleep in,—a thing pestiferous and most uncivil. Then I asked my servant, knew he this prince? Ay, did he, and had often drunk with him in a marble chamber above the stable,
where, for table, was a curious and artificial rock, and the drinking vessels hang on its pinnacles, and at the hottest of the engagement a statue of a horseman in bronze came forth bearing a bowl of liquor, and he that sat nearest behooved to drain it. "'Tis well," said I. "Now, for thy penance, whisper thou in yon prince's ear that God hath given him his people freely, and not sought a price for them as for horses. And pray him look inside the huts at his horse-palace door, and bethink himself is it well to house his horses, and stable his folk." Said he, "'T will give sore offence." "But," said I, "ye must do it discreetly, and choose your time." So he promised. And riding on we heard plaintive cries. "Alas!" said I, "some sore mischance hath befallen some poor soul. What may it be?" And we rode up, and lo! it was a wedding feast; and the guests were plying the business of drinking, sad and silent, but ever and anon cried loud and dolefully, "Seyte frolich! Be merry!"

'January 3. — Yesterday between Nurnberg and Augsburg we parted company. I gave my lord, late servant, back his brave clothes for mine; but his horse he made me keep, and five gold pieces, and said he was still my debtor, his penance it had been slight along of me, but
profitable. But his best word was this: "I see 'tis more noble to be loved than feared." And then he did so praise me as I blush to put on paper; yet, poor fool, would fain thou couldst hear his words, but from some other pen than mine. And the servants did heartily grasp my hand, and wish me good luck. And riding apace, yet could I not reach Augsburg till the gates were closed; but it mattered little, for this Augsburg it is an enchanted city. For a small coin one took me a long way round to a famous postern called der Einlasse. Here stood two guardians like statues. To them I gave my name and business. They nodded me leave to knock. I knocked; and the iron gate opened with a great noise and hollow rattling of a chain, but no hand seen nor chain; and he who drew the hidden chain sits a butt's length from the gate. And I rode in, and the gate closed with a clang after me. I found myself in a great building with a bridge at my feet. This I rode over, and presently came to a porter's lodge, where one asked me again my name and business, then rang a bell, and a great portcullis that barred the way began to rise, drawn by a wheel overhead, and no hand seen. Behind the portcullis was a thick oaken door studded with steel. It opened without hand, and I rode
into a hall as dark as pitch. Trembling there awhile, a door opened and showed me a smaller hall lighted. I rode into it. A tin goblet came down from the ceiling by a little chain: I put two batzen into it, and it went up again. Being gone, another thick door creaked, and opened, and I rid through. It closed on me with a tremendous clang, and behold me in Augsburg city. I lay at an inn called the Three Moors, over an hundred years old; and this morning, according to my way of viewing towns to learn their compass and shape, I mounted the highest tower I could find, and setting my dial at my foot surveyed the beautiful city,—whole streets of palaces, and churches tiled with copper burnished like gold; and the house fronts gayly painted and all glazed, and the glass so clean and burnished as 't is most replendent and rare. And I, now first seeing a great citie, did croun with delight, and like cock on his ladder, and at the tower foot was taken into custody for a spy; for whilst I watched the city, the watchman had watched me. The burgomaster received me courteously and heard my story; then rebuked he the officers. "Could ye not question him yourselves, or read in his face? This is to make our city stink in stranger's report." Then he told me my curi-
osity was of a commendable sort; and seeing
I was a craftsman and inquisitive, bade his clerk
take me among the guilds. God bless the city
where the very burgomaster is cut of Solomon's
cloth!

'January 5. — Dear Margaret, it is a noble
city, and a kind mother to arts. Here they cut
in wood and ivory, that 't is like spiders' work,
and paint on glass, and sing angelical harmonies.
Writing of books is quite gone by; here be six
printers. Yet was I offered a bountiful wage to
write fairly a merchant's accounts,—one Fugger,
a grand and wealthy trader, and hath store
of ships, yet his father was but a poor weaver;
but here in commerce, her very garden, men
swell like mushrooms. And he bought my
horse of me, and abated me not a jot, which
way of dealing is not known in Holland. But,
oh, Margaret, the workmen of all the guilds are
so kind and brotherly to one another and to
me. Here, methinks, I have found the true
German mind,—loyal, frank, and kindly, some-
what choleric withal, but nought revengeful.
Each mechanic wears a sword. The very
weavers at the loom sit girded with their
weapons, and all Germans on too slight occa-
sion draw them and fight; but no treachery.
Challenge first, then draw, and with the edge
only, mostly the face, not with Sir Point; for if in these combats one thrust at his adversary and hurt him, 'tis called ein schelemstucke,—a heinous act. Both men and women turn their backs on him; and even the judges punish thrusts bitterly, but pass over cuts. Hence in Germany be good store of scarred faces,—three in five at least,—and in France scarce more than one in three.

'But in arts mechanical no citizens may compare with these. Fountains in every street that play to heaven, and in the gardens seeming trees, which being approached, one standing afar touches a spring, and every twig shoots water, and souses the guests to their host's much delectation. Big culverins of war they cast with no more ado than our folk horse-shoes, and have done this fourscore years. All stuffs they weave, and linen fine as ours at home, or nearly, which elsewhere in Europe vainly shall you seek. Sir Printing Press—sore foe to poor Gerard, but to other humans beneficial—plieth by night and day, and casteth goodly words like sower afield; while I, poor fool, can but sow them as I saw women in France sow rye,—dribbling it in the furrow grain by grain. And of their strange mechanical skill take two examples: For ending of
exemplary rogues they have a figure like a woman, seven feet high, and called Jung Frau; but lo! a spring is touched, she seizeth the poor wretch with iron arms, and opening herself, hales him inside her, and there pierces him through and through with two score lances. Secondly, in all great houses the spit is turned not by a scrubby boy, but by smoke. Ay, mayst well admire, and judge me a lying knave. These cunning Germans do set in the chimney a little windmill, and the smoke struggling to wend past, turns it. And from the mill a wire runs through the wall and turns the spit on wheels; beholding which I doffed my bonnet to the men of Augsburg, — for who but these had ere devised to bind ye so dark and subtle a knave as Sir Smoke, and set him to roast Dame Pullet?

‘This day, January 5, with three craftsmen of the town, I painted a pack of cards. They were for a senator in a hurry. I the diamonds. My queen came forth with eyes like spring violets, hair a golden brown, and witching smile. My fellow-craftsmen saw her, and put their arms round my neck and hailed me master (oh, noble Germans! No jealousy of a brother-workman; no sour looks at a stranger), and would have me spend Sunday with them after
matins; and the merchant paid me so richly as I was ashamed to take the guerdon. And I to my inn, and tried to paint the queen of diamonds for poor Gerard; but no, she would not come like again. Luck will not be bespoke. Oh, happy rich man that hath got her! Fie! fie! Happy Gerard, that shall have herself one day, and keep house with her at Augsburg.

'January 8. — With my fellows, and one Veit Stoss, a wood-carver, and one Hafnagel, of the goldsmiths' guild, and their wives and lasses, to Hafnagel's cousin (a senator of this free city), and his stupendous wine-vessel. It is ribbed like a ship, and hath been eighteen months in hand and finished but now, and holds a hundred and fifty hogsheads, and standeth not, but lieth; yet even so ye get not on his back withouten ladders two, of thirty steps. And we sat about the miraculous mass, and drank Rhenish from it, drawn by a little artificial pump; and the lasses pinned their crantzes to it, and we danced round it, and the senator danced on its back, but with drinking of so many garausses, lost his footing and fell off, glass in hand, and broke an arm and a leg in the midst of us. So scurvily ended our drinking bout for this time.

'January 10. — This day started for Venice with a company of merchants, and among them
him who had desired me for his scrivener; and so we are now agreed, I to write at night the letters he shall dict, and other matters, he to feed and lodge me on the road. We be many and armed, and soldiers with us to boot, so fear not the thieves which men say lie on the borders of Italy. But an if I find the printing-press at Venice, I trow I shall not go on to Rome, for men may not vie with iron.

'Imprimit una dies quantum non scribitur anno. And, dearest, something tells me you and I shall end our days at Augsburg, whence going, I shall leave it all I can, — my blessing.

'January 12.—My master affecteth me much, and now maketh me sit with him in his horse-litter. A grave, good man, of all respected, but sad for loss of a dear daughter, and loveth my psaltery, — not giddy-paced ditties, but holy harmonies such as Cul de Jatte made wry mouths at. So many men, so many minds. But cooped in horse-litter, and at night writing his letters, my journal halteth.

'January 14.—When not attending on my good merchant, I consort with such of our company as are Italians (for 'tis to Italy I wend); and I am ill seen in Italian tongue. A courteous and a subtle people; at meat delicate feeders, and cleanly: love not to put their left hand
in the dish. They say Venice is the garden of Lombardy, Lombardy the garden of Italy, Italy of the world.

'January 16. — Strong ways and steep; and the mountain girls so girded up, as from their armpits to their waist is but a handful. Of all the garbs I yet have seen the most unlovely.

'January 18. — In the midst of life we are in death. Oh, dear Margaret, I thought I had lost thee. Here I lie in pain and dole, and shall write thee that which, read you it in a romance, ye should cry, "Most improbable!" And so still wondering that I am alive to write it, and thanking for it God and the saints, this is what befell thy Gerard:

'Yestreen I wearied of being shut up in litter, and of the mule's slow pace, and so went forward; and being, I know not why, strangely full of spirit and hope, as I have heard befall some men when on trouble's brink, seemed to tread on air, and soon distanced them all. Presently I came to two roads, and took the larger; I should have taken the smaller. After traveling a good half-hour I found my error, and returned; and deeming my company had long passed by, pushed bravely on, but I could not overtake them, — and small wonder, as you shall hear. Then I was anxious, and ran; but
bare was the road of those I sought. And night came down, and the wild beasts afoot; and I bemoaned my folly, also I was hungered. The moon rose clear and bright exceedingly, and presently a little way off the road I saw a tall windmill. "Come," said I, "mayhap the miller will take ruth on me." Near the mill was a haystack, and scattered about were store of little barrels; but lo! they were not flour-barrels, but tar-barrels, one or two, and the rest of spirits,—Brant vein and Schiedam; I knew them momently, having seen the like in Holland. I knocked at the mill door, but none answered. I lifted the latch and the door opened inward. I went in, and gladly, for the night was fine but cold, and a rime on the trees, which were a kind of lofty sycamores. There was a stove, but black. I lighted it with some of the hay and wood, for there was a great pile of wood outside; and, I know not how, I went to sleep. Not long had I slept, I trow, when hearing a noise I awoke, and there were a dozen men around me, with wild faces, and long black hair, and black sparkling eyes."

Catherine. 'Oh, my poor boy! those black-haired ones do still scare me to look on.'
and the Hearth.

"I made my excuses in such Italian as I knew, and eking out by signs. They grinned. I had lost my company. They grinned. I was an hungered. Still they grinned, and spoke to one another in a tongue I knew not. At last one gave me a piece of bread, and a tin-mug of wine, as I thought, but it was spirits neat. I made a wry face, and asked for water; then these wild men laughed a horrible laugh. I thought to fly, but looking toward the door, it was bolted with two enormous bolts of iron; and now first, as I ate my bread, I saw it was all guarded too, and ribbed with iron. My blood curdled within me, and yet I could not tell thee why; but hadst thou seen the faces, wild, stupid, and ruthless! I mumbled my bread, not to let them see I feared them; but, oh, it cost me to swallow it, and keep it in me. Then it whirled in my brain, was there no way to escape? Said I, "They will not let me forth by the door; these be smugglers or robbers." So I feigned drowsiness, and taking out two batzen said, "Good men, for our Lady's grace let me lie on a bed and sleep, for I am faint with travel." They nodded, and grinned their horrible grin, and bade one light a lantern and lead me. He took me up a winding staircase, up, up; and I saw no windows, but the wooden
walls were pierced like a barbican tower, and methinks for the same purpose; and through these slits I got glimpses of the sky, and thought, "Shall I e'er see thee again?" He took me to the very top of the mill; and there was a room with a heap of straw in one corner, and many empty barrels, and by the wall a truckle bed. He pointed to it, and went downstairs heavily, taking the light; for in this room was a great window, and the moon came in bright. I looked out to see, and lo! it was so high that even the mill sails at their highest came not up to my window by some feet, but turned very slow and stately underneath,—for wind there was scarce a breath,—and the trees seemed silver filagree made by angel craftsmen. My hope of flight was gone.

'But now, those wild faces being out of sight, I smiled at my fears. What an if they were ill men, would it profit them to hurt me? Nevertheless, for caution against surprise, I would put the bed against the door. I went to move it, but could not. It was free at the head, but at the foot fast clamped with iron to the floor. So I flung my psaltery on the bed, but for myself made a layer of straw at the door, so as none could open on me unawares. And I laid my sword ready to my hand, and said my prayers for thee and me, and turned to sleep.
‘Below, they drank and made merry. And hearing this gave me confidence. Said I, “Out of sight, out of mind. Another hour and the good Schiedam will make them forget that I am here.” And so I composed myself to sleep; and for some time could not, for the boisterous mirth below. At last I dropped off. How long I slept I knew not; but I woke with a start. The noise had ceased below, and the sudden silence woke me. And scarce was I awake, when sudden the truckle bed was gone with a loud clang all but the feet, and the floor yawned, and I heard my psaltery fall and break to atoms deep, deep, below the very floor of the mill. It had fallen into a well. And so had I done, lying where it lay.’

Margaret shuddered, and put her face in her hands, but speedily resumed.

‘I lay stupefied at first. Then horror fell on me, and I rose, but stood rooted there, shaking from head to foot. At last I found myself looking down into that fearsome gap, and my very hair did bristle as I peered. And then, I remember, I turned quite calm, and made up my mind to die sword in hand; for I saw no man must know this their bloody secret and live.
And I said, "Poor Margaret!" And I took out of my bosom, where they lie ever, our marriage lines, and kissed them again and again; and I pinned them to my shirt again, that they might lie in one grave with me, if die I must. And I thought, "All our love and hopes to end thus!"

Eli. 'Whist all! Their marriage lines? Give her time! But no word. I can bear no chat. My poor lad!'

During the long pause that ensued Catherine leaned forward and passed something adroitly from her own lap under her daughter's apron, who sat next her.

'Presently thinking, all in a whirl, of all that ever passed between us, and taking leave of all those pleasant hours, I called to mind how one day at Sevenbergen thou taughtest me to make a rope of straw. Mindest thou? The moment memory brought that happy day back to me, I cried out very loud: "Margaret gives me a chance for life even here." I woke from my lethargy. I seized on the straw and twisted it eagerly, as thou didst teach me; but my fingers trembled and delayed the task. While I wrought I heard a door open below. That was
a terrible moment. Even as I twisted my rope I got to the window and looked down at the great arms of the mill coming slowly up, then passing, then turning less slowly down, as it seemed; and I thought, "They go not as when there is wind; yet, slow or fast, what man rid ever on such steed as these, and lived? Yet," said I, "better trust to them and God than to ill men." And I prayed to him whom even the wind obeyeth.

'Dear Margaret, I fastened my rope, and let myself gently down, and fixed my eye on that huge arm of the mill which then was creeping up to me, and went to spring on to it. But my heart failed me at the pinch; and methought it was not near enow. And it passed calm and awful by. I watched for another: they were three. And after a little while one crept up slower than the rest methought. And I with my foot thrust myself in good time somewhat out from the wall, and crying aloud "Margaret!" did grip with all my soul the wood-work of the sail, and that moment was swimming in the air.

Giles. 'Well done! well done!'

'Motion I felt little; but the stars seemed to go round the sky, and then the grass came up
to me nearer and nearer. And when the hoary grass was quite close I was sent rolling along it as if hurled from a catapult, and got up breathless, and every point and tie about me broken. I rose, but fell down again in agony. I had but one leg I could stand on."

Catherine. ‘Eh, dear! His leg is broke! my boy’s leg is broke!’

‘And e’en as I lay groaning, I heard a sound like thunder. It was the assassins running up the stairs. The crazy old mill shook under them. They must have found I had not fallen into their bloody trap, and were running to despatch me. Margaret, I felt no fear, for I had now no hope. I could neither run nor hide, so wild the place, so bright the moon. I struggled up all agony and revenge, more like some wounded wild beast than your Gerard. Leaning on my sword-hilt I hobbled round; and swift as lightning, or vengeance, I heaped a great pile of their hay and wood at the mill door; then drove my dagger into a barrel of their smuggled spirits, and flung it on; then out with my tinder and lighted the pile. “This will bring true men round my dead body,” said I. “Aha!” I cried, “think you I’ll die alone,
cowards! assassins! reckless fiends!" and at each word on went a barrel pierced. But, oh, Margaret! the fire fed by the spirits surprised me: it shot up and singed my very hair; it went roaring up the side of the mill, swift as falls the lightning; and I yelled and laughed in my torture and despair, and pierced more barrels, and the very tar-barrels, and flung them on. The fire roared like a lion for its prey, and voices answered it inside from the top of the mill; and the feet came thundering down, and I stood as near that awful fire as I could, with uplifted sword to slay and be slain. The bolt was drawn. A tar-barrel caught fire. The door was opened. What followed? Not the men came out, but the fire rushed in at them like a living death; and the first I thought to fight with was blackened and crumpled on the floor like a leaf. One fearsome yell, and dumb forever. The feet ran up again, but fewer. I heard them hack with their swords a little way up, at the mill's wooden sides; but they had no time to hew their way out: the fire and reek were at their heels, and the smoke burst out at every loophole, and oozed blue in the moonlight through each crevice. I hobbled back, racked with pain and fury. There were white faces up at my window. They saw me. They
cursed me. I cursed them back, and shook my naked sword: "Come down the road I came," I cried. "But ye must come one by one, and as ye come, ye die upon this steel." Some cursed at that, but others wailed; for I had them all at deadly vantage. And doubtless with my smoke-grimed face and fiendish rage I looked a demon.

'And now there was a steady roar inside the mill. The flame was going up it as furnace up its chimney. The mill caught fire. Fire glimmered through it. Tongues of flame darted through each loophole and shot sparks and fiery flakes into the night. One of the assassins leaped on to the sail as I had done. In his hurry he missed his grasp and fell at my feet, and bounded from the hard ground like a ball, and never spoke nor moved again. And the rest screamed like women, and with their despair came back to me both ruth for them and hope of life for myself. And the fire gnawed through the mill in placen, and shot forth showers of great flat sparks like flakes of fiery snow; and the sails caught fire one after another; and I became a man again, and staggered away terror-stricken, leaning on my sword, from the sight of my revenge, and with great bodily pain crawled back to the road. And, dear Margaret,
the rimy trees were now all like pyramids of golden filagree, and lace, cobweb fine, in the red firelight. Oh, most beautiful! And a poor wretch got entangled in the burning sails, and whirled round screaming, and lost hold at the wrong time, and hurled like stone from mangonel high into the air; then a dull thump: it was his carcass striking the earth. The next moment there was a loud crash. The mill fell in on its destroyer, and a million great sparks flew up; and the sails fell over the burning wreck, and at that a million more sparks flew up, and the ground was strewn with burning wood, and men. I prayed God forgive me, and kneeling with my back to that fiery shambles, I saw lights on the road,—a welcome sight. It was a company coming toward me, and scarce two furlongs off. I hobbled toward them. Ere I had gone far I heard a swift step behind me. I turned. One had escaped; how escaped, who can divine? His sword shone in the moonlight. I feared him; methought the ghosts of all those dead sat on that glittering glaive. I put my other foot to the ground, maugre the anguish, and fled toward the torches, moaning with pain, and shouting for aid. But what could I do? He gained on me. Behooved me turn and fight. Denys had taught me sword-play in sport. I
wheeled; our swords clashed. His clothes, they smelled all singed. I cut swiftly upward with supple hand, and his dangled bleeding at the wrist, and his sword fell; it tinkled on the ground. I raised my sword to hew him should he stoop for 't. He stood and cursed me. He drew his dagger with his left; I opposed my point, and dared him with my eye to close. A great shout arose behind me from true men's throats. He started. He spat at me in his rage, then gnashed his teeth and fled, blaspheming. I turned and saw torches close at hand. Lo, they fell to dancing up and down methought, and the next—moment—all—was—dark. I had—'

'Ah!'

_Catherine._ 'Here, help! water! Stand aloof, you that be men!'

_Margaret_ had fainted away.
CHAPTER V.

WHEN she recovered, her head was on Catherine's arm, and the honest half of the family she had invaded like a foe stood round her uttering rough homely words of encouragement, especially Giles, who roared at her that she was not to take on like that. Gerard was alive and well, or he could not have writ this letter, — the biggest mankind had seen as yet, and, as he thought, the beautifulest, and most moving, and smallest writ.

'Ay, good Master Giles,' sighed Margaret, feebly, 'he was alive. But how know I what hath since befallen him? Oh, why left he Holland to go among strangers fierce as lions? And why did I not drive him from me sooner than part him from his own flesh and blood? Forgive me, you that are his mother!' And she gently removed Catherine's arm, and made a feeble attempt to slide off the chair on to her knees, which, after a brief struggle with superior force, ended in her finding herself on
Catherine's bosom. Then Margaret held out the letter to Eli, and said faintly but sweetly, 'I will trust it from my hand now. In sooth, I am little fit to read any more—and—and—loath to leave my comfort;' and she wreathed her other arm round Catherine's neck.

'Read thou, Richart,' said Eli; 'thine eyes be younger than mine.'

Richart took the letter. 'Well,' said he, 'such writing saw I never. A writeth with a needle's point, and clear to boot. Why is he not in my counting-house at Amsterdam instead of vagabonding it out yonder?'

'When I came to myself I was seated in the litter, and my good merchant holding of my hand. I babbled I know not what, and then shuddered awhile in silence. He put a horn of wine to my lips.'

Catherine. 'Bless him! bless him!'

Eli. 'Whist!'

'And I told him what had befallen. He would see my leg. It was sprained sore, and swelled at the ankle; and all my points were broken, as I could scarce keep up my hose: and I said, "Sir, I shall be but a burden to
and the Hearth.

you, I doubt, and can make you no harmony now. My poor psaltery, it is broken;” and I did grieve over my broken music, companion of so many weary leagues. But he patted me on the cheek, and bade me not fret; also he did put up my leg on a pillow, and tended me like a kind father.

‘January 19. — I sit all day in the litter (for we are pushing forward with haste), and at night the good kind merchant sendeth me to bed, and will not let me work. Strange! whene'er I fall in with men like fiends, then the next moment God still sendeth me some good man or woman, lest I should turn away from human kind. Oh, Margaret! how strangely mixed they be, and how old I am by what I was three months ago! And lo! if good Master Fugger hath not been and bought me a psaltery.’

Catherine. ‘Eli, my man, an yon merchant comes our way, let us buy a hundred ells of cloth of him, and not higgle.’

Eli. ‘That will I, take your oath on ‘t!’

While Richart prepared to read, Kate looked at her mother, and with a faint blush drew out the piece of work from under her apron, and sewed, with head depressed a little more than necessary. On this her mother drew a piece of

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work out of her pocket, and sewed too, while Richart read. Both the specimens these sweet surreptitious creatures now first exposed to observation were babies’ caps, and more than half finished, which told a tale. Horror! they were like little monks’ cowls in shape and delicacy.

‘January 22. — Laid up in the litter, and as good as blind; but halting to bait, Lombardy plains burst on me. Oh, Margaret! a land flowing with milk and honey; all sloping plains, goodly rivers, jocund meadows, delectable orchards, and blooming gardens; and though winter, looks warmer than poor beloved Holland at midsummer, and makes the wanderer’s face to shine, and his heart to leap for joy to see earth so kind and smiling. Here be vines, cedars, olives, and cattle plenty, but three goats to a sheep. The draught oxen wear white linen on their necks, and standing by dark green olive-trees each one is a picture; and the folk, especially women, wear delicate strawen hats with flowers and leaves fairly imitated in silk, with silver mixed. This day we crossed a river prettily in a chained ferry-boat. On either bank was a windlass, and a single man by turning of it drew our whole company to his shore, whereat I did admire, being a stranger. Passed
over with us some country folk; and an old
woman looking at a young wench, she did hide
her face with her hand, and held her crucifix
out like knight his sword in tournay, dreading
the evil eye.

'January 25.-Safe at Venice, — a place
whose strange and passing beauty is well known
to thee by report of our mariners. Dost mind
too how Peter would oft fill our ears withal,
we handed beneath the table, and he still dis-
couraging of this sea-enthroned and peerless
citie, in shape a bow, and its great canal, and
palaces on piles, and its watery ways plied by
scores of gilded boats; and that market-place
of nations, orbis, non urbis, forum, St. Mark
his place; and his statue with the peerless
jewels in his eyes, and the lion at his gate? But I,
lying at my window in pain, may see
none of these beauties as yet, but only a street,
fairly paved, which is dull; and houses with
oiled paper and linen in lieu of glass, which is
rude; and the passers-by, their habits and their
gestures, wherein they are superfluous. There-
fore not to miss my daily comfort of whispering
to thee, I will e’en turn mine eyes inward, and
bind my sheaves of wisdom reaped by travel.
For I love thee so that no treasure pleases me
not shared with thee; and what treasure so
good and enduring as knowledge? This, then, have I, Sir Footsore, learned, that each nation hath its proper wisdom and its proper folly; and, methinks, could a great king or duke tramp like me, and see with his own eyes, he might pick the flowers, and eschew the weeds of nations, and go home and set his own folk on Wisdom's hill. The Germans in the north were churlish, but frank and honest; in the south, kindly and honest too. Their general blot is drunkennes, the which they carry even to mis-like and contempt of sober men. They say commonly, "Kanstu niecht sauffen und fressen so kanstu kienem hern wol dienen." In England the vulgar sort drink as deep, but the worshipful hold excess in this a reproach, and drink a health or two for courtesy, not gluttony, and still sugar the wine. In their cups the Germans use little mirth or discourse, but ply the business sadly crying, "Seyte frolich!" The best of their drunken sport is Kurlemurlehuff,—a way of drinking with touching deftly of the glass the beard, the table, in due turn, intermixed with whistlings and snapplings of the fin- ger so curiously ordered as 'tis a labour of Hercules, but to the beholder right pleasant and mirthful. Their topers, by advice of German leeches, sleep with pebbles in their mouths.
For as if a man could be a true copy of the true, there would be no room for error or mistake. Yet, if we consider the nature of human beings, it is evident that we are not perfect in our actions and decisions. The human mind is complex, and our emotions can influence our thoughts and actions at any moment. Thus, it is wise to be cautious and considerate when dealing with others, especially when discussing intimate or sensitive topics.

To: [Recipient Name]

Dear [Recipient Name],

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my gratitude for your kind words and support during these challenging times. Your encouragement has been a great comfort to me.

Yours sincerely,

[Your Name]
melt his lands. They are quarrelsome, but 't is the liquor, not the mind; for they are none revengeful. And when they have made a bad bargain drunk, they stand to it sober. They keep their windows bright, and judge a man by his clothes. Whatever fruit or grain or herb grows by the roadside, gather and eat. The owner seeing you shall say, "Art welcome, honest man." But an ye pluck a wayside grape, your very life is in jeopardy. 'T is eating of that Heaven gave to be drunken. The French are much fairer spoken, and not nigh so true hearted. Sweet words cost them nought. They call it payer en blanche.'

_Denys_. 'Les coquins! ha, ha!'

'Nathless, courtesy is in their hearts,—ay, in their very blood. They say commonly, "Give yourself the trouble of sitting down." And such straws of speech show how blows the wind. Also at a public show, if you would leave your seat, yet not lose it, tie but your napkin round the bench and no French man or woman will sit here, but rather keep the place for you.'

_Catherine_. 'Gramercy! that is manners. France for me!'
Denys rose and placed his hand gracefully to his breastplate.

‘Nathless, they say things in sport which are not courteous, but shocking. “Le diable t’emporte!” “Allez au diable!” and so forth. But I trow they mean not such dreadful wishes; custom belike. Moderate in drinking, and mix water with their wine, and sing and dance over their cups, and are then enchanting company. They are curious not to drink in another man’s cup. In war the English gain the better of them in the field; but the French are their masters in attack and defence of cities,—witness Orleans, where they besieged their besiegers, and hashed them sore with their double and treble culverins, and many other sieges in this our century. More than all nations they flatter their women, and despise them. No she may be their sovereign ruler. Also they often hang their female malefactors instead of drowning them decently, as other nations use. The furniture in their inns is walnut, in Germany only deal. French windows are ill. The lower half is of wood, and opens; the upper half is of glass, but fixed, so that the servant cannot come at it to clean it. The German windows are all glass, and movable, and shine far and near like dia-
monds. In France many mean houses are not glazed at all. Once I saw a Frenchman pass a church without unbonneting. This I ne’er witnessed in Holland, Germany, or Italy. At many inns they show the traveller his sheets to give him assurance they are clean, and warm them at the fire before him,—a laudable custom. They receive him kindly and like a guest; they mostly cheat him, and whiles cut his throat. They plead in excuse hard and tyrannous laws. And true it is their law thrusteth its nose into every platter, and its finger into every pie. In France worshipful men wear their hats and their furs in-doors, and go abroad lighter clad. In Germany they don hat and furred cloak to go abroad, but sit bareheaded and light clad round the stove.

‘The French intermix not the men and women folk in assemblies, as we Hollanders use. Round their preachers the women sit on their heels in rows, and the men stand behind them. Their harvests are rye and flax and wine. Three mules shall you see to one horse, and whole flocks of sheep as black as coal.

‘In Germany the snails be red. I lie not. The French buy minstrelsy, but breed jests, and make their own mirth. The Germans foster their set fools with ear-caps, which move them
to laughter by simulating madness,—a calamity that asks pity, not laughter. In this particular I deem that lighter nation wiser than the graver German. What sayest thou? Alas! canst not answer me now.

'In Germany the petty laws are wondrous wise and just, those against criminals, bloody; in France bloodier still, and executed a trifle more cruelly there. Here the wheel is common, and the fiery stake; and under this king they drown men by the score in Paris river, Seine yclept. But the English are as peremptory in hanging and drowning for a light fault, so travellers report. Finally, a true-hearted Frenchman, when ye chance on one, is a man as near perfect as earth affords; and such a man is my Denys, spite of his foul mouth.'

Denys. 'My foul mouth! Is that so writ, Master Richart?'

Richart. 'Ay, in sooth; see else.'

Denys. (Inspecting the letter gravely.) 'I read not the letter so.'

Richart. 'How, then?'

Denys. 'Humph! ahem! why, just the contrary.' He added, 'Tis little work perusing of these black scratches men are agreed to take for words; and I trow 't is still by guess you
clerks do go, worthy sir. My foul mouth? This is the first time e'er I heard on 't. Eh, mesdames?'

But the women did not seize the opportunity he gave them, and burst into a loud and general disclaimer. Margaret blushed and said nothing; the other two bent silently over their work with something very like a sly smile. Denys inspected their countenances long and carefully; and the perusal was so satisfactory that he turned with a tone of injured but patient innocence, and bade Richart read on.

'The Italians are a polished and subtle people. They judge a man, not by his habits, but his speech and gesture. Here Sir Chough may by no means pass for falcon gentle, as did I in Germany, pranked in my noble servant's feathers. Wisest of all nations in their singular temperance of food and drink; most foolish of all to search strangers coming into their borders, and stay them from bringing much money in. They should rather invite it, and, like other nations, let the traveller from taking of it out. Also here in Venice the dames turn their black hair yellow by the sun and art, to be wiser than Him who made them. Ye enter no Italian town without a bill of health, though now is no plague
in Europe. This peevishness is for extortion's sake. The innkeepers cringe and fawn and cheat, and, in country places, murder you. Yet will they give you clean sheets by paying therefor. Delicate in eating, and abhor from putting their hand in the plate; sooner they will apply a crust or what not. They do even tell of a cardinal at Rome which armeth his guest's left hand with a little bifurcal dagger to hold the meat, while his knife cutteth it; but methinks this, too, is to be wiser than Him who made the hand so supple and prehensile.'

*Eli.* 'I am of your mind, my lad.'

'They are sore troubled with the itch; and ointment for it (*unguento per la rogna*) is cried at every corner of Venice. From this my window I saw an urchin sell it to three several dames in silken trains, and to two velvet knights.'

*Catherine.* 'Italy, my lass, I rede ye wash your body i' the tub o' Sundays; and then ye can put your hand i' the plate o' Thursday without offence.'

'Their bread is lovely white. Their meats they spoil with sprinkling cheese over them, —
O perversity! Their salt is black; without a lie. In commerce these Venetians are masters of the earth and sea, and govern their territories wisely. Only one flaw I find,—the same I once heard a learned friar cast up against Plato his Republic; to wit, that here women are encouraged to venal frailty, and do pay a tax to the State, which, not content with silk and spice, and other rich and honest freights, good store, must trade in sin. Twenty thousand of these Jezebels there be in Venice and Candia, and about, pampered and honoured for bringing strangers to the city, and many live in princely palaces of their own. But herein, methinks, the politic signors of Venice forget what King David saith, "Except the Lord keep the citie, the watchman waketh but in vain." Also, in religion, they hang their cloth according to the wind,—siding now with the Pope, now with the Turk, but aye with the god of traders, Mammon hight. Shall flower so cankered bloom to the world's end? But since I speak of flowers, this none may deny them, that they are most cunning in making roses and gillyflowers to blow unseasonably. In summer they nip certain of the budding roses and water them not. Then in winter they dig round these discouraged plants, and put in cloves; and so with great art
rear sweet-scented roses, and bring them to market in January. And did first learn this art of a cow. Buds she grazed in summer, and they sprouted at yule. Women have sat in the doctors' chairs at their colleges; but she that sat in St. Peter’s was a German. Italy, too, for artful fountains and figures that move by water and enact life; and next for fountains is Augsburg, where they harness the foul knave Smoke to good Sir Spit, and he turneth stout Master Roast. But lest any one place should vaunt, two towns there be in Europe which, scorning giddy fountains, bring water tame in pipes to every burgher's door; and he filleteth his vessels with but turning of a cock. One is London, so watered this many a year by pipes of a league from Paddington, a neighbouring city; and the other is the fair town of Lubeck. Also the fierce English are reported to me wise in that they will not share their land and flocks with wolves, but have fairly driven those marauders into their mountains. But neither in France nor Germany, nor Italy, is a wayfarer's life safe from the vagabonds after sundown. I can hear of no glazed house in all Venice, but only oiled linen and paper; and behind these barbarian eyelets, a wooden jalousie. Their name for a cowardly assassin is ‘a brave man,”
and for an harlot, "a courteous person," which is as much as to say that a woman's worst vice, and a man's worst vice, are virtues. But I pray God for little Holland that there an assassin may be yclept an assassin, and an harlot an harlot, till doomesday; and then gloze foul faults with silken names who can!

_Eli._ (With a sigh.) 'He should have been a priest, saving your presence, my poor lass.'

'Go to, peevish writer; art tied smarting by the leg, and may not see the beauties of Venice, so thy pen kicketh all around like a wicked mule.

'January 26.—Sweetheart, I must be brief, and tell thee but a part of that I have seen, for this day my journal ends. To-night it sails for thee, and I unhappy, not with it, but to-morrow, in another ship, to Rome.

'Dear Margaret, I took a hand-litter, and was carried to St. Mark his church. Outside it, toward the market-place, is a noble gallery, and above it four famous horses, cut in brass by the ancient Romans, and seem all moving, and at the very next step must needs leap down on the beholder. About the church are six hundred pillars of marble, porphyry, and ophites;
inside is a treasure greater than either of St. Denys, or Loreto, or Tournai. First a precious pitcher given the seignory by a Persian sultan, also the ducal cap bearing with crosses, and in its crown a diamond and a chrysolite, each as big as an almond; two golden crowns and twelve golden stomachers studded with crosses from Constantinople; also a monstrous sapphire; item, a great diamond given to a French king; item, a prodigious carbuncle; item, three unicorns' horns. But what are these compared with the sacred relics?

'Dear Margaret, I stood and saw the brown chest that holds the body of Saint Mark the Evangelist. I saw with these eyes, and handled, his ring and his gospel written with his own hand, and all my travels seemed light; for who am I that I should see such things? Dear Margaret, his sacred body was first brought from Alexandria by merchants in 829, and was not prized as now; for between 325, when the church was built, and 1046, the very place where it lay was forgotten. Then they prayed fasted and prayed many days seeking for light, and lo! the Evangelist's body broke at a crevice through the marble and stood before them. They fell to the earth; but in the morning found the crevice the sacred body had burst
through, and peering through it, saw him lie. Then they took and laid him in his chest beneath the altar, and carefully put back the stone with its miraculous crevice, which crevice I saw, and shall gape for a monument while the world lasts. After that they showed me the Virgin's chair (it is of stone); also her picture, painted by Saint Luke, very dark, and the features now scarce visible. This picture, in time of drought, they carry in procession, and brings the rain. I wish I had not seen it. Item, two pieces of marble spotted with John the Baptist's blood; item, a piece of the true cross and of the pillar to which Christ was tied; item, the rock struck by Moses, and wet to this hour; also a stone Christ sat on, preaching at Tyre; but some say it is the one the patriarch Jacob laid his head on, and I hold with them, by reason our Lord never preached at Tyre. Going hence they showed me the State nursery for the children of those aphrodiasian dames, their favourites. Here in the outer wall was a broad niche, and if they bring them so little as they can squeeze them through it alive, the bairn falls into a net inside, and the State takes charge of it; but if too big, their mothers must even take them home again, with whom abiding 't is like to be mali corvi mali ovum. Coming out of the church we met them
carrying in a corpse, with the feet and face bare. This I then first learned is Venetian custom; and sure no other town will ever rob them of it, nor of this that follows. On a great porphyry slab in the piazza were three ghastly heads rotting and tainting the air, and in their hot summers like to take vengeance with breeding of a plague. These were traitors to the State, and a heavy price — two thousand ducats — being put on each head, their friends had slain them and brought all three to the slab, and so sold blood of others and their own faith. No State buys heads so many nor pays half so high a price for that sorry merchandise. But what I most admired was to see over against the duke's palace a fair gallows in alabaster, reared express to hang him, and no other, for the least treason to the State; and there it stands in his eye whispering him memento mori. I pondered, and owned these signors my masters, who will let no man, not even their sovereign, be above the common weal. Hard by, on a wall, the workmen were just finishing, by order of the seigniory, the stone effigy of a tragical and enormous act enacted last year, yet on the wall looks innocent. Here two gentlefolks whisper together, and there other twain, their swords by their side. Four brethren were they, which did on either
side conspire to poison the other two, and so halve their land in lieu of quartering it; and at a mutual banquet these twain drugged the wine, and those twain envenomed a marchpane, to such good purpose that the same afternoon lay four "brave men" around one table grovelling in mortal agony, and cursing of one another and themselves, and so concluded miserably; and the land, for which they had lost their immortal souls, went into another family. And why not? it could not go into a worse.

' But O sovereign wisdom of bywords! how true they put the finger on each nation's, or particular's, fault.

"Quand Italie sera sans poison,  
Et France sans trahison,  
Et l'Angleterre sans guerre,  
Lors sera le monde sans terre."'

Richart explained this to Catherine, then proceeded: —

' And after this they took me to the quay; and presently I espied among the masts one garlanded with amaranth flowers. "Take me thither," said I; and I let my guide know the custom of our Dutch skippers to hoist flowers to the masthead when they are courting a maid. Oft had I scoffed at this, saying, "So then his
wooing is the earth's concern." But now, so far from the Rotter, that bunch at a masthead made my heart leap with assurance of a countryman. They carried me, and, oh, Margaret! on the stern of that Dutch hoy was writ in muckle letters,—

Richard Eliassoen, Amsterdam.

"Put me down," I said; "for our Lady's sake put me down." I sat on the bank and looked, scarce believing my eyes, and looked, and presently fell to crying, till I could see the words no more. Ah me, how they went to my heart, those bare letters in a foreign land! Dear Richard! good kind brother Richard! often I have sat on his knee and rid on his back. Kisses many he has given me, unkind word from him had I never. And there was his name on his own ship; and his face and all his grave, but good and gentle ways, came back to me, and I sobbed vehemently, and cried aloud, "Why, why is not brother Richard here, and not his name only?" I spake in Dutch, for my heart was too full to hold their foreign tongues, and—'

Eli. 'Well, Richard, go on, lad; prithee go on. Is this a place to halt at?'
Richard. 'Father, with my duty to you, it is easy to say go on; but think ye I am not flesh and blood? The poor boy's—simple grief and brotherly love coming—so sudden—on me, they go through my heart and—I cannot go on. Sink me if I can even see the words, 'tis writ so fine.'

Denys. 'Courage, good Master Richard! Take your time. Here are more eyne wet than yours. Ah, little comrade! would God thou wert here, and I at Venice for thee.'

Richard. 'Poor little curly-headed lad, what had he done that we have driven him so far?'

'That is what I would fain know,' said Catherine, dryly, then fell to weeping and rocking herself, with her apron over her head.

'Kind dame, good friends,' said Margaret, trembling, 'let me tell you how the letter ends. The skipper, hearing our Gerard speak his grief in Dutch, accosted him, and spake comfortably to him; and after a while our Gerard found breath to say he was worthy Master Richard's brother. Thereat was the good skipper all agog to serve him.'

Richard. 'So! so! skipper! Master Richard aforesaid will be at thy wedding, and bring's purse to boot.'

Margaret. 'Sir, he told Gerard of his con-
sort that was to sail that very night for Rotterdam; and dear Gerard had to go home and finish his letter and bring it to the ship. And the rest, it is but his poor dear words of love to me, the which, an't please you, I think shame to hear them read aloud, and ends with the lines I sent to Mistress Kate; and they would sound so harsh now and ungrateful.'

The pleading tone, as much as the words, prevailed; and Richart said he would read no more aloud, but run his eye over it for his own brotherly satisfaction. She blushed and looked uneasy, but made no reply.

' Eli,' said Catherine, still sobbing a little, 'tell me, for our Lady's sake, how our poor boy is to live at that nasty Rome. He is gone there to write, but here be his own words to prove writing avails nought; a had died o' hunger by the way but for paint-brush and psaltery. Well-a-day!'

' Well,' said Eli, 'he has got brush and music still. Besides, so many men so many minds. Writing, thof it had no sale in other parts, may be merchandise at Rome.'

' Father,' said little Kate, 'have I your good leave to put in my word 'twixt mother and you?'

' And welcome, little heart.'
The Cloister

'Then, seems to me painting and music, close at hand, be stronger than writing, but being distant, nought to compare; for see what glamour written paper hath done here but now. Our Gerard, writing at Venice, hath verily put his hand into this room at Rotterdam, and turned all our hearts. Ay, dear, dear Gerard, methinks thy spirit hath rid hither on these thy paper wings; and, oh, dear father, why not do as we should do were he here in the body?'

'Kate,' said Eli, 'fear not; Richart and I will give him glamour for glamour. We will write him a letter, and send it to Rome by a sure hand with money, and bid him home on the instant.'

Cornelis and Sybrandt exchanged a gloomy look.

'Ah, good father! And meantime?'

'Well, meantime?'

'Dear father, dear mother, what can we do to pleasure the absent, but be kind to his poor lass; and her own trouble afore her?'

'T is well!' said Eli; 'but I am older than thou.' Then he turned gravely to Margaret: 'Wilt answer me a question, my pretty mistress?'

'If I may, sir,' faltered Margaret.

'What are these marriage lines Gerard speaks of in the letter?'
‘Our marriage lines, sir. His and mine. Know you not we are betrothed?’

‘Before witnesses?’

‘Ay, sure. My poor father and Martin Wittenhaagen.’

‘This is the first I ever heard of it. How came they in his hands? They should be in yours.’

‘Alas, sir, the more is my grief. But I ne’er doubted him; and he said it was a comfort to him to have them in his bosom.’

‘Y’are a very foolish lass.’

‘Indeed I was, sir; but trouble teaches the simple.’

‘Tis a good answer. Well, foolish or no, y’are honest. I had shown ye more respect at first, but I thought y’ had been his leman, and that is the truth.’

‘God forbid, sir! Denys, methinks ’tis time for us to go. Give me my letter, sir!’

‘Bide ye! bide ye! Be not so hot for a word! Natheless, wife, methinks her red cheek becomes her.’

‘Better than it did you to give it her, my man.’

‘Softly, wife, softly. I am not counted an unjust man tho’ I be somewhat slow.’

Here Richart broke in. ‘Why, mistress, did ye shed your blood for our Gerard?’
'Not I, sir. But maybe I would.'
'Nay, nay. But he says you did. Speak sooth, now!'
'Alas! I know not what ye mean. I rede ye believe not all that my poor lad says of me. Love makes him blind.'
'Traitress!' cried Denys. 'Let not her throw dust in thine eyes, Master Richart. Old Martin tells me,—ye need not make signals to me, she-comrade; I am as blind as Love,—Martin tells me she cut her arm, and let her blood flow, and smeared her heels when Gerard was hunted by the bloodhounds, to turn the scent from her lad.'
'Well, and if I did, 't was my own, and spilled for the good of my own,' said Margaret, defiantly. But Catherine suddenly clasping her, she began to cry at having found a bosom to cry on,—of one who would have also shed her blood for Gerard in danger.

Eli rose from his chair. 'Wife,' said he, solemnly, 'you will set another chair at our table for every meal; also another plate and knife. They will be for Margaret and Peter. She will come when she likes, and stay away when she pleases. None may take her place at my left hand. Such as can welcome her are welcome to me. Such as cannot, I force them not to
bide with me. The world is wide and free. Within my walls I am master, and my son's betrothed is welcome.'

Catherine bustled out to prepare supper. Eli and Richard sat down and concocted a letter to bring Gerard home. Richard promised it should go by sea to Rome that very week. Sybrandt and Cornelis exchanged a gloomy wink, and stole out. Margaret, seeing Giles deep in meditation, for the dwarf's intelligence had taken giant strides, asked him to bring her the letter. 'You have heard but half, good Master Giles,' said she. 'Shall I read you the rest?'

'I shall be much beholden to you,' shouted the courtier.

She gave him her stool; curiosity bowed his pride to sit on it; and Margaret murmured the first part of the letter into his ear very low, not to disturb Eli and Richard. And to do this, she leaned forward and put her lovely face cheek by jowl with Giles's hideous one,—a strange contrast, and worth a painter's while to try and represent. And in this attitude Catherine found her; and all the mother warmed toward her, and she exchanged an eloquent glance with little Kate.
The Cloister

The latter smiled, and sewed, with drooping lashes.

‘Get him home on the instant,’ roared Giles.
‘I'll make a man of him. I can do aught with the duke.’

‘Hear the boy!’ said Catherine, half comically, half proudly.

‘We hear him,’ said Richart; ‘a mostly makes himself heard when a do speak.’

Sybrandt. ‘Which will get to him first?’
Cornelis. (Gloomily.) ‘Who can tell?’
CHAPTER VI.

ABOUT two months before this scene in Eli's home, the natives of a little maritime place between Naples and Rome might be seen flocking to the sea beach, with eyes cast seaward at a ship that laboured against a stiff gale blowing dead on the shore. At times she seemed likely to weather the danger, and then the spectators congratulated her aloud; at others the wind and sea drove her visibly nearer, and the lookers-on were not without a secret satisfaction they would not have owned even to themselves.

'Non quia vexari quemquam est jucunda voluptas
Sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave est.'

And the poor ship, though not scientifically built for sailing, was admirably constructed for going ashore, with her extravagant poop that caught the wind, and her lines like a cocked hat reversed. To those on the beach that battered labouring frame of wood seemed alive, and struggling against death with a panting heart; but could they have been transferred to her
deck they would have seen she had not one beating heart but many, and not one nature but a score were coming out clear in that fearful hour.

The mariners stumbled wildly about the deck, handling the ropes as each thought fit, and cursing and praying alternately.

The passengers were huddled together round the mast, some sitting, some kneeling, some lying prostrate, and grasping the bulwarks as the vessel rolled and pitched in the mighty waves. One comely young man, whose ashy cheek, but compressed lips, showed how hard terror was battling in him with self-respect, stood a little apart, holding tight by a shroud, and wincing at each sea. It was the ill-fated Gerard. Meantime prayers and vows rose from the trembling throng amidships, and, to hear them, it seemed there were almost as many gods about as men and women. The sailors, indeed, relied on a single goddess. They varied her titles only, calling on her as Queen of Heaven, Star of the Sea, Mistress of the World, Haven of Safety. But among the landsmen Polytheism raged. Even those who by some strange chance hit on the same divinity did not hit on the same edition of that divinity. An English merchant vowed a heap of gold to our Lady of Walsing-
ham. But a Genoese merchant vowed a silver collar of four pounds to our Lady of Loretto; and a Tuscan noble promised ten pounds of wax lights to our Lady of Ravenna. And with a similar rage for diversity they pledged themselves, not on the true cross, but on the true cross in this, that, or the other modern city.

Suddenly a more powerful gust than usual catching the sail at a disadvantage, the rotten shrouds gave way, and the sail was torn out with a loud crack, and went down the wind, smaller and smaller, blacker and blacker, and fluttered into the sea half a mile off like a sheet of paper; and ere the helmsman could put the ship's head before the wind, a wave caught her on the quarter and drenched the poor wretches to the bone, and gave them a foretaste of chill death. Then one vowed aloud to turn Carthusian monk if Saint Thomas would save him. Another would go a pilgrim to Compostella, bareheaded, barefooted, with nothing but a coat-of-mail on his naked skin, if Saint James would save him. Others invoked Thomas, Dominic, Denys, and, above all, Catherine of Sienna.

Two petty Neapolitan traders stood shivering.
One shouted at the top of his voice, "I vow to Saint Christopher at Paris a waxen image of his own weight, if I win safe to land."

On this the other nugged him and said, "Brother, brother, take heed what you vow. Why, if you sell all you have in the world by public auction, 't will not buy his weight in wax."

"Hold your tongue, you fool," said the vociferator. Then in a whisper, "Think ye I am in earnest? Let me but win safe to land, I'll not give him a rush dip."

Others lay flat and prayed to the sea. "O most merciful sea! O sea most generous! O bountiful sea! O beautiful sea! be gentle, be kind; preserve us in this hour of peril."

And others wailed and moaned in mere animal terror each time the ill-fated ship rolled or pitched more terribly than usual; and she was now a mere plaything in the arms of the tremendous waves.

A Roman woman of the humbler class sat with her child at her half-bared breast, silent amid that wailing throng, her cheek ashy pale, her eye calm; and her lips moved at times in silent prayer, but she neither wept, nor lamented, nor bargained with the gods. Whenever the ship seemed really gone under their feet, and
bearded men squeaked, she kissed her child; but that was all. And so she sat patient, and suckled him in death's jaws; for why should he lose any joy she could give him, moribundo? Ay, there I do believe, sat Antiquity among those mediævals. Sixteen hundred years had not tainted the old Roman blood in her veins; and the instinct of a race she had perhaps scarce heard of taught her to die with decent dignity.

A gigantic friar stood on the poop with feet apart, like the Colossus of Rhodes, not so much defying as ignoring the peril that surrounded him. He recited verses from the canticles with a loud, unwavering voice, and invited the passengers to confess to him. Some did so on their knees; and he heard them, and laid his hands on them, and absolved them as if he had been in a snug sacristy instead of a perishing ship. Gerard got nearer and nearer to him, by the instinct that takes the wavering to the side of the impregnable. And in truth, the courage of heroes facing fleshly odds might have paled by the side of that gigantic friar, and his still more gigantic composure. Thus, even here, two were found who maintained the dignity of our race,—a woman, tender, yet heroic, and a monk steeled by religion against mortal fears.
And now, the sail being gone, the sailors cut down the useless mast a foot above the board, and it fell with its remaining hamper over the ship's side. This seemed to relieve her a little.

But now the hull, no longer impelled by canvas, could not keep ahead of the sea. It struck her again and again on the poop, and the tremendous blows seemed given by a rocky mountain, not by a liquid.

The captain left the helm and came amidships pale as death. 'Lighten her!' he cried. 'Fling all overboard, or we shall founder ere we strike, and lose the one little chance we have of life.' While the sailors were executing this order, the captain, pale himself, and surrounded by pale faces that demanded to know their fate, was talking as unlike an English skipper in like peril as can well be imagined. 'Friends,' said he, 'last night, when all was fair,—too fair, alas!—there came a globe of fire close to the ship. When a pair of them come it is good luck, and nought can drown her that voyage. We mariners call these fiery globes Castor and Pollux. But if Castor come without Pollux, or Pollux without Castor, she is doomed. Therefore, like good Christians, prepare to die.'
These words were received with a loud wail. To a trembling inquiry how long they had to prepare, the captain replied, 'She may, or may not, last half an hour; over that, impossible. She leaks like a sieve. Bustle, men; lighten her.'

The poor passengers seized on everything that was on deck and flung it overboard. Presently they laid hold of a heavy sack; an old man was lying on it, seasick. They lugged it from under him. It rattled. Two of them drew it to the side. Up started the owner, and with an unearthly shriek pounced on it. 'Holy Moses! what would you do? 'Tis my all; 'tis the whole fruits of my journey,—silver candlesticks, silver plates, brooches, hanaps—'

'Let go, thou hoary villain,' cried the others. 'Shall all our lives be lost for thy ill-gotten gear?' 'Fling him in with it,' cried one; 'tis this Ebrew we Christian men are drowned for.'

Numbers soon wrenched it from him and heaved it over the side. It splashed into the waves. Then its owner uttered one cry of anguish, and stood glaring, his white hair streaming in the wind, and was going to leap after it, and would, had it floated. But it sank, and was gone forever; and he staggered to and fro, tearing his hair, and cursed them, and the
ship, and the sea, and all the powers of heaven and hell alike.

And now the captain cried out: 'See, there is a church in sight. Steer for that church, mate; and you, friends, pray to the saint, whoe'er he be.'

So they steered for the church, and prayed to the unknown god it was named after. A tremendous sea pooped them, broke the rudder, and jammed it immovable, and flooded the deck.

Then wild with superstitious terror some of them came round Gerard. 'Here is the cause of all,' they cried. 'He has never invoked a single saint. He is a heathen; here is a pagan aboard!'

'Alas, good friends, say not so,' said Gerard, his teeth chattering with cold and fear. 'Rather call these heathens that lie a-praying to the sea. Friends, I do honour the saints — but I dare not pray to them now — there is no time — Oh! What avail me Dominic and Thomas and Catherine? Nearer God's throne than these Saint Peter sitteth; and if I pray to him, it's odds but I shall be drowned ere he has time to plead my cause with God. Oh! oh! oh! I must need go straight to Him that made the sea and the saints and me. Our father, which art in
heaven, save these poor souls and me that cry for the bare life! O sweet Jesus, pitiful Jesus, that didst walk Genezaret when Peter sank, and wept for Lazarus dead when the apostles' eyes were dry, oh, save poor Gerard—for dear Margaret's sake!'

At this moment the sailors were seen preparing to desert the sinking ship in the little boat, which even at that epoch every ship carried. Then there was a rush of egotists; and thirty souls crowded into it. Remained behind three who were bewildered, and two who were paralyzed, with terror. The paralyzed sat like heaps of wet rags; the bewildered ones ran to and fro, and saw the thirty egotists put off, but made no attempt to join them, only kept running to and fro, and wringing their hands. Besides these there was one on his knees praying over the wooden statue of the Virgin Mary, as large as life, which the sailors had reverently detached from the mast. It washed about the deck as the water came slushing in from the sea, and pouring out at the scuppers; and this poor soul kept following it on his knees, with his hands clasped at it, and the water playing with it. And there was the Jew, palsy, but not by fear. He was no longer capable of so petty a passion. He sat cross-legged, bemoan-
ing his bag, and whenever the spray lashed him, shook his fist at where it came from, and cursed the Nazarenes, and their gods, and their devils, and their ships, and their waters, to all eternity. And the gigantic Dominican, having shriven the whole ship, stood calmly communing with his own spirit. And the Roman woman sat pale and patient, only drawing her child closer to her bosom as death came nearer.

Gerard saw this, and it awakened his manhood. 'See! see!' he said; 'they have ta'en the boat and left the poor woman and her child to perish.'

His heart soon set his wit working.

'Wife, I'll save thee yet, please God.' And he ran to find a cask or a plank to float her. There was none. Then his eye fell on the wooden image of the Virgin. He caught it up in his arms, and heedless of a wail that issued from its worshipper, like a child robbed of its toy, ran aft with it. 'Come, wife,' he cried. 'I'll lash thee and the child to this. 'T is sore worm-eaten; but 't will serve.'

She turned her great dark eye on him and said a single word: 'Thyself?' but with wonderful magnanimity and tenderness.

'I am a man, and have no child to take care of.'
and the Hearth.

'Ah!' said she; and his words seemed to animate her face with a desire to live. He lashed the image to her side. Then with the hope of life she lost something of her heroic calm; not much,—her body trembled a little, but not her eye.

The ship was now so low in the water that by using an oar as a lever he could slide her into the waves.

'Come,' said he, 'while yet there is time.'

She turned her great Roman eyes, wet now, upon him. 'Poor youth! God forgive me! My child!' And he launched her on the surge, and with his oar kept her from being battered against the ship.

A heavy hand fell on him; a deep sonorous voice sounded in his ear: 'Tis well. Now come with me.'

It was the gigantic friar.

Gerard turned, and the friar took two strides, and laid hold of the broken mast. Gerard did the same, obeying him instinctively. Between them, after a prodigious effort, they hoisted up the remainder of the mast, and carried it off. 'Fling it in,' said the friar, 'and follow it.' They flung it in; but one of the bewildered passengers had run after them, and jumped first, and got on one end. Gerard seized the other, the friar the middle.
It was a terrible situation. The mast rose and plunged with each wave like a kicking horse, and the spray flogged their faces mercilessly, and blinded them, to help knock them off.

Presently was heard a long grating noise ahead. The ship had struck; and soon after, she being stationary now, they were hurled against her with tremendous force. Their companion's head struck against the upper part of the broken rudder with a horrible crack, and was smashed like a cocoanut by a sledge-hammer. He sunk directly, leaving no trace but a red stain on the water, and a white clot on the jagged rudder, and a death-cry ringing in their ears, as they drifted clear under the lee of the black hull. The friar uttered a short Latin prayer for the safety of his soul, and took his place composedly. They rolled along ἵπτεκ θανάτου; one moment they saw nothing, and seemed down in a mere basin of watery hills; the next they caught glimpses of the shore speckled bright with people, who kept throwing up their arms with wild Italian gestures to encourage them, and the black boat driving bottom upward, and between it and them the woman rising and falling like themselves. She had come across a paddle, and was holding her child tight with her left arm, and paddling gallantly with her right.
When they had tumbled along thus a long time, suddenly the friar said quietly, 'I touched the ground.'

'Impossible, father,' said Gerard; 'we are more than a hundred yards from shore. Prithee, prithee, leave not our faithful mast.'

'My son,' said the friar, 'you speak prudently. But know that I have business of holy Church on hand and may not waste time floating when I can walk in her service. There! I felt it with my toes again; see the benefit of wearing sandals, and not shoon. Again; and sandy. Thy stature is less than mine; keep to the mast! I walk.' He left the mast accordingly, and extending his powerful arms, rushed through the water. Gerard soon followed him. At each overpowering wave the monk stood like a tower, and closing his mouth, threw his head back to encounter it, and was entirely lost under it awhile; then emerged, and ploughed lustily on. At last they came close to the shore; but the suction outward baffled all their attempts to land. Then the natives sent stout fishermen into the sea, holding by long spears in a triple chain, and so dragged them ashore.

The friar shook himself, bestowed a short paternal benediction on the natives, and went on to Rome, with eyes bent on earth, according
to his rule, and without pausing. He did not
even cast a glance back upon that sea which
had so nearly engulfed him, but had no power
to harm him, without his Master's leave.

While he stalks on alone to Rome without
looking back, I, who am not in the service of
holy Church, stop a moment to say that the
reader and I were within six inches of this
giant once before, but we escaped him that
time. Now, I fear, we are in for him.

Gerard grasped every hand upon the beach.
They brought him to an enormous fire, and with
a delicacy he would hardly have encountered
in the North, left him to dry himself alone. On
this he took out of his bosom a parchment, and
a paper, and dried them carefully. When this
was done to his mind, and not till then, he con-
sented to put on a fisherman's dress and leave
his own by the fire, and went down to the
beach. What he saw may be briefly related.

The captain stuck by the ship, not so much
from gallantry, as from a conviction that it was
idle to resist Castor or Pollux, whichever it
was that had come for him in a ball of fire.
Nevertheless, the sea broke up the ship, and
swept the poop, captain and all, clear of the
rest, and took him safe ashore. Gerard had a
principal hand in pulling him out of the water.
The disconsolate Hebrew landed on another fragment, and on touching earth, offered a reward for his bag, which excited little sympathy but some amusement. Two more were saved on pieces of the wreck. The thirty egotists came ashore, but one at a time, and dead; one breathed still. Him the natives, with excellent intentions, took to a hot fire. So then he too retired from this shifting scene.

As Gerard stood by the sea, watching, with horror and curiosity mixed, his late companions washed ashore, a hand was laid lightly on his shoulder. He turned. It was the Roman matron, burning with womanly gratitude. She took his hand gently, and raising it slowly to her lips, kissed it; but so nobly, she seemed to be conferring an honour on one deserving hand. Then, with face all beaming and moist eyes, she held her child up and made him kiss his preserver.

Gerard kissed the child more than once (he was fond of children); but he said nothing. He was much moved; for she did not speak at all, except with her eyes and glowing cheeks, and noble antique gesture, so large and stately. Perhaps she was right. Gratitude is not a thing of words. It was an ancient Roman matron thanking a modern from her heart of hearts.
Next day, toward afternoon, Gerard — twice as old as last year, thrice as learned in human ways, a boy no more, but a man who had shed blood in self-defence, and grazed the grave by land and sea — reached the Eternal City; post tot naufragia tutus.
CHAPTER VII.

GERARD took a modest lodging on the west bank of the Tiber, and every day went forth in search of work, taking a specimen round to every shop he could hear of that executed such commissions. They received him coldly. 'We make our letter somewhat thinner than this,' said one. 'How dark your ink is,' said another. But the main cry was, 'What avails this? Scant is the Latin writ here now. Can ye not write Greek?'

'Ay, but not nigh so well as Latin.'

'Then you shall never make your bread at Rome.'

Gerard borrowed a beautiful Greek manuscript at a high price, and went home with a sad hole in his purse, but none in his courage. In a fortnight he had made vast progress with the Greek character; so then, to lose no time, he used to work at it till noon, and hunt customers the rest of the day.

When he carried round a better Greek specimen than any they possessed, the traders in-
formed him that Greek and Latin were alike unsalable; the city was thronged with works from all Europe. He should have come last year.

Gerard bought a psaltery.

His landlady, pleased with his looks and manners, used often to speak a kind word in passing. One day she made him dine with her, and somewhat to his surprise asked him what had dashed his spirits. He told her. She gave him her reading of the matter. 'Those sly traders,' she would be bound, 'had writers in their pay for whose work they received a noble price and paid a sorry one. So no wonder they blow cold on you. Methinks you write too well. How know I that? say you. Marry—marry, because you lock not your door, like the churl Pietro; and women will be curious. Ay, ay; you write too well for them.'

Gerard asked an explanation.

'Why,' said she, 'your good work might put out the eyes of that they are selling.'

Gerard sighed. 'Alas! dame, you read folk on the ill side, and you so kind and frank yourself.'

'My dear little heart, these Romans are a subtle race. Me? I am a Siennese, thanks to the Virgin.'
'My mistake was leaving Augsburg,' said Gerard.

'Augsburg?' said she, haughtily; 'is that a place to even to Rome? I never heard of it, for my part.'

She then assured him that he should make his fortune in spite of the booksellers. 'Seeing thee a stranger, they lie to thee without sense or discretion. Why, all the world knows that our great folk are bitten with the writing spider this many years, and pour out their money like water, and turn good land and houses into writ sheepskins to keep in a chest or a cupboard. God help them, and send them safe through this fury, as he hath through a heap of others; and in sooth, hath been somewhat less cutting and stabbing among rival factions, and vindictive eating of their opposites' livers, minced and fried, since Scribbling came in. Why, I can tell you two. There is his eminence Cardinal Bassarion, and his holiness the Pope himself. There be a pair could keep a score such as thee a-writing night and day. But I'll speak to Teresa; she hears the gossip of the Court.'

The next day she told him she had seen Teresa, and had heard of five more signors who were bitten with the writing spider. Gerard took
down their names, and bought parchment, and busied himself for some days in preparing specimens. He left one, with his name and address, at each of these signors' doors, and hopefully awaited the result.

There was none.

Day after day passed and left him heartsick.

And strange to say this was just the time when Margaret was fighting so hard against odds to feed her dependents at Rotterdam, and arrested for curing without a license instead of killing with one.

Gerard saw ruin staring him in the face.

He spent the afternoons picking up canzonets and mastering them. He laid in playing cards to colour, and struck off a meal per day.

This last stroke of genius got him into fresh trouble.

In these camere locande the landlady dressed all the meals, though the lodgers bought the provisions. So Gerard's hostess speedily detected him, and asked him if he was not ashamed of himself; by which brusque opening, having made him blush and look scared, she pacified herself all in a moment, and appealed to his good sense whether Adversity was a thing to be overcome on an empty stomach.
‘Patienza, my lad! times will mend; meantime I will feed you for the love of Heaven,’—Italian for ‘gratis.’

‘Nay, hostess,’ said Gerard, ‘my purse is not yet quite void; and it would add to my trouble an if true folk should lose their due by me.’

‘Why you are as mad as your neighbour Pietro, with his one bad picture.’

‘Why, how know you ’t is a bad picture?’

‘Because nobody will buy it. There is one that hath no gift. He will have to don casque and glaive, and carry his panel for a shield.’

Gerard pricked up his ears at this, so she told him more. Pietro had come from Florence with money in his purse, and an unfinished picture; had taken her one unfurnished room, opposite Gerard’s, and furnished it neatly. When his picture was finished, he received visitors, and had offers for it. These, though in her opinion liberal ones, he had refused so disdainfully as to make enemies of his customers. Since then he had often taken it out with him to try and sell, but had always brought it back; and the last month she had seen one movable after another go out of his room, and now he wore but one suit, and lay at night on a great chest. She had found this out only by peeping through the keyhole, for he locked the door most vigi-
lantly whenever he went out. 'Is he afraid we shall steal his chest, or his picture, that no soul in all Rome is weak enough to buy?'

'Nay, sweet hostess; see you not 't is his poverty he would screen from view?'

'And the more fool he! Are all our hearts as ill as his? A might give us a trial first, anyway.'

'How you speak of him! Why, his case is mine; and your countryman to boot.'

'Oh, we Siennese love strangers. His case yours? Nay 't is just the contrary. You are the comeliest youth ever lodged in this house; hair like gold. He is a dark, sour-visaged loon. Besides, you know how to take a woman on her better side; but not he. Natheless, I wish he would not starve to death in my house, to get me a bad name. Anyway, one starveling is enough in any house. You are far from home, and it is for me, which am the mistress here, to number your meals,—for me and the Dutch wife, your mother, that is far away; we two women shall settle that matter. Mind thou thine own business, being a man, and leave cooking and the like to us, that are in the world for little else that I see but to roast fowls, and suckle men at starting, and sweep their grown-up cobwebs.'
'Dear kind dame, in sooth you do often put me in mind of my mother that is far away.'

'All the better; I'll put you more in mind of her before I have done with you.' And the honest soul beamed with pleasure.

Gerard not being an egotist, nor blinded by a woman's partialities, saw his own grief in poor proud Pietro; and the more he thought of it, the more he resolved to share his humble means with that unlucky artist. Pietro's sympathy would repay him. He tried to waylay him, but without success.

One day he heard a groaning in the room. He knocked at the door, but received no answer. He knocked again. A surly voice bade him enter. He obeyed somewhat timidly, and entered a garret furnished with a chair, a picture, face to wall, an iron basin, an easel, and a long chest, on which was coiled a haggard young man with a wonderfully bright eye. Anything more like a coiled cobra ripe for striking the first comer was never seen.

'Good Signor Pietro,' said Gerard, 'forgive me that, weary of my own solitude, I intrude on yours; but I am your highest neighbour in this house, and methinks your brother in fortune. I am an artist too.'

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'You are a painter? Welcome, signor. Sit down on my bed.' And Pietro jumped off, and waived him into the vacant throne with a magnificent demonstration of courtesy.

Gerard bowed, and smiled, but hesitated a little. 'I may not call myself a painter. I am a writer, a caligraph. I copy Greek and Latin manuscripts, when I can get them to copy.'

'And you call that an artist?'

'Without offence to your superior merit, Signor Pietro.'

'No offence, stranger, none. Only, me seemeth an artist is one who thinks, and paints his thought. Now, a caligraph but draws in black and white the thoughts of another.'

'T is well distinguished, signor. But then, a writer can write the thoughts of the great ancients, and matters of pure reason, such as no man may paint; ay, and the thoughts of God, which angels could not paint. But let that pass. I am a painter as well; but a sorry one.'

'The better thy luck. They will buy thy work in Rome.'

'But seeking to commend myself to one of thy eminence, I thought it well rather to call myself a capable writer than a scurvy painter.'
and the Hearth.

At this moment a step was heard on the stair. 'Ah! 't is the good dame,' cried Gerard. 'What ho! hostess, I am here in conversation with Signor Pietro. I dare say he will let me have my humble dinner here.'

The Italian bowed gravely.

The landlady brought in Gerard's dinner, smoking and savory. She put the dish down on the bed with a face divested of all expression, and went.

Gerard fell to. But ere he had eaten many mouthfuls, he stopped, and said: 'I am an ill-mannered churl, Signor Pietro. I ne'er eat to my mind, when I eat alone. For our Lady's sake put a spoon into this ragout with me; 't is not unsavory, I promise you.'

Pietro fixed his glittering eye on him. 'What! good youth, thou a stranger, and offerest me thy dinner?'

'Why, see, there is more than one can eat.'

'Well, I accept,' said Pietro; and took the dish with some appearance of calmness, and flung the contents out of window.

Then he turned, trembling with mortification and ire, and said, 'Let that teach thee to offer alms to an artist thou knowest not, master writer.'
Gerard's face flushed with anger, and it cost him a bitter struggle not to box this high-souled creature's ears. And then to go and destroy good food! His mother's milk curdled in his veins with horror at such impiety. Finally, pity at Pietro's petulance and egotism, and a touch of respect for poverty-struck pride, prevailed. However, he said coldly, 'Likely what thou hast done might pass in a novel of thy countryman, Signor Boccaccio; but 't was not honest.'

'Make that good!' said the painter, sullenly. 'I offered thee half my dinner; no more. But thou hast ta'en it all. Hadst a right to throw away thy share, but not mine. Pride is well, but justice is better.'

Pietro stared, then reflected.

'T is well. I took thee for a fool, so transparent was thine artifice. Forgive me! And prithee leave me! Thou seest how 't is with me. The world hath soured me. I hate mankind. I was not always so. Once more excuse that my discourtesy, and fare thee well!'

Gerard sighed, and made for the door.

But suddenly a thought struck him. 'Signor Pietro,' said he, 'we Dutchmen are hard bargainers. We are the lads een eij scheeren, — that is, "to shave an egg." Therefore, I, for my lost
dinner, do claim to feast mine eyes on your picture, whose face is toward the wall.'

'Nay, nay,' said the painter, hastily; 'ask me not that. I have already misconducted myself enough toward thee. I would not shed thy blood.'

'Saints forbid! My blood?'

'Stranger,' said Pietro, sullenly, 'irritated by repeated insults to my picture, which is my child, my heart, I did in a moment of rage make a solemn vow to drive my dagger into the next one that should flout it, and the labour and love that I have given to it.'

'What I are all to be slain that will not praise this picture?,' and he looked at its back with curiosity.

'Nay, nay; if you would but look at it, and hold your parrot tongues. But you will be talking. So I have turned it to the wall forever. Would I were dead, and buried in it for my coffin!'

Gerard reflected. 'I accept the conditions. Show me the picture! I can but hold my peace.'

Pietro went and turned its face, and put it in the best light the room afforded, and coiled himself again on his chest, with his eye and stiletto glittering.
The picture represented the Virgin and Christ, flying through the air in a sort of cloud of shadowy cherubic faces; underneath was a landscape, forty or fifty miles in extent, and a purple sky above.

Gerard stood and looked at it in silence. Then he stepped close, and looked. Then he retired as far off as he could, and looked; but said not a word.

When he had been at this game half an hour, Pietro cried out querulously, and somewhat inconsistently: 'Well, have you not a word to say about it?'

Gerard started. 'I cry your mercy; I forgot there were three of us here. Ay, I have much to say.' And he drew his sword.

'Alas! alas!' cried Pietro, jumping in terror from his lair. 'What wouldst thou?'

'Marry, defend myself against thy bodkin, signor, and at due odds, being, as aforesaid, a Dutchman. Therefore hold aloof while I deliver judgment, or I will pin thee to the wall like a cockchafer.'

'Oh, is that all!' said Pietro, greatly relieved. 'I feared you were going to stab my poor picture with your sword, stabbed already by so many foul tongues.'

Gerard 'pursued criticism under difficulties:'
put himself in a position of defence, with his sword's point covering Pietro, and one eye glancing aside at the picture. 'First, signor, I would have you know that in the mixing of certain colours and in the preparation of your oil, you Italians are far behind us Flemings. But let that flea stick. For as small as I am, I can show you certain secrets of the Van Eycks that you will put to marvellous profit in your next picture. Meantime I see in this one the great qualities of your nation. Verily, ye are solis filii. If we have colour, you have imagination. Mother of Heaven! an he hath not flung his immortal soul upon the panel. One thing I go by is this: It makes other pictures I once admired seem drossy, earth-born things. The drapery here is somewhat short and stiff. Why not let it float freely, the figures being in air and motion?'

'I will! I will!' cried Pietro, eagerly. 'I will do anything for those who will but see what I have done.'

'Humph! This landscape it enlightens me. Henceforth I scorn those little huddled landscapes that did erst content me. Here is Nature's very face: a spacious plain, each distance marked, and every tree, house, figure, field and river smaller and less plain, by exquisite grada-
tion, till vision itself melts into distance. Oh, beautiful! And the cunning rogue hath hung his celestial figure in air out of the way of his little world below. Here, floating saints beneath heaven’s purple canopy. There, far down, earth and her busy hives. And they let you take this painted poetry, this blooming hymn, through the streets of Rome and bring it home unsold. But I tell thee in Ghent or Bruges, or even in Rotterdam, they would tear it out of thy hands. But 'tis a common saying that a stranger's eye sees clearest. Courage, Pietro Vanucci! I reverence thee, and, though myself a scurvy painter, do forgive thee for being a great one. Forgive thee? I thank God for thee and such rare men as thou art, and bow the knee to thee in just homage. Thy picture is immortal; and thou, that hast but a chest to sit on, art a king in thy most royal art. Viva, il maestro! Viva!'

At this unexpected burst the painter, with all the abandon of his nation, flung himself on Gerard’s neck. 'They said it was a maniac’s dream,' he sobbed.

'Maniacs themselves! No, idiots!' shouted Gerard.

'Generous stranger! I will hate men no more, since the world hath such as thee. I was
a viper to fling thy poor dinner away; a wretch, a monster.'

'Well, monster, wilt be gentle now, and sup with me?'

'Ah! that I will. Whither goest thou?'

'To order supper on the instant. We will have the picture for third man.'

'I will invite it whiles thou art gone. My poor picture, child of my heart!'

'Ah! master; 't will look on many a supper after the worms have eaten you and me.'

'I hope so,' said Pietro.
CHAPTER VIII.

ABOUT a week after this the two friends sat working together, but not in the same spirit. Pietro dashed fitfully at his, and did wonders in a few minutes, and then did nothing, except abuse it; then presently resumed it in a fury, to lay it down with a groan. Through all which kept calmly working, calmly smiling, the canny Dutchman.

To be plain, Gerard, who never had a friend he did not master, had put his Onagra in harness. The friends were painting playing-cards to boil the pot. When done, the indignant master took up his picture to make his daily tour in search of a customer.

Gerard begged him to take the cards as well, and try and sell them. He looked all the rattle-snake, but eventually embraced Gerard in the Italian fashion, and took them, after first drying the last-finished ones in the sun, which was now powerful in that happy clime.

Gerard, left alone, executed a Greek letter or two, and then mended a little rent in his hose.
His landlady found him thus employed, and inquired ironically whether there were no women in the house.

'When you have done that,' said she, 'come and talk to Teresa, my friend I spoke to thee of, that hath a husband not good for much, which brags his acquaintance with the great.'

Gerard went down, and who should Teresa be but the Roman matron.

'Ah, madama,' said he, 'is it you? The good dame told me not that. And the little fair-haired boy, is he well? Is he none the worse for his voyage in that strange boat?'

'He is well,' said the matron.

'Why, what are you two talking about?' said the landlady, staring at them both in turn; 'and why tremble you so, Teresa mia?'

'He saved my child's life,' said Teresa, making an effort to compose herself.

'What! my lodger? And he never told me a word of that. Art not ashamed to look me in the face?'

'Alas! speak not harshly to him,' said the matron. She then turned to her friend and poured out a glowing description of Gerard's conduct, during which Gerard stood blushing like a girl, and scarce recognizing his own performance, gratitude painted it so fair.
'And to think thou shouldst ask me to serve thy lodger, of whom I knew nought but that he had thy good word, O Fiammina; and that was enough for me. Dear youth, in serving thee I serve myself.'

Then ensued an eager description, by the two women, of what had been done, and what should be done, to penetrate the thick wall of fees, commissions, and chicanery, which stood between the patrons of art and an unknown artist in the Eternal City.

Teresa smiled sadly at Gerard's simplicity in leaving specimens of his skill at the doors of the great.

'What I' said she, 'without promising the servants a share, without even seeing them to let the signors see thy merchandise! As well have flung it into Tiber.'

'Well-a-day!' sighed Gerard. 'Then how is an artist to find a patron? For artists are poor, not rich.'

'By going to some city nobler and not so greedy as this,' said Teresa. 'La corte Romana non vuol' pecora senza lana.'

She fell into thought, and said she would come again to-morrow.

The landlady felicitated Gerard. 'Teresa has got something in her head,' said she.
Teresa was scarce gone when Pietro returned with his picture, looking black as thunder. Gerard exchanged a glance with the landlady, and followed him upstairs to console him.

‘What! have they let thee bring home thy masterpiece?’

‘As heretofore.’

‘More fools they, then.’

‘That is not the worst.’

‘Why, what is the matter?’

‘They have bought the cards,’ yelled Pietro, and hammered the air furiously right and left.

‘All the better,’ said Gerard, cheerfully.

‘They flew at me for them. They were enraptured with them. They tried to conceal their longing for them, but could not. I saw, I feigned, I pillaged; curse the boobies!’

And he flung down a dozen small silver coins on the floor and jumped on them, and danced on them with basilisk eyes, and then kicked them assiduously, and sent them spinning and flying, and running all abroad. Down went Gerard on his knees and followed the maltreated innocents directly, and transferred them tenderly to his purse.

‘Shouldst rather smile at their ignorance, and put it to profit,’ said he.

‘And so I will,’ said Pietro, with concen-
trated indignation. ‘The brutes! We will paint a pack a day; we will set the whole city gambling and ruining itself, while we live like princes on its vices and stupidity. There was one of the queens, though, I had fain have kept back. ’T was you limned her, brother. She had lovely red-brown hair and sapphire eyes, and above all, soul.’

‘Pietro,’ said Gerard, softly, ‘I painted that one from my heart.’

The quick-witted Italian nodded, and his eyes twinkled. ‘You love her so well, yet leave her.’

‘Pietro, it is because I love her so dear that I have wandered all this weary road.’

This interesting colloquy was interrupted by the landlady crying from below, ‘Come down, you are wanted.’ He went down, and there was Teresa again.

‘Come with me, Ser Gerard.’
CHAPTER IX.

GERARD walked silently beside Teresa, wondering in his own mind, after the manner of artists, what she was going to do with him, instead of asking her. So at last she told him of her own accord. A friend had informed her of a working goldsmith's wife who wanted a writer. 'Her shop is hard by; you will not have far to go.'

Accordingly they soon arrived at the goldsmith's wife.

'Madama,' said Teresa, 'Leonora tells me you want a writer. I have brought you a beautiful one; he saved my child at sea. Prithee look on him with favour.'

The goldsmith's wife complied in one sense. She fixed her eyes on Gerard's comely face, and could hardly take them off again. But her reply was unsatisfactory. 'Nay, I have no use for a writer. Ah! I mind now, it is my gossip, Claelia, the sausage-maker, wants one; she told me, and I told Leonora.'
Teresa made a courteous speech and withdrew.

Clælia lived at some distance, and when they reached her house she was out. Teresa said calmly, 'I will await her return,' and sat so still and dignified and statuesque that Gerard was beginning furtively to draw her, when Clælia returned.

'Madama, I hear from the goldsmith's wife, the excellent Olympia, that you need a writer.' Here she took Gerard by the hand and led him forward. 'I have brought you a beautiful one, he saved my child from the cruel waves. For our Lady's sake look with favour on him.'

'My good dame, my fair Ser,' said Clælia, 'I have no use for a writer; but now you remind me, it was my friend Appia Claudia asked me for one but the other day. She is a tailor, lives in the Via Lepida.'

Teresa retired calmly.

'Madama,' said Gerard, 'this is likely to be a tedious business for you.'

Teresa opened her eyes.

'What was ever done without a little patience?' She added mildly, 'We will knock at every door at Rome but you shall have justice.'

'But, madama, I think we are dogged. I
noticed a man that follows us, sometimes afar, sometimes close.'

' I have seen it,' said Teresa, coldly; but her cheek coloured faintly. 'It is my poor Lodovico.'

She stopped and turned, and beckoned with her finger. A figure approached them somewhat unwillingly. When he came up, she gazed him full in the face, and he looked sheepish.

' Lodovico mio,' said she, 'know this young Ser, of whom I have so often spoken to thee. Know him and love him, for he it was who saved thy wife and child.'

At these last words Lodovico, who had been bowing and grinning artificially, suddenly changed to an expression of heartfelt gratitude, and embraced Gerard warmly.

Yet somehow there was something in the man's original manner, and his having followed his wife by stealth, that made Gerard uncomfortable under this caress. However he said, 'We shall have your company, Ser Lodovico?'

'No, signor,' replied Lodovico, 'I go not on that side Tiber.'

'Addio, then,' said Teresa, significantly.

'When shall you return home, Teresa mia?'

'When I have done mine errand, Lodovico.'

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They pursued their way in silence. Teresa now wore a sad and almost gloomy air.

To be brief, Appia Claudia was merciful, and did not send them over Tiber again, but only a hundred yards down the street to Lucretia, who kept the glove shop. She it was wanted a writer; but what for Appia Claudia could not conceive. Lucretia was a merry little dame, who received them heartily enough, and told them she wanted no writer, kept all her accounts in her head. 'It was for my confessor, Father Colonna; he is mad after them.'

'I have heard of his excellency,' said Teresa.

'Who has not?'

'But, good dame, he is a friar; he has made vow of poverty. I cannot let the young man write and not be paid. He saved my child at sea.'

'Did he now?' And Lucretia cast an approving look on Gerard. 'Well, make your mind easy; a Colonna never wants for money. The good father has only to say the word, and the princes of his race will pour a thousand crowns into his lap. And such a confessor, dame! the best in Rome. His head is leagues and leagues away all the while; he never heeds what you are saying. Why, I think no more of confessing my sins to him than of telling them
to that wall. Once, to try him, I confessed, along with the rest, as how I had killed my lodger’s little girl and baked her in a pie. Well, when my voice left off confessing, he started out of his dream, and says he, a mustering up a gloom, "My erring sister, say three paternosters and three Ave Marias kneeling, and eat no butter nor eggs next Wednesday, and pax vobiscum!" and off a went with his hands behind him, looking as if there was no such thing as me in the world."

Teresa waited patiently, then calmly brought this discursive lady back to the point: 'Would she be so kind as go with this good youth to the friar and speak for him?'

'Alack! how can I leave my shop? And what need? His door is aye open to writers and painters and scholars, and all such cattle. Why, one day he would not receive the Duke d'Urbino because a learned Greek was closeted with him; and the friar’s head and his so close together over a dusty parchment just come in from Greece, as you could put one cowl over the pair. His wench Onesta told me. She mostly looks in here for a chat when she goes an errand.'

'This is the man for thee, my friend,' said Teresa.
All you have to do," continued Lucretia, "is to go to his lodgings (my boy shall show them you), and tell Onesta you come from me, and you are a writer, and she will take you up to him. If you put a piece of silver in the wench's hand, 't will do you no harm; that stands to reason."

'I have silver,' said Teresa, warmly.

'But stay,' said Lucretia, 'mind one thing. What the young man saith he can do, that he must be able to do, or let him shun the good friar like poison. He is a very wild beast against all bunglers. Why, 't was but t'other day one brought him an ill-carved crucifix. Says he: "Is this how you present Salvator Mundi? who died for you in mortal agony; and you go and grudge him careful work. This slovenly gimcrack, a crucifix? But that it is a crucifix of some sort, and I am a holy man, I 'd dust your jacket with your crucifix," says he. Onesta heard every word through the keyhole; so mind.'

'Have no fears, madama,' said Teresa, loftily.
'I will answer for his ability; he saved my child.'

Gerard was not subtle enough to appreciate this conclusion, and was so far from sharing Teresa's confidence that he begged a respite.
He would rather not go to the friar to-day. Would not to-morrow do as well?

'Here is a coward for ye,' said Lucretia.

'No, he is not a coward,' said Teresa, firing up. 'He is modest.'

'I am afraid of this high-born, fastidious friar,' said Gerard. 'Consider, he has seen the handiwork of all the writers in Italy, dear dame Teresa; if you would but let me prepare a better piece of work than yet I have done, and then to-morrow I will face him with it.'

'I consent,' said Teresa.

They walked home together.

Not far from his own lodging was a shop that sold vellum. There was a beautiful white skin in the window. Gerard looked at it wistfully; but he knew he could not pay for it, so he went on rather hastily. However, he soon made up his mind where to get vellum; and parting with Teresa at his own door, ran hastily upstairs, and took the bond he had brought all the way from Sevenbergen, and laid it with a sigh on the table. He then prepared with his chemicals to erase the old writing; but, as this was his last chance of reading it, he now overcame his deadly repugnance to bad writing, and proceeded to decipher the deed in spite of its detestable contractions. It appeared by this deed
that Ghysbrecht Van Swieten was to advance some money to Floris Brandt on a piece of land, and was to repay himself out of the rent.

On this Gerard felt it would be imprudent and improper to destroy the deed. On the contrary he vowed to decipher every word at his leisure. He went downstairs, determined to buy a small piece of vellum with his half of the card-money.

At the bottom of the stairs he found the landlady and Teresa talking. At sight of him the former cried, ‘Here he is. You are caught, donna mia. See what she has bought you!’ And whipped out from under her apron the very skin of vellum Gerard had longed for.

‘Why, dame! Why, donna Teresa!’ And he was speechless with pleasure and astonishment. ‘Dear donna Teresa, there is not a skin in all Rome like it. How ever came you to hit on this one? ’Tis glamour.’

‘Alas, dear boy, did not thine eye rest on it with desire, and didst thou not sigh in turning away from it? And was it for Teresa to let thee want the thing after that?’

‘What sagacity! what goodness, madama! Oh, dame, I never thought I should possess this. What did you pay for it?’
‘I forget. Addio, Fiammina. Addio, Ser Gerard. Be happy, be prosperous, as you are good.’ And the Roman matron glided away, while Gerard was hesitating, and thinking how to offer to pay so stately a creature for her purchase.

The next day in the afternoon he went to Lucretia, and her boy took him to Fra Colonna’s lodgings. He announced his business and feed Onesta, and she took him up to the friar. Gerard entered with a beating heart. The room, a large one, was strewed and heaped with objects of art, antiquity, and learning, lying about in rich profusion, and confusion,—manuscripts, pictures, carvings in wood and ivory, musical instruments; and in this glorious chaos sat the friar, poring intently over an Arabian manuscript.

He looked up a little peevishly at the interruption. Onesta whispered in his ear.

‘Very well,’ said he. ‘Let him be seated. Stay; young man, show me how you write!’ And he threw Gerard a piece of paper, and pointed to an ink-horn.

‘So please you, reverend father,’ said Gerard, ‘my hand, it trembleth too much at this moment; but last night I wrote a vellum page of
Greek, and the Latin version by its side, to show the various character.'
'Show it me!'
Gerard brought the work to him in fear and trembling; then stood, heart-sick, awaiting his verdict.
When it came it staggered him; for the verdict was, a Dominican falling on his neck.
CHAPTER X.

HAPPY the man who has two chain-cables, — Merit and Women. Oh, that I, like Gerard, had a chaine des dames to pull up by. I would be prose laureate, or professor of the spasmodic, or something, in no time. En attendant, I will sketch the Fra Colonna.

The true revivers of ancient learning and philosophy, were two writers of fiction, — Petrarch and Boccaccio. Their labours were not crowned with great, public, and immediate success; but they sowed the good seed. And it never perished, but quickened in the soil, awaiting sunshine.

From their day Italy was never without a native scholar or two, versed in Greek; and each learned Greek who landed there was received fraternally. The fourteenth century, ere its close, saw the birth of Poggio, Valla, and the elder Guarino; and early in the fifteenth, Florence under Cosmo de Medici was a nest of Platonists. These, headed by Gemistus
Pletho, a born Greek, began about A.D. 1440, to write down Aristotle. For few minds are big enough to be just to great A without being unjust to capital B.

Theodore Gaza defended that great man with moderation; George of Trebizond with acerbity, and retorted on Plato. Then Cardinal Bessarion, another born Greek, resisted the said George, and his idol, in a tract 'Adversus calumniatorem Platonis.'

Pugnacity, whether wise or not, is a form of vitality. Born without controversial bile in so zealous an epoch, Francesco Colonna, a young nobleman of Florence, lived for the arts. At twenty he turned Dominican friar. His object was quiet study. He retired from idle company and faction fights, the humming and the stinging of the human hive, to Saint Dominic and the Nine Muses. An eager student of languages, pictures, statues, chronology, coins, and monumental inscriptions. These last loosened his faith in popular histories.

He travelled many years in the East, and returned laden with spoils; master of several choice MSS., and versed in Greek and Latin, Hebrew and Syriac. He found his country had not stood still. Other lettered princes besides Cosmo had sprung up. Alfonzo King of
Naples, Nicolas d'Este, Lionel d'Este, etc. Above all, his old friend Thomas of Sarzana had been made pope, and had lent a mighty impulse to letters; had accumulated five thousand MSS. in the library of the Vatican, and had set Poggio to translate Diodorus Siculus and Xenophon's Cyropædia, Laurentius Valla to translate Herodotus and Thucydides, Theodore Gaza, Theophrastus; George of Trebizond, Eusebius, and certain treatises of Plato, etc.

The monk found Plato and Aristotle under armistice, but Poggio and Valla at loggerheads over verbs and nouns, and on fire with odium philologicum. All this was heaven; and he settled down in his native land, his life a rosy dream. None so happy as the versatile, provided they have not their bread to make by it. And Fra Colonna was Versatility. He knew seven or eight languages, and a little mathematics; could write a bit, paint a bit, model a bit, sing a bit, strum a bit; and could relish superior excellence in all these branches. For this last trait he deserved to be as happy as he was. For, gauge the intellects of your acquaintances, and you will find but few whose minds are neither deaf, nor blind, nor dead to some great art or science,—

'And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.'
And such of them as are conceited as well as stupid shall even parade, instead of blushing for, the holes in their intellects.

A zealot in art, the friar was a sceptic in religion.

In every age there are a few men who hold the opinions of another age, past or future. Being a lump of simplicity, his scepticism was as naïf, as his enthusiasm. He affected to look on the religious ceremonies of his day as his models, the heathen philosophers, regarded the worship of gods and departed heroes,—mummeries good for the populace. But here his mind drew unconsciously a droll distinction. Whatever Christian ceremony his learning taught him was of purely pagan origin, that he respected, out of respect for antiquity; though had he, with his turn of mind, been a pagan and its contemporary, he would have scorned it from his philosophic heights.

Fra Colonna was charmed with his new artist, and, having the run of half the palaces in Rome, sounded his praises so that he was soon called upon to resign him. He told Gerard what great princes wanted him. 'But I am so happy with you, father,' objected Gerard. 'Fiddlestick about being happy with me,' said Fra Colonna. 'You must not be happy; you must be a man
of the world. The grand lesson I impress on the young is, Be a man of the world. Now, these Montesini can pay you three times as much as I can, and they shall too, by Jupiter! And the friar clapped a terrific price on Gerard's pen.

It was acceded to without a murmur. Much higher prices were going for copying than authorship ever obtained for centuries under the printing-press. Gerard had three hundred crowns for Aristotle's treatise on rhetoric.

The great are mighty sweet upon all their pets while the fancy lasts; and in the rage for Greek MSS. the handsome writer soon became a pet, and nobles of both sexes caressed him like a lapdog. It would have turned a vain fellow's head; but the canny Dutchman saw the steel hand beneath the velvet glove, and did not presume. Nevertheless, it was a proud day for him when he found himself seated with Fra Colonna at the table of his present employer, Cardinal Bessarion. They were about a mile from the top of that table; but, never mind, there they were. And Gerard had the advantage of seeing roast pheasants dished up with all their feathers, as if they had just flown out of a coppice instead of off the spit; also chickens cooked in bottles, and tender as peaches. But
the grand novelty was the napkins, surpassingly fine, and folded into cocked hats, and birds’ wings, and fans, etc. instead of lying flat. This electrified Gerard; though my readers have seen the dazzling phenomenon without tumbling backward chair and all.

After dinner the tables were split in pieces, and carried away, and lo! under each was another table spread with sweetmeats. The signoras and signorinas fell upon them and gormandized; but the signors eyed them with reasonable suspicion.

‘But, dear father,’ objected Gerard, ‘I see not the bifurcal daggers with which men say his excellency armeth the left hand of a man.’

‘Nay, ’tis the Cardinal Orsini which hath invented yon peevish instrument for his guests to fumble their meat withal. One, being in haste, did skewer his tongue to his palate with it, I hear; O tempora, O mores! The ancients, reclining godlike at their feasts, how had they spurned such pedantries!’

As soon as the ladies had disported themselves among the sugar-plums, the tables were suddenly removed, and the guests sat in a row against the wall. Then came in, ducking and scraping, two ecclesiastics with lutes, and kneeled at the cardinal’s feet, and there sang the
service of the day; then retired with a deep obeisance: in answer to which the cardinal fingered his skull-cap as our late Iron Duke his hat; the company dispersed, and Gerard had dined with a cardinal, and one that had thrice just missed being pope.

But greater honour was in store.

One day the cardinal sent for him, and after praising the beauty of his work took him in his coach to the Vatican, and up a private stair to a luxurious little room, with a great oriel window. Here were inkstands, sloping frames for writing on, and all the instruments of art. The cardinal whispered a courtier, and presently the Pope’s private secretary appeared with a glorious grimy old MS. of Plutarch’s Lives. And soon Gerard was seated alone copying it, awe-struck, yet half delighted at the thought that his holiness would handle his work and read it.

The papal inkstands were all glorious externally, but within the ink was vile. But Gerard carried ever good ink, home-made, in a dirty little inkhorn; he prayed on his knees for a firm and skilful hand, and set to work.

One side of his room was nearly occupied by a massive curtain divided in the centre; but its ample folds overlapped. After a while Gerard felt drawn to peep through that curtain. He resisted
the impulse. It returned. It overpowered him. He left Plutarch, stole across the matted floor, took the folds of the curtain and gently gathered them up with his fingers, and putting his nose through the chink ran it against a cold steel halbert. Two soldiers armed cap-à-pie, were holding their glittering weapons crossed in a triangle. Gerard drew swiftly back; but in that instant he heard the soft murmur of voices, and saw a group of persons cringing before some hidden figure.

He never repeated his attempt to pry through the guarded curtain, but often eyed it. Every hour or so an ecclesiastic peeped in, eyed him, chilled him, and exit. All this was gloomy and mechanical. But the next day a gentleman, richly armed, bounced in, and glared at him.

'What is toward here?' said he.

Gerard told him he was writing out Plutarch, with the help of the saints. The spark said he did not know the signor in question. Gerard explained the circumstances of time and space that had deprived the Signor Plutarch of the advantage of the spark's conversation.

'Oh! one of those old dead Greeks they keep such a coil about.'

'Ay, signor, one of them, who, being dead, yet live.'
'I understand you not, young man,' said the noble, with all the dignity of ignorance. 'What did the old fellow write? Love stories?' and his eyes sparkled. 'Merry tales like Boccaccio?'

'Nay, lives of heroes and sages.'

'Soldiers and popes?'

'Soldiers and princes.'

'Wilt read me of them some day?'

'And willingly, signor. But what would they say who employ me, were I to break off work?'

'Oh, never heed that! Know you not who I am? I am Jacques Bonaventura, nephew to his holiness the Pope, and captain of his guards. And I came here to look after my fellows. I trow they have turned them out of their room for you.' Signor Bonaventura then hurried away.

This lively companion, however, having acquired a habit of running into that little room, and finding Gerard good company, often looked in on him, and chattered ephemeralities while Gerard wrote the immortal Lives.

One day he came, a changed and moody man, and threw himself into a chair, crying, 'Ah, traitress! traitress!' Gerard inquired what was his ill? 'Traitress! traitress!' was the reply. Whereupon Gerard wrote Plutarch. Then says
Bonaventura, 'I am melancholy; and for our Lady's sake read me a story out of Ser Plutarcho, to sooth my bile; in all that Greek is there nought about lovers betrayed?'

Gerard read him the life of Alexander. He got excited, marched about the room, and embracing the reader, vowed to shun 'soft delights,' that bed of nettles, and follow glory.

Who so happy now as Gerard? His art was honoured, and fabulous prices paid for it; in a year or two he should return by sea to Holland, with good store of money, and set up with his beloved Margaret in Bruges, or Antwerp, or dear Augsburg, and end their days in peace, and love, and healthy, happy labour. His heart never strayed an instant from her.

In his prosperity he did not forget poor Pietro. He took the Fra Colonna to see his picture. The friar inspected it severely and closely, fell on the artist's neck, and carried the picture to one of the Colonnas, who gave a noble price for it.

Pietro descended to the first floor, and lived like a gentleman. But Gerard remained in his garret. To increase his expenses would have been to postpone his return to Margaret. Luxury had no charms for the single-hearted one, when opposed to love.
Jacques Bonaventura made him acquainted with other gay young fellows. They loved him, and sought to entice him into vice, and other expenses; but he begged humbly to be excused. So he escaped that temptation. But a greater was behind.
CHAPTER XI.

FRA COLONNA had the run of the Pope's library, and sometimes left off work at the same hour and walked the city with Gerard; on which occasions the happy artist saw all things _en beau_, and was wrapped up in the grandeur of Rome and its churches, palaces, and ruins.

The friar granted the ruins, but threw cold water on the rest.

'This place Rome? It is but the tomb of mighty Rome.' He showed Gerard that twenty or thirty feet of the old triumphal arches were underground, and that the modern streets ran over ancient palaces, and over the tops of columns; and coupling this with the comparatively narrow limits of the modern city, and the gigantic vestiges of antiquity that peeped above ground here and there, he uttered a somewhat remarkable simile. 'I tell thee this village they call Rome is but as one of those swallows' nests ye shall see built on the eaves of a decayed abbey.'
‘Old Rome must indeed have been fair then,’ said Gerard.

‘Judge for yourself, my son. You see the great sewer, the work of the Romans in their very childhood, and shall outlast Vesuvius. You see the fragments of the Temple of Peace. How would you look could you see also the Capitol with its five-and-twenty temples? Do but note this Monte Savello. What is it, an it please you, but the ruins of the ancient theatre of Marcellus? And as for Testacio, one of the highest hills in modern Rome, it is but an ancient dust heap; the women of old Rome flung their broken pots and pans there, and lo! a mountain.

“Ex pede Herculem; ex ungue leonem.”’

Gerard listened respectfully; but when the holy friar proceeded by analogy to imply that the moral superiority of the heathen Romans was proportionably grand, he resisted stoutly. ‘Has then the world lost by Christ his coming?’ said he; but blushed, for he felt himself reproaching his benefactor.

‘Saints forbid!’ said the friar. ‘‘T were heresy to say so.’ And having made this direct concession, he proceeded gradually to evade it by subtle circumlocution, and reached the for-
bdden door by the spiral back staircase. In the midst of all which they came to a church with a knot of persons in the porch. A demon was being exorcised within. Now, Fra Co-
lonna had a way of uttering a curious sort of little moan, when things Zeno or Epicurus would not have swallowed were presented to him as facts. This moan conveyed to such as had often heard it, not only strong dissent, but pity for human credulity, ignorance, and error, — especially, of course, when it blinded men to the merits of Pagandom.

The friar moaned, and said, 'Then come away.'

'Nay, father, prithee! prithee! I ne'er saw a divell cast out.'

The friar accompanied Gerard into the church, but had a good shrug first. There they found the demoniac forced down on his knees before the altar, with a scarf tied round his neck, by which the officiating priest held him like a dog in a chain.

Not many persons were present, for fame had put forth that the last demon cast out in that church went no farther than into one of the company, 'as a cony ferreted out of one burrow runs to the next.' When Gerard and the friar came up, the priest seemed to
think there were now spectators enough; and began.

He faced the demoniac, breviary in hand, and first set himself to learn the individual's name with whom he had to deal. 'Come out, Ash-taroth. Oho! it is not you, then. Come out, Belial. Come out, Tatzi. Come out, Eza. No; he trembles not. Come out, Azymoth. Come out, Feriander. Come out, Foletho. Come out, Astyma. Come out, Nebul. Aha! What! have I found ye? 'Tis thou, thou reptile; at thine old tricks. Let us pray:—

'O Lord, we pray thee to drive the soul fiend Nebul out of this thy creature, — out of his hair and his eyes, out of his nose, out of his mouth, out of his ears, out of his gums, out of his teeth, out of his shoulders, out of his arms, legs, loins, stomach, bowels, thighs, knees, calves, feet, ankles, finger-nails, toe-nails, and soul. Amen.'

The priest then rose from his knees, and turning to the company said, with quiet geniality, 'Gentles, we have here as obstinate a divell as you may see in a summer day.' Then facing the patient, he spoke to him with great rigour, sometimes addressing the man, and sometimes the fiend, and they answered him in turn through the same mouth, now saying that they hated
those holy names the priest kept uttering, and now complaining they did feel so bad in their inside.

It was the priest who first confounded the victim and the culprit in idea, by pitching into the former, cuffing him soundly, kicking him, and spitting repeatedly in his face. Then he took a candle and lighted it, and turned it down, and burned it till it burned his fingers, when he dropped it double quick; then took the custodial, and showed the patient the Corpus Domini within; then burned another candle as before, but more cautiously; then spoke civilly to the demoniac in his human character, dismissed him, and received the compliments of the company.

‘Good father,’ said Gerard, ‘how you have their names by heart. Our northern priests have no such exquisite knowledge of the hellish squadrons.’

‘Ay, young man, here we know all their names, and eke their ways, the reptiles! This Nebul is a bitter hard one to hunt out.’

He then told the company in the most affable way several of his experiences, concluding with his feat of yesterday, when he drove a great hulking fiend out of a woman by her mouth, leaving behind him certain nails and pins, and
a tuft of his own hair, and cried out in a voice of anguish, "'T is not thou that conquers me. See that stone on the window-sill. Know that the angel Gabriel coming down to earth once lighted on that stone: 't is that has done my business.'"

The friar moaned. 'And you believed him?' 'Certes! Who but an infidel had discredited a revelation so precise?' 'What! believe the father of lies? That is pushing credulity beyond the age.' 'Oh, a liar does not always lie.'

'Ay, doth he whenever he tells an improbable story to begin, and shows you a holy relic, — arms you against the satanic host. Fiends (if any) be not so simple. Shouldst have answered him out of antiquity, —

"Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes."

Some blackguard chopped his wife's head off on that stone, young man; you take my word for it. 'And the friar hurried Gerard away. 'Alack, father, I fear you abashed the good priest.' 'Ay, by Pollux,' said the friar, with a chuckle; 'I blistered him with a single touch of "Socratic interrogation." What modern can parry the weapons of antiquity?'
One afternoon, when Gerard had finished his day's work, a fine lackey came and demanded his attendance at the palace Cesarini. He went, and was ushered into a noble apartment; there was a girl seated in it, working on a tapestry. She rose and left the room, and said she would let her mistress know.

A good hour did Gerard cool his heels in that great room, and at last he began to fret. 'These nobles think nothing of a poor fellow's time.' However, just as he was making up his mind to slip out, and go about his business, the door opened, and a superb beauty entered the room, followed by two maids. It was the young princess of the house of Cesarini.

She came in talking rather loudly and haughtily to her dependents, but at sight of Gerard lowered her voice to a very feminine tone, and said, 'Are you the writer, messer?'

'I am, signorina.'

'T is well.' She then seated herself; Gerard and her maids remained standing. 'What is your name, good youth?'

'Gerard, signorina.'

'Gerard? Body of Bacchus! is that the name of a human creature?'

'It is a Dutch name, signorina. I was born at Tergou, in Holland.'
'A harsh name, girls, for so well-favoured a youth. What say you?'

The maids assented warmly.

'What did I send for him for?' inquired the lady, with lofty languor. 'Ah, I remember. Be seated, Ser Gerardo, and write me a letter to Ercole d'Orsini, my lover; at least he says so.'

Gerard seated himself, took out paper and ink, and looked up to the princess for instructions.

She, seated on a much higher chair, almost a throne, looked down at him with eyes equally inquiring.

'Well, Gerardo?'

'I am ready, your excellence.'

'Write, then.'

'I but await the words.'

'And who, think you, is to provide them?'

'Who but your grace, whose letter it is to be.'

'Gramercy! What! you writers, find you not the words? What avails your art without the words? I doubt you are an impostor, Gerardo.'

'Nay, signorina, I am none. I might make shift to put your highness's speech into grammar, as well as writing; but I cannot interpret your
silence. Therefore speak what is in your heart, and I will empaper it before your eyes."

'But there is nothing in my heart. And sometimes I think I have got no heart.'

'What is in your mind, then?'

'But there is nothing in my mind, nor my head neither.'

'Then why write at all?'

'Why, indeed? That is the first word of sense either you or I have spoken, Gerardo. Pestilence seize him! why writeth he not first? Then I could say nay to this, and ay to that, withouten headache. Also is it a lady's part to say the first word?'

'No, signorina: the last.'

'It is well spoken, Gerardo. Ha! ha! Shalt have a gold piece for thy wit. Give me my purse!' And she paid him for the article on the nail à la moyen âge.

Money never yet chilled zeal. Gerard, after getting a gold piece so cheap, felt bound to pull her out of her difficulty, if the wit of man might achieve it. 'Signorina,' said he, 'these things are only hard because folk attempt too much, are artificial, and labour phrases. Do but figure to yourself the signor you love —'

'I love him not.'

'Well, then, the signor you love not — seated
at this table, and dict to me just what you would say to him.'

'Well, if he sat there I should say, "Go away."'

Gerard, who was flourishing his pen by way of preparation, laid it down with a groan.

'And when he was gone,' said Floretta, 'your highness would say, "Come back."'

'Like enough, wench. Now silence, all, and let me think. He pestered me to write, and I promised; so mine honour is engaged. What lie shall I tell the Gerardo to tell the fool?' And she turned her head away from them and fell into deep thought, with her noble chin resting on her white hand, half clinched.

She was so lovely and statuesque, and looked so inspired with thoughts celestial as she sat thus, impregnating herself with mendacity, that Gerard forgot all except art, and proceeded eagerly to transfer that exquisite profile to paper. He had very nearly finished when the fair statue turned brusquely round and looked at him.

'Nay, signorina,' said he, a little peevishly, 'for Heaven's sake change not your posture; 't was perfect. See, you are nearly finished.'

All eyes were instantly on the work, and all tongues active. 'How like! and done in a
minute. Nay, methinks her highness's chin is not quite so—'

'Oh, a touch will make that right.'

'What a pity 'tis not coloured. I'm all for colours. Hang black and white! And her highness hath such a lovely skin. Take away her skin, and half her beauty is lost.'

'Peace. Can you colour, Ser Gerardo?'

'Ay, signorina. I am a poor hand at oils; there shines my friend Pietro. But in this small way I can tint you to the life, if you have time to waste on such vanity.'

'Call you this vanity? And for time, it hangs on me like lead. Send for your colours now; quick! this moment! for love of all the saints.'

'Nay, signorina, I must prepare them. I could come at the same time to-morrow.'

'So be it. And you, Floretta, see that he be admitted at all hours. Alack! leave my head! leave my head!'

'Forgive me, signorina; I thought to prepare it at home to receive the colours; but I will leave it. And now let us despatch the letter.'

'What letter?'

'To the Signor d'Orsini.'

'And shall I waste my time on such vanity as writing letters, and to that empty creature, to
whom I am as indifferent as the moon? Nay, not indifferent, for I have just discovered my real sentiments. I hate him and despise him. Girls, I here forbid you once for all to mention that signor's name to me again; else I 'll whip you till the blood comes. You know how I can lay on when I 'm roused.'

' We do! We do!' 

' Then provoke me not to it; ' and her eye flashed daggers, and she turned to Gerard all instantaneous honey. ' Addio, il Gerar-do.' And Gerard bowed himself out of this velvet tiger's den.

He came next day and coloured her; and next he was set to make a portrait of her on a large scale; and then a full-length figure; and he was obliged to set apart two hours in the afternoon for drawing and painting this princess, whose beauty and vanity were prodigious, and candidates for a portrait of her numerous. Here the thriving Gerard found a new and fruitful source of income.

Margaret seemed nearer and nearer.

It was holy Thursday. No work this day. Fra Colonna and Gerard sat in a window and saw the religious processions. Their number and pious ardour thrilled Gerard with the de-
votion that now seemed to animate the whole people, lately bent on earthly joys.

Presently the Pope came pacing majestically at the head of his cardinals, in a red hat, white cloak, a capuchin of red velvet, and riding a lovely white Neapolitan barb, caparisoned with red velvet fringed and tasselled with gold; a hundred horsemen, armed cap-à-pie, rode behind him with their lances erected, the butt-end resting on the man's thigh. The cardinals went uncovered, all but one, De Medicis, who rode close to the Pope and conversed with him as with an equal. At every fifteen steps the Pope stopped a single moment, and gave the people his blessing, then on again.

Gerard and the friar now came down, and threading some by-streets reached the portico of one of the seven churches; it was hung with black. And soon the Pope and cardinals, who had entered the church by another door, issued forth, and stood with torches on the steps, separated by barriers from the people; then a canon read a Latin Bull, excommunicating several persons by name, especially such princes as were keeping the Church out of any of her temporal possessions.

At this awful ceremony Gerard trembled, and so did the people; but two of the cardinals
and the Hearth.

spoiled the effect by laughing unreservedly the whole time.

When this was ended, the black cloth was removed, and revealed a gay panoply; and the Pope blessed the people, and ended by throwing his torch among them; so did two cardinals. Instantly there was a scramble for the torches. They were fought for, and torn in pieces by the candidates, so devoutly that small fragments were gained at the price of black eyes, bloody noses, and burnt fingers; 'in which hurtling' his holiness and suite withdrew in peace.

And now there was a cry, and the crowd rushed to a square where was a large open stage. Several priests were upon it praying. They rose, and with great ceremony donned red gloves. Then one of their number kneeled, and with signs of the lowest reverence drew forth from a shrine a square frame, like that of a mirror, and inside was as it were the impression of a face.

It was the verum icon, or true impression of our Saviour's face, taken at the very moment of his most mortal agony for us. Received as it was without a grain of doubt, imagine how it moved every Christian heart.

The people threw themselves on their faces when the priest raised it on high; and cries of

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pity were in every mouth, and tears in almost every eye. After a while the people rose, and then the priests went round the platform, showing it for a single moment to the nearest; and at each sight loud cries of pity and devotion burst forth.

Soon after this the friends fell in with a procession of Flagellants flogging their bare shoulders till the blood ran streaming down; but without a sign of pain in their faces, and many of them laughing and jesting as they lashed. The by-standers out of pity offered them wine. They took it, but few drank it; they generally used it to free the tails of the cat, which were hard with clotted blood, and make the next stroke more effective. Most of them were boys; and a young woman took pity on one fair urchin. 'Alas! dear child,' said she, 'why wound thy white skin so?' 'Basta,' said he, laughing, 'tis for your sins I do it, not for mine.'

'Hear you that?' said the friar. 'Show me the whip that can whip the vanity out of man's heart! The young monkey! how knoweth he that stranger is a sinner more than he?'

'Father,' said Gerard, 'surely this is not to our Lord's mind. He was so pitiful.'

'Our Lord?' said the friar, crossing himself.
'What has he to do with this? This was a
custom in Rome six hundred years before he
was born. The boys used to go through the
streets at the Lupercalia, flogging themselves.
And the married women used to shove in, and
try and get a blow from the monkeys' scourges;
for these blows conferred fruitfulness,—in
those days. A foolish trick this flagellation,
but interesting to the by-stander; reminds him
of the grand old heathen. We are so prone to
forget all we owe them.'

Next they got into one of the seven churches,
and saw the Pope give the Mass. The cere-
mony was imposing, but again spoiled by the
inconsistent conduct of the cardinals and other
prelates, who sat about the altar with their hats
on, chattering all through the Mass like a flock
of geese.

The eucharist in both kinds was tasted by
an official before the Pope would venture on it;
and this surprised Gerard beyond measure.
'Who is that base man, and what doth he
there?'

'Oh, that is the Preguste, and he tastes the
eucharist by way of precaution. This is the
country for poison; and none fall oftener by
it than the poor popes.'

'Alas! so I have heard; but after the mirac-
ulous change of the bread and wine to Christ his body and blood, poison cannot remain. Gone is the bread with all its properties and accidents; gone is the wine.'

'So says faith; but experience tells another tale. Scores have died in Italy poisoned in the host.'

'And I tell you, father, that were both bread and wine charged with direst poison before his holiness had consecrated them, yet after consecration I would take them both withouten fear.'

'So would I, but for the fine arts.'

'What mean you?'

'Marry, that I would be as ready to leave the world as thou, were it not for those arts which beautify existence here below and make it dear to men of sense and education. No; so long as the Nine Muses strew my path with roses of learning and art, me may Apollo inspire with wisdom and caution, that knowing the wiles of my countrymen, I may eat poison neither at God's altar nor at a friend's table, since, wherever I eat it or drink it, it will assuredly cut short my mortal thread; and I am writing a book,—heart and soul in it,—"The Dream of Polifilo," the man of many arts. So name not poison to me till that is finished and copied.'
And now the great bells of St. John Lateran's were rung with a clash at short intervals, and the people hurried thither to see the heads of Saint Peter and Saint Paul.

Gerard and the friar got a good place in the church, and there was a great curtain, and, after long and breathless expectation of the people, this curtain was drawn by jerks, and at a height of about thirty feet were two human heads, with bearded faces, that seemed alive. They were shown no longer than the time to say an Ave Maria, and then the curtain drawn; but they were shown in this fashion three times. Saint Peter's complexion was pale, his face oval, his beard gray and forked; his head crowned with a papal mitre. Saint Paul was dark skinned, with a thick, square beard; his face also and head were more square and massive, and full of resolution.

Gerard was awe-struck. The friar approved after his fashion.

'This exhibition of the "imaginies," or waxen effigies of heroes and demigods, is a venerable custom, and inciteth the vulgar to virtue by great and visible examples.'

'Waxen images? What! are they not the apostles themselves, embalmed, or the like?'

The friar moaned.
"They did not exist in the year 800. The great old Roman families always produced at their funerals a series of these "imagines," thereby tying past and present history together, and showing the populace the features of far-famed worthies. I can conceive nothing more thrilling or instructive. But then the effigies were portraits made during life, or at the hour of death. These of Saint Paul and Saint Peter are moulded out of pure fancy."

"Ah! say not so, father."

"But the worst is, this humour of showing them up on a shelf, and half in the dark, and by snatches, and with the poor mountebank trick of a drawn curtain:—"

"Quodcunque ostendis mihi sic, incredulus odi."

Enough; the men of this day are not the men of old. Let us have done with these new-fangled mummeries, and go among the Pope's books; there we shall find the wisdom we shall vainly hunt in the streets of modern Rome."

And this idea having once taken root, the good friar plunged and tore through the crowd, and looked neither to the right hand nor to the left till he had escaped the glories of the holy week, which had brought fifty thousand strangers to Rome, and had got nice and
quiet among the dead in the library of the Vatican.

Presently, going into Gerard's room, he found a hot dispute a-foot, between him and Jacques Bonaventura. That spark had come in, all steel from head to toe; doffed helmet, puffed, and railed most scornfully on a ridiculous ceremony at which he and his soldiers had been compelled to attend the Pope,—to wit, the blessing of the beasts of burden.

Gerard said it was not ridiculous; nothing a pope did could be ridiculous.

The argument grew warm, and the friar stood grimly neuter, waiting, like the stork that ate the frog and the mouse at the close of their combat, to grind them both between the jaws of antiquity, when lo! the curtain was gently drawn, and there stood a venerable old man in a purple skull-cap, with a beard like white floss silk, looking at them with a kind though feeble smile.

'Happy youth,' said he, 'that can heat itself over such matters.'

They all fell on their knees. It was the Pope.

'Nay, rise, my children,' said he, almost peevishly. 'I came not into this corner to be in state. How goes Plutarch?'
Gerard brought his work, and kneeling on one knee presented it to his holiness, who had seated himself, the others standing.

His holiness inspected it with interest. 'T is excellently writ,' said he.

Gerard's heart beat with delight.

'Ah! this Plutarch, he had a wondrous art, Francesco. How each character standeth out alive on his page! How full of nature each, yet how unlike his fellow!'

Jacques Bonaventura. 'Give me the Signor Boccaccio.'

His Holiness. 'An excellent narrator, capitano, and writeth exquisite Italian; but in spirit a thought too monotonous. Monks and nuns were never all unchaste. One or two such stories were right pleasant and diverting; but five score paint his time falsely, and sadden the heart of such as love mankind. Moreover, he hath no skill at characters. Now, this Greek is supreme in that great art: he carveth them with pen; and, turning his page, see into how real and great a world we enter of war and policy and business, and love in its own place,—for with him, as in the great world, men are not all running after a wench. With this great open field compare me not the narrow garden of Boc-
caccio, and his little mill-round of dishonest pleasures.'

'Your holiness, they say, hath not disdained to write a novel.'

'My holiness hath done more foolish things than one, whereof it repents too late. When I wrote novels I little thought to be head of the Church.'

'I search in vain for a copy of it to add to my poor library.'

'It is well. Then the strict orders I gave four years ago to destroy every copy in Italy have been well discharged. However, for your comfort, on my being made Pope, some fool turned it into French; so that you may read it, at the price of exile.'

'Reduced to this strait we throw ourselves on your holiness's generosity. Vouchsafe to give us your infallible judgment on it!'

'Gently, gently, good Francesco. A pope's novels are not matters of faith. I can but give you my sincere impression. Well, then, the work in question had, as far as I remember, all the vices of Boccaccio without his choice Italian.'

_Fra Colonna._ 'Your holiness is known for slighting Æneas Silvius as other men never slighted him. I did him injustice to make you his judge. Perhaps your holiness will decide
more justly between these two boys, about blessing the beasts.'

The Pope demurred. In speaking of Plutarch he had brightened up for a moment, and his eye had even flashed; but his general manner was as unlike what youthful women expect in a pope as you can conceive. I can only describe it in French: *le gentilhomme blazé*. A high-bred and highly cultivated gentleman, who had done, and said, and seen, and known everything, and whose body was nearly worn out. But double languor seem to seize him at the father's proposal.

' My poor Francesco,' said he, 'bethink thee that I have had a life of controversy, and am sick on't,—sick as death. Plutarch drew me to this calm retreat, not divinity.'

' Nay, but, your holiness, for moderating of strife between two hot young bloods,'

"Μακάρωι ο εἰρηνοκόιλον."

' And know you nature so ill, as to think either of these high-mettled youths will reck what a poor old pope saith?'

' Oh! your holiness,' broke in Gerard, blushing and gasping, 'sure, here is one who will treasure your words all his life as words from Heaven.'
'In that case,' said the Pope, 'I am fairly caught. As Francesco here would say,—

"οὐκ εστὶν δοτὶς ἐστ' ἀνὴρ ἐλεύθερος."

I came to taste that eloquent heathen, dear to me e'en as to thee, thou Paynim monk; and I must talk divinity, or something next door to it. But the youth hath a good and a winning face, and writeth Greek like an angel. Well, then, my children, to comprehend the ways of the Church, we should still rise a little above the earth, since the Church is between heaven and earth, and interprets betwixt them.

'The question is, then, not how vulgar men feel, but how the common Creator of man and beast doth feel, toward the lower animals. This, if we are too proud to search for it in the lessons of the Church, the next best thing is to go to the most ancient history of men and animals.'

Colonna. 'Herodotus.'

'Nay, nay; in this matter Herodotus is but a mushroom. Finely were we sped for ancient history if we depended on your Greeks, who did but write on the last leaf of that great book, Antiquity.'

The friar groaned. Here was a pope uttering heresy against his demigods.
"'T is the Vulgate I speak of. A history that handles matters three thousand years before him pedants call "the Father of History."'

Colonna. 'Oh, the Vulgate? I cry your holiness mercy. How you frightened me. I quite forgot the Vulgate.'

'Forgot it? Art sure thou ever readst it, Francesco mio?'

'Not quite, your holiness. 'T is a pleasure I have long promised myself, the first vacant moment. Hitherto these grand old heathen have left me small time for recreation.'

His Holiness. 'First, then, you will find in Genesis that God, having created the animals, drew a holy pleasure, undefinable by us, from contemplating of their beauty. Was it wonderful? See their myriad forms, their lovely hair, and eyes, their grace, and of some the power and majesty; the colour of others, brighter than roses or rubies. And when, for man's sin, not their own, they were destroyed, yet were two of each kind spared.

'And when the ark and its trembling inmates tumbled solitary on the world of water, then, saith the Word, "God remembered Noah, and the cattle that were with him in the ark."

'Thereafter God did write his rainbow in the sky as a bond that earth should be flooded no
more; and between whom the bond? Between God and man? nay: between God and man, and every living creature of all flesh; or my memory fails me with age. In Exodus God commanded that the cattle should share the sweet blessing of the one day's rest. Moreover, he forbade to muzzle the ox that trod out the corn. "Nay, let the poor overwrought soul snatch a mouthful as he goes his toilsome round; the bulk of the grain shall still be for man." Ye will object perchance that Saint Paul, commenting this, saith rudely, "Doth God care for oxen?" Verily, had I been Peter, instead of the humblest of his successors, I had answered him: "Drop thy theatrical poets, Paul, and read the scriptures; then shalt thou know whether God careth only for men and sparrows, or for all his creatures. O Paul," had I made bold to say, "think not to learn God by looking into Paul's heart, nor any heart of man, but study that which he hath revealed concerning himself."

'Thrice he forbade the Jews to boil the kid in his mother's milk; not that this is cruelty, but want of thought and gentle sentiments, and so paves the way for downright cruelty. A prophet riding on an ass did meet an angel. Which of these two, Paulo judice, had seen the
heavenly spirit? Marry, the prophet. But it was not so. The man, his vision cloyed with sin, saw nought. The poor despised creature saw all. Nor is this recorded as miraculous. Poor proud things, we overrate ourselves. The angel had slain the prophet and spared the ass, but for that creature's clearer vision of essences divine. He said so, methinks. But in sooth I read it many years agone. Why did God spare repentant Nineveh? Because in that city were sixty thousand children, besides much cattle.

'Profane history and vulgar experience add their mite of witness. The cruel to animals end in cruelty to man; and strange and violent deaths, marked with retribution's bloody finger, have in all ages fallen from heaven on such as wantonly harm innocent beasts. This I myself have seen. All this duly weighed, and seeing that, despite this Francesco's friends, the Stoics, who in their vanity say the creatures all subsist for man's comfort, there be snakes and scorpions which kill Dominum terrae with a nip, mosquitoes which eat him piecemeal, and tigers and sharks which crack him like an almond, we do well to be grateful to these true, faithful, patient four-footed friends, which, in lieu of powdering us, put forth their strength to relieve
our toils, and do feed us like mothers from their
gentle dugs.

'Methinks, then, the Church is never more
divine than in this benediction of our four-
footed friends, which has revolted you great
theological authority, the captain of the Pope's
guards; since here she inculcates humility and
gratitude, and rises toward the level of the
mind divine, and interprets God to man,—God
the creator, parent, and friend, of man and
beast.

'But all this, younggentles, you will please
to receive, not as delivered by the Pope ex
cathedra, but uttered carelessly, in a free hour,
by an aged clergyman. On that score you will
perhaps do well to entertain it with some little
consideration; for old age must surely bring a
man somewhat in return for his digestion (his
dura puerorum ilia, eh, Francesco), which it
carries away.'

Such was the purport of the Pope's discourse;
but the manner high-bred, languid, kindly, and
free from all tone of dictation. He seemed to
be gently probing the matter, in concert with
his hearers, not playing Sir Oracle. At the
bottom of all which was doubtless a slight touch
of humbug, but the humbug that embellishes
life; and all sense of it was lost in the subtle Italian grace of the thing.

' I seem to hear the oracle of Delphi,' said Fra Colonna, enthusiastically.

'I call that good sense,' shouted Jacques Bonaventura.

'Oh, captain, good sense!' said Gerard, with a deep and tender reproach.

The Pope smiled on Gerard. 'Cavil not at words; that was an unheard-of concession from a rival theologian.'

He then asked for all Gerard's work, and took it away in his hand. But, before going, he gently pulled Fra Colonna's ear, and asked him whether he remembered when they were school-fellows together, and robbed the Virgin by the roadside of the money dropped into her box. 'You took a flat stick and applied bird-lime to the top, and drew the money out through the chink, you rogue,' said his holiness, severely.

'To every signor his own honour,' replied Fra Colonna. 'It was your holiness's good wit invented the manoeuvre. I was but the humble instrument.'

'It is well. Doubtless you know 't was sacrilege.'
'Of the first water; but I did it in such good company, it troubles me not.'

'Humph! I have not even that poor consolation. What did we spend it in, dost mind?'

'Can your holiness ask? Why, sugar-plums.'

'What, all on 't?'

'Every doit.'

'These are delightful reminiscences, my Francesco. Alas! I am getting old. I shall not be here long. And I am sorry for it, for thy sake. They will go and burn thee when I am gone. Art far more a heretic than Huss, whom I saw burned with these eyes; and oh, he died like a martyr.'

'Ay, your holiness; but I believe in the Pope, and Huss did not.'

'Fox! They will not burn thee; wood is too dear. Adieu, old playmate; adieu, young gentlemen. An old man's blessing be on you.'

That afternoon the Pope's secretary brought Gerard a little bag; in it were several gold pieces.

He added them to his store.

Margaret seemed nearer and nearer.

For some time past, too it appeared as if the fairies had watched over him. Baskets of choice provisions and fruits were brought to his door by porters, who knew not who had
employed them, or affected ignorance; and one
day came a jewel in a letter, but no words.
At this point the suspicions of his landlady
broke out. 'This is none of thy patrons, silly
boy; this is some lady that hath fallen in love
with thy sweet face. Marry, I blame her not.'
CHAPTER XII.

THE Princess Clælia ordered a full-length portrait of herself. Gerard advised her to employ his friend Pietro Vanucci. But she declined. ' 'T will be time to put a slight on the Gerardo, when his work discontents me.' Then Gerard, who knew he was an excellent draughtsman, but not so good a colourist, begged her to stand to him as a Roman statue. He showed her how closely he could mimic marble on paper. She consented at first; but demurred when this enthusiast explained to her that she must wear the tunic, toga, and sandals of the ancients.

'Why, I had as leave be presented in my smock,' said she, with mediæval frankness. 

'Alack! signorina,' said Gerard, 'you have surely never noted the ancient habit,—so free, so ample, so simple, yet so noble; and most becoming your highness, to whom Heaven hath given the Roman features, and eke a shapely arm and hand, hid in modern guise.'
'What! can you flatter, like the rest, Gerardo? Well, give me time to think on 't. Come o' Saturday, and then I will say ay or nay.'

The respite thus gained was passed in making the tunic and toga, etc., and trying them on in her chamber, to see whether they suited her style of beauty well enough to compensate their being a thousand years out of date.

Gerard, hurrying along to this interview, was suddenly arrested, and rooted to earth at a shop-window. His quick eye had discerned in that window a copy of Lactantius lying open. 'That is fairly writ, anyway,' thought he.

He eyed it a moment more with all his eyes.

It was not written at all. It was printed.

Gerard groaned. 'I am sped; mine enemy is at the door. The press is in Rome.'

He went into the shop, and affecting nonchalance, inquired how long the printing-press had been in Rome. The man said he believed there was no such thing in the city. 'Oh, the Lactantius; that was printed on the top of the Apennines.'

'What! did the printing-press fall down there out o' the moon?'

'Nay, messer,' said the trader, laughing, 'it shot up there out of Germany. See the title-page!'
Gerard took the Lactantius eagerly, and saw the following: —

‘Operâ et impensis Sweynheim et Pannartz
Alumnorum Joannis Fust.
Impressum Subiacis. A.D. 1465.’

‘Will ye buy, messer? See how fair and even be the letters. Few are left can write like that; and scarce a quarter of the price.’

‘I would fain have it,’ said Gerard, sadly; ‘but my heart will not let me. Know that I am a caligraph, and these disciples of Fust run after me round the world a-taking the bread out of my mouth. But I wish them no ill. Heaven forbid!’ And he hurried from the shop.

‘Dear Margaret,’ said he to himself, ‘we must lose no time; we must make our hay while shines the sun. One month more and an avalanche of printer’s type shall roll down on Rome from those Apennines, and lay us waste that writers be.’ And he almost ran to the Princess Clœlia.

He was ushered into an apartment new to him. It was not very large, but most luxurious; a fountain played in the centre, and the floor was covered with the skins of panthers, dressed with the hair, so that no footfall could be heard. The room was an ante-chamber to the princess’s
boudoir, for on one side there was no door, but an ample curtain of gorgeous tapestry.

Here Gerard was left alone till he became quite uneasy, and doubted whether the maid had not shown him to the wrong place. These doubts were agreeably dissipated.

A light step came swiftly behind the curtain; it parted in the middle, and there stood a figure the heathens might have worshipped. It was not quite Venus, nor quite Minerva; but between the two,—nobler than Venus, more womanly than Jupiter's daughter. Toga, tunic, sandals; nothing was modern. And as for beauty, that is of all times.

Gerard started up, and all the artist in him flushed with pleasure.

'Oh!' he cried innocently, and gazed in rapture.

This added the last charm to his model: a light blush tinted her cheeks, and her eyes brightened, and her mouth smiled with delicious complacency at this genuine tribute to her charms.

When they had looked at each other so some time, and she saw Gerard's eloquence was confined to ejaculating and gazing, she spoke. 'Well, Gerardo, thou seest I have made myself an antique monster for thee.'
'A monster? I doubt Fra Colonna would fall down and adore your highness, seeing you so habited.'

'Nay, I care not to be adored by an old man. I would liever be loved by a young one, — of my own choosing.'

Gerard took out his pencils, arranged his canvas, which he had covered with stout paper, and set to work; and so absorbed was he that he had no mercy on his model. At last, after near an hour in one posture, 'Gerardo,' said she, faintly, 'I can stand so no more, even for thee.'

'Sit down and rest awhile, signorina.'

'I thank thee,' said she; and sinking into a chair turned pale and sighed.

Gerard was alarmed, and saw also he had been inconsiderate. He took water from the fountain and was about to throw it in her face; but she put up a white hand deprecatingly: 'Nay, hold it to my brow with thine hand; prithee, do not fling it at me!'

Gerard timidly and hesitatingly applied his wet hand to her brow.

'Ah!' she sighed, 'that is reviving. Again.'

He applied it again. She thanked him, and asked him to ring a little hand-bell on the table. He did so, and a maid came, and was
sent to Floretta with orders to bring a large fan.

Floretta speedily came with the fan.
She no sooner came near the princess than that lady's high-bred nostrils suddenly expanded like a blood horse's. 'Wretch!' said she; and rising up with a sudden return to vigour, seized Floretta with her left hand, twisted it in her hair, and with her right hand boxed her ears severely three times.

Floretta screamed and blubbered, but obtained no mercy.

The antique toga left quite disengaged a bare arm, that now seemed as powerful as it was beautiful; it rose and fell like the piston of a modern steam-engine, and heavy slaps resounded one after another on Floretta's shoulders. The last one drove her sobbing and screaming through the curtain, and there she was heard crying bitterly for some time after.

'Saints of heaven!' cried Gerard, 'what is amiss? What hath she done?'

'She knows right well. 'Tis not the first time. The nasty toad! I'll learn her to come to me stinking of the musk-cat.'

'Alas! signorina, 't was a small fault, me-thinks.'

'A small fault? Nay, 't was a foul fault.'
She added with an amazing sudden descent to humility and sweetness, 'Are you wroth with me for beating her, Gerar-do?'

'Signorina, it ill becomes me to school you; but methinks such as Heaven appoints to govern others should govern themselves.'

'That is true, Gerardo. How wise you are, to be so young.' She then called the other maid, and gave her a little purse. 'Take that to Floretta, and tell her "the Gerardo" hath interceded for her; and so I must needs forgive her. There, Gerardo.'

Gerard coloured all over at the compliment; but not knowing how to turn a phrase equal to the occasion, asked her if he should resume her picture.

'Not yet; beating that hussy hath somewhat breathed me. I'll sit awhile, and you shall talk to me. I know you can talk, an it pleases you, as rarely as you draw.'

'That were easily done.'

'Do it then, Gerardo.'

Gerard was taken aback.

'But, signorina, I know not what to say. This is sudden.'

'Say your real mind. Say you wish you were anywhere but here.'
'Nay, signorina, that would not be sooth. I wish one thing though.'

'Ay, and what is that?' said she, gently.

'I wish I could have drawn you as you were beating that poor lass. You were awful, yet lovely. Oh, what a subject for a Pythoness!'

'Alas! he thinks but of his art. And why keep such a coil about my beauty, Gerardo? You are far fairer than I am. You are more like Apollo than I to Venus. Also, you have lovely hair, and lovely eyes, — but you know not what to do with them.'

'Ay, do I. To draw you, signorina.'

'Ah, yes. You can see my features with them; but you cannot see what any Roman gallant had seen long ago in your place. Yet sure you must have noted how welcome you are to me, Gerardo?'

'I can see your highness is always passing kind to me, — a poor stranger like me.'

'No, I am not, Gerardo. I have often been cold to you, — rude sometimes; and you are so simple you see not the cause. Alas! I feared for my own heart. I feared to be your slave, — I who have hitherto made slaves. Ah! Gerardo, I am unhappy. Ever since you came here I have lived upon your visits. The day
and the Heartb. 251

you are to come I am bright. The other days I am listless, and wish them fled. You are not like the Roman gallants. You make me hate them. You are ten times braver to my eye; and you are wise and scholarly, and never flatter and lie. I scorn a man that lies. Gerar-do, teach me thy magic, — teach me to make thee as happy by my side as I am still by thine.'

As she poured out these strange words, the princess's mellow voice sunk almost to a whisper, and trembled with half-suppressed passion; and her white hand stole timidly yet earnestly down Gerard’s arm till it rested like a soft bird upon his wrist, and as ready to fly away at a word.

Destitute of vanity and experience, wrapped up in his Margaret and his art, Gerard had not seen this revelation coming, though it had come by regular and visible gradations.

He blushed all over. His innocent admiration of the regal beauty that besieged him did not for a moment displace the absent Margaret’s image. Yet it was regal beauty, and wooing with a grace and tenderness he had never even figured in imagination. How to check her without wounding her?

He blushed and trembled.

The siren saw, and encouraged him. ‘Poor
Gerardo,' she murmured, 'fear not; none shall ever harm thee under my wing. Wilt not speak to me, Gerar-do mio?'

'Signorina!' muttered Gerard, deprecatingly.

At this moment his eye, lowered in his confusion, fell on the shapely white arm and delicate hand that curled round his elbow like a tender vine, and it flashed across him how he had just seen that lovely limb employed on Floretta.

He trembled and blushed.

'Alas!' said the princess, 'I scare him. Am I then so very terrible? Is it my Roman robe? I'll doff it, and habit me as when thou first camest to me. Mindest thou? 'T was to write a letter to yon barren knight Ercole d'Orsini. Shall I tell thee? 'T was the sight of thee, and thy pretty ways, and thy wise words, made me hate him on the instant. I liked the fool well enough before, — or wist I liked him. Tell me now how many times hast thou been here since then. Ah! thou knowest not; loveth me not, I doubt, as I love thee. Eighteen times, Gerardo; and each time dearer to me. The day thou comest not 't is night, not day, to Clælia. Alas! I speak for both. Cruel boy, am I not worth a word? Hast every day a princess at thy feet? Nay, prithee, prithee, speak to me, Gerar-do.'
'Signorina,' faltered Gerard, 'what can I say, that were not better left unsaid? Oh, evil day that ever I came here.'

'Ah! say not so. 'T was the brightest day ever shone on me,—or indeed on thee. I'll make thee confess so much ere long, ungrateful one.'

'Your highness,' began Gerard, in a low, pleading voice.

'Call me Clælia, Gerar-do.'

'Signorina, I am too young and too little wise to know how I ought to speak to you, so as not to seem blind nor yet ungrateful. But this I know, I were both naught and ungrateful, and the worst foe e'er you had, did I take advantage of this mad fancy. Sure some ill spirit hath had leave to afflict you withal; for 'tis all unnatural that a princess adorned with every grace should abase her affections on a churl.'

The princess withdrew her hand slowly from Gerard's wrist.

Yet as it passed lightly over his arm it seemed to linger a moment at parting.

'You fear the daggers of my kinsmen,' said she, half sadly, half contemptuously.

'No more than I fear the bodkins of your women,' said Gerard, haughtily. 'But I fear God and the saints, and my own conscience.'
The truth, Gerardo, the truth! Hypocrisy sits awkwardly on thee. Princesses, while they are young, are not despised for love of God, but of some other woman. Tell me whom thou lovest; and if she is worthy thee, I will forgive thee.'

'No she in Italy, upon my soul.'

'Ah! there is one somewhere, then. Where?'

'In Holland, my native country.'

'Ah! Marie de Bourgogne is fair, they say. Yet she is but a child.'

'Princess, she I love is not noble. She is as I am. Nor is she so fair as thou. Yet is she fair; and linked to my heart forever by her virtues, and by all the dangers and griefs we have borne together, and for each other. Forgive me; but I would not wrong my Margaret for all the highest dames in Italy.'

The slighted beauty started to her feet, and stood opposite him, as beautiful, but far more terrible than when she slapped Floretta, for then her cheeks were red, but now they were pale, and her eyes full of concentrated fury.

'This to my face, unmannered wretch,' she cried. 'Was I born to be insulted, as well as scorned, by such as thou? Beware! We nobles brook no rivals. Bethink thee whether is
better, the love of a Cesarini or her hate; for after all I have said and done to thee, it must be love or hate between us, and to the death. Choose now!'

He looked up at her with wonder and awe, as she stood towering over him in her Roman toga, offering this strange alternative. He seemed to have affronted a goddess of antiquity,—he, a poor puny mortal.

He sighed deeply, but spoke not.

Perhaps something in his deep and patient sigh touched a tender chord in that ungoverned creature, or perhaps the time had come for one passion to ebb and another to flow. The princess sank languidly into a seat, and the tears began to steal rapidly down her cheeks.

'Alas! alas!' said Gerard. 'Weep not, sweet lady; your tears they do accuse me, and I am like to weep for company. My kind patron, be yourself! You will live to see how much better a friend I was to you than I seemed.'

'I see it now, Gerardo,' said the princess. 'Friend is the word, — the only word can ever pass between us twain. I was mad. Any other man had ta'en advantage of my folly. You must teach me to be your friend and nothing more.'
Gerard hailed this proposition with joy, and told her out of Cicero how godlike a thing was friendship, and how much better and rarer and more lasting than love. To prove to her he was capable of it, he even told her about Denys and himself.

She listened with her eyes half shut, watching his words to fathom his character, and learn his weak point.

At last she addressed him calmly thus: 'Leave me now, Gerardo, and come as usual to-morrow. You will find your lesson well bestowed.' She held out her hand to him; he kissed it, and went away pondering deeply this strange interview, and wondering whether he had done prudently or not.

The next day he was received with marked distance, and the princess stood before him literally like a statue, and after a very short sitting, excused herself and dismissed him.

Gerard felt the chilling difference, but said to himself, 'She is wise.' So she was in her way.

The next day he found the princess waiting for him surrounded by young nobles flattering her to the skies. She and they treated him like a dog that could do one little trick they could not. The cavaliers in particular criticised his
work with a mass of ignorance and insolence combined that made his cheeks burn.

The princess watched his face demurely with half-closed eyes, at each sting the insects gave him, and when they had fled, had her doors closed against every one of them for their pains.

The next day Gerard found her alone, cold and silent. After standing to him so some time, she said, 'You treated my company with less respect than became you.'

'Did I, signorina?'

'Did you? You fired up at the comments they did you the honour to make on your work.'

'Nay, I said nought,' observed Gerard.

'Oh, high looks speak as plain as high words. Your cheeks were red as blood.'

'I was nettled a moment at seeing so much ignorance and ill-nature together.'

'Now it is me, their hostess, you affront.'

'Forgive me, signorina, and acquit me of design. It would ill become me to affront the kindest patron and friend I have in Rome, — but one.'

'How humble we are all of a sudden. In sooth, Ser Gerardo, you are a capital feignor. You can insult or truckle at will.'
'Truckle? To whom?'
'To me, for one,— to one whom you af-
fronted for a base-born girl like yourself, but
whose patronage you claim all the same.'
Gerard rose, and put his hand to his heart.
'These are biting words, signorina. Have I
really deserved them?'
'Oh, what are words to an adventurer like
you? Cold steel is all you fear.'
'I am no swashbuckler, yet I have met steel
with steel; and methinks I had rather face your
kinsmen's swords than your cruel tongue, lady.
Why do you use me so?'
'Gerard, for no good reason, but because I
am wayward and shrewish and cursed, and be-
cause everybody admires me but you.'
'I admire you too, signorina. Your friends
may flatter you more; but believe me they have
not the eye to see half your charms. Their
babble yesterday showed me that. None ad-
mire you more truly, or wish you better, than
the poor artist, who might not be your lover,
but hoped to be your friend; but no, I see that
may not be between one so high as you, and
one so low as I.'
'Ay! but it shall, Gerard,' said the princess,
eagerly. 'I will not be so cursed. Tell me
now where abides thy Margaret, and I will give
and the Hearth.

thee a present for her; and on that you and I will be friends.'

'She is the daughter of a physician called Peter, and they bide at Sevenbergen. Ah, me! shall I e'er see it again?'

'Tis well. Now go.' And she dismissed him somewhat abruptly.

Poor Gerard. He began to wade in deep waters when he encountered this Italian princess, *callida et calida solis filia*. He resolved to go no more when once he had finished her likeness. Indeed, he now regretted having undertaken so long and laborious a task.

This resolution was shaken for a moment by his next reception, which was all gentleness and kindness.

After standing to him some time in her toga, she said she was fatigued, and wanted his assistance in another way. Would he teach her to draw a little? He sat down beside her and taught her to make easy lines. He found her wonderfully apt. He said so.

'I had a teacher before thee, Gerar-do. Ay, and one as handsome as thyself.' She then went to a drawer, and brought out several heads drawn with a complete ignorance of the art, but with great patience and natural talent.
They were all heads of Gerard, and full of spirit, and really not unlike. One was his very image. 'There!' said she; 'now thou seest who was my teacher.'

'Not I, signorina.'

'What, know you not who teaches us women to do all things? 'T is love, Gerar-do. Love made me draw because thou drawest, Gerar-do. Love prints thine image in my bosom. My fingers touch the pen, and love supplies the want of art, and lo! thy beloved features lie upon the paper.'

Gerard opened his eyes with astonishment at this return to an interdicted topic. 'Oh, signorina, you promised me to be friends and nothing more.'

She laughed in his face. 'How simple you are! Who believes a woman promising nonsense,—impossibilities? Friendship! foolish boy, who ever built that temple on red ashes? Nay, Gerardo,' she added gloomily, 'between thee and me it must be love or hate.'

'Which you will, signorina,' said Gerard, firmly. 'But for me I will neither love nor hate you; but with your permission I will leave you.' And he rose abruptly.

She rose too, pale as death, and said, 'Ere thou leavest me so, know thy fate. Outside
that door are armed men who wait to slay thee at a word from me.'

'But you will not speak that word, signorina.'

'That word I will speak. Nay, more; I shall noise it abroad it was for proffering brutal love to me thou wert slain; and I will send a special messenger to Sevenbergen,—a cunning messenger, well taught his lesson. Thy Margaret shall know thee dead, and think thee faithless. Now, go to thy grave,—a dog's; for a man thou art not.'

Gerard turned pale, and stood dumbstricken.

'God have mercy on us both.'

'Nay, have thou mercy on her, and on thyself. She will never know in Holland what thou dost in Rome, unless I be driven to tell her my tale. Come, yield thee, Gerar-do mio. What will it cost thee to say thou lovest me? I ask thee but to feign it handsomely. Thou art young. Die not for the poor pleasure of denying a lady what?—the shadow of a heart. Who will shed a tear for thee? I tell thee men will laugh, not weep, over thy tombstone—Ah!' She ended in a little scream, for Gerard threw himself in a moment at her feet, and poured out in one torrent of eloquence the story of his love and Margaret's. How he had been imprisoned, hunted with bloodhounds for her,
driven to exile for her; how she had shed her blood for him, and now pined at home; how he had walked through Europe, environed by perils, torn by savage brutes, attacked by furious men, with sword and axe and trap, robbed, shipwrecked for her.

The princess trembled, and tried to get away from him; but he held her robe; he clung to her; he made her hear his pitiful story and Margaret's; he caught her hand, and clasped it between both his. And his tears fell fast on her hand as he implored her to think on all the woes of the true lovers she would part; and what but remorse, swift and lasting, could come of so deep a love betrayed, and so false a love feigned, with mutual hatred lurking at the bottom.

In such moments none ever resisted Gerard.

The princess, after in vain trying to get away from him, for she felt his power over her, began to waver, and sigh, and her bosom to rise and fall tumultuously, and her fiery eyes to fill.

'You conquer me,' she sobbed. 'You, or my better angel. Leave Rome!'  
'I will, I will!'

'If you breathe a word of my folly, it will be your last.'

'Think not so poorly of me. You are my
benefactress once more. Is it for me to slander you?'

'Go! I will send you the means. I know myself; if you cross my path again I shall kill you. Addio; my heart is broken.'

She touched her bell. 'Floretta,' said she, in a choked voice, 'take him safe out of the house through my chamber and by the side poster.'

He turned at the door; she was leaning with one hand on a chair, crying, with averted head. Then he thought only of her kindness, and ran back and kissed her robe. She never moved.

Once clear of the house he darted home, thanking Heaven for his escape, soul and body.

'Landlady,' said he, 'there is one would pick a quarrel with me. What is to be done?'

'Strike him first, and at vantage! Get behind him, and then draw.'

'Alas! I lack your Italian courage. To be serious, 't is a noble.'

'Oh, holy saints! that is another matter. Change thy lodging awhile, and keep snug; and alter the fashion of thy habits.'

She then took him to her own niece, who let lodgings at some little distance, and installed him there.
The Cloister

He had little to do now, and no princess to draw, so he set himself resolutely to read that deed of Floris Brandt, from which he had hitherto been driven by the abominably bad writing. He mastered it, and saw at once that the loan on this land must have been paid over and over again by the rents, and that Ghysbrecht was keeping Peter Brandt out of his own.

'Fool! not to have read this before,' he cried. He hired a horse and rode down to the nearest port. A vessel was to sail for Amsterdam in four days.

He took a passage, and paid a small sum to secure it.

'The land is too full of cutthroats for me,' said he; 'and 'tis lovely fair weather for the sea. Our Dutch skippers are not shipwrecked like these bungling Italians.'

When he returned home there sat his old landlady with her eyes sparkling.

'You are in luck, my young master,' said she. 'All the fish run to your net this day, methinks. See what a lackey hath brought to our house! This bill and this bag.'

Gerard broke the seals, and found it full of silver crowns. The letter contained a mere slip of paper with this line, cut out of some
MS. : 'La lingua non ha osso, ma fa rompere il dosso.'

'Fear me not!', said Gerard, aloud. 'I'll keep mine between my teeth.'

'What is that?'

'Oh, nothing. Am I not happy, dame? I am going back to my sweetheart with money in one pocket, and land in the other.' And he fell to dancing round her.

'Well,' said she, 'I trow nothing could make you happier.'

'Nothing, except to be there.'

'Well, that is a pity, for I thought to make you a little happier with a letter from Holland.'


'A stranger; a painter, with a reddish face and an outlandish name, — Anselmin, I trow.'

'Hans Memling? A friend of mine. God bless him!'

'Ay, that is it; Anselmin. He could scarce speak a word, but a had the wit to name thee; and a puts the letter down, and a nods and smiles, and I nods and smiles, and gives him a pint o' wine, and it went down him like a spoonful.'

'That is Hans, honest Hans. Oh, dame, I am in luck to-day; but I deserve it. For, I
care not if I tell you, I have just overcome a
great temptation for dear Margaret's sake.'

'Who is she?'

'Nay, I'd have my tongue cut out sooner
than betray her; but, oh! it was a temptation.
Gratitude pushing me wrong, Beauty almost di-
vine pulling me wrong; curses, reproaches, and,
hardest of all to resist, gentle tears from eyes
used to command. Sure some saint helped
me,—Anthony belike. But my reward is
come.'

'Ay, is it, lad; and no farther off than my
pocket. Come out, Gerard's reward.' And she
brought a letter out of her capacious pocket.

Gerard threw his arm round her neck and
hugged her. 'My best friend,' said he, 'my
second mother, I'll read it to you.'

'Ay, do, do.'

'Alas! it is not from Margaret. This is not
her hand.' And he turned it about.

'Alack! but maybe her bill is within. The
lasses are aye for gliding in their bills under
cover of another hand.'

'True. Whose hand is this? Sure I have
seen it. I trow 'tis my dear friend the De-
moiselle Van Eyck. Oh, then Margaret's bill
will be inside.' He tore it open. 'Nay, 'tis
all in one writing':—
Gerard, my well beloved son [she never called me that before that I mind], this letter brings the heavy news from one would liever send thee joyful tidings. Know that Margaret Brandt died in these arms on Thursday sennight last. [What does the doting old woman mean by that?] The last word on her lips was 'Gerard.' She said, 'Tell him I prayed for him at my last hour, and bid him pray for me.' She died very comfortable, and I saw her laid in the earth; for her father was useless, as you shall know. So no more at present from her that is with sorrowing heart thy loving friend and servant,

MARGARET VAN EYCK.

'Ay, that is her signature sure enough. Now, what d'ye think of that, dame?' cried Gerard, with a grating laugh. 'There is a pretty letter to send to a poor fellow so far from home, But it is Reicht Heynes I blame for humouring the old woman and letting her do it. As for the old woman herself, she dotes, she has lost her head; she is fourscore. Oh, my heart, I'm choking. For all that, she ought to be locked up, or her hands tied. Say this had come to a fool, — say I was idiot enough to believe this, know ye what I should do? — run to the top of the highest church tower in Rome and fling myself off it,
cursing Heaven. Woman! woman! what are you doing?' And he seized her rudely by the shoulder. 'What are ye weeping for?' he cried in a voice all unlike his own, and loud and hoarse as a raven. 'Would ye scald me to death with your tears?—She believes it. She believes it. Ah! ah! ah! ah! ah! ah! ah! Then there is no God!'

The poor woman sighed and rocked herself. 'And must I be the one to bring it thee all smiling and smirking? I could kill myself for 't. Death spares none,' she sobbed. 'Death spares none.'

Gerard staggered against the window-sill. 'But He is master of death,' he groaned, 'or they have taught me a lie. I begin to fear there is no God, and the saints are but dead bones, and hell is master of the world. My pretty Margaret,—my sweet, my loving Margaret. The best daughter! the truest lover! the pride of Holland! the darling of the world! It is a lie. Where is this caitiff Hans? I'll hunt him round the town. I'll cram his murdering falsehood down his throat.' And he seized his hat and ran furiously about the streets for hours.

Toward sunset he came back white as a ghost. He had not found Memling, but his
poor mind had had time to realize the woman’s simple words that Death spares none.

He crept into the house, bent and feeble as an old man, and refused all food. Nor would he speak, but sat, white, with great staring eyes, muttering at intervals, ‘There is no God.’

Alarmed both on his account and on her own (for he looked a desperate maniac), his landlady ran for her aunt.

The good dame came; and the two women, braver together, sat one on each side of him, and tried to soothe him with kind and consoling voices. But he heeded them no more than the chairs they sat on. Then the younger held a crucifix out before him, to aid her. ‘Maria, Mother of Heaven, comfort him,’ they sighed. But he sat glaring, deaf to all external sounds.

Presently, without any warning, he jumped up, struck the crucifix rudely out of his way with a curse, and made a headlong dash at the door. The poor women shrieked. But ere he reached the door, something seemed to them to draw him up straight by his hair, and twirl him round like a top. He whirled twice round with arms extended; then fell like a dead log upon the floor, with blood trickling from his nostrils and ears.
CHAPTER XIII.

GERARD returned to consciousness and to despair.

On the second day he was raving with fever on the brain. On a table hard by lay his rich auburn hair, long as a woman's.

The deadlier symptoms succeeded one another rapidly.

On the fifth day his leech retired and gave him up.

On the sunset of that same day he fell into a deep sleep.

Some said he would wake only to die. But an old gossip, whose opinion carried weight (she had been a professional nurse), declared that his youth might save him yet, could he sleep twelve hours.

On this his old landlady cleared the room and watched him alone. She vowed a wax candle to the Virgin for every hour he should sleep.

He slept twelve hours.
The good soul rejoiced, and thanked the Virgin on her knees.

He slept twenty-four hours.

His kind nurse began to doubt. At the thirtieth hour she sent for the woman of art. 'Thirty hours! Shall we wake him?'

The other inspected him closely for some time. 'His breath is even, his hand moist. I know there be learned leeches would wake him, to look at his tongue, and be none the wiser; but we that be women should have the sense to let bon Nature alone. When did sleep ever harm the racked brain or the torn heart?'

When he had been forty-eight hours asleep, it got wind, and they had much ado to keep the curious out; but they admitted only Fra Colonna and his friend the gigantic Fra Jerome.

These two relieved the women, and sat silent; the former eying his young friend with tears in his eyes, the latter with beads in his hand looked as calmly on him as he had on the sea when Gerard and he encountered it hand to hand.

At last, I think it was about the sixtieth hour of this strange sleep, the landlady touched Fra Colonna with her elbow. He looked. Gerard had opened his eyes as gently as if he had been but dozing.
He stared. He drew himself up a little in bed. He put his hand to his head, and found his hair was gone.

He noticed his friend Colonna, and smiled with pleasure; but in the middle of smiling his face stopped, and was convulsed in a moment with anguish unspeakable, and he uttered a loud cry, and turned his face to the wall.

His good landlady wept at this. She had known what it is to awake bereaved.

Fra Jerome recited canticles and prayers from his breviary.

Gerard rolled himself in the bed-clothes.

Fra Colonna went to him, and, whimpering, reminded him that all was not lost. The divine Muses were immortal. He must transfer his affection to them; they would never betray him nor fail him like creatures of clay. The good, simple father then hurried away; for he was overcome by his emotion.

Fra Jerome remained behind. 'Young man,' said he, 'the Muses exist but in the brains of Pagans and visionaries. The Church alone gives repose to the heart on earth, and happiness to the soul hereafter. Hath earth deceived thee, hath passion broken thy heart after tearing it, the Church opens her arms. Consecrate thy gifts to her! The Church is peace of mind.'
He spoke these words solemnly at the door, and was gone as soon as they were uttered.

'The Church!' cried Gerard rising furiously and shaking his fist after the friar. 'Malediction on the Church! But for the Church I should not lie broken here, and she lie cold, cold, cold, in Holland. Oh, my Margaret! Oh, my darling! my darling! And I must run from thee the few months thou hadst to live. Cruel! cruel! The monsters, they let her die. Death comes not without some signs. These the blind, selfish wretches saw not, or recked not; but I had seen them, — I that love her. Oh, had I been there, I had saved her, I had saved her! Idiot! idiot! to leave her for a moment.'

He wept bitterly a long time.

Then, suddenly bursting into rage again, he cried vehemently, 'The Church! for whose sake I was driven from her; my malison be on the Church and the hypocrites that name it to my broken heart! Accursed be the world! Ghysbrecht lives; Margaret dies. Thieves, murderers, harlots, live forever. Only angels die. Curse life! curse death! and whosoever made them what they are!'

The friar did not hear these mad and wicked words, but only the yell of rage with which they were flung after him.
It was as well. For if he had heard them, he would have had his late shipmate burned in the forum with as little hesitation as he would have roasted a kid.

His old landlady, who had accompanied Fra Colonna down the stair, heard the raised voice, and returned in some anxiety.

She found Gerard putting on his clothes, and crying. She remonstrated.

'What avails my lying here?' said he, gloomily.

'Can I find here that which I seek?'

'Saints preserve us! Is he distraught again?
What seek ye?'

'Oblivion.'

'Oblivion, my little heart? Oh, but y' are young to talk so.'

'Young or old, what else have I to live for?' He put on his best clothes.

The good dame remonstrated. 'My pretty Gerard, know that it is Tuesday, not Sunday.'

'Oh, Tuesday is it? I thought it had been Saturday.'

'Nay, thou hast slept long. Thou never wearest thy brave clothes on working-days. Consider.'

'What I did, when she lived, I did. Now I shall do whatever erst I did not. The past is the past. There lies my hair, and with it my
way of life. I have served one Master as well as I could. You see my reward. Now I'll serve another, and give him a fair trial too.'

'Alas!' sighed the woman, turning pale, 'what mean these dark words? And what new master is this whose service thou wouldst try?'

'Satan.'

And with this horrible declaration on his lips the miserable creature walked out with his cap and feather set jauntily on one side, and feeble limbs, and a sinister face pale as ashes, and all drawn down as if by age.
CHAPTER XIV.

A dark cloud fell on a noble mind. His pure and unrivalled love for Margaret had been his polar star. It was quenched, and he drifted on the gloomy sea of no hope.

Nor was he a prey to despair alone, but to exasperation at all his self-denial, fortitude, perils, virtue, wasted and worse than wasted; for it kept burning and stinging him that, had he stayed lazily, selfishly, at home, he should have saved his Margaret's life.

These two poisons, raging together in his young blood, maddened and demoralized him. He rushed fiercely into pleasure. And in those days, even more than now, pleasure was vice.

Wine, women, gambling,—whatever could procure him an hour's excitement and a moment's oblivion. He plunged into these things, as men tired of life have rushed among the enemy's bullets.

The large sums he had put by for Margaret gave him ample means for debauchery, and he
was soon the leader of those loose companions
he had hitherto kept at a distance.

His heart deteriorated along with his morals.
He sulked with his old landlady for thrusting
gentle advice and warning on him, and finally
removed to another part of the town, to be clear
of remonstrance and reminiscences. When he
had carried this game on some time, his hand
became less steady, and he could no longer
write to satisfy himself. Moreover his patience
decayed as the habits of pleasure grew on
him. So he gave up that art, and took like-
nesses in colours. But this he neglected when-
ever the idle rakes, his companions, came for
him.

And so he dived in foul waters, seeking that
sorry oyster-shell, Oblivion.

It is not my business to paint at full length
the scenes of coarse vice in which this unhappy
young man now played a part. But it is my
business to impress the broad truth that he was
a rake, a debauchee, and a drunkard, and one
of the wildest, loosest, and wickedest young
men in Rome.

They are no lovers of truth, nor of mankind,
who conceal or slur the wickedness of the good,
and so by their want of candour rob despondent
sinners of hope.
Enough, the man was not born to do things by halves. And he was not vicious by halves.

His humble women friends often gossiped about him. His old landlady told Teresa he was going to the bad, and prayed her to try and find out where he was.

Teresa told her husband Lodovico his sad story, and bade him look about and see if he could discover the young man's present abode. 'Shouldst remember his face, Lodovico mio?'

'Teresa, a man in my way of life never forgets a face, — least of all a benefactor's. But thou knowest I seldom go abroad by daylight.'

Teresa sighed. 'And how long is it to be so, Lodovico?'

'Till some cavalier passes his sword through me. They will not let a poor fellow like me take to any honest trade.'

Pietro Vanucci was one of those who bear prosperity worse than adversity.

Having been ignominiously ejected for late hours by their old landlady, and meeting Gerard in the street, he greeted him warmly, and soon after took up his quarters in the same house.

He brought with him a lad called Andrea, who ground his colours, and was his pupil, and also
his model, being a youth of rare beauty, and as
sharp as a needle.

Pietro had not quite forgotten old times, and
professed a warm friendship for Gerard.

Gerard, in whom all warmth of sentiment
seemed extinct, submitted coldly to the other's
friendship.

And a fine acquaintance it was. This Pietro
was not only a libertine, but half a misanthrope,
and an open infidel.

And so they ran in couples, with mighty little
in common. Oh, rare phenomenon!

One day, when Gerard had undermined his
health, and taken the bloom off his beauty, and
run through most of his money, Vanucci got up
a gay party to mount the Tiber in a boat drawn
by buffaloes. Lorenzo de' Medici had imported
these creatures into Florence about three years
before, but they were new in Rome; and nothing
would content this beggar on horseback, Va-
nucci, but being drawn by the brutes up the
Tiber.

Each libertine was to bring a lady; and she
must be handsome, or he be fined. But the one
that should contribute the loveliest was to be
crowned with laurel, and voted a public bene-
factor. Such was their reading of 'Vir bonus
est quis? ’ They got a splendid galley, and twelve buffaloes. And all the libertines and their female accomplices assembled by degrees at the place of embarkation. But no Gerard.

They waited for him some time, at first impatiently, then impatiently.

Vanucci excused him. ‘I heard him say he had forgotten to provide himself with a farthingale. Comrades, the good lad is hunting for a beauty fit to take rank among these peerless dames. Consider the difficulty, ladies, and be patient!’

At last Gerard was seen at some distance with a woman in his hand.

‘She is long enough,’ said one of her sex, criticising her from afar.

‘Gemini! what steps she takes,’ said another.

‘Oh! it is wise to hurry into good company,’ was Pietro’s excuse.

But when the pair came up, satire was choked.

Gerard’s companion was a peerless beauty; she extinguished the boat-load, as stars the rising sun. Tall, but not too tall; and straight as a dart, yet supple as a young panther; her face a perfect oval; her forehead white; her cheeks a rich olive with the eloquent blood mantling below; and her glorious eyes fringed with long
thick silken eyelashes that seemed made to sweep up sensitive hearts by the half-dozen; saucy red lips, and teeth of the whitest ivory.

The women were visibly depressed by this wretched sight; the men in ecstasies. They received her with loud shouts and waving of caps, and one enthusiast even went down on his knees upon the boat’s gunwale, and hailed her of origin divine. But his chère amie pulling his hair for it, and the goddess giving him a little kick contemporaneously, he lay supine; and the peerless creature frisked over his body without deigning him a look, and took her seat at the prow. Pietro Vanucci sat in a sort of collapse, glaring at her, and gaping with his mouth open like a dying cod-fish.

The drover spoke to the buffaloes, the ropes tightened, and they moved up stream.

‘What think ye of this new beef, mesdames?’

‘We ne’er saw monsters so vilely ill-favoured, with their nasty horns that make one afeard, and their foul nostrils cast up into the air. Holes be they, not nostrils.’

‘Signorina, the beeves are a present from Florence the beautiful. Would ye look a gift beef i’ the nose?’

‘They are so dull,’ objected a lively lady. ‘I
went up Tiber twice as fast last time with but five mules and an ass.'

'Nay, that is soon mended,' cried a gallant, and jumping ashore he drew his sword, and de- spite the remonstrances of the drivers, went down the dozen buffaloes goading them.

They snorted and whisked their tails, and went no faster, at which the boat-load laughed loud and long; finally he goaded a patriarch bull, who turned instantly on the sword, sent his long horns clean through the spark, and with a furious jerk of his prodigious neck sent him flying over his head into the air. He described a bold parabola and fell sitting, and uncon- sciously waving his glittering blade, into the yellow Tiber. The laughing ladies screamed and wrung their hands, all but Gerard's fair. She uttered something very like an oath, and seizing the helm steerèd the boat out, and the gallant came up sputtering, gripped the gunwale, and was drawn in dripping.

He glared round him confusedly. 'I understand not that,' said he, a little perversely; puzzled, and therefore, it would seem, discontented. At which, finding he was by some strange acci- dent not slain, his doublet being perforated in- stead of his body, they began to laugh again louder than ever.
'What are ye cackling at?' remonstrated the spark. 'I desire to know how 'tis that one moment a gentleman is out yonder a-pricking of African beef, and the next moment—'

Gerald's lady. 'Disporting in his native stream.'

'Tell him not, a soul of ye,' cried Vanucci. 'Let him find out 's own riddle.'

'Confound ye all. I might puzzle my brains till doomsday, I should ne'er find it out. Also, where is my sword?'

Gerald's lady. 'Ask Tiber! Your best way, signor, will be to do it over again; and, in a word, kept pricking of Afric's beef, till your mind receives light. So shall you comprehend the matter by degrees, as lawyers mount heaven, and buffaloes Tiber.'

Here a chevalier remarked that the last speaker transcended the sons of Adam as much in wit as she did the daughters of Eve in beauty.

At which, and indeed at all their compliments, the conduct of Pietro Vanucci was peculiar. That signor had left off staring, and gaping bewildered, and now sat coiled up snake-like on a bench, his mouth muffled, and two bright eyes fixed on the lady, and twinkling and scintillating most comically.
He did not appear to interest or amuse her in return. Her glorious eyes and eyelashes swept him calmly at times, but scarce distinguished him from the benches and things.

Presently the unanimity of the party suffered a momentary check.

Mortified by the attention the cavaliers paid to Gerard’s companion, the ladies began to pick her to pieces sotto voce, and audibly.

The lovely girl then showed that, if rich in beauty, she was poor in feminine tact. Instead of revenging herself like a true woman through the men, she permitted herself to overhear, and openly retaliate on her detractors.

‘There is not one of you that wears Nature’s colours,’ said she. ‘Look here,’ and she pointed rudely in one’s face. ‘This is the beauty that is to be bought in every shop. Here is cerussa, here is stibium, and here purpurissum. Oh, I know the articles. Bless you, I use them every day,—but not on my face; no thank you.’

Here Vanucci’s eyes twinkled themselves nearly out of sight.

‘Why, your lips are coloured, and the very veins in your forehead; not a charm but would come off with a wet towel. And look at your great coarse black hair like a horse’s tail, drugged and stained to look like tow. And then your
bodies are as false as your heads and your cheeks, and your hearts I trow. Look at your padded bosoms, and your wooden heeled chopines to raise your little stunted limbs up and deceive the world. Skinny dwarfs ye are, cushioned and stiltified into great fat giants. Aha, mesdames, well is it said of you, grande — di legni; grosse — di straci; rosse — di bettito; bianche — di calcina.'

This drew out a rejoinder. 'Avaunt, vulgar toad, telling the men everything. Your coarse, ruddy cheeks are your own, and your little handful of African hair. But who is padded more? Why, you are shaped like a fire-shovel.'

'Ye lie, malapert.'

'Oh, the well educated young person! Where didst pick her up, Ser Gerard?'

'Hold thy piece, Marcia,' said Gerard, awakened by the raised trebles from a gloomy revery. 'Be not so insolent! The grave shall close over thy beauty as it hath over fairer than thee.'

'They began,' said Marcia, petulantly.

'Then be thou the first to leave off.'

'At thy request, my friend.' She then whispered Gerard, 'It was only to make you laugh. You are distraught; you are sad. Judge whether I care for the quips of these little
fools, or the admiration of these big fools. Dear Signor Gerard, would I were what they take me for! You should not be so sad.' Gerard sighed deeply, and shook his head. But, touched by the earnest young tones, caressed the jet black locks, much as one strokes the head of an affectionate dog.

At this moment a galley drifting slowly down stream got entangled for an instant in their ropes; for, the river turning suddenly, they had shot out into the stream, and this galley came between them and the bank. In it a lady of great beauty was seated under a canopy with gallants and dependents standing behind her.

Gerard looked up at the interruption. It was the Princess Clælia.

He coloured and withdrew his hand from Marcia's head.

Marcia was all admiration. 'Aha! ladies,' said she, 'here is a rival an ye will. Those cheeks were coloured by Nature, — like mine.'

'Peace, child! peace!' said Gerard. 'Make not too free with the great.'

'Why, she heard me not. Oh, Ser Gerard, what a lovely creature!' Two of the women had been for some time past putting their heads together and casting glances at Marcia.
One of them now addressed her.

'Signorina, do you love almonds?'
The speaker had a lapful of them.

'Yes, I love them,—when I can get them,' said Marcia, pettishly, and eying the fruit with ill-concealed desire; 'but yours is not the hand to give me any, I trow.'

'You are much mistook,' said the other. 'Here, catch!' and suddenly threw a double handful into Marcia's lap.

Marcia brought her knees together by an irresistible instinct.

'Aha! you are caught, my lad,' cried she of the nuts. 'T is a man,—or a boy. A woman still parteth her knees to catch the nuts the surer in her apron; but a man closeth his for fear they shall fall between his hose. Confess, now, didst never wear fardingale ere to-day.'

'Give me another handful, sweetheart, and I'll tell thee.'

'There! I said he was too handsome for a woman.'

'Ser Gerard, they have found me out,' observed the Epicæne, calmly cracking an almond.

The libertines vowed it was impossible, and all glared at the goddess like a battery. But Vanucci struck in, and reminded the gaping gazers of a recent controversy, in which they
had, with an unanimity not often found among
dunces, laughed Gerard and him to scorn for
saying that men were as beautiful as women in
a true artist's eye.

'Where are ye now? This is my boy An-
drea. And you have all been down on your
knees to him. Ha! ha! But oh, my little
ladies, when he lectured you and flung your
stibium, your cerussa, and your purpurissum
back in your faces, 'tis then I was like to
burst; a grinds my colours. Ha! ha! he!
he! he! ho!'

'The little impostor! Duck him!'

'What for, signors?' cried Andrea, in dis-
may, and lost his rich carnation.

But the women collected round him, and
vowed nobody should harm a hair of his head.

'The dear child! How well his pretty little
saucy ways become him.'

'Oh, what eyes and teeth!'

'And what eyebrows and hair!'

'And what lashes!'

'And what a nose!'

'The sweetest little ear in the world!'

'And what health! Touch but his cheek
with a pin the blood should squirt.'

'Who would be so cruel?'

'He is a rosebud washed in dew.'
And they revenged themselves for their beaux' admiration of her by lavishing all their tenderness on him.

But one there was who was still among these butterflies, but no longer of them.

The sight of the Princess Clælia had torn open his wound.

Scarce three months ago he had declined the love of that peerless creature,—a love illicit and insane, but at least refined. How much lower had he fallen now.

How happy he must have been when the blandishments of Clælia, that might have melted an anchorite, could not tempt him from the path of loyalty!

Now what was he? He had blushed at her seeing him in such company. Yet it was his daily company.

He hung over the boat in moody silence.

And from that hour another phase of his misery began, and grew upon him.

Some wretched fools try to drown care in drink. The fumes of intoxication vanish; the inevitable care remains, and must be faced at last, with an aching head, a disordered stomach, and spirits artificially depressed.

Gerard's conduct had been of a piece with
these maniacs'. To survive his terrible blow he needed all his forces,—his virtue, his health, his habits of labour, and the calm sleep that is labour's satellite; above all, his piety.

Yet all these balms to wounded hearts he flung away, and trusted to moral intoxication.

Its brief fumes fled. The bereaved heart lay still heavy as lead within his bosom; but now the dark vulture Remorse sat upon it reading it.

Broken health; means wasted; innocence fled; Margaret parted from him by another gulf wider than the grave!

The hot fit of despair passed away. The cold fit of despair came on. Then this miserable young man spurned his gay companions, and all the world.

He wandered alone. He drank wine alone to stupefy himself, and paralyze a moment the dark foes to man that preyed upon his soul. He wandered alone amidst the temples of old Rome, and lay stony-eyed, woe-begone, among their ruins, worse wrecked than they.

Last of all came the climax, to which solitude, that gloomy yet fascinating foe of minds diseased, pushes the hopeless.

He wandered alone at night by dark streams, and eyed them, and eyed them, with decreasing
repugnance. There glided peace; perhaps annihilation.

What else was left him?

These dark spells have been broken by kind words, by loving and cheerful voices. The humblest friend the afflicted one possesses may speak, or look, or smile, a sunbeam between him and that worst madness Gerard now brooded.

Where was Teresa? Where his hearty, kind, old landlady?

They would see with their homely but swift intelligence; they would see and save.

No; they knew not where he was, or whither he was gliding.

And is there no mortal eye upon the poor wretch, and the dark road he is going?

Yes; one eye there is upon him, watching his every movement, following him abroad, tracking him home.

And that eye is the eye of an enemy.

An enemy to the death.
CHAPTER XV.

In an apartment richly furnished, the floor covered with striped and spotted skins of animals, a lady sat with her arms extended before her, and her hands half clinched. The agitation of her face corresponded with this attitude; she was pale and red by turns, and her foot restless.

Presently the curtain was drawn by a domestic. The lady's brow flushed.

The maid said, in an awe-struck whisper, 'Altezza, the man is here.'

The lady bade her admit him, and snatched up a little black mask and put it on; and in a moment her colour was gone, and the contrast between her black mask and her marble cheeks was strange and fearful.

A man entered bowing and scraping. It was such a figure as crowds seem made of, — short hair, roundish head, plain, but decent clothes; features neither comely nor forbidding. Nothing to remark in him but a singularly restless eye.
After a pause in his music he turned away from the lady and awaited her pleasure.

"They have told you what you are wanted.

"Yes, signora."

"Did those who spoke to you agree as to what you are to receive?"

"Yes, signora. It is the full price, and purchases the greater vendetta — unless of your benevolence you choose to content yourself with the lesser."

"I understand you not," said the lady.

"Ah: this is the signora's first. The lesser vendetta, lady, is the death of the body only. We watch our man come out of a church, or take him in an innocent hour, and so deal with him. In the greater vendetta we watch him, and catch him hot from some unrepented sin, and so slay his soul as well as his body. But this vendetta is not so run upon now as it was a few years ago."

"Man, silence me his tongue, and let his treasonable heart beat no more. But his soul I have no feud with."

"So be it, signora. He who spoke to me knew not the man, nor his name, nor his abode. From whom shall I learn these?"

"From myself."

At this the man, with the first symptoms of
anxiety he had shown, entreated her to be cautious, and particular, in this part of the business.

'Fear me not,' said she. 'Listen. It is a young man, tall of stature, and auburn hair, and dark-blue eyes, and an honest face would deceive a saint. He lives in the Via Claudia, at the corner house, — the glover's. In that house there lodge but three men, — he, and a painter short of stature and dark visaged, and a young, slim boy. He that hath betrayed me is a stranger, fair, and taller than thou art.'

The bravo listened with all his ears. 'It is enough,' said he. 'Stay, signora, haunteth he any secret place where I may deal with him?'

'My spy doth report me he hath of late frequented the banks of Tiber after dusk, — doubtless to meet his light o' love, who calls me her rival. Even there slay him! and let my rival come and find him, — the smooth, heartless, insolent traitor.'

'Be calm, signora. He will betray no more ladies.'

'I know not that. He weareth a sword, and can use it. He is young and resolute.'

'Neither will avail him.'

'Are ye so sure of your hand? What are your weapons?'
The bravo showed her a steel gauntlet. 'We strike with such force we needs must guard our hand. This is our mallet.' He then undid his doublet, and gave her a glimpse of a coat of mail beneath, and finally laid his glittering stiletto on the table with a flourish.

The lady shuddered at first, but presently took it up in her white hand and tried its point against her finger.

'Beware, madam,' said the bravo.

'What! is it poisoned?'

'Saints forbid! We steal no lives. We take them with steel point, not drugs. But 'tis newly ground, and I feared for the signora's white skin.'

'His skin is as white as mine,' said she, with a sudden gleam of pity. It lasted but a moment. 'But his heart is black as soot. Say, do I not well to remove a traitor that slanders me?'

'The signora will settle that with her confessor. I am but a tool in noble hands,—like my stiletto.'

The princess appeared not to hear the speaker. 'Oh, how I could have loved him,—to the death, as now I hate him. Fool! he will learn to trifle with princes,—to spurn them and fawn on them, and prefer the scum of the town to them, and make them a byword.' She looked
up; 'Why loiter'st thou here? Haste thee, revenge me.'

'It is customary to pay half the price beforehand, signora.'

'Ah, I forgot; thy revenge is bought. Here is more than half;' and she pushed a bag across the table to him. 'When the blow is struck, come for the rest.'

'You will soon see me again, signora.' And he retired, bowing and scraping.

The princess, burning with jealousy, mortified pride, and dread of exposure (for till she knew Gerard no public stain had fallen on her), sat where he left her, masked, with her arms straight out before her, and the nails of her clinched hand nipping the table.

So sat the fabled sphinx: so sits a tigress.

Yet there crept a chill upon her now that the assassin was gone. And moody misgivings heaved within her, precursors of vain remorse. Gerard and Margaret were before their age. This was your true mediæval,—proud, amorous, vindictive, generous, foolish, cunning, impulsive, unprincipled, and ignorant as dirt.

Power is the curse of such a creature.

Forced to do her own crimes, the weakness of her nerves would have balanced the violence of her passions, and her bark been worse than
her bite; but power gives a feeble, furious woman masculine instruments. And the effect is as terrible as the combination is unnatural.

In this instance it whetted an assassin's dagger for a poor forlorn wretch just meditating suicide.
CHAPTER XVI.

IT happened, two days after the scene I have endeavoured to describe, that Gerard, wandering through one of the meanest streets in Rome, was overtaken by a thunderstorm, and entered a low hostelry. He called for wine, and, the rain continuing, soon drank himself into a half-stupid condition, and dozed with his head on his hands and his hands upon the table.

In course of time the room began to fill and the noise of the rude guests to wake him.

Then it was he became conscious of two figures near him conversing in a low voice.

One was a pardon. The other by his dress, clean but modest, might have passed for a decent tradesman; but the way he had slouched his hat over his brows so as to hide all his face except his beard, showed he was one of those who shun the eye of honest men, and of the law. The pair were driving a bargain in the sin market. And by an arrangement not uncommon at that date, the crime to be forgiven was yet to be committed, — under the celestial contract.
It is of the utmost importance that you understand the nature of the disease. It is dangerous to attempt a self-medication without proper guidance.

The doctor must be informed of any other medical conditions you may have. It is important to follow the prescribed treatment.

In the meantime, you should refrain from any strenuous activities.

It is crucial to keep the medication as directed. If you experience any side effects, contact your doctor immediately.

The condition is contagious, so it is important to take precautions to prevent the spread to others.
man. The price for disposing of a clerk bore no proportion.

The word assassination was never once uttered by either merchant.

All this buzzed in Gerard's ear; but he never lifted his head from the table, — only listened stupidly.

However, when the parties rose and separated, he half raised his head and eyed with a scowl the retiring figure of the purchaser.

'If Margaret was alive,' muttered he, 'I'd take thee by the throat and throttle thee, thou cowardly stabber. But she is dead, dead, dead. Die all the world; 't is nought to me, so that I die among the first.'

When he got home there was a man in a slouched hat walking briskly to and fro on the opposite side of the way.

'Why, there is that cur again,' thought Gerard.

But in his state of mind, the circumstance made no impression whatever on him.
CHAPTER XVII.

TWO nights after this Pietro Vanucci and Andrea sat waiting supper for Gerard.

The former grew peevish. It was past nine o'clock. At last he sent Andrea to Gerard's room on the desperate chance of his having come in unobserved. Andrea shrugged his shoulders and went.

He returned without Gerard, but with a slip of paper. Andrea could not read, as scholars in his day and charity boys in ours understand the art; but he had a quick eye, and had learned how the words Pietro Vanucci looked on paper.

'That is for you, I trow,' said he, proud of his intelligence.

Pietro snatched it, and read it to Andrea, with his satirical comments:—

Dear Pietro, dear Andrea, life is too great a burden. [So 'tis, my lad; but that is no reason for being abroad at supper-time. Supper is
not a burden.] Wear my habits. [Said the poplar to the juniper bush]; and thou, Andrea, mine amethyst ring; and me in both your hearts, a month or two. [Why, Andrea?] For my body, ere this ye read, it will lie in Tiber. Trouble not to look for it; 'tis not worth the pains. Oh, unhappy day that it was born! Oh, happy night that rids me of it!
Adieu! adieu!

The broken hearted

GERARD.

'Here is a sorry jest of the peevish rogue,' said Pietro. But his pale cheek and chattering teeth belied his words.
Andrea filled the house with his cries. 'Oh, miserable day! Oh, calamity of calamities! Gerard, my friend, my sweet patron! Help! help! He is killing himself! Oh, good people, help me save him!' And after alarming all the house he ran into the street, bareheaded, imploring all good Christians to help him save his friend.

A number of persons soon collected.
But poor Andrea could not animate their sluggishness. Go down to the river? No. It was not their business. What part of the river? It was a wild-goose chase. It was not lucky to
and the Hearth.

go down to the river after sunset. Too many
ghosts walked those banks all night.

A lackey, however, who had been standing
some time opposite the house, said he would go
with Andrea; and this turned three or four of
the younger ones.

The little band took the way to the river.
The lackey questioned Andrea.

Andrea, sobbing, told him about the letter,
and Gerard's moody ways of late.

That lackey was a spy of the Princess Clælia.
Their Italian tongues went fast till they
neared the Tiber. But the moment they felt
the air from the river, and the smell of the
stream in the calm spring night, they were dead
silent.

The moon shone calm and clear in a cloudless
sky. Their feet sounded loud and ominous.
Their tongues were hushed.

Presently hurrying round a corner they met
a man. He stopped irresolute at sight of them.

The man was bareheaded, and his dripping
hair glistened in the moonlight; and at the next
step they saw his clothes were drenched with
water.

'Here he is,' cried one of the young men,
unacquainted with Gerard's face and figure.

The stranger turned instantly and fled.
They ran after him might and main, Andrea leading, and the princess's lackey next.

Andrea gained on him; but in a moment he twisted up a narrow alley. Andrea shot by, unable to check himself; and the pursuers soon found themselves in a labyrinth in which it was vain to pursue a quickfooted fugitive who knew every inch of it, and could now only be followed by the ear.

They returned to their companions, and found them standing on the spot where the man had stood, and utterly confounded; for Pietro had assured them that the fugitive had neither the features nor the stature of Gerard.

'Are ye verily sure?' said they. 'He had been in the river. Why, in the saints' names, fled he at our approach?'

Then said Vanucci, 'Friends, methinks this has nought to do with him we seek. What shall we do, Andrea?'

Here the lackey put in his word. 'Let us track him to the water's side, to make sure. See, he hath come dripping all the way.'

This advice was approved, and with very little difficulty they tracked the man's course.

But soon they encountered a new enigma.

They had gone scarcely fifty yards ere the drops turned away from the river, and took
them to the gate of a large gloomy building. It was a monastery.

They stood irresolute before it, and gazed at the dark pile. It seemed to them to hide some horrible mystery.

But presently Andrea gave a shout. 'Here be the drops again,' cried he. 'And this road leadeth to the river.'

They resumed the chase; and soon it became clear the drops were now leading them home. The track became wetter and wetter, and took them to the Tiber's edge. And there on the bank a bucketful appeared to have been discharged from the stream.

At first they shouted, and thought they had made a discovery; but reflection showed them it amounted to nothing. Certainly a man had been in the water, and had got out of it in safety; but that man was not Gerard. One said he knew a fisherman hard by that had nets and drags. They found the fisher, and paid him liberally to sink nets in the river below the place, and to drag it above and below; and promised him gold should he find the body. Then they ran vainly up and down the river, which flowed so calm and voiceless, holding this and a thousand more strange secrets.
Suddenly, Andrea, with a cry of hope, ran back to the house.

He returned in less than half an hour.

'No,' he groaned, and wrung his hands.

'What is the hour?' asked the lackey.

'Four hours past midnight.'

'My pretty lad,' said the lackey, solemnly, 'say a mass for thy friend's soul; for he is not among living men.'

The morning broke. Worn out with fatigue, Andrea and Pietro went home, heart-sick.

The days rolled on, mute as the Tiber as to Gerard's fate.
CHAPTER XVIII.

IT would indeed have been strange if with such barren data as they possessed, those men could have read the handwriting on the river's bank. For there on that spot an event had just occurred, which, take it altogether, was perhaps without a parallel in the history of mankind, and may remain so to the end of time.

But it shall be told in a very few words, partly by me, partly by an actor in the scene.

Gerard, then, after writing his brief adieu to Pietro and Andrea, had stolen down to the river at nightfall. He had taken his measures with a dogged resolution not uncommon in those who are bent on self-destruction. He filled his pockets with all the silver and copper he possessed, that he might sink the surer; and, so provided, hurried to a part of the stream that he had seen was little frequented.

There are some, especially women, who look about to make sure there is somebody at hand; but this resolute wretch looked about him to
make sure there was nobody. And, to his annoyance, he observed a single figure leaning against the corner of an alley. So he affected to stroll carelessly away; but returned to the spot.

Lo! the same figure emerged from a side street and loitered about.

'Can he be watching me? Can he know what I am here for?' thought Gerard. 'Impossible.'

He went briskly off, walked along a street or two, made a detour, and came back.

The man had vanished. But, lo! on Gerard looking all round, to make sure, there he was a few yards behind, apparently fastening his shoe.

Gerard saw he was watched, and at this moment observed in the moonlight a steel gauntlet in his sentinel's hand.

Then he knew it was an assassin.

Strange to say, it never occurred to him that his was the life aimed at. To be sure, he was not aware he had an enemy in the world.

He turned and walked up to the bravo. 'My good friend,' said he, eagerly, 'sell me thine arm! A single stroke! See, here is all I have;' and he forced his money into the bravo's hands. 'Oh, prithee! prithee! do one good deed, and rid me of my hateful life!'
and the Hearth.

and even while speaking he undid his doublet, and bared his bosom.

The man stared in his face.

'Why do ye hesitate?' shrieked Gerard.

'Have ye no bowels? Is it so much pains to lift your arm and fall it? Is it because I am poor, and can't give ye gold? Useless wretch, canst only strike a man behind, not look one in the face. There, then, do but turn thy head and hold thy tongue!'

And with a snarl of contempt he ran from him, and flung himself into the water.

'Margaret!'

At the heavy plunge of his body in the stream the bravo seemed to recover from a stupor. He ran to the bank, and with a strange cry the assassin plunged in after the self-destroyer.

What followed will be related by the assassin.
CHAPTER XIX.

A WOMAN has her own troubles, as a man has his. And we men writers seldom do more than indicate the griefs of the other sex. The intelligence of the woman reader must come to our aid, and fill up our cold outlines. So have I indicated, rather than described, what Margaret Brandt went through up to that eventful day, when she entered Eli’s house an enemy, read her sweetheart’s letter, and remained a friend.

And now a woman’s greatest trial drew near, and Gerard far away.

She availed herself but little of Eli’s sudden favour. For this reserve she had always a plausible reason ready, and never hinted at the true one, which was this: there were two men in that house at sight of whom she shuddered with instinctive antipathy and dread. She had read wickedness and hatred in their faces, and mysterious signals of secret intelligence. She preferred to receive Catherine and her daughter at
home. The former went to see her every day, and was warmed up in the expected event.

Catherine was one of those women whose office it is to multiply, and rear the multiplied: who, when at last they consent to leave off pelt- ing one out of every room in the house with babies, hover about the fair scourges that are still in full swing, and do so cluck, they seem to multiply by proxy. It was in this spirit she entreated Eli to let her stay at Rotterdam while he went back to Terenou.

"The poor lass hath not a soul about her that knows anything about anything. What avail a pair o' soldiers? Why, that sort o' cattle should be putten out o' doors the first, at such an a time."

Need I say that this was a great comfort to Margaret?

Poor soul, she was full of anxiety as the time drew near. She should die; and Gerard away.

But things balance themselves. Her poverty, and her father's helplessness, which had cost her such a struggle, stood her in good stead now.

Adversity's iron hand had forced her to battle the lassitude that overpowers the rich of her sex, and to be forever on her feet, working. She kept this up to the last by Catherine's advice.

And so it was that one fine evening, just at
sunset, she lay weak as water, but safe, with a little face by her side, and the heaven of maternity opening on her.

' Why dost weep, sweetheart, all of a sudden?'
' He is not here to see it.'
' Ah, well, lass, he will be here ere 't is weaned. Meantime, God hath been as good to thee as to e'er a woman born. And do but bethink thee, it might have been a girl! Did n't my very own Kate threaten me with one; and here we have got the bonniest boy in Holland, and a rare heavy one, the saints be praised for 't.'
' Ay, mother, I am but a sorry, ungrateful wretch to weep. If only Gerard were here to see it. 'T is strange; I bore him well enow to be away from me in my sorrow; but, oh, it doth seem so hard he should not share my joy. Prithee, prithee, come to me, Gerard! dear, dear Gerard! ' And she stretched out her feeble arms.

Catherine bustled about, but avoided Margaret's eyes; for she could not restrain her own tears at hearing her own absent child thus earnestly addressed.

Presently, turning round, she found Margaret looking at her with a singular expression. ' Heared you nought? '
'No, my lamb. What?'
'I did cry on Gerard, but now.'
'Ay, ay; sure I heard that.'
'Well, he answered me.'
'Tush, girl; say not that.'
'Mother, as sure as I lie here, with his boy by my side, his voice came back to me, “Margaret!” So. Yet methought 't was not his happy voice; but that might be the distance. All voices go off sad like at a distance. Why art not happy, sweetheart, and I so happy this night? Mother, I seem never to have felt a pain or known a care.' And her sweet eyes turned and gloated on the little face in silence.

That very night Gerard flung himself into the Tiber. And that very hour she heard him speak her name he cried aloud in death's jaws and despair's,—
'Margaret!'
Account for it those who can. I cannot.
CHAPTER XX.

IN the guest chamber of a Dominican convent lay a single stranger, exhausted by successive and violent fits of nausea, which had at last subsided, leaving him almost as weak as Margaret lay that night in Holland.

A huge wood fire burned on the hearth, and beside it hung the patient's clothes.

A gigantic friar sat by his bedside reading pious collects aloud from his breviary.

The patient at times eyed him, and seemed to listen: at others closed his eyes and moaned.

The monk kneeled down with his face touching the ground and prayed for him; then rose and bade him farewell. 'Day breaks,' said he, 'I must prepare for matins.'

'Good Father Jerome, before you go, how came I hither?'

'By the hand of Heaven. You flung away God's gift. He bestowed it on you again. Think on it! Hast tried the world, and found its gall. Now try the Church! The Church is peace. Pax vobiscum.'
He was gone. Gerard lay back, meditating and wondering, till weak and wearied he fell into a doze. When he awoke again he found a new nurse seated beside him. It was a layman, with an eye as small and restless as Friar Jerome's was calm and majestic.

The man inquired earnestly how he felt.

'Very, very weak. Where have I seen you before, messer?'

'None the worse for my gauntlet?' inquired the other, with considerable anxiety. 'I was fain to strike you withal, or both you and I should be at the bottom of Tiber.'

Gerard stared at him. 'What! 't was you saved me? How?'

'Well, signor, I was by the banks of Tiber on—on—an errand, no matter what. You came to me and begged hard for a dagger-stroke; but ere I could oblige you, ay, even as you spoke to me, I knew you for the signor that saved my wife and child upon the sea.'

'It is Teresa's husband. And an assassin!'

'At your service. Well, Ser Gerard, the next thing was, you flung yourself into Tiber, and bade me hold aloof.'

'I remember that.'

'Had it been any but you, believe me I had obeyed you, and not wagged a finger. Men are
my foes. They may all hang on one rope, or
drown in one river, for me. But when thou,
sinking in Tiber, didst cry Margaret!—'
'Ah!'—
'my heart it cried Teresa! How could I
go home and look her in the face, did I let thee
die, and by the very death thou savedst her
from? So in I went; and luckily for us both,
I swim like a duck. You, seeing me near, and
being bent on destruction, tried to grip me,
and so end us both; but I swam round thee,
and (receive my excuses) so buffeted thee on
the nape of the neck with my steel glove that
thou lost sense, and I with much ado, the
stream being strong, did draw thy body to land,
but insensible and full of water. Then I took
thee on my back and made for my own home.
"Teresa will nurse him, and be pleased with
me," thought I. But hard by this monastery, a
holy friar, the biggest e'er I saw, met us, and
asked the matter. So I told him. He looked
hard at thee. "I know the face," quoth he.
"'T is one Gerard, a fair youth from Holland."
"The same," quo' I. Then said his reverence,
"He hath friends among our brethren. Leave
him with us! Charity, it is our office."
'Also he told me they of the convent had
better means to tend thee than I had. And that
was true enow. So I just bargained to be let in to see thee once a day, and here thou art.' And the miscreant cast a strange look of affection and interest upon Gerard.

Gerard did not respond to it. He felt as if a snake were in the room. He closed his eyes.

'Ah, thou wouldst sleep,' said the miscreant, eagerly. 'I go.' And he retired on tiptoe with a promise to come every day.

Gerard lay with his eyes closed, — not asleep, but deeply pondering.

Saved from death by an assassin! Was not this the finger of Heaven, — of that Heaven he had insulted, cursed, and defied?

He shuddered at his blasphemies. He tried to pray. He found he could utter prayers; but he could not pray.

'I am doomed eternally,' he cried; 'doomed, doomed!'

The organ of the convent church burst on his ear in rich and solemn harmony. Then rose the voices of the choir chanting a full service. Among them was one that seemed to hover above the others, and tower toward heaven, — a sweet boy's voice, full, pure, angelic.

He closed his eyes and listened. The days of his own boyhood flowed back upon him in those sweet, pious harmonies. No earthly dross
there, no foul, fierce passions, rending and corrupting the soul. Peace, peace,—sweet, balmy peace.

'Ay,' he sighed, 'the Church is peace of mind. Till I left her bosom I ne'er knew sorrow nor sin.' And the poor torn, worn creature wept.

And even as he wept, there beamed on him the sweet and reverend face of one he had never thought to see again. It was the face of Father Anselm.

The good father had only reached the convent the night before last. Gerard recognized him in a moment, and cried to him, 'Oh, Father Anselm, you cured my wounded body in Juliers; now cure my hurt soul in Rome! Alas! you cannot.'

Anselm sat down by the bedside, and putting a gentle hand on his head, first calmed him with a soothing word or two.

He then (for he had learned how Gerard came there) spoke to him kindly but solemnly, and made him feel his crime, and urged him to repentance, and gratitude to that Divine Power which had thwarted his will to save his soul.

'Come, my son,' said he, 'first purge thy bosom of its load.'

'Ah, father,' said Gerard, 'in Juliers I could,
—then I was innocent; but now, impious monster that I am, I dare not confess to you.'

'Why not, my son? Thinkest thou I have not sinned against Heaven in my time, and deeply?—oh, how deeply! Come, poor laden soul, pour forth thy grief, pour forth thy faults, hold back nought! Lie not oppressed and crushed by hidden sins.'

And soon Gerard was at Father Anselm's knees confessing his every sin with sighs and groans of penitence.

'Thy sins are great,' said Anselm. 'Thy temptation also was great,—terribly great. I must consult our good prior.'

The good Anselm kissed his brow, and left him, to consult the superior as to his penance.

And, lo! Gerard could pray now.

And he prayed with all his heart.

The phase through which this remarkable mind now passed may be summed in a word,—Penitence.

He turned with terror and aversion from the world, and begged passionately to remain in the convent. To him, convent nurtured, it was like a bird returning wounded, wearied, to its gentle nest.
The Cloister

He passed his noviciate in prayer, and mortification, and pious reading, and meditation.

The Princess Clælia’s spy went home and told her that Gerard was certainly dead, the manner of his death unknown at present.

She seemed literally stunned.

When, after a long time, she found breath to speak at all, it was to bemoan her lot, cursed with such ready tools. ‘So soon,’ she sighed. ‘See how swift these monsters are to do ill deeds. They come to us in our hot blood, and first tempt us with their venal daggers, then enact the mortal deeds we ne’er had thought on but for them.’

Ere many hours had passed, her pity for Gerard and hatred of his murderer had risen to fever heat, which with this fool was blood heat.

‘Poor soul! I cannot call thee back to life; but he shall never live that traitorously slew thee.’

And she put armed men in ambush, and kept them on guard all day, ready, when Lodo-vico should come for his money, to fall on him in a certain ante-chamber and hack him to pieces.

‘Strike at his head,’ said she, ‘for he weareth
a privy coat of mail; and if he goes hence alive, your own heads shall answer it.'

And so she sat weeping her victim, and pulling the strings of machines to shed the blood of a second for having been her machine to kill the first.
CHAPTER XXI.

ONE of the novice Gerard's self-imposed penances was to receive Lodovico kindly, feeling secretly as to a slimy serpent.

Never was self-denial better bestowed; and, like most rational penances, it soon became no penance at all. At first the pride and complacency with which the assassin gazed on the one life he had saved was perhaps as ludicrous as pathetic; but it is a great thing to open a good door in a heart. One good thing follows another through the aperture. Finding it so sweet to save life, the miscreant went on to be averse to taking it; and from that to remorse, and from remorse to something very like penitence. And here Teresa co-operated by threatening, not for the first time, to leave him unless he would consent to lead an honest life. The good fathers of the convent lent their aid, and Lodovico and Teresa were sent by sea to Leghorn, where Teresa had friends, and the assassin settled down and became a porter.
and the Hearth.

He found it miserably dull work at first, and said so.

But methinks this dull life of plodding labour was better for him than the brief excitement of being hewn in pieces by the Princess Clælia’s myrmidons. His exile saved the unconscious penitent from that fate. And the princess, balked of her revenge, took to brooding, and fell into a profound melancholy; dismissed her confessor, and took a new one with a great reputation for piety, to whom she confided what she called her griefs. The new confessor was no other than Fra Jerome. She could not have fallen into better hands.

He heard her grimly out. Then took her and shook the delusions out of her as roughly as if she had been a kitchen-maid. For to do this hard monk justice, on the path of duty he feared the anger of princes as little as he did the sea. He showed her in a few words, all thunder and lightning, that she was the criminal of criminals.

‘Thou art the devil, that with thy money hath tempted one man to slay his fellow, and then, blinded with self-love, instead of blaming and punishing thyself, art thirsting for more blood of guilty men, but not so guilty as thou.’
The Cloister

At first she resisted, and told him she was not used to be taken to task by her confessors; but he overpowered her, and so threatened her with the Church's curse here and hereafter, and so tore the scales off her eyes, and thundered at her, and crushed her, that she sank down and grovelled with remorse and terror at the feet of the gigantic Boanerges.

'Oh, holy father, have pity on a poor weak woman, and help me save my guilty soul. I was benighted for want of ghostly counsel like thine, good father. I waken as from a dream.'

'Doff thy jewels,' said Fra Jerome, sternly.
'I will. I will.'
'Doff thy silk and velvet, and in humbler garb than wears thy meanest servant, wend thou instant to Loretto.'
'I will,' said the princess, faintly.
'No shoes; but a bare sandal.'
'No, father.'
'Wash the feet of pilgrims both going and coming; and to such of them as be holy friars tell thy sin, and abide their admonition.'
'Oh, holy father, let me wear my mask.'
'Humph!' 
'Oh, mercy! Bethink thee! My features are known through Italy.'
'Ay. Beauty is a curse to most of ye. Well, thou mayst mask thine eyes; no more.'
On this concession she seized his hand, and was about to kiss it; but he snatched it rudely from her.
'What would ye do? That hand handled the eucharist but an hour agone. Is it fit for such as thou to touch it?'
'Ah, no. But oh, go not without giving your penitent daughter your blessing.'
'Time enow to ask it when you come back from Loretto.'

Thus that marvellous occurrence by Tiber's banks left its mark on all the actors, as prodigies are said to do. The assassin, softened by saving the life he was paid to take, turned from the stiletto to the porter's knot. The princess went barefoot to Loretto, weeping her crime and washing the feet of base-born men. And Gerard, carried from the Tiber into that convent a suicide, now passed for a young saint within its walls.

Loving but experienced eyes were on him.
Upon a shorter probation than usual he was admitted to priests' orders, and soon after took the monastic vows, and became a friar of St. Dominic.
Dying to the world, the monk parted with the very name by which he had lived in it, and so broke the last link of association with earthly feelings.

Here Gerard ended, and Brother Clement began.
CHAPTER XXII.

'As is the race of leaves so is that of men.'
And a great man budded unnoticed in a tailor's house at Rotterdam this year, and a large man dropped to earth with great éclat.

Philip, Duke of Burgundy, Earl of Holland, etc., lay sick at Bruges. Now, paupers got sick and got well as Nature pleased; but woe betided the rich in an age when, for one Mr. Malady killed, three fell by Dr. Remedy.
The duke's complaint, nameless then, is now diphtheria. It is, and was, a very weakening malady, and the duke was old; so altogether Dr. Remedy bled him.
The duke turned very cold: wonderful!
Then Dr. Remedy had recourse to the arcana of science.
'Ho! This is grave. Flay me an ape incontinent, and clap him to the duke's breast!'
Officers of state ran septemvious, seeking an ape to counteract the bloodthirsty tomfoolery of the human species.
Perdition! The duke was out of apes. There were buffaloes, lizards, Turks, leopards,—any unreasonable beast but the right one.

'Why, there used to be an ape about,' said one. 'If I stand here I saw him.'

So there used; but the mastiff had mangled the sprightly creature for stealing his supper, and so fulfilled the human precept, 'Soyez de votre siècle!'

In this emergency the seneschal cast his despairing eyes around; and not in vain. A hopeful light shot into them.

'Here is this,' said he, *sotto voce*. 'Surely this will serve; 'tis altogether ape-like, doublet and hose apart.'

'Nay,' said the chancellor, peevishly, 'the Princess Marie would hang us. She doteth on this.'

Now, *this* was our friend Giles, strutting, all unconscious, in cloth-of-gold.

Then Dr. Remedy grew impatient, and bade flay a dog. 'A dog is next best to an ape; only it must be a dog all of one colour.'

So they flayed a liver-coloured dog, and clapped it, yet palpitating, to their sovereign's breast: and he died.

Philip the Good, thus scientifically disposed
of, left thirty-one children, of whom one, somehow or another, was legitimate, and reigned in his stead.

The good duke provided for nineteen out of the other thirty; the rest shifted for themselves.

According to the Flemish chronicle the deceased prince was descended from the kings of Troy through Thierry of Aquitaine, and Chilperic, Pharamond, etc., the old kings of Franconia. But this in reality was no distinction. Not a prince of his day have I been able to discover who did not come down from Troy. ‘Priam’ was mediæval for ‘Adam.’

The good duke’s body was carried into Burgundy, and laid in a noble mausoleum of black marble at Dijon.

Holland rang with his death, and little dreamed that anything as famous was born in her territory that year. That judgment has been long reversed. Men gazed at the tailor’s house, where the great birth of the fifteenth century took place. In what house the good duke died ‘no one knows and no one cares,’ as the song says. And why? Dukes Philip the Good come and go, and leave mankind not a halfpenny wiser, nor better, nor other, than they found it;
but when, once in three hundred years, such a child is born to the world as Margaret's son, lo! a human torch lighted by fire from heaven, and *fiat lux* thunders from pole to pole.
CHAPTER XXIII.

The Cloister.

The Dominicans, or preaching friars, once the most powerful order in Europe, were now on the wane. Their rivals and bitter enemies, the Franciscans, were overpowering them throughout Europe, — even in England, a rich and religious country, where, under the name of the Black Friars, they had once been paramount. Therefore the sagacious men who watched and directed the interests of the order were never so anxious to incorporate able and zealous sons, and send them forth to win back the world.

The zeal and accomplishments of Clement, especially his rare mastery of language (for he spoke Latin, Italian, French, high and low Dutch) soon transpired, and he was destined to travel and preach in England, corresponding with the Roman centre.

But Jerome, who had the superior's ear, obstructed this design.
'Clement,' said he, 'has the milk of the world still in his veins, its feelings, its weaknesses; let not his new-born zeal and his humility tempt us to forego our ancient wisdom. Try him first, and temper him, lest one day we find ourselves leaning on a reed for a staff.'

'It is well advised,' said the prior. 'Take him in hand thyself.'

Then Jerome, following the ancient wisdom, took Clement and tried him. One day he brought him to a field where the young men amused themselves at the games of the day; he knew this to be a haunt of Clement's late friends. And sure enough ere long Pietro Vanucci and Andrea passed by them, and cast a careless glance on the two friars. They did not recognize their dead friend in a shaven monk.

Clement gave a very little start, and then lowered his eyes and said a pater noster.

'Would ye not speak with them, brother?' said Jerome, trying him.

'No, brother; yet was it good for me to see them. They remind me of the sins I can never repent enough.'

'It is well,' said Jerome, and he made a cold report in Clement's favour.

Then Jerome took Clement to many death-
beds, and then into noisome dungeons,—places where the darkness was appalling, and the stench loathsome, pestilential; and men looking like wild beasts lay coiled in rags and filth and despair. It tried his body hard; but the soul collected all its powers to comfort such poor wretches there as were not past comfort. And Clement shone in that trial. Jerome reported that Clement's spirit was willing, but his flesh was weak.

'Good!' said Anselm; 'his flesh is weak, but his spirit is willing.'

But there was a greater trial in store.

I will describe it as it was seen by others.

One morning a principal street in Rome was crowded, and even the avenues blocked up with heads. It was an execution. No common crime had been done, and on no vulgar victim. The governor of Rome had been found in his bed at daybreak, slaughtered. His hand, raised probably in self-defence, lay by his side severed at the wrist; his throat was cut, and his temples bruised with some blunt instrument. The murder had been traced to his servant, and was to be expiated in kind this very morning.

Italian executions were not cruel in general; but this murder was thought to call for exact and bloody retribution.
The criminal was brought to the house of the murdered man, and fastened for half an hour to its wall. After this foretaste of legal vengeance his left hand was struck off, like his victim's. A new killed fowl was cut open and fastened round the bleeding stump,—with what view I really don't know; but, by the look of it, some mare's nest of the poor dear doctors,—and the murderer, thus mutilated and bandaged, was hurried to the scaffold; and there a young friar was most earnest and affectionate in praying with him, and for him, and holding the crucifix close to his eyes.

Presently the executioner pulled the friar roughly on one side, and in a moment felled the culprit with a heavy mallet, and falling on him, cut his throat from ear to ear.

There was a cry of horror from the crowd. The young friar swooned away. A gigantic monk strode forward, and carried him off like a child.

Brother Clement went back to the convent sadly discouraged. He confessed to the prior, with tears of regret.

'C Courage, son Clement,' said the prior. 'A Dominican is not made in a day. Thou shalt have another trial; and I forbid thee to go to it fasting.' Clement bowed his head in token of
and the Hearth.

obedience. He had not long to wait. A robber was brought to the scaffold, — a monster of villany and cruelty, who had killed men in pure wantonness, after robbing them. Clement passed his last night in prison with him, accompanied him to the scaffold, and then prayed with him and for him so earnestly that the hardened ruffian shed tears and embraced him. Clement embraced him too, though his flesh quivered with repugnance; and held the crucifix earnestly before his eyes. The man was garroted, and Clement lost sight of the crowd, and prayed loud and earnestly while that dark spirit was passing from earth. He was no sooner dead than the hangman raised his hatchet and quartered the body on the spot. And, oh, mysterious heart of man! the people, who had seen the living body robbed of life with indifference, almost with satisfaction, uttered a piteous cry at each stroke of the axe upon his corpse that could feel nought. Clement too shuddered then, but stood firm, like one of those rocks that vibrate but cannot be thrown down. But suddenly Jerome's voice sounded in his ear.

'Brother Clement, get thee on that cart and preach to the people. Nay, quickly! Strike with all thy force on all this iron, while yet 't is hot, and souls are to be saved.'
Clement's colour came and went, and he breathed hard; but he obeyed, and with ill-assured step mounted the cart, and preached his first sermon to the first crowd he had ever faced. Oh, that sea of heads! His throat seemed parched, his heart thumped, his voice trembled.

By-and-by the greatness of the occasion, the sight of the eager upturned faces, and his own heart full of zeal, fired the pale monk. He told them this robber's history, warm from his own lips in the prison, and showed his hearers by that example the gradations of folly and crime, and warned them solemnly not to put foot on the first round of that fatal ladder. And as alternately he thundered against the shedders of blood, and moved the crowd to charity and pity, his tremors left him, and he felt all strung up like a lute, and gifted with an unsuspected force; he was master of that listening crowd, could feel their very pulse, could play sacred melodies on them as on his psaltery. Sobs and groans attested his power over the mob already excited by the tragedy before them. Jerome stared like one who goes to light a stick, and fires a rocket. After a while Clement caught his look of astonishment, and seeing no approbation in it, broke suddenly off, and joined him.
'It was my first endeavour,' said he, apologetically. 'Your behest came on me like a thunder-bolt. Was I — ? Did I — ? Oh, correct me and aid me with your experience, Brother Jerome.'

'Humph!' said Jerome, doubtfully. He added, rather sullenly after long reflection, 'Give the glory to God, Brother Clement; my opinion is thou art an orator born.'

He reported the same at head-quarters, half reluctantly; for he was an honest friar though a disagreeable one.

One Julio Antonelli was accused of sacrilege; three witnesses swore they saw him come out of the church whence the candlesticks were stolen, and at the very time. Other witnesses proved an alibi for him as positively. Neither testimony could be shaken. In this doubt Antonelli was permitted the trial by water, hot or cold. By the hot trial he must put his bare arm into boiling water, fourteen inches deep, and take out a pebble; by the cold trial his body must be let down into eight feet of water. The clergy, who thought him innocent, recommended the hot water trial, which, to those whom they favoured, was not so terrible as it sounded; but the poor wretch had not the nerve, and chose the cold
ordeal. And this gave Jerome another opportunity of steeling Clement. Antonelli took the sacrament, and then was stripped naked on the banks of the Tiber, and tied hand and foot, to prevent those struggles by which a man, throwing his arms out of the water, sinks his body.

He was then let down gently into the stream, and floated a moment, with just his hair above water. A simultaneous roar from the crowd on each bank proclaimed him guilty. But the next moment the ropes, which happened to be new, got wet, and he settled down. Another roar proclaimed his innocence. They left him at the bottom of the river the appointed time,—rather more than half a minute,—then drew him up, gurgling, and gasping, and screaming for mercy; and, after the appointed prayers, dismissed him, cleared of the charge.

During the experiment Clement prayed earnestly on the bank. When it was over he thanked God in a loud but slightly quavering voice. By-and-by he asked Jerome whether the man ought not to be compensated.

'For what?'

'For the pain, the dread, the suffocation. Poor soul, he liveth, but hath tasted all the bitterness of death. Yet he had done no ill.'
'He is rewarded enough in that he is cleared of his fault.'

'But, being innocent of that fault, yet hath he drunk Death's cup, though not to the dregs; and his accusers, less innocent than he, do suffer nought.'

Jerome replied somewhat sternly, 'It is not in this world men are really punished, Brother Clement. Unhappy they who sin yet suffer not. And happy they who suffer such ills as earth hath power to inflict; 't is counted to them above, ay, and a hundredfold.'

Clement bowed his head submissively.

'May thy good words not fall to the ground, but take root in my heart, Brother Jerome.'

But the severest trial Clement underwent at Jerome's hands was unpremeditated. It came about thus. Jerome, in an indulgent moment, went with him to Fra Colonna, and there 'The Dream of Polifilo' lay on the table just copied fairly. The poor author, in the pride of his heart, pointed out a master-stroke in it.

'For ages,' said he, 'fools have been lavishing poetic praise and amorous compliment on mortal women, mere creatures of earth, smackling palpably of their origin, — sirens at the windows, where our Roman women in particular have by lifelong study learned the wily art to
show their one good feature, though but an ear
or an eyelash, at a jalousie, and hide all the rest;
maggies at the door; capre n’ i giardini; an-
geli in Strada; sante in chiesa; diavoli in casa.
Then come I and ransack the minstrels’ lines
for amorous turns, not forgetting those which
Petrarch wasted on that French jilt Laura, the
slyest of them all; and I lay you the whole
bundle of spice at the feet of the only women
worthy amorous incense,—to wit, the Nine
Muses.’
‘By which goodly stratagem,’ said Jerome,
who had been turning the pages all this time,
‘you, a friar of St. Dominic, have produced an
obscene book.’ And he dashed ‘Polifilo’ on
the table.
‘Obscene? Thou discourteous monk!’
And the author ran round the table, snatched
‘Polifilo’ away, locked him up, and, trembling
with mortification, said, ‘My Gerard,—pshaw! 
Brother What ’s-his-name had not found “Po-
ifilo ” obscene: \textit{puris omnia pura}.’
‘Such as read your “Polifilo”—Heaven
grant they may be few!—will find him what
I find him.’
Poor Colonna gulped down this bitter pill as
he might; and had he not been in his own
lodgings, and a high-born gentleman as well as
a scholar, there might have been a vulgar quarrel. As it was, he made a great effort, and turned the conversation to a beautiful chrysolite the Cardinal Colonna had lent him; and while Clement handled it, enlarged on its moral virtues,—for he went the whole length of his age as a worshipper of jewels. But Jerome did not, and expostulated with him for believing that one dead stone could confer valour on its wearer, another chastity, another safety from poison, another temperance.

' The experience of ages proves they do,' said Colonna. 'As to the last virtue you have named, there sits a living proof. This Gerard—I beg pardon, Brother Thingemy—comes from the North, where men drink like fishes; yet was he ever most abstemious. And why? Carried an amethyst, the clearest and fullest coloured e'er I saw on any but noble finger. Where, in Heaven's name, is thine amethyst? Show it this unbeliever!'

'And 't was that amethyst made the boy temperate?' asked Jerome, ironically.

'Certainly. Why, what is the derivation and meaning of amethyst? a negative, and μεθυνω to tipple. Go to, names are but the signs of things. A stone is not called αμθυντος for two thousand years out of mere sport, and abuse of language.'
He then went through the prime jewels, illustrating their moral properties, especially of the ruby, the sapphire, the emerald, and the opal, by anecdotes out of grave historians.

‘These be old wives’ fables,’ said Jerome, contemptuously. ‘Was ever such credulity as thine?’

Now, credulity is a reproach sceptics have often the ill-luck to incur; but it mortifies them none the less for that. The believer in stones writhed under it, and dropped the subject. Then Jerome, mistaking his silence, exhorted him to go a step farther, and give up from this day his vain pagan lore, and study the lives of the saints. ‘Blot out these heathen superstitions from thy mind, brother, as Christianity hath blotted them from the earth.’ And in this strain he proceeded, repeating, incautiously, some current but loose theological statements. Then the smarting Polifilo revenged himself. He flew out, and hurled a mountain of crude, miscellaneous lore upon Jerome, of which (partly for want of time, partly for lack of learning) I can reproduce but a few fragments:

‘The heathen blotted out? Why, they hold four-fifths of the world. And what have we Christians invented without their aid? Painting? sculpture? — these are heathen arts, and we but
pygmies at them. What modern mind can conceive and grave so god-like forms as did the chief Athenian sculptors, and the Libyan Licas, and Dinocrates of Macedon, and Scopas, Timotheus, Leochares, and Briaxis; Chares, Lysippus, and the immortal three of Rhodes, that wrought Laocoön from a single block? What prince hath the genius to turn mountains into statues, as was done at Bagistan, and projected at Athos; what town the soul to plant a colossus of brass in the sea, for the tallest ships to sail in and out between his legs? Is it architecture we have invented? Why, here too we are but children. Can we match for pure design the Parthenon, with its clusters of double and single Doric columns? (I do adore the Doric when the scale is large), and, for grandeur and finish, the theatres of Greece and Rome, or the prodigious temples of Egypt, up to whose portals men walked awe-struck through avenues a mile long of sphinxes, each as big as a Venetian palace? And all these prodigies of porphyry cut and polished like crystal, not rough hewn as in our puny structures. Even now their polished columns and pilasters lie o'erthrown and broken, o'ergrown with acanthus and myrtle, but sparkling still, and flouting the slovenly art of modern work-
men. Is it sewers, aqueducts, viaducts? Why, we have lost the art of making a road, — lost it with the world's greatest models under our very eye. Is it sepulchres of the dead? Why, no Christian nation has ever erected a tomb, the sight of which does not set a scholar laughing. Do but think of the Mausoleum, and the Pyramids, and the monstrous sepulchres of the Indus and Ganges, which outside are mountains, and within are mines of precious stones. Ah, you have not seen the East, Jerome, or you could not decry the heathen.'

Jerome observed that these were mere material things. True greatness was in the soul.

'Well, then,' replied Colonna, 'in the world of mind, what have we discovered? Is it geometry? Is it logic? Nay, we are all pupils of Euclid and Aristotle. Is it written characters? — an invention almost divine. We no more invented it than Cadmus did. Is it poetry? Homer hath never been approached by us, nor hath Virgil, nor Horace. Is it tragedy or comedy? Why poets, actors, theatres,— all fell to dust at our touch. Have we succeeded in reviving them? Would you compare our little miserable mysteries and moralities, all frigid personification and dog Latin, with the glories of a Greek play (on the decoration of
which a hundred thousand crowns had been spent) performed inside a marble miracle, the audience a seated city, and the poet a Sophocles?

'What, then, have we invented? Is it monotheism? Why, the learned and philosophical among the Greeks and Romans held it; even their more enlightened poets were monotheists in their sleeves.

"Zeús ēstiv odravós, Zeús te γη Zeús toi pánta,"

saith the Greek, and Lucan echoes him:

"Jupiter est quodcunque vides quocunque moveris."

'Their vulgar were polytheists; and what are ours? We have not invented "invocation of the saints." Our sancti answer to their daemones and divi; and the heathen use to pray their divi, or deified mortals, to intercede with the higher divinity. But the ruder minds among them, incapable of nice distinctions, worshipped those lesser gods they should have but invoked. And so do the mob of Christians in our day, following the heathen vulgar by unbroken tradition. For in holy writ is no polytheism of any sort or kind.

'We have not invented so much as a form, or variety, of polytheism. The pagan vulgar worshipped all sorts of deified mortals, and each had
his favourite to whom he prayed ten times for once to the Omnipotent. Our vulgar worship canonized mortals, and each has his favourite, to whom he prays ten times for once to God. Call you that invention? Invention is confined to the East. Among the ancient vulgar only the mariners were monotheists; they worshipped Venus,—called her "Stella maris," and "Regina cælorum." Among our vulgar only the mariners are monotheists; they worship the Virgin Mary, and call her "the Star of the Sea," and "the Queen of Heaven." Call you theirs a new religion? An old doublet with a new button. Our vulgar make images, and adore them, which is absurd; for adoration is the homage due from a creature to its creator. Now, here man is the creator; so the statues ought to worship him, and would, if they had brains enough to justify a rat in worshipping them. But even this abuse, though childish enough to be modern, is ancient. The pagan vulgar in these parts made their images, then knelt before them, adorned them with flowers, offered incense to them, lighted tapers before them, carried them in procession, and made pilgrimages to them just to the smallest tittle as we their imitators do.'

Jerome here broke in impatiently, and re-
minded him that the images the most revered in Christendom were made by no mortal hand, but had dropped from heaven.

' Ay,' cried Colonna, ' such are the tutelary images of most great Italian towns. I have examined nineteen of them, and made draughts of them. If they came from the sky, our worst sculptors are our angels. But my mind is easy on that score. Ungainly statue or villainous daub fell never yet from heaven to smuggle the bread out of capable workmen's mouths. All this is Pagan, and arose thus. The Trojans had Oriental imaginations, and feigned that their Palladium, a wooden statue three cubits long, fell down from heaven. The Greeks took this fib home among the spoils of Troy, and soon it rained statues on all the Grecian cities, and their Latin apes. And one of these Palladia gave Saint Paul trouble at Ephesus; 't was a statue of Diana that fell down from Jupiter. Credat qui credere possit.'

' What! would you cast your profane doubts on that picture of our blessed Lady, which scarce a century agoine hung lustrous in the air over this very city, and was taken down by the Pope and bestowed in St. Peter's Church?'

' I have no profane doubts on the matter, Je-
The Cloister

rome. This is the story of Numa’s shield, revived by theologians with an itch for fiction, but no talent that way; not being Orientals. The ancile, or sacred shield of Numa, hung lustrous in the air over this very city, till that pious prince took it down and hung it in the temple of Jupiter. Be just; swallow both stories or neither. The Bocca della Verita passes for a statue of the Virgin, and convicted a woman of perjury the other day. It is in reality an image of the goddess Rhea, and the modern figment is one of its ancient traditions; swallow both or neither:

"Qui Bavium non oedit, amet tua carmina, Mævi."

But indeed we owe all our Palladiuncula, and all our speaking, nodding, winking, sweating, bleeding statues to these poor abused heathens. The Athenian statues all sweated before the battle of Chæronea, so did the Roman statues during Tully’s consulship, — namely, the statue of Victory at Capua, of Mars at Rome, and of Apollo outside the gates. The Palladium itself was brought to Italy by Aeneas, and after keeping quiet three centuries, made an observation in Vesta’s Temple, — a trivial one, I fear, since it hath not survived. Juno’s statue at Veii assented with a nod to go to Rome. An-
thony's statue on Mount Alban bled from every vein in its marble, before the fight of Actium. Others cured diseases,—as that of Pelichus, derided by Lucian; for the wiser among the heathen believed in sweating marble, weeping wood, and bleeding brass—as I do. Of all our marks and dents made in stone by soft substances, this saint's knee, and that saint's finger, and t'other's head, the original is heathen. Thus the footprints of Hercules were shown on a rock in Scythia. Castor and Pollux fighting on white horses for Rome against the Latians, left the prints of their hoofs on a rock at Regillum. A temple was built to them on the spot, and the marks were to be seen in Tully's day. You may see near Venice a great stone cut nearly in half by Saint George's sword. This he ne'er had done but for the old Roman who cut the whetstone in two with his razor:—

"Qui Bavium non odit, amet tua carmina, Mævi."

'T Kissing of images, and the Pope's toe, is Eastern Paganism. The Egyptians had it of the Assyrians, the Greeks of the Egyptians, the Romans of the Greeks, and we of the Romans, whose Pontifex Maximus had his toe kissed under the Empire. The Druids kissed their high priest's toe a thousand years B.C. The Mussulmans,
who, like you, profess to abhor Heathenism, kiss the stone of the Caaba,—a Pagan practice. The Priests of Baal kissed their idols so.

'Tully tells us of a fair image of Hercules at Agrigentum whose chin was worn by kissing. The lower parts of the statue we call Peter are Jupiter. The toe is sore worn, but not all by Christian mouths. The heathen vulgar laid their lips there first, for many a year, and ours have but followed them, as monkeys their masters. And that is why, down with the poor heathen! Pereant qui ante nos nostra fecerint.

'Our infant baptism is Persian, with the font, and the signing of the child's brow. Our throwing three handfuls of earth on the coffin, and saying, 'Dust to dust,' is Egyptian.

'Our incense is Oriental, Roman, Pagan; and the early Fathers of the Church regarded it with superstitious horror, and died for refusing to handle it. Our holy water is Pagan, and all its uses. See, here is a Pagan aspersorium. Could you tell it from one of ours? It stood in the same part of their temples, and was used in ordinary worship as ours, and in extraordinary purifications. They called it Aqua lustralis. Their vulgar, like ours, thought drops of it falling on the body would wash out sin; and their men of sense, like ours, smiled or sighed at
such credulity. What saith Ovid of this folly, which hath outlived him?

"Ah! nimium faciles, qui tristia crimina cædis
Flumineâ tolli posse putetis aquâ."

Thou seest the heathen were not all fools. No more are we. Not all.'

Fra Colonna uttered all this with such volubility, that his hearers could not edge in a word of remonstrance; and not being interrupted in praising his favourites, he recovered his good humour, without any diminution of his volubility.

' We celebrate the miraculous Conception of the Virgin on the 2d of February. The old Romans celebrated the miraculous Conception of Juno on the 2d of February. Our feast of All Saints is on the 2d November. The Festum Dei Mortis was on the 2d November. Our Candlemas is also an old Roman feast, — neither the date nor the ceremony altered one tittle. The patrician ladies carried candles about the city that night as our signoras do now. At the gate of San Croce our courtesans keep a feast on the 20th August. Ask them why. The little noodles cannot tell you. On that very spot stood the Temple of Venus. Her building is gone; but her rite remains. Did we discover Purgatory? On the contrary, all we really know about it is
from two treatises of Plato,—the Gorgias and
the Phædo,—and the sixth book of Virgil's
Æneid.'

'I take it from a holier source,—Saint
Gregory,' said Jerome, sternly.

'Like enough,' replied Colonna, dryly. 'But
Saint Gregory was not so nice; he took it from
Virgil. Some souls, saith Gregory, are purged
by fire, others by water, others by air.

'Says Virgil:—

"Aliæ panduntur inanes,
Suspensæ ad ventos, aliis sub gurgite vasto
Infectum eluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni."

But peradventure, you think Pope Gregory I.
lived before Virgil, and Virgil versified him.

'But the doctrine is Eastern, and as much
older than Plato as Plato than Gregory. Our
prayers for the dead came from Asia with Æneas.
Ovid tells, that when he prayed for the soul of
Anchises, the custom was strange in Italy.

"Hunc morem Æneas, pietatis idonius auctor
Attulit in terras, juste Latine, tuas."

The "Biblicæ Sortes," which I have seen
consulted on the altar, are a parody on the
"Sortes Virgilianæ." Our numerous altars in
one church are heathen. The Jews, who are
monotheists, have but one altar in a church;
but the Pagans had many, being polytheists. In the temple of Paphian Venus were a hundred of them. "Centumque Sabæo thure callent ara." Our altars and our hundred lights around Saint Peter's tomb are Pagan. "Centum aras posuit vigilemque sacraverat ignem." We invent nothing, not even numerically. Our very Devil is the god Pan, horns and hoofs and all,—but blackened. For we cannot draw; we can but daub the figures of antiquity with a little sorry paint or soot. Our Moses hath stolen the horns of Ammon; our Wolfgang the hook of Saturn; and Janus bore the keys of heaven before Saint Peter. All our really old Italian bronzes of the Virgin and Child are Venuses and Cupids. So is the wooden statue that stands hard by this house, of Pope Joan and the child she is said to have brought forth there in the middle of a procession. Idiots! are new-born children thirteen years old? And that boy is not a day younger. Cupid! Cupid! Cupid! And since you accuse me of credulity, know that to my mind that Papess is full as mythological, born of froth, and every way unreal, as the goddess who passes for her in the next street, or as the saints you call Saint Baccho and Saint Quirina; or Saint Oracte, which is a dunce-like corruption of Mount Soracte;
or Saint Amphibolus, an English saint, which is a dunce-like corruption of the cloak worn by their Saint Alban; or as the Spanish saint, Saint Viar, which words on his tombstone, written thus: "S. Viar," prove him no saint, but a good old nameless heathen, and praefectus via-rum, or overseer of roads (would he were back to earth, and paganizing of our Christian roads!); or as our Saint Veronica of Benasco, which Veronica is a dunce-like corruption of the ve-rum icon, which this saint brought into the Church. I wish it may not be as unreal as the donor, or as the eleven thousand virgins of Cologne, who were but a couple.'

Clement interrupted him to inquire what he meant. 'I have spoken with those have seen their bones.'

'What! of eleven thousand virgins all collected in one place and at one time? Do but bethink thee, Clement. Not one of the great Eastern cities of antiquity could collect eleven thousand Pagan virgins at one time, far less a puny Western city. Eleven thousand Christian virgins in a little, wee, Paynim city!

"Quodcunque ostendis mihi sic, incredulus odi."

The simple sooth is this. The martyrs were two,—the Breton princess herself, falsely
called British, and her maid Onesimilla, which is a Greek name, Onesima, diminished. This some fool did mispronounce *undecim mille,* — eleven thousand. Loose tongue found credulous ears; and so one fool made many, — eleven thousand of *them,* an you will. And you charge me with credulity, Jerome, and bid me read the lives of the saints? Well, I have read them; and many a dear old Pagan acquaintance I found there. The best fictions in the book are Oriental, and are known to have been current in Persia and Arabia eight hundred years and more before the dates the Church assigns to them as facts. As for the true Western figments, they lack the Oriental plausibility. Think you I am credulous enough to believe that Saint Ida joined a decapitated head to its body; that Cuthbert's carcass directed his bearers where to go, and where to stop; that a city was eaten up of rats to punish one Hatto for comparing the poor to mice; that angels have a little horn in their foreheads, and that this was seen and recorded at the time by Saint Veronica of Benasco, who never existed, and hath left us this information and a miraculous handkercher? For my part, I think the holiest woman the world ere saw must have an existence ere she can have a handkercher, or
an eye to take unicorns for angels. Think you I believe that a brace of lions turned sextons and helped Anthony bury Paul of Thebes; that Patrick, a Scotch saint, stuck a goat's beard on all the descendants of one that offended him; that certain thieves, having stolen the convent ram, and denying it, Saint Pol de Leon bade the ram bear witness, and straight the mutton bleated in the thief's belly? Would you have me give up the skilful figments of antiquity for such old wives' fables as these?

'The ancients lied about animals, too. But then they lied logically; we unreasonably. Do but compare Ephis and his lion, or, better still, Androcles and his lion, with Anthony and his two lions. Both the pagan lions do what lions never did, but at least they act in character. A lion with a bone in his throat, or a thorn in his foot, could not do better than be civil to a man. But Anthony's lions are asses in a lion's skin. What leonine motive could they have in turning sextons? A lion's business is to make corpses, not inter them.' He added, with a sigh, 'Our lies are as inferior to the lies of the ancients as our statues, and for the same reason; we do not study Nature as they did. We are imitatores, servum pecus. Believe you the "Acts of the Saints," that Paul the Theban
was the first hermit, and Anthony the first Cænobite? Why, Pythagoras was an Eremite, and under ground for seven years; and his daughter was an abbess. Monks and hermits were in the East long before Moses, and neither old Greece nor Rome was ever without them. As for Saint Francis and his snowballs, he did but mimic Diogenes, who, naked, embraced statues on which snow had fallen. The folly without the poetry. Ape of an ape,—for Diogenes was but a mimic therein of the Brahmins and Indian gymnosophists. Nathless, the children of this Francis bid fair to pelt us out of the Church with their snowballs.

‘Tell me now, Clement, what habit is lovelier than the vestments of our priests? Well, we owe them all to Numa Pompilius, except the girdle and the stole, which are Judaical. As for the amice and the albe, they retain the very names they bore in Numa’s day. The “pelt” worn by the canons comes from primeval Paganism. It is a relic of those rude times when the sacrificing priest wore the skins of the beasts with the fur outward. Strip off thy black gown, Jerome, thy girdle and cowl, for they come to us all three from the Pagan ladies. Let thy hair grow like Absalom’s, Jerome! for the tonsure is as Pagan as the Muses.’
‘Take care what thou sayest,’ said Jerome, sternly. ‘We know the very year in which the Church did first ordain it.’

‘But not invent it, Jerome. The Brahmins wore it a few thousand years ere that. From them it came through the Assyrians to the priests of Isis in Egypt, and afterward of Serapis at Athens. The late pope (the saints be good to him) once told me the tonsure was forbidden by God to the Levites in the Pentateuch. If so, this was because of the Egyptian priests wearing it. I trust to his holiness. I am no biblical scholar. The Latin of thy namesake Jerome is a barrier I cannot overleap. “Dixit ad me Dominus Deus. Dixi ad Dominum Deum.” No, thank you, holy Jerome; I can stand a good deal, but I cannot stand thy Latin. Nay; give me the New Testament! ’T is not the Greek of Xenophon; but ’t is Greek. And there be heathen sayings in it too; for Saint Paul was not so spiteful against them as thou. When the heathen said a good thing that suited his matter, by Jupiter! he just took it, and mixed it to all eternity with the inspired text.’

‘Come forth, Clement, come forth!’ said Jerome, rising; ‘and thou, profane monk, know that but for the powerful house that up-
holds thee, thy accursed heresy should go no farther, for I would have thee burned at the stake.' And he strode out white with indignation.

Colonna's reception of this threat did credit to him as an enthusiast. He ran and halled joyfully after Jerome. 'And that is Pagan. Burning of men's bodies for the opinions of their souls is a purely Pagan custom,—as Pagan as incense, holy water, a hundred altars in one church, the tonsure, the cardinal's, or flamen's hat, the word 'pope,' the —'

Here Jerome slammed the door.

But ere they could get clear of the house a jalousie was flung open, and the Paynim monk came out head and shoulders, and overhung the street, shouting, —

"Affecti suppliciis Christiani, genus hominum
Novae superstitionis ac maleficæ."

And having delivered this parting blow, he felt a great triumphant joy, and strode exultant to and fro; and not attending with his usual care to the fair way (for his room could only be threaded by little paths wriggling among the antiquities), tripped over the beak of an Egyptian stork, and rolled upon a regiment of Armenian gods, which he found tough in argument though small in stature.
'You will go no more to that heretical monk,' said Jerome to Clement.

Clement sighed. 'Shall we leave him and not try to correct him? Make allowance for heat of discourse! He was nettled. His words are worse than his acts. Oh, 'tis a pure and charitable soul.'

'So are all arch-heretics. Satan does not tempt them like other men. Rather he makes them more moral, to give their teaching weight. Fra Colonna cannot be corrected; his family is all-powerful in Rome. Pray we the saints he blasphemes to enlighten him. 'T will not be the first time they have returned good for evil. Meantime thou art forbidden to consort with him. From this day go alone through the city. Confess and absolve sinners, exorcise demons, comfort the sick, terrify the impenitent, preach wherever men are gathered and occasion serves, and hold no converse with the Fra Colonna.'

Clement bowed his head.

Then the prior, at Jerome's request, had the young friar watched. And one day the spy returned with the news that brother Clement had passed by the Fra Colonna's lodging, and had stopped a little while in the street, and then gone on, but with his hand to his eyes, and slowly.
This report Jerome took to the prior. The prior asked his opinion, and also Anselm's, who was then taking leave of him on his return to Juliers.

Jerome. 'Humph! He obeyed, but with regret,—ay, with childish repining.'

Anselm. 'He shed a natural tear at turning his back on a friend and a benefactor; but he obeyed.'

Now, Anselm was one of your gentle irresistibles. He had at times a mild ascendant even over Jerome.

'Worthy brother Anselm,' said Jerome, 'Clement is weak to the very bone. He will disappoint thee. He will do nothing great, either for the Church or for our holy order. Yet he is an orator, and hath drunken of the spirit of Saint Dominic. Fly him, then, with a string.'

That same day it was announced to Clement that he was to go to England immediately with Brother Jerome.

Clement folded his hands on his breast, and bowed his head in calm submission.