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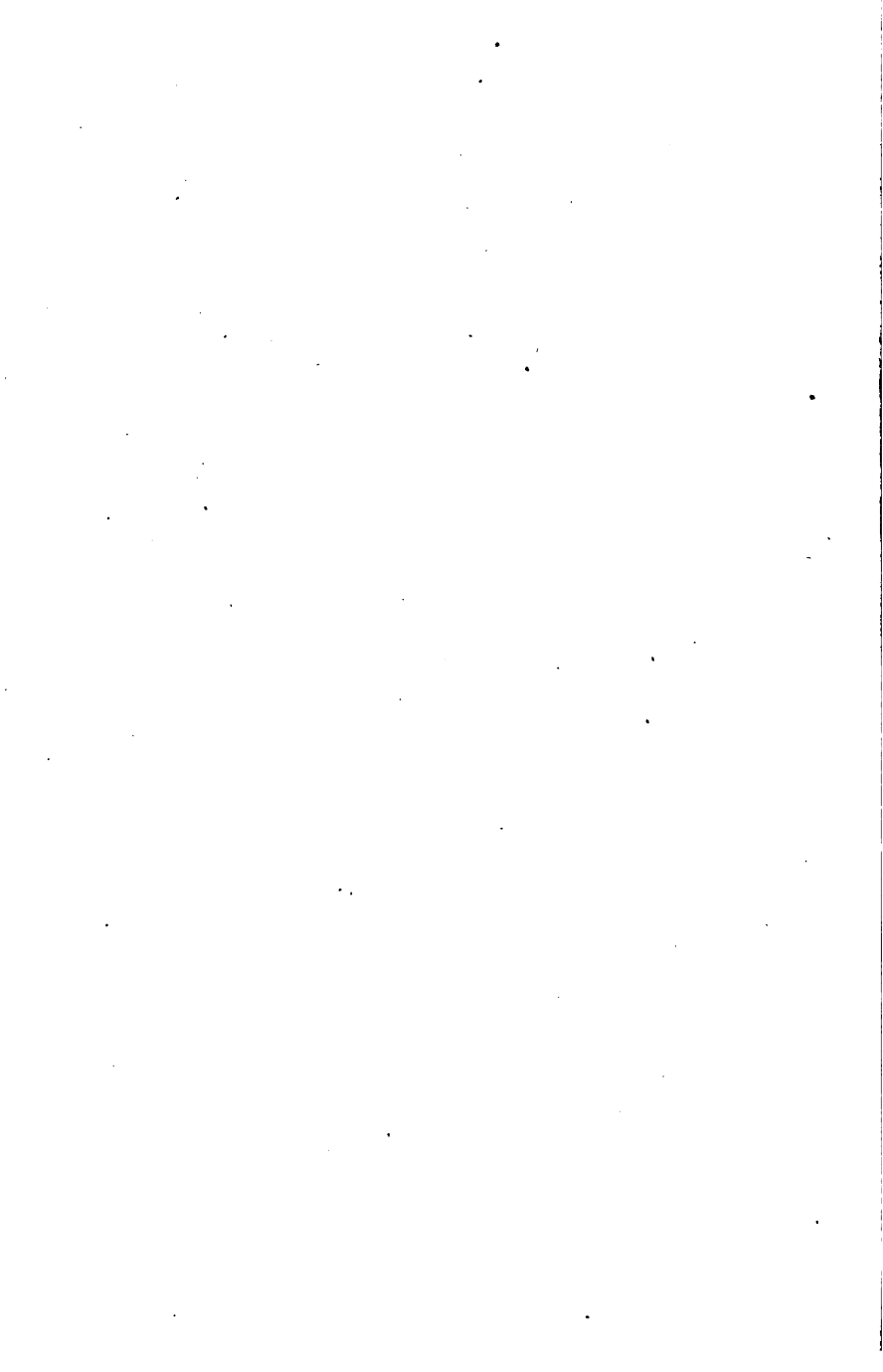
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THE WORKS OF
SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

VOL. III.

THE VIRGIN WIDOW ;

OR, A SICILIAN SUMMER.

ST. CLEMENT'S EVE.

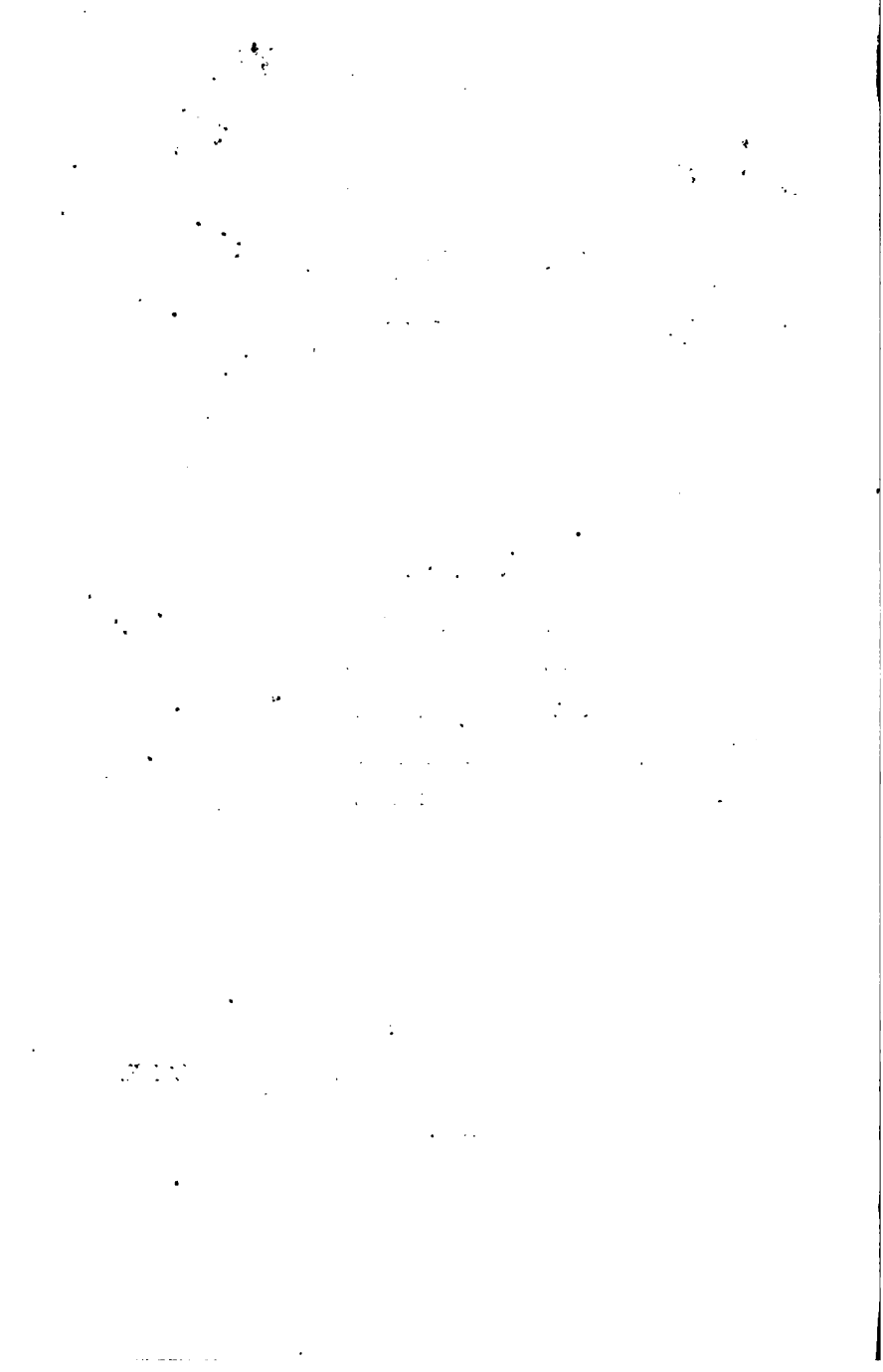
THE EVE OF THE CONQUEST,

AND OTHER POEMS,

LONDON :

C. KEGAN PAUL & CO., 1, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

1878.



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THE VIRGIN WIDOW;

OR,

A SICILIAN SUMMER.



TO
W. C. MACREADY,
TO WHOSE EXCELLENT JUDGMENT
IN MATTERS OF ART
THIS WORK
IS LARGELY INDEBTED,
IT IS
WITH SINCERE RESPECT AND REGARD
VERY GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED.

LADON HOUSE, MORTLAKE,
1st May, 1850.



P R E F A C E.



IN a letter which Mr. Southey wrote many years ago, on a first and very juvenile attempt of mine in dramatic composition, he observed that pure tragedy was what few but the young could bear. I felt the truth of the observation before youth was past ; and though there are other grounds on which I should have preferred the mixed drama—it is so much more various in its spirit, more wide and general in its scope—yet the oppressiveness of pure tragedy would have been sufficient of itself to turn me away from it ere long ; and as life advances, tragedy of any kind, however mixed and attempered, seems to demand more of the hardihood—perhaps, I may say, the hardness—of youth, than it is either likely or desirable that after years should be armed with.

Comedy is doubtless a lower, and, in some measure, a lesser sphere ; for whilst tragedy—that is, the mixed and romantic tragedy—admits all elements, not excepting the comic, comedy does not admit the tragic,—which, indeed, can hardly exist except through a general and predominating

effect. This, however, is the only element which comedy necessarily excludes. The mere comedy of manners and repartee which has been written for the last two centuries, is, no doubt, with all the brilliancy which it has occasionally exhibited, a somewhat narrow representation of human life. But the romantic and poetic comedy which preceded, includes, though not the four seasons, yet the spring, summer, and autumn of nature. It is light and sweet for the most part; but without losing its prevailing character of sweetness and lightness, it can in turn be serious, pathetic, and still more eminently wise. In no works are the pleasantries of wisdom more bright and abundant than in the comedy of the Elizabethan age.

I wish it were possible, not indeed to repeat that comedy, but to renew the spirit which gave birth to it. Fictions are written in these days often with great power and ability; but to me they seem powerful only to give pain. Our writers of fictions would appear to despair of getting an answer from the popular imagination in any other way than by breaking it on the wheel. I well know that in times of rapid movement light pressures are not easily felt. But I venture to believe that, here and there, in the recesses of society, there may still be found persons who, like myself, do not desire to be *harrowed*, and are better pleased to be taken amongst the amenities of fiction, than amongst its glooms and terrors.

LADON HOUSE, MORTLAKE,

1st May, 1850.

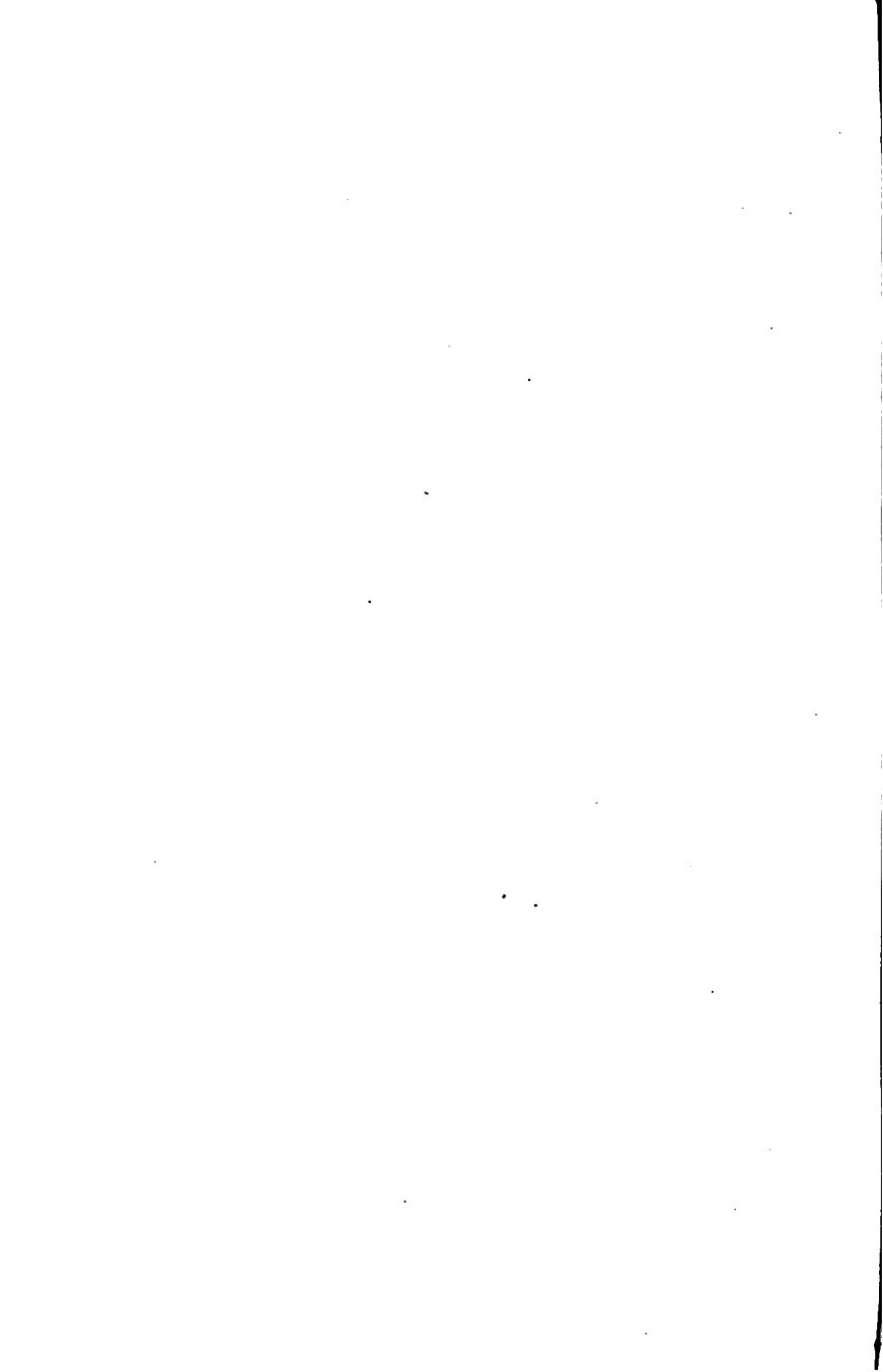
DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

- DON PEDRO, *King of Sicily.*
SILISCO, *Marquis of Malespina.*
RUGGIERO, *Count of Arona.*
UBALDO, *Great Chamberlain.*
UGO, *Count of Arezzo.*
GERBETTO, *the King's Physician.*
TRIBOLO, *the King's Fool.*
CHIEF JUSTICIARY.
SPADONE, *a Sea-Captain. A Boatswain and Mate.*
HAGGAI, SADC, and SHALLUM, *Jews.*
FRA MARTINO, *Chaplain to Count Ugo.*
GIROLAMO, *Steward to Count Ugo.*
OSPORCO, *a Farmer.*
BRUNO and CONRADO, *Attendants on Silisco.*
*A Manager, and divers Players; Provost Marshal, and Marshals-
men, Courtiers, Citizens, &c.*

WOMEN.

- ROSALBA, *Daughter to Ubaldo.*
FIORDELIZA, *her Friend.*
ARETINA, *Mistress to Spadone.*
LISANA, *Daughter to Gerbetto.*
MARIANA, *Servant to Fiordeliza.*
ABBESS *of the Convent of San Paolo.*



THE VIRGIN WIDOW;

OR,

A SICILIAN SUMMER.



ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Quay in front of the Palazzo Malespina at Palermo.*—SPADONE, Boatswain, and Mate.

Spadone. When your Marquis turns merchant, see you the way of it! No sailing orders, and as much gone in demurrage as would buy a cargo.

Boatswain. West-South-West! as I'm a living soul, and as merry a breeze as ever gave a big belly to the fore-topsail! Our chaplain on board the Rombola used to say that there were seven cardinal sins in sea-divinity, and the worst of them was to keep a fair wind waiting.

Spadone. And a cargo too that longs for us. When we reach Rhodes, we shall take such a treasure of jewels and ingots aboard as the good ship never lodged before.

Mate. Gold and jewels is a good cargo; for 'tis they that bring a man fair weather in this world.

Spadone. 'Tis a cargo would buy fair weather for us three for the rest of our lives. But we'll talk of that aboard. Go thou, Antonio, and get me my orders.

Mate. Where shall I find you?

Spadone. In the catacombs. Thou knowest the cavern where we hid those silks we brought from Genoa. Aretina is to meet me there.

Mate. There, then, I will seek thee.

Spadone. But take heed to thy steps ; for the worthy Noah's forefathers that lived in the bowels of the earth were men of crooked ways and their paths are hard to hit. Go aboard, boatswain, and get the water stowed. We shall surely sail to-night.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter GERBETTO and FRA MARTINO.

Gerbetto. I ever found your counsel wise and sure.
One thousand ducats are well nigh mine all ;
The earnings of a life of infinite toil.

Fra Martino. The Marquis should disperse them in a
day
And think the ducats and the day well spent.
And as for means of payment, you should know
The lands of Malespina stand impledged
For what he owes Count Ugo.

Gerbetto. From his birth
I have denied him nothing ; almost loved

The wants that sent him to me, hoping still
That as he grew to ripeness, what was soft
Would harden in him, what was hard would soften ;
For he was of a sweet and liberal nature.
But lending this to lose it, robs my child,
My poor Lisana, of that little store
I gather'd for her dowry.

Fra Martino. For what end ?

Not for his good,—be wiser than to think it.
Give thou to no man, if thou wish him well,
What he may not in honour's interest take :
Else shalt thou but befriend his faults, allied
Against his better with his baser self.

Gerbetto. Look ! who be these ? the Marquis and his
friends.

A banquet waits them at the palace. Ah !
A greeting by the way. He cannot pass,
No not a dog nor cat, but he must speak.
Let us begone, for I were loth to meet him.

SCENE II. *The Palazzo Malespino*—SILISCO, RUGGIERO,
and other Noblemen. BRUNO *and* CONRADO. *A*
Manager and three Players. Singing and Dancing
Girls, and amongst the former ARETINA.

Silisco. Off with these viands and this wine, Conrado ;
Feasting is not festivity : it cloys

The finer spirits. Music is the feast
That lightly fills the soul. My pretty friend,
Touch me that lute of thine, and pour thy voice
Upon the troubled waters of this world.

Aretina. What ditty would you please to hear, my
Lord?

Silisco. Choose you, Ruggiero. See now, if that
knave . . .

Conrado, ho! A hundred times I've bid thee
To give what wine is over to the poor
About the doors.

Conrado. Sir, this is Malvoisie
And Muscadel, a ducat by the flask.

Silisco. Give it them not the less; they'll never
know;

And better it went to enrich a beggar's blood
Than surfeit ours;—Choose you, Ruggiero!

Ruggiero. I!

I have not heard her songs.

Silisco. You sang me once
A song that had a note of either muse,
Not sad, nor gay, but rather both than neither.
What call you it?

Aretina (touching her lute). I think, my Lord, 'twas
this.

Silisco. Yes, yes, 'twas so it ran; sing that, I pray
you.

Aretina (sings).

I'm a bird that's free
Of the land and sea,
I wander whither I will ;
But oft on the wing
I falter and sing
Oh fluttering heart, be still,
Be still,
Oh fluttering heart, be still.

I'm wild as the wind
But soft and kind,
And wander whither I may
The eye-bright sighs
And says with its eyes,
Thou wandering wind, oh stay,
Oh stay,
Thou wandering wind, oh stay.

Silisco. There ! have you heard elsewhere a voice like hers ?

The soul it reaches not is far from Heaven,
Is't not, Ruggiero ?

Ruggiero. To say ay to that
Were for myself to claim a place too near ;
For it not reaches only, but runs through me.

Manager. Now, had she clapp'd her hand upon her heart

In the first verse, which says " Oh fluttering heart " . . .

1st Player. And at " oh stay " had beckoned thus or thus . . .

2nd Player. And with a speaking look

Manager. But no—she could not—
It was not in her.

Silisco. You'll not take the gold?
Wear this then for my sake ; it once adorn'd
The bosom of a Queen of Samarcand
And shall not shame to sit upon this throne.

[*Hangs a jewel round her neck.*]

Aretina. My heart, my Lord, would prize a gift of
yours,
Were it a pebble from the brook.

Silisco. What ho !
Are not the players in attendance ? Ah !
A word or two with you, my worthy friends.

1st Girl. Why, Aretina, 'tis the diamond
Was sold last winter for a hundred crowns.

2nd Girl. A princely man !

3rd Girl. In some things ; but in others
He's liker to a patriarch than a prince.

1st Girl. I think that he takes us for patriarchs,
He's so respectful.

2nd Girl. Tell Spadone that ;
Bid him believe such gifts are given for nothing ;
A diamond for a song !

1st Girl. Well, let it pass ;
We're none of us St. Ursulas ; forsooth
Even I have tripped at times ; and Adrian swears
That on your mouth as many kisses meet
As on St. Peter's toe.

2nd Girl. Speak for yourself,
And let my mouth alone.

Silisco. With all my heart ;
We'll have the scene where Brutus from the bench
Condemns his son to death. 'Twas you, Ruggiero,
Made me to love that scene.

Manager. I think, my Lord,
We pleased you in it.

Ruggiero. Oh you did, you did ;
Yet still with reservations : and might I speak
My untaught mind to you that know your art,
I should beseech you not to stare and gasp
And quiver, that the infection of the sense
May make our flesh to creep ; for as the hand
By tickling of our skin may make us laugh
More than the wit of Plautus, so these tricks
May make us shudder. But true art is this,
To set aside your sorrowful pantomime,
Pass by the senses, leave the flesh at rest,
And working by the witcheries of words
Felt in the fulness of their import, call
Men's spirits from the deep ; that pain may thus
Be glorified, and passion flashing out
Like noiseless lightning in a summer's night,
Show Nature in her bounds from peak to chasm,
Awful, but not terrific.

Manager. True, my Lord :
My very words ; 'tis what I always told them.

Now, Folco, speak thy speech.

Bruno. A word, my Lord ;
The Maddelena's mate is here without,
And craves to see you.

Silisco. Call him in. Your pardon.
[*To the players,*

One moment and we'll hear you.

Ruggiero. 'Tis a speech
That by a language of familiar lowness
Enhances what of more heroic vein
Is next to follow. But one fault it has :
It fits too close to life's realities,
In truth to Nature missing truth to Art ;
For Art commends not counterparts and copies,
But from our life a nobler life would shape,
Bodies celestial from terrestrial raise,
And teach us, not jejune what we are,
But what we may be when the Parian block
Yields to the hand of Phidias.

Enter Mate.

Silisco. Well, what cheer ?

Mate. Spadone sends me, Sir, for sailing orders ;
The wind is fair, and we may lose a day
That's worth a week.

Silisco. Ay, say ye so ? But stop ;
Where may these Jews be found ? You cannot sail

Without their warrants of delivery
Upon the goods at Rhodes.

Bruno. My Lord, the Jews
Have been these three hours in the outer hall
Much kicking of their heels and cursing Meroz.
You would have heard them, but I shut the door
By reason of the smell.

Silisco. Oh, bring them in.

Aretina (to the Mate.) To meet him in the Catacombs?
I will.

Take this, and tell him not you saw me here.

[*Gives him money and exit.*]

Silisco. Poor gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim!
I had forgotten them.

Ruggiero. The day will come
When they will not permit you to forget them.
Your bondsman, Haggai, will be then perchance
Your Lord and Master.

Silisco. When is that to be?
Oh, thank you ; in the reign of Tush and Pish.

Ruggiero. Farewell. I would not willingly look on
Whilst knavery prospers. Knavery, did I say?
Haggai and Sadoc, if I rightly read
The docket Nature scribbles on their skulls,
Are not more knaves than ruffians. Bear in mind
The Zita is in sight, which brings my friends
From Procida. You promised we should meet
At vespers, on the shore, to see her in.

[*Exit.*]

Silisco. Farewell. And you, my friends. I thank you all.

If business will not wait upon my leisure,
Still less shall you. To all a kind farewell.

[*Exeunt all but SILISCO and the Mate, BRUNO,
and CONRADO.*

Enter HAGGAI, SADC, and SHALLUM.

Silisco. God save you, Jews ; have you brought me those writings ?

Haggai. Your worship shall behold them : here they be. Two skins.

Silisco. "To the rich and worshipful Nimshi, our brother at Rhodes, these :"—This is the order for the treasure. Take it, Mate, and begone ; and by sunset let the good ship Maddelena look small in the offing, like a lobster with its legs up.

[*Exit Mate.*

What next? the charter-party. Fifty ducats per diem—crew to be found in all things needful,—was it so?—Freightage—demurrage—brokerage—— Brokerage ! Why Haggai, the ship being thine own and the bargain struck betwixt thee and me, whence is the brokerage? I saw no broker.

Haggai. Your worship shall understand. In taking of a ship on freight, there ever comes betwixt him that owns her and him that takes her, that useful and that

profitable man, a broker. 'Tis the law and the usage. Is it not, Sadoc? Is it not, Shallum?

Sadoc. The law and the usage.

Shallum. Justly the law and usage.

Silisco. But is that useful, profitable man invisible? for I saw him not; I dealt not with him.

Haggai. Your worship shall understand. Lo! the times are evil, and hardly shall your servant live if he sweat not in two callings. Truly I own a ship, and in the way of an honest industry I do likewise follow the occupation of a broker.

Silisco. Oh! I see. Thou wert thyself that profitable man.

Haggai. At half the charge that it should have cost you else. Was it not, Sadoc?

Sadoc. Yea, and that half halved.

Haggai. Was it not, Shallum?

Shallum. Truly, Sir, for a reasonable broker, there is none other that I can commend you to but only the worthy Haggai.

Silisco. To make a bargain 'twixt himself and me. What is the other? Oh! the mortgage. Stop.

Haggai. His worship calls.

Sadoc. Ho! pen and ink.

Shallum. Lo, here!

Silisco. If I understand this writing, it pledges, not Villa Guastata only, but my other effects whatsoever.

Haggai. Villa Guastata! Woe is me! I travelled and

gat me to the spot. Woe ! Woe ! Woe ! a desolation and a hissing !

Silisco. Nay, nay, Haggai ; the property is sufficient for the charge. But as I have a purpose of payment, I care not what effects thou makest answerable.

[*Signs the deed.*

There—have we made an end ?

Haggai. Of this present business. But there be certain lands at Punto Vecchio that bring your worship but little profit at present. . . .

Silisco. My worthy masters ! Lo ! the times are evil ! Surely your servant in more ways than one Must use his diligence ; and having spent The past hour greatly to my profit here The next I purpose spending in the woods Amongst the nightingales. God speed you, Sirs.

SCENE III.—*The Catacombs under the Western Suburb of Palermo.*—*ARETINA alone.*

Aretina. He loves my singing, but he loves not me. How should he ? knowing me so vilely link'd With this Spadone. To have fallen was sad, But for the love of such a knave as this To fall, was falling doubly ;—not as Eve Lured by the fruit, but by the Serpent's self.

Yet is the Serpent not so very wise,
To think that, having fallen, I am his
For ever, and must evermore misdeem
His venom to be nectar. No, could I pierce
The plot that now he hatches—sure I am
There's perfidy design'd—the last were this
That I should see of these detested caves,
Or of this wretch and his barbarities.

Enter SPADONE.

Spadone. According to thy wont—blear-eyed, I see.
What has sprung the leak now?

Aretina. Were I to tell you I should find no pity; so
I may keep my counsel.

Spadone. Pity! As great a pity to see a woman weep
as to see a goose go barefoot. 'Tis their nature. But,
hark you, my girl; if gold can make you merry, you
shall not maunder long. When I come back from
Rhodes

Aretina. Yes. Shall you bring much gold with you?

Spadone. Treasure upon treasure! heap upon heap!
Here, in this very cave, you shall see it; and what
is more, you shall have it in your keeping. For when
I shall have seen it safe with you, it will be needful I
should make away for Calabria and whistle off a month
or two till I shall see how things be taken.

Aretina. But whence will this treasure come?

Spadone. When the Maddelena shall be seen in the offing, hie thee hither. Wait not till she comes into port, for that may chance to be a tedious time; and if they should tell you that we have gone to the bottom, heed not that; for you shall find me here notwithstanding.

Aretina. But tell me, whence is the treasure?

Spadone. For the gold, it comes out of the bowels of the earth. The diamonds were digged up in the further Ind. Touching the pearls, thou shalt ask of an oyster; and in respect of the jewels, a toad could tell thee somewhat. Hark! I hear the Mate bellowing for me through the caverns like a calf that has lost its dam. Fare you well!

Aretina. Here then we meet when you return. Farewell.

[*Exit SPADONE.*

And for the gold you boast of, whence it comes
 You know not better than I know myself.
 It is Silisco's gold. Whither it goes,
 You know not better—nor so well. In trust
 For him I'll take it. Falsehood to the false
 Is woman's truth, and fair fidelity.

SCENE IV.—*The Sea-shore near Palermo.*—SILISCO and
 RUGGIERO.

Silisco. With what a saucy, blithe, and buxom grace
 She breasts the blushing waters. Fare thee well,

Thou good ship Maddelena. Welcome home,
Thou good ship Zita.

Ruggiero. But the wind that speeds
That outward-bound, baffles this homeward bark ;
She cannot cross the bar ; and what is that ?
Look there—a boat is pushing from her side
To bring her charge ashore.

Silisco. The richest freight
That ever Procida produced, they say,
This Countess is—heiress to-all the wealth
Of old Ubaldo. Is she fair beside ?

Ruggiero. Indeed she is.

Silisco. As fair as she that comes
In her fair company ?

Ruggiero. As Fiordeliza ?
In my allegiance, I must answer, No ;
Yet each is in her kind supremely fair.

Silisco. Thou painter, poet, moralist, what not ?
Show me their pictures—say them, sing them, paint
them.

Ruggiero. Painting is perilous when the proof is
near ;
Yet take, to pass the time, some rude attempt.

Silisco. First for the island Countess.

Ruggiero. First for her :
In the rich fulness of a rounded grace,
Noble of stature, with an inward life
Of secret joy sedate, Rosalba stands,

As seeing and not knowing she is seen,
 Like a majestic child, without a want.
 She speaks not often, but her presence speaks,
 And is itself an eloquence, which withdrawn,
 It seems as though some strain of music ceased
 That fill'd till then the palpitating air
 With soft pulsations; when she speaks indeed,
 'Tis like some one voice eminent in the choir,
 Heard from the midst of many sweetly clear,
 With thrilling singleness, yet just accord.
 So heard, so seen, she moves upon the earth
 Unknowing that the joy she ministers
 Is aught but Nature's sunshine.

Silisco.

Call you this

The picture of a woman or a Saint?
 When Cimabue next shall figure forth
 The hierarchies of heaven, we'll give him this
 To copy from. But said you, then, the other
 Was fairer still than this?

Ruggiero.

I may have said it;

I should have said she's fairer in my sight.
 Yet must mine eyes be something worse than blind
 And see the thing that is not, if the hand
 Of Nature was not lavish of delights
 When she was fashion'd. But it were not well
 To blazon her too much; for mounted thus
 In your esteem, she might not hold her place,
 But fall the farther for the fancied rise.

For she has faults, Silisco, she has faults ;
And when you see them you may think them worse
Than I, who know, or think I know, their scope.
She gives her moods the mastery, and flush'd
With quickenings of a wild and wayward wit,
Flits like a firefly in a tangled wood,
Restless, capricious, careless, hard to catch,
Though beautiful to look at.

Silisco.

By my faith

She's a wild growth, to judge her by her fruits,
For she torments you vilely. Prudent friend,
Rosalba being what you say, why fix
Your heart on Fiordeliza?

Ruggiero.

Wherefore? why?

When hearts are told by number, weight, and
measure,

I'll render you a reason for my love ;
Till then, I say it was my luck to love her ;
Ill luck or good, I know not yet. For you,
I would it were your luck to love Rosalba,
So you might wed her ; but the rumour is
That she is brought from Procida to be given
To old Count Ugo.

Silisco.

Good old man, he's welcome ;

A simpler-hearted creature never lived
To put on spectacles and see the world
Grow wise and honest, and I wish him joy.
And I will take example by him too

And marry when I'm seventy ; and till then
I'll live as heretofore and take delight
In God's creation revell'd in at large
And not this work or that.

Ruggiero. So do ; 'tis best
So long as it suffices. See how fast
The light skiff shoots along ; a few pulls more
Shall bring them in.

Silisco. Now show me which . . . oh ! she
In the red scarf is Fiordeliza.

Ruggiero. Yes ;
They know me now and kiss their hands. At first
You'll think Rosalba fairer.

Silisco. By my faith
If what I there behold be flesh and blood
Nature can fashion counterfeits of Saints
More cunningly than you ; in Nature's right
My hasty commendation I recall
And say your picture was as cold as clay
And colour'd from the vapours of the north.

Ruggiero. Easy your oars, good coxswain ! way
enough !
A thousand welcomes ! Ladies, if the hearts
That leap to meet you. . . .

Silisco. Make you footing sure ;
Jump out my lads and steady her . . . there . . . so.

*Enter, landing from the boat, UBALDO, ROSALBA, and
FIORDELIZA, with sailors and attendants.*

Ruggiero. Oh my good Lord, the King has miss'd
you much.

Ubaldo. Has he, Sir, truly? well, he's kind; but
we

That will have children, are enforced at times,
Losing the courtier's in the father's office,
To dance attendance on a chit like this.
Bring the goods after. To the palace; come.

Fiordeliza. Kind ocean, fare thee well! I would that
earth

Demean'd herself no worse. I'll stamp upon her.

Ruggiero. What is your quarrel, Lady, with the earth,
Are not her titles equal to the ocean's?

Fiordeliza. The earth breeds men, Sir, but the ocean
fish.

Ubaldo. Rosalba, are you lost? Come on, come on.
I crave your pardon, Sir, I should have known you;
My Lord of Malespina, if I err not;
In health, I hope, Sir? Ah, Sir! youth and strength—
We prize them when they're gone; we prize them then.

Silisco. I thank you, Sir, I thank you; I am well;
I wish you a good voyage.

Ubaldo. God be praised,
Our voyage, which was very good, is done.

This way, child ; are you dreaming ? Sir, sometimes
 When duty calls you to the palace, think
 Of the old Chamberlain ; in sooth, my Lord,
 We shall most gladly greet you. Fare you well.

[*Exeunt all but SILISCO.*

Silisco. I answer'd like an idiot. So I felt ;
 Doubtless so look'd. Can I not lose my heart
 But I must lose my understanding too ?
 Count Ugo ! He's a gallant light and gay
 To what I seem'd—a very dullard I,
 If not a dotard. Can a man so change
 In less than fifty years, and be himself
 And yet withal belie the self he was
 An hour—a minute, I might say—before ?
 But we shall meet again—perhaps to-morrow—
 And I'll shake off the stupor of to-day
 And be my better self. To-morrow ! yes—
 I am not in my nature what I seem'd—
 That all Palermo's tongues will testify—
 And there is that within me springing now
 Shall testify it better. Hope and Joy,
 My younger sisters, you have never yet
 Been parted from my side beyond the breadth
 Of a slim sunbeam, and you never shall ;
 Already it is loosen'd, it is gone,—
 The cloud, the mist ; across the vale of life
 The rainbow rears its soft triumphal arch
 And every roving path and brake and bower

Is bathed in colour'd light. Come what come may
I know this world is richer than I thought
By something left to it from paradise ;
I know this world is brighter than I thought,
Having a window into heaven. Henceforth
Life has for me a purpose and a drift.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Avenue in the Gardens of the Palazzo Malespina. In the back scene tents are spread for a fête champêtre.*—CONRADO and BRUNO.

Conrado. And all for her ! Well, she's a gracious lady ;

But there's a measure, master Bruno.

Bruno.

Yea,

She's a sweet lady, but she's costly, Sir.

The tournament, the banquet, and the masque

Shall reach a thousand ducats—in one day—

Gone in one day ! the lands of Malespina

Are broad and fat ; but all things have an end.

Conrado. A thousand ducats !

Bruno.

Ere yon sun be set.

Conrado. And shall he win her when his all is spent ?

True, she is heiress to Count Procida

And rich enough to marry one that's poor ;

But wealth will after kind,—it will, it will.

Attendance ! here's the King !

Bruno.

Fall back a space

And make a sign to yonder gilded troop

To sound their cornets.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter THE KING, SILISCO, *and* RUGGIERO.

The King. I grudge you not your victory in the tilting ;
for there were eyes fell with my fall which I think better
of than of any that blazed at your triumph. Who was
she that cried out so piteously ?

Silisco. Sir, 'twas the little Lisana, daughter of your
Majesty's Physician, Gerbetto. Ruggiero can tell you
more of her than I. He frequents her for her singing.

The King. A good musician is she ?

Enter UBALDO, ROSALBA, *and* FIOREDELIZA.

Ruggiero. Sir, she's young,
Yet I have heard some adepts in her art
Who pleased me less ; for she is true, yet free,
Abandon'd to her strain, and hath a voice
That whoso' hears feels for the time no touch
Of pain or weariness or troubled thought
But following in the train of melody
To that seductive sequence of sweet sounds
Tunes his attentive mind. 'Tis wonderful
What power upon the passionate soul of man
Resides in that low voice.

The King. Well praised at least.

Silisco. Welcome, fair guests, again. Pass on, I pray ;
The dance awaits you.

The King. Presently we'll follow.

Fiordeliza. Well praised indeed ! Indeed I wish her joy.

[*Excunt ROSALBA and FIORELIZA.*

The King. Ruggiero, if this doctor's daughter sings so well, methinks our evening's entertainment should not be the worse for her ; I pray you bring her hither.

[*Exit RUGGIERO.*

My Lord of Malespina, attend your guests. We stay for a word with the Chamberlain, trusting thereby to do you some service.

[*Exit SILISCO.*

Ubaldo. This Marquis, my Lord, hath gifts by nature that might be fruitful in your Majesty's service, were he well guided ; but as he carries himself, he is but to your court like the streamer over yonder pavilion,—the ornament of a holiday and the plaything of the winds ; and were not the intent of this day's doings to minister to your Majesty's amusement, I could call them most idle.

The King. They are not for my amusement, I think, but in honour of another ; and she, I hope, will regard them with more favour. My Lord, this month and more, and indeed since first your daughter came to court, it has been in my heart to speak with you on her behalf. She is, in my poor apprehension, a sweet, gentle, and of her years, truly a comely and majestic lady.

Ubaldo. Your Majesty is kind ; and to speak of her

truly, the child is of a goodly presence and demeanour, and hath a freshness and sweet savour that I know not if her father could boast these fifty years.

The King. Surely; and looking on her comeliness and youth, shall it not touch us with some careful thoughts as to the bestowing of her in marriage. I think, Sir, with so much beauty there were no little danger in the mismatching of her.

Ubaldo. Most justly noted. Your Majesty hath the like discretion in affairs familiar as at the Council Board. Yet a blind instinct had supplied me, and I had already taken thought for the girl. I think your Majesty knows whom I have provided and that you could wish it no other.

The King. Indeed, Sir, but I do. Count Ugo is a nobleman of surpassing worth and wealth; but his time of life borders on threescore and ten and the years that he has left for her should be but labour and sorrow. Besides, the damsel being of so great virtue and discretion, the inclination of her own fancies and affections should methinks be somewhat regarded.

Ubaldo. Your Majesty's admonition is most wise; but you shall pardon me for averring that I have needed it not. To carry the damsel's inclinations with me has ever been my care, and from her cradle I have bid her beware of those green gallants and those hot bloods which take a maid to wife as parcel of their revels and lay her by like the napkin that hath wiped their beards. I bade her

to know that a constancy of kindness should be found in those of riper years, and she, being of a wise and prudent spirit, hath ever assented and applied herself to the affecting of old men.

The King. Hath she indeed? But either my observation is at fault or her assent extends not to Count Ugo.

Ubaldo. The watchfulness of a parent, my Lord, is more than discernment ; else should I not presume to say you err.

The King. What ! mean you that she is herself wishful to marry Count Ugo ?

Ubaldo. She is, my Lord ; Count Ugo is her choice, Her absolute and unalterable choice ; I could not turn her from him if I would.

The King. Now truly this is strange ! You ought to know ;
And yet I could have sworn her looks of love
Were bent upon another—on Silisco.

Ubaldo. Impossible ! I warn'd her from the first
That marry whom she might she could not him.
His wealth was wondrous once ; but wondrous waste
Has scatter'd it to every wind that blows ;
His lands at Malespina are imploded
For more than they are worth—a monstrous sum—
To good Count Ugo ; what he hath besides
This Jew or that lays claim to.

The King.

There's a ship

Expected now from Rhodes, that, as I learn,
Brings treasure to Silisco of such price
As amply shall redeem his lands and him.

Ubaldo. My Lord, a large remainder of his wealth,
'Tis true, is coming swiftly o'er the sea
To gild a summer's day and disappear.
Lo ! what he squanders ev'n on this day's feast !
I crave your pardon, knowing him your friend,
My gracious Lord ; but were it not a sin
To force my child aboard this leaky craft
With every stitch of canvas madly set
To court the storm ?

The King. To force the lady's choice
Were any way a sin ; but should she yield
(As, if I miss not of my aim, she will)
A free consent, I answer for my friend
That he shall leak no longer, but repair,
With such small aid as may be mine to give,
The vessel of his fortunes ; which perform'd,
I trust a match so seemly, of a man
Whom doting Nature constituted heir
Of all she had, and accident upraised
To eminence of station, with a maid
As nobly born, and in her kind and sex
As excellently gifted, should command
Your kind approval.

Ubaldo. Sire, the maiden's choice
Is fix'd on Ugo and my faith is pledged ;

But should Silisco liberate his lands
 And settle them in trust, and should the Count
 Release me, and the child be wrought upon
 To change her purpose, then

The King. I think, my friend,
 All these conditions you shall find fulfill'd
 Ere many days. Well, shall we see the dance ?

[*Exeunt.*

Enter ROSALBA and FIORDELIZA.

Fiordeliza. Let me alone, I say ; I will not dance.

Rosalba. Not if Ruggiero ask you ?

Fiordeliza. He indeed !

If the Colossus came from Rhodes and ask'd me
 Perhaps I might.

Rosalba. Come, Fiordeliza, come ;
 I think, if truth were spoken 'tis not much
 You have against that knight.

Fiordeliza. Not much you think ;
 Well, be it much or little, 'tis enough ;
 He has his faults.

Rosalba. Recount me them ; what are they ?

Fiordeliza. I'll pick you out a few : my wallet : first,
 He's grave ; his coming puts a jest to flight
 As winter does the swallow.

Rosalba. Something else ;
 For this may be a merit : jests are oft

Or birds of prey or birds of kind unclean.

Fiordeliza. He's rude ; he's stirring ever with his staff
A growling great she-bear that he calls Truth.

Rosalba. The rudeness is no virtue ; but for love
Of that she-bear, a vice that's worse might pass.
Again ?

Fiordeliza. He's slow,—slow as a tortoise,—once
He was run over by a funeral.

Rosalba. He may have failings, but if these be all
I would that others were as innocent.

Fiordeliza. Oh, others ! Say then who ?

Rosalba. Nay, others,—all ;
I wish that all mankind were innocent.

Fiordeliza. You are a dear well-wisher of mankind
And in a special charity you wish well
To that good knight Silisco. What ! do you blush ?

Rosalba. No ; though you fain would make me.

Fiordeliza. No ! What's this,
That with an invisible brush doth paint thee red ?
Well, I too can be charitable and wish
Silisco were less wicked.

Rosalba. Is he wicked ?

Fiordeliza. Is waste not wickedness ? and know you
not
The lands of Malespina day by day
Diminish in his hands ?

Rosalba. True, waste is sin.
My mother (and no carking cares had she

Nor loved the world too much nor the world's goods)
 In many a vigil of her last sick bed
 Bade me beware of spendthrifts, as of men
 That seeming in their youth not worse than light,
 Would end not so, but with the season change ;
 For time, she said, which makes the serious soft,
 Turns lightness into hardness.

Fiordeliza. Said she so ?

But I am light myself.

Rosalba. Adversity

Will sometimes soften what should else be hard :
 It may please Providence to visit you
 With some disaster for your good.

Fiordeliza. Oh me !

Pray not for that ! I will be good and grave
 And soft without a bruise.

Rosalba. Sing a soft song ;

If you are ever soft 'tis when you sing.

Fiordeliza. I will. You mean by that, a song of love.

(*Sings.*)

Love slept upon the lone hill-side
 And dream'd of pleasant days
 When he with flowers should deck his bride
 And she deck him with bays.

He rose like daybreak, flush'd with joy,
 And went his way to court ;
 But there they took him for a toy
 And turn'd him into sport.

He hung his head, his dreams had fled,—
 Not here, not here, he cried,
 But I shall find her in my bed
 Upon the lone hill-side.

Enter SILISCO.

Silisco. My guests, I think,
 Are tired of dancing, and the players wait.
 What play shall they present ?

Fiordeliza. A dolorous play ;
 A play to weep at.

Silisco. Do you love to weep
 Or in defiance choose a tragedy ?

Fiordeliza. No, Sir, I choose it but to give me rest
 From laughing ; I'm as lazy as the dog
 That lean'd his head against a wall to bark,
 And there are such a sort of men about me
 As take away my breath. Lo ! there again !

[RUGGIERO *crosses the back scene, leading LISANA.*

What comedy can show me aught like that ?
 There is a man whose aspect, you would swear,
 Proclaim'd Queen Nature's warrant and commission
 To preach repentance to a sinful world
 And frighten it,—upon whose brow you read
 Pleasure's "hic jacet ;" yet behold his life,
 His occupation ! Never seen abroad
 But in his hand some rosy Magdalen
 That looks as hastening to repeat the sin

She bloomingly repents. Oh, that is rare
And I must see it to an end. Farewell !

[*Exit.*

Rosalba. Stay, Fiordeliza. Nay, then, I must follow.

Silisco. Not yet,—not yet ; from what you said in the
dance

I gather that the Court's calumnious tongues
Are busy with my name ; my life, I know,
Has heretofore been led in such a sort
As makes the wise to wonder ; let them gape
As wide as wisdom may ; I know besides
They charge me with more frailties than I own,
And having of my genuine stock enough
I would not you should therein err with them ;
My life has been, though volatile, not gross,
For God bestow'd upon me at my birth
A heart that fill'd the measure of its joys
From its own fountains, craving nought beside.
So heretofore it was ; and since that eve
When, as you landed in the dimpled bay
From Procida, I help'd you from the boat
And touch'd your hand and as the shallop rock'd
Embolden'd by your fears I pardon me,
I should not make you to remember more,—
But since that moment when the frolicsome waves
Toss'd you towards me,—blessings on their sport !
I have not felt one kindling of a thought,
One working of a wish but you were in it ;

The living waters from the well of love,
 The hope that, bubbling from my breast, shall feed
 The roots of stately trees and odorous flowers
 And make my soul prolific,—give me that,
 And you shall know me for a miser.

Rosalba.

Oh !

Be careful of what love you venture for ;
 For in so much as love is better worth
 So prudence is more prizeable in love.
My hand, you know, is promised.

Silisco.

Not by you.

Rosalba. To my loved mother, on the day she died,
 I gave a promise solemn as a vow,
 That I in all things would obey my father,
 And specially in the choice of whom to wed.
 You know my father's choice.

Silisco.

It cannot be ;

He shall not link you to a living death ;
 The world, which is his idol, would revolt
 From such an immolation ; good men would blush
 And wicked men deride and all cry shame
 On the hard father and preposterous spouse.

Rosalba. My Lord of Malespina, I am young
 And know not how to answer words like these ;
 But they offend me. I have heard it said
 No spendthrift ever yet was generous ;
 I hope it is not true ; but bear in mind
 That my good father has a father's rights

And I a daughter's duties ; think besides
Count Ugo has not injured you—nay more,
'Tis said that through a long and innocent life
He never injured any. For myself,
Although a coffin were my nuptial bed
The promise to my sainted mother made
Should not be unfulfill'd.

Silisco.

I stand reproved :

Pardon my ill behaviour : I am rude,
Unjust, ungenerous, by passion, Lady,
By nature not. One boon alone I beg.
I look not on you as on one betroth'd.
The King befriends me, and Count Ugo's will
Devoutly loyal answers to the King's
In all things. At a word he yields you up.
Your father is of sterner metal made :
But though I rival not the Count in wealth
Not many rival me, and thus the King
Will want not power with him too to prevail.
I therefore hold you as absolved and free.
Now were you truly in your own sight so,
And should I ask you then,—not for your love,
But for your leave to love you, what reply
Should greet me ?

Rosalba.

Counting on my father's change

You are, I fear, too sanguine.

Silisco.

Do you fear ?

That is a fear at which a thousand hopes

Enter BRUNO.

Bruno. My Lord,
I pray you pardon me ; the Chamberlain
Calls for his daughter to attend him home,
As now the dews are falling.

Rosalba. Say I come.
I hope not with a fearless hope like yours ;
But yet believe me, Sir, the hope I have
If wreck'd would bring a ruin on my heart
It hardly could sustain. I say too much :
And yet it seems too little. Fare you well.

Silisco. Look ! where in yonder heaven near the moon
Glitters the star they call the star of love.
A Spirit has his dwelling in that star
Whence emanating he on earth alights
Sometimes, but only in earth's happiest hours,
And ranging then earth's happiest regions through
He seeks, and, bee-like, rifles of their sweets
The bosoms that are fullest of true love
And so with rapture satiate reascends :
That Spirit to that star did never take
Of truer love an ampler treasure home
Than you, if you should seek, would find in me.
Farewell, beloved Rosalba.

Rosalba. Fare you well.
Judge of me gently ; love me if you may.

[*Exit.*

Bruno (*who had retired to the back scene, and now advances*). That the dew was falling was God's truth ; that the lady was sent for was man's invention.

Silisco. How so ? If it was thy invention, thy gift that way was never more unseasonably exercised.

Bruno. Hear me ere you pronounce. I had that to speak which I think you would not that she should hear. The Maddelena hath been seen and is seen no more. Some say she was seen to sink.

Silisco. Thou say'st not so ? Then I sink too. But it cannot be. There has been neither storm nor mist nor aught that could bring her to danger.

Bruno. She was clearly seen, and now she is lost to sight ; so much is certain.

Silisco. Why 'tis the sun has sunk and not the ship ;
Broad daylight show'd what twilight cannot. Go ;
Entreat my guests to pardon me awhile ;
The most are gone ; I'll to the beach and see.

[*Exit*.

Bruno. There is a certain scum of them left which I shall know how to scatter. Had it not been for such locusts and caterpillars as these, the lands of Malespina had not now been coming by sea from Rhodes.

[*Exit*.

Enter HAGGAI and SADOC meeting.

Haggai. Hast thou found him ?

Sadoc. My Lord of Malespina ? No.

Haggai. They told me we should find him here. In two hours more the good ship shall be at the quay. Where is Shallum?

Sadoc. He is on the watch-tower of the west gate, looking out upon the sea. No, he comes hither.

Haggai. Yea, this is he,—but his hands are tossed up and his garment is rent; has aught happened to the ship?

Enter SHALLUM.

Shallum. Come ye to the beach;—the ship and the treasure, my soul is troubled for the ship and treasure.

Haggai. Nay, she is coming into port.

Shallum. I beheld her from the watch-tower at eleven of the clock and until six; but then she staggered and ducked like a lame bird, and in a few moments she vanished and was no more seen; so as my bowels yearn for her lest that she be lost, and the jewels and the ingots and the much treasures. But come ye to the beach.

Haggai. Woe is me! my brother Shallum, I will come with thee to the beach. But go thou, Sadoc, and sue out writs against my Lord of Malespina. By Aaron's rod his body shall be bail.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter the Manager and the Three Players.

1st Player. What's ordered for to-night?

Manager. Nothing's ordered; everything's forgotten;

the great actors are playing their parts at court and we who are the small must shift for ourselves ; yet they'll expect a play when the night comes, and it behoves us to choose what it shall be. What say ye, one and all ?

2nd Player. Tell them over, as many as we are primed with.

Manager. First, here is "Sorrow's Sum Total !"

1st Player. Ah ! that is a sweet play ; it was written by a gentleman that was very loving and melancholy and knew nothing but to sit by himself all day long weeping and making verses. But the play is too mournful for the Marquis : we'll not play that.

Manager. Here is "Up with your Hearts, and Down with the Dumps."

1st Player. The author of that was a great philosopher and wrote an excellent treatise on politics, besides sundry tales, chazas, ballads, and chansons. The Count of Arona was greatly pleased with him and said that his systems had the charm of novelty and his jests the sanction of long usage.

3rd Player. I remember him well ; he tossed his heart a thought too high, and it was killed by the fall ; he died of drinking, poor gentleman ; and therefore we will not act his play, inasmuch as, being dead, he will not make us the customary compliment.

Manager. Here is "Time's Tympany."

1st Player. 'Tis too big.

Manager. "Cupid's Wet Nurse?"

1st Player. 'Tis pretty, but not passionate.

Manager. "Love's Outgoings?"

1st Player. No.

Manager. "Lust's Leavings?"

1st Player. The story has a good moral, but sleeps in it as in a feather-bed.

Manager. Then there is but one more,—“Woman half pleased, and Satan satisfied.”

1st Player. 'Tis easy choosing when nothing's left. That shall suffice for fault of a better. It has matter in it and an outgrowth and consequence in the story.

Manager. And for the casting. . . .

Enter BRUNO.

Bruno. Away, you knaves and minions, get ye gone!
You've eaten all, you saints of belly worship!
You gilded, painted, mimicries of men,
You butterflies by night and bats by day!
Hence with your belly-gods!

Manager. How now! how now!

Bruno. How now? Dost dare to say “how now” to me!

Thou urchin-snouted, trencher-pated rogue!
Where are thy manners and thy moderation
To say “how now” to me? My noble Lord
Is lost, undone!

1st Player. My Lord of Malespina?

Bruno. Yes he, thou trivial tripper up of virtue,
Thou seven-times whipp'd and ne'er corrected rogue,
Thou inadvertency of Nature, he.

No need for peering at me o'er thy paunch ;
I tell thee he is beggar'd and undone ;
The Maddelena with the rich remains
Of all he had, is in the offing wreck'd.

2nd Player. We have not done it, Sir ; revile not us.

Bruno. Away, you rotten-hearted, rancid knaves !
It was a wind that smelling you in the port
Made violent recoil. Hence, hogs, begone !
Play me no plays ; your trough is empty ; scud.

SCENE II.—*The Sea-shore.*—MATE and BOATSWAIN of the
Maddelena.

Mate. Bah ! we did but what three rats would have done if it had pleased Providence. With what we got we may have absolutions for the scuttling of twenty such ships,—or of forty if the owners be Jews. Spadone makes small haste to return ; surely he has had time ten times told to hide the booty.

Boatswain. Hearest thou ? The watch is cried at the city gates.

Mate. How long are we to wait ? If thou knowest the ways of the Catacombs, hie thee and fetch him off ! for else Aretina will hold him half the night.

Boatswain. I know them not ; but with that yell in his ears which followed us when we left the ship, it can hardly be woman's dalliance that withholds him ; more likely she has played him false.

Mate. Then are we much in jeopardy. Lo ! who comes here ? By his gait and carriage it is the Marquis's fast friend my Lord of Arona. Push off, push off ! Spadone must take his fate.

[They betake themselves to their boat and put to sea.]

Enter RUGGIERO.

Ruggiero. Truly Silisco seems to have vanished as his ship vanished ; in a moment and without a warning. Not though, like the ship, without cause that may be guessed ; for assuredly there will be writs out against him when the news is known. He has conveyed himself doubtless to some safe hiding-place. What is that ? a shock of seaweed or a head of hair ? By Heaven, it is a man that wrestles with the surf. Courage, my friend ! hold up thy head but an instant more and I am with thee.

[Plunges into the surf, and brings out of it a sailor who was sinking.]

Why, cheer thee up ? thou hast had a tustle for thy life, but thou hast it and art none the worse I think, for thy colour comes again. What ! thou art doubtless a waif from the wreck of the Maddelena. But silence ! I trouble thy devotions.

Sailor. Next to God, Sir, I give thanks to you; for under God it is to you that I owe my life. Strong swimming stood me in stead for two long hours, but then my strength was nigh spent and the surf should have mastered me but for your help. I thank God for my life, and I thank God that all men are not the merciless villains that some are; for the villainy that put me in this peril might have made me think mankind given over to the Devil, but for the charity that plucked me out of it.

Ruggiero. Villainy! Why, was it not the elements?

Sailor. The elements were guiltless; the wreck was a wreck of man's making and of the Devil's setting on; and the captain, the mate, and the boatswain were the instruments; they scuttled the ship and made off in a boat with the treasure.

Ruggiero. Ay, verily did they? And I saw but now two men that fled at my approach as though the cry of blood were behind and betook them to their boat.

Sailor. They should be three. But had they peaked beavers such as are worn at Rhodes?

Ruggiero. They had, and doubtless they are full in flight with their booty. Now if, as thou say'st, thou owest thy peril to them and thy life to me, commit thyself with me to the craft that is tethered in yonder cove and we will give chase to them.

Sailor. I am yours, Sir, for any service you shall command, and you could not put me to one more welcome. What course did they steer?

Ruggiero. As if making for the coast of Calabria. We shall have them in sight and to leeward round yonder point.

SCENE III.—*The Catacombs.*—SPADONE and ARETINA.

Spadone. Silence! I did not come to thee for shrift.
Say one or fifty sent to feed the sharks,
What matters it? Of such a miscreant tribe
Each by the other would have done the like
But that they lack'd the courage and the scope
To rise above some petty piracy.
Truly to see the gallant *ship* go down
Went to my heart—she was a goodly craft!
But for the crew, I'd drown them twice a-day
And think no pity on't, more than to drown
A litter of blind puppies. Fare thee well!
Remember that to him who brings thee this

[*Showing a ring.*

Thou shalt disclose the treasure—to none else.
And thou shalt send me tidings, too, by him
Of what is said in Sicily. Farewell.

[*Exit.*

Aretina. O monstrous crime! Ruthless, remorseless
wretch!

And so besotted as to think my love
Would hold through all! A gurgling sobbing sound

Is in my ears,—a booming overhead !
 My blood runs cold. Oh ! I shall faint ! and here !
 And should the light go out I hear a step

(*Enter SILISCO.*)

Who's there ! Who are you ?

[*Utters a sharp cry.*

Silisco.

Nay, but who art thou ?

I swear 'tis Aretina—cold as stone !
 What dost thou here ? nay, courage—come, look up ;
 A friendly arm is round thee—know'st not me ?

Aretina. Oh yes, my Lord, I know you,—sent by
 Heaven—

For I have that to tell you

*Spadone (who had re-entered unobserved and stabs her
 from behind).* Which thy throat
 Shall utter through a bloody new-made mouth.

[*ARETINA shrieks and flies.*

And now, my Lord, for you !

Silisco.

A woman's blood,

Dastard ! is all that thou shalt shed to-day.

[*They fight. SPADONE falls.*

Slain is he ? No, I think not—but he swoons.
 Where's that unhappy girl ? Fled forth the caves ?
 Well doth this caitiff merit to be left
 To meet his fate ; but should he wake to life
 And find himself in darkness left to die

Unshriven and unassoil'd ! Most horrible !
Gerbetto's house is on the beach hard by ;
I'll take him there : the worthy doctor's skill
May call him from his trance, and he may thus
Repent and live or be absolv'd and die.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Gardens of UBALDO'S Palace.*—ROSALBA and
FIORDELIZA.

Fiordeliza. Rosalba,—nay, Rosalba.

Rosalba. Am I not patient?

Fiordeliza. Well, I think you are : but I would have you cheerful ; look at me ; has not my lover vanished too ?

Rosalba. True, Fiordeliza ; sorrow is wont to be vilely selfish and I am forgetting your trouble in mine own. Yet if I were not driven to marry another, methinks I also could be cheerful.

Fiordeliza. I will pity you for the driving ; but you shall not pity me for the vanishing. I tell you that that sunshine and these flowers are more to me than love. They make me happy.

Rosalba. If that were so, your happiness should be but the happiness of a butterfly, and should last but a summer's season. I think it is not so ; but be it or be it not, you are so bright a thing in mine eyes that I cannot desire you to be other than you are.

Fiordeliza. I am not a butterfly. But I wish in my heart that we were like the birds, which are in love only

once a year. I will sing you a song and shall not that do you good?

(*Sings.*)

Oh had I the wings of a dove
Soon would I fly away
And never more think of my love
Or not for a year and a day :
If I had the wings of a dove.

I would press the air to my breast,
I would love the changeful sky,
In the murmuring leaves I would set up my rest
And bid the world good-bye :
If I had the wings of a dove.

Rosalba. It is a new song I think, but in an old sense, and one that will live as long as the world lives, unless the world should live to be better than it is.

Fiordeliza. Yes, or than it ever has been since the birds sang to Adam in the golden prime. They sang to him out of the tree of life, and knew better than to build their nests in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ; and though death comes to them, it comes unknown, and though love leaves them, they sigh not.

Rosalba. Is yon my father? Alas! I fear the very sight of him now.

Fiordeliza. Were I a nursing mother I should fear it, lest it should sour my milk.

Rosalba. He is always in the same story—that Silisco never will be seen again and Count Ugo cannot wait.

Fiordeliza. Well, as to the story, there is this truth in it—that the rich Silisco will not be seen, and that Ugo will never again be as young as he is now. Indeed your father may have some cause to fear lest his purpose to marry be crossed by that hasty humour which happens to men at his time of life, of going to the grave at one jump.

Rosalba. Fie ! Fiordeliza ; it makes me sad, not merry, to hear you talk so lightly. Count Ugo, though he has not, nor has had, the gifts and faculties which you set store by, was ever a just, courteous, and bountiful man, of good life and conversation, with a gentle and generous heart, and peradventure as much understanding as innocence has occasion for.

Fiordeliza. Oh ! I grant him that ; but nevertheless the good old golden pippin is ripe and may drop while the gardener is getting the ladder. There is the gardener,—and who besides ? Gerbetto, the doctor, I think. They are deep in council, and are going to take another turn ; so let me sing another song the while.

(*Sings*).

The last year's leaf, its time is brief
Upon the beechen spray ;
The green bud springs, the young bird sings
Old leaf, make room for May :
 Begone, fly away ;
 Make room for May.

Oh green bud, smile on me awhile,
Oh young bird, let me stay:—
What joy have we, old leaf, in thee?
Make room, make room for May :
 Begone, fly away,
 Make room for May.

Enter UBALDO and GERBETTO.

Ubaldo. I bring you, daughter, a kind friend and a skilful physician, who can cure, I think, more maladies than are mentioned in Hippocrates or Galen ; and he would have a few words with you,—a few words with you, good lady, a few.

Rosalba. Master Gerbetto is a good friend to me and ever welcome, and though I have given him but little opportunity for the exercise of his art, yet I have many times found comfort in his kindness.

Gerbetto. Indeed, sweet lady, I would fain be comfortable to you if I might.

Fiordeliza. Well, if you may not, at least show us a less discomfortable countenance ; for with that you have on now you look more like adversity itself than a consolation in adversity.

Ubaldo. He brings, though not a comfort, yet a cure,
A cure for blindness and besotted dreams,
A cure for feminine credulity.
This swain, enamour'd as he seem'd of you,
Was all the while enamour'd of another ;

And by that guilty passion's power impell'd
To deeper guilt, he stain'd his hands in blood,
And stands accountant for a rival's death.

Fiordeliza. Nay, sweet Rosalba, keep your courage
yet;

This cannot be believed. Reach her yon seat.
Silisco never was impeach'd before
Of dissolute courses.

Rosalba. And he said himself
His life, or ever it had found its law
From love and me, had still been pure.

Ubaldo. Oh dupe!
He told you, he! No doubt of it he did;
An unthrift was a liar from all time;
Never was debtor that was not deceiver.
Hold up thy head, poor child; poor monkey, nay,
'Tis a brief anguish that discards the vile,
The false, the faithless. Doctor, tell your tale.

Gerbetto. 'Tis a sad task, that tale to tell, for me;
But I am bound to speak. Two months ago,—
That day it was the marquis disappear'd—
Coming from vespers, in my house I found
A wounded man, swooning from loss of blood.
With sedulous care and what small skill is mine
I tended him, though deeming from the first
His hurt was mortal. Slowly day by day
He languish'd and declined, till yesternight,
Knowing his hour was come, he bade me hear

What brought him to that pass ; which till that hour,
Wherefore I know not, he was loth to tell.
He said that in the caverns near the beach,
Not far from my abode, the self-same night
That I first found him wounded on the floor,
A damsel that affianced was to him
By him was caught in passages of love
With a young lordling of the court ; they fought ;
He fell ; and instantaneously bereft
Of sense, he knew no more, nor by what means
He reach'd my house. I ask'd him, did he know
Who slew him ; he replied, he knew him well,
The Lord of Malespina ; at that word
He bounded from his bed, fell back, and died.

Rosalba. Alas ! alas !

Ubaldo.

Here is a terrible tale !

And this is he that would have wed my child !
I thank him that he puts me forth his foot
And shows the cleft on't ; truly, yes, I thank him.
Now, daughter, I beseech you, prate no more
Of promises and questions and delays.
What day you please next week ! 'Tis yours to choose.

Rosalba. Oh, father, father, give me time to think ;
My brain is weak ; I cannot understand
What's said to me nor what I say myself.
Ere long this dimness will be clear'd away
And I shall know my course ; but, father, now
The waters have gone over me.

Ubaldo.

Nay, nay,

So long as thou'rt unsettled, mutinous thoughts
 Will vex thy heart; I know the ways of women;
 But when what should be must, contentment comes;
 Compassion goes to work the shortest way;
 Despatch is mercy: yet yourself shall choose;
 Say Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, which you will;
 Thursday or—no, not Friday—at your pleasure
 Thursday or Saturday. Go, go your ways;
 Order whate'er shall please you; a brave day
 We'll make on't; get you gone. Good cause had he
 To fly the Court! The truculent villain! Ho!

SCENE II.—*A Farmstead on the Lands of Malespina,
 in the Neighbourhood of the Castle.*

Enter SILISCO and RUGGIERO.

Ruggiero. We chased them that night and the next day, gaining on them by little and little; but as evening fell, there came into the horizon a cloud no bigger than your hand, and in an instant the storm swooped upon them like a bird of prey and they went to destruction before our eyes, thief and booty together.

Silisco. Best friend and boldest, how fared you I pray?

Ruggiero. The storm spared us, but we were sorely tormented by hunger and thirst that night; and when we landed next morning at Vetri in Calabria, my strength

was clean spent and a fever was upon me that laid me low for many a day. When that left me, I found my way back with all speed, and learning from Monna the direction of your flight, I sped hither. Such is my history.

Silisco.

Of mine remains

But little to recount. Spadone, or,
If he was dead, Spadone's corpse, I left
In old Gerbetto's cottage on the beach ;
Nor waiting his return (for he was forth),
Back to the Catacombs I sped, and search'd
Each cranny, but could nowhere find my friend,
The luckless Aretina. In the caves
I dwelt by day ; the night I chiefly spent
In my own gardens.

Ruggiero.

In your gardens?

Silisco.

Yes ;

Behind the statue of Proserpina
There is a cavern fringed with pensile plants,
By which, well-known to me in boyhood, opes
A passage to the Catacombs ; through this,
When first it reached me that the writs were out
I, like a land-crab, into earth had dropp'd,
And afterwards through this I issued thence
When darkness and the owls possess'd the world.
Ere long, impatient of my dreary life,
I meditated flight ; and strange you'll deem
The choice I made of whither to betake me ;

But having not since childhood seen my lands
A humour seized me to revisit them ;
And seeing I was here as little known
As elsewhere I could be, and peradventure
Should be less look'd for, hither did I come.
I found Count Ugo's people in possession,
The sometime mortgagee, the owner now.

Ruggiero. Why hither? it can bring you little joy
To look upon the lands that you have lost.

Silisco. To look upon the *days* that I have lost,
Ruggiero, brings me less ; and here I thought
To get behind them ; for my childhood here
Lies round me. But it may not be. By Heavens !
That very childhood bitterly upbraids
The manhood vain that did but travesty,
With empty and unseasonable mirth,
Its joys and lightness. From each brake and bower
Where thoughtless sports had lawful time and place
The manly child rebukes the childish man ;
And more reproof and bitterer do I read
In many a peasant's face whose leaden looks
My host the farmer construes to my shame.
Injustice, rural tyranny, more dark
Than that of courts, have laid their brutal hands
On those that claim'd my tendance ; want and vice
And injury and outrage fill'd my lands,
Whilst I, who saw it not, my substance threw
To feed the fraudulent and tempt the weak.

Ruggiero, with what glittering words soe'er
We smear the selfishness of waste, and count
Our careless tossings bounties, this is sure,
Man sinks not by a more unmanly vice
Than is that vice of prodigality—
Man finds not more dishonour than in debt.

Ruggiero. Farewell my function ! I perceive that now
You need no more a monitor. To me,
Who, when the past was present, sigh'd to see it,
The present brings its joy ; one work is wrought ;,
Adversity hath borne its best of fruits ;
And, issuing from this gorge, the tract you tread,
Though it be ne'er so beggarly and bare,
Shall lie, I augur, in the sunshine.

Silisco. No ;
Not in the sunshine ; that may never be ;
Upon my path the sun shall shine no more.
It is not poverty will darken it—
In many another point I err'd, but not
In deeming wealth to me was little worth ;
Nor self-reproach—for this, though sharp, will work
Its own purgation ; nor the world's contempt,
Which with a light and friendly disregard
I soon could conquer. But one hope there was
That in the darkness and the frosty air
Burnt brighter still and brighter, which is now
Set, not to rise again. In this I own
Needful severity ; for this art

My joyfulness of nature had escaped
The hands of justice and all worldly ills
Had left me unchastised.

Ruggiero.

Rosalba false !

Silisco. No, say not so—she means not to be false ;
No—falseness could no more have place in her
Than could the cankerworm in Paradise.
She promised, it is true, till All-Saints' Eve
To hold herself in freedom unbetroth'd ;
'Tis likewise true, or publicly proclaim'd,
Count Ugo is to marry her to-morrow.
But doubtless she has deem'd herself released
By my desertion. Since that fatal night
She knows of me no more than that I vanish'd ;
For how could I, a beggar, plead to her,
An heiress, her past promise ? With what aim ?
Since should she wait the term, the issue still
Must be obedience to her sire's behest ;
And what can now move *him* ?

Ruggiero.

I know not what ;

But what we know not of may haply be :
And this I know,—what rules the true of heart
Is plighted faith, not circumstance. To-morrow ?
I think it may be done—Ronzino's legs
Will carry me if legs of mortal steed
Can span the distance in the time—and so
My presence and my protest shall precede
This woeful wedding : yes, ere noon to-morrow

Tribolo. Well said, Virgins ! Look at me if you would see a colour ;—and there's an arm for you ! “ Let me alone, villain, I cannot draw my breath,” said the she-rhinoceros when I put it round her waist. But is there no answer ?

CHORUS OF YOUTHS.

We bent the knee before her
 With a worship nigh to sin,
 Predestined to adore her
 Without a hope to win :
 But having known the dear delight
 Of living in her sunny sight,
 'Twere vain
 That we should strain
 Against the pressure of that golden chain ;
 For we are prisoners in Despair's despite :
 And as for trying what our eyes could do
 Or what our arms, with you,
 We could not, scornful maidens, if we might.

Tribolo. Hapless Bachelors ! But I like you well ; for though you counterfeit a love-sickness, yet you are clad in all the colours of the rainbow, and you sing like peacocks. Come along ! You must perform this at the Palace. Come, musical maidens and men of many colours. Sing in time and you shall be rewarded in eternity,—not to mention a puncheon of strong ale which stands abroach for you at the buttery.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter RUGGIERO with an Innkeeper.

Ruggiero. Brought fairly to the ground! I prithee give the poor beast a can of wine, and when his courage shall come back take him to the stable of the Palazzo Arona; do thy best for him and take this for thy pains.

[Exit Innkeeper.

Poor Ronzino! thou sufferest for the sins of others. What festal troop is this? Ha! my mind misgives me!

[The Procession crosses the stage; two Citizens detach themselves from it and stand beside

RUGGIERO.

1st Citizen. Enough of this! I'll follow no further. Foh! 'Tis a filthy crowd!

2nd Citizen. The sun is hot, and the garlick, which yesterday was like a flower of the field, is to-day the least of a little unsavoury. At night there is to be a masked ball at the palace in honour of the wedding.

1st Citizen. If I were a nobleman and bidden, I would not dance at it.

2nd Citizen. Why so?

1st Citizen. It is such a wedding as no man that dances with consideration would dance at.

2nd Citizen. Wherefore? It is magnificently managed and no cost spared.

1st Citizen. It is a wicked wedding: the bride is the sweetest incomparable lady that ever the sun shined upon, and the bridegroom——

2nd Citizen. Well ?

1st Citizen. Is a pink-headed, white-haired old gentleman ; very corpulent ; with one foot in the grave and the other in a velvet shoe. Did you mark him as he stood at the altar, leaning upon his staff ? He was three minutes groping in his pouch for the ring, and at last he fished up—what ? a pair of spectacles !

2nd Citizen. He is a simple-hearted, kindly gentleman—meek and mild—but as you say, very old and not strong in the legs. Let us to the royal gardens and make sure of places to see the fireworks.

Ruggiero. What marriage is it that you speak of, friends ?

Count Ugo's ?

1st Citizen. Yes.

Ruggiero. And did ye say the King Gives a mask'd ball to-night ?

2nd Citizen. Sir, so we hear.

[*Exeunt Citizens.*]

Ruggiero. Too late—too late ! Yet shall the truth be heard !

Though what is irremediable be done,
Let what is just be spoken. To that ball
Shall come a dreary and unwelcome guest.

SCENE IV.—*An Antechamber with folding doors, opening upon a Ball-Room in the Royal Palace at Palermo.*

—THE KING, *masked as a Knight of St. John, and LISANA, as a Minstrel.*

The King. Young minstrel, had thy ditty been less sweet

I should have bid thee sing me one less sad,
But thou hast so subdued me to thy strain
I crave another like it.

Lisana. Sooth, my Lord,
It is but such that I can sing ; I'm young,
Untaught, and have but a few natural notes :
I sing but as the birds do, from my heart.

The King. Well, sing from that again. Thy voice awakes

A tenderness that might be troublesome
And shame to show itself by day ; but tears
That come at twilight like a summer dew
May trickle unrestrain'd ; sing once again.

Lisana (sings).

The morning broke and Spring was there,
And lusty Summer near her birth ;
The birds awoke and waked the air,
The flowers awoke and waked the earth.

Up! quoth he, what joy for me
 On dewy plain, in budding brake!
 A sweet bird sings on every tree,
 And flowers are sweeter for my sake.

Lightly o'er the plain he stept,
 Lightly brush'd he through the wood,
 And snared a little bird that slept
 And had not waken'd when she should.

Lightly through the wood he brush'd,
 Lightly stept he o'er the plain,
 And yet—a little flower was crush'd
 That never raised its head again.

The King. That voice had won me were I blind; that
 face,

Though I were deaf, had spoken to my heart!
 I am ashamed to say what love is mine
 For thee, and of what temper. Jesu Mary!
 That I, a King, God help me! should so waste
 The night, the dawn, the noon, the dewy eve
 In this sweet serious idleness of love.
 The masquers thicken, and such songs as these
 Are not for every ear. See! through this door
 There is a private chamber. Come with me.

[*Exeunt the KING and LISANA.*]

*Enter RUGGIERO, masked as Conscience, with a lamp and
 scourge.*

Ruggiero. Surely I know that voice! Lisana's, if I

err not. And that Knight of St. John was the King. Poor girl! she is in the toils, and they glisten in her eyes like a cobweb dew-bespangled. A word of warning in her father's ear were not ill bestowed, and doubtless he will be here anon.

Enter divers Maskers, passing through to the Ball-Room, and others passing out.

1st Mask. Marco, I think? Yes, I know you by the wave of your feather. What, have you danced?

2nd Mask. Ay; but methinks these festivities are somewhat sadly carried. Seest thou the bride yonder? By my faith she stands more like a marble statue in a mist than a bride of flesh and blood. There—have you seen her, Sir? (*to Ruggiero*). Ah, now she slinks behind the crowd.

Ruggiero. In truth a pitiable spectacle!
I marvel, Sir, what pleasure age can take
So airily to deck its dim decline.
A chaplet of forced flowers on winter's brow
Seems not less inharmonious to me
Than the untimely snow on the green leaf.

2nd Mask. Why, Sir, it is a common error of age to think that it can get back the enjoyment of youth by getting what youth only can enjoy.

1st Mask. Nay, but this was a match of Ubaldo's

making, not of Ugo's. We are here to dance ; so pass on, I pray you.

[All pass into the ball-room except RUGGIERO and one Mask.

Ruggiero. Gerbetto, no ?

Gerbetto. The same, Sir ; and can I mistake the voice of the Count of Arona ?

Ruggiero. Make me not known, Gerbetto ; but when we pass in, do thy endeavour to draw the Countess out of the crowd to where I shall stand apart. Know you, Gerbetto, that your daughter hath secret conference with the King ?

Gerbetto. You say not so, my Lord ?

Ruggiero. I do ; and though the maiden be as modest as the rosebud's inmost leaf, yet I like not the sun and the south-west wind to play with her.

Gerbetto. You are right, my Lord ; and I shall beseech you to give me your counsel. But lo ! the crowd divides and if we take the occasion

Ruggiero. Pass in, I pray.

SCENE V.—*The Ball-Room, with various groups of Masks.*
—*In front* UGO and ROSALBA as bridegroom and bride, with UBALDO and FIORDELIZA. *After a while GERBETTO joins them, with RUGGIERO, who remains a little apart. TRIBOLO the King's Fool appears in his usual habit.*

Ubaldo. More lights, I tell you ! If a canary bird were here she would hardly sing. Strike up, musicians ! We suffer more in the tuning of your fiddles than the music's worth. If the King be taken up into heaven, 'tis well ; but as we see him neither here nor there, 'tis no wonder if our guests shall not disport themselves as merrily as they are wont.

Ugo. If an old man can do aught to make them merry, I would fain be assisting.

Ubaldo. Old ! why the day makes us all young.

Fiordeliza. If your good Lordship would assist me, I pray you to find me a discreet and nimble gentleman to dance with.

Ugo. I will, sweet Lady.

Rosalba. My friend, my Fiordeliza, leave me not.

Fiordeliza. Come hither, Fool. How is it that thou comest to the King's masked ball without a mask ?

Tribolo. Please your sweet Ladyship, my sister told

me the solemnity was of that nature that I should show it my countenance and not my mask.

Fiordeliza. Thy sister? I knew not thou hadst a sister. Who is she?

Tribolo. The world calls her Wisdom. The wisdom of the world, my Lady, was ever born-sister to a fool.

Fiordeliza. The fool were no fool that should hold that faith.

Tribolo. Then there is my mask and the fool is no fool for the occasion.

Gerbetto (to Ruggiero in the side scene). She says she must know who you are before she shall speak with you apart.

Ruggiero. Then be it openly and not apart.

Fiordeliza. Fool, thou art melancholy.

Tribolo. No wonder, Lady, if you consider my dreams last night.

Fiordeliza. What didst thou dream?

Tribolo. I dreamt I was a tailor going to be married, and that I went to church sitting cross-legged a-top of a hearse and stitching at my shroud.

Fiordeliza. Was that all?

Tribolo. No, I dreamt that I was a thousand miles out at sea, sitting astride of an empty cask, and a beauteous sea-nymph bobbing before me; but I could not come at her.

Ubaldo. The King, doubtless, hath his own amusements and we will wait no longer. Ho! gallants,

gallants, match ye for the dance ! strike up, musicians !
Serve a bumper round. Ho ! gallants, follow me ; this
way, this way.

Ruggiero (advancing). Pass ye no further till my voice
be heard.

Ubaldo. What voice is that ? a merry mask I trow ;
Well, speak ; I like the humour of thy mask,
Though it be dismal ; whom dost thou present ?

Ruggiero. Sirs, I am CONSCIENCE ; with this lamp
I search

The hearts of sinners, with this scourge chastise ;
Men feast, men dance, men revel,—but I come ;
The shouts of jollity and riot rise,
But what though jollity and riot shout,
My knock is heard and let me in they must ;
For wheresoever Evil enters, there
I follow with my lamp, and Evil thus
Is palpable, or by his substance seen
Or by his shadow ; then my lamp I lift
As now I lift it—yea, I lift my lamp
And lift my scourge—for therefore am I here :
Musicians, cease ; ye dancers, cease to dance,
Trampling ye know not what beneath your feet ;
What ye with noise and dancing celebrate
Are vows by prior vows made perfidy—
A heartless, faithless show of plighted faith.

Ubaldo. What masking call ye this ? A mask indeed
That masks a railer and a villain. Ho !

Tear off this caitiff's mask—tear off his mask.

Gerbetto (supporting Rosalba). Sirs, she wants air—I pray you stand aside.

Fiordeliza. Cheerly, my sweet Rosalba! Villain!

Ugo.

Run,

Fetch that elixir

Ubaldo.

Tear me off his mask,

Tear off the villain's mask.

Ruggiero.

Ye shall not need.

[*Unmasking.*

Fiordeliza. Ruggiero!

1st Mask.

What! the Count?

2nd Mask.

'Tis he indeed!

3rd Mask. As strangely found as lost!

4th Mask.

Most wonderful!

Ugo. Who is it, Sirs? who is it? for mine eyes

Ubaldo. I would that mine were dimmer than they are.

My Lord, or e'er you ask me to unsay

The name I gave you in your mask, say you

Wherefore you trouble thus our marriage feast.

Ruggiero. Say what you please and unsay what you will.

Silisco loved your daughter; she loved him

And pledged her faith that this side All-Saints' Eve

She would not wed another. I demand

Why walks she here a bride?

Ubaldo.

This outrage grows!

Who says she loved?

Rosalba.

Father, I did, I did.

Ubaldo. Or pledged her faith?

Rosalba. I did, but he was false.

Fiordeliza. Gerbetto knows it—and he slew the
espoused

Of her with whom he traffick'd.

Gerbetto. Sir, 'tis true;

He slew him in the caverns.

Ruggiero. Oh, sad chance!

Disastrous error! Was it this betray'd
The maiden's faith! Why then shall pity plead
Against all anger. Whom he slew I know,—
A wretch who, for the plunder of his ship,
Sent to the bottom her and all her crew,
By name Spadone; in the Catacombs,
Silisco, hiding from his creditors,
Met—innocently met, by accident—
Spadone's paramour; by him assail'd,
He, certes, slew him.

Ubaldo. At the point of death
Spadone said

Ruggiero. What like enough he thought;
For with a hundred murders did he reek
And foulest thoughts were uppermost. But lo!
If any here shall say Silisco's soul
Was not as pure as infant's at the breast,
True as confessing Saint's, there is my glove—
I'll prove upon his body that he lies.

Three KNIGHTS come forward.

1st Knight. There be three here will take this quarrel
up
Upon the bride's behalf.

Rosalba. Oh, not on mine!
My cause is bad—I brake my promise—oh!
Silisco, ever, evermore beloved!
Forgive me! oh forgive me! I was false,
And thou wert faithfuller than the constant fire
That burns the centre!

Ubaldo. Daughter! art thou mad?

Fiordeliza. She faints, she falls.

Gerbetto. Make room—to the air—to the air!

[*ROSALBA is taken out by GERBETTO and FIORDELIZA.*

Ubaldo. See, Sir, your mischief prospers. But the
King

Shall know of this, and instantly. My friends,
Ye see how this, which should have been a feast,
By this man's meddling insolence is marr'd.
This shall the King redress; and some time hence
We'll have our pastime; for this present, Sirs,
Your further aid I ask not. Fare you well!

[*Exit.*

Ugo. Before you go, Sirs, pray you hear me speak;
For I am sorely troubled, yea, my heart
Is full of grief: I knew not, Sirs, till now

Of this sweet lady's love, nor of her pledge
 Given, as this Lord avouches, to his friend,
 That worthy Knight, my Lord of Malespina :
 Sirs, had I known it, not for worlds and worlds
 Would I have done her that discourtesy
 To force myself upon her to her wrong :
 Sirs what I can I will for her relief ;
 I call you all to witness, I renounce
 All rights from this day's injury derived ;
 I'll never more approach her.

Ruggiero.

Noble Sir,

Your pardon if I wrong'd you.

Ugo.

Nay, not so ;

The sorrows of this day are born of sin ;
 A secret sin, whereof to cleanse my soul
 I hasten now. I pray you help me hence.
 Forth on a perilous pilgrimage I go,
 Sorely to suffer for my sore offence.

Ruggiero. Count, think not I accuse you

Ugo.

No, Sir, no ;

My sin is other than against this maid,
 Whom, verily, I married for her good,
 Her sire protesting 'twas her will—no less
 For her own good than that exceeding love
 I bore her and shall ever bear—and now
 There's nothing I can suffer that my soul
 Shall not rejoice to suffer, even to death,
 If haply so appeasing God, He shower

A blessing on that lady and her love.

[*Exit, followed by all except RUGGIERO.*

Ruggiero. A gallant and magnanimous old man !
 Much injury have I done him, God forgive me !
 In thinking slightly of his slender wit
 By greatness of his heart so glorified.
 Till now I knew not he had utterance ;
 But generous sorrows and high purposes
 Make the dumb speak. Ye orators, note that,
 That in the workshop of your head weave words.

Enter GERBETTO.

Gerbetto. Strange day is this ! My Lord, the aged
 Count

Prepares, in sackcloth clad, to issue forth
 The city gates, afoot and unattended,
 To seek the Holy Sepulchre. A vow
 Made this day three years, when his former wife
 Lay sick to death, did bind him, as he says,
 Within three years in such wise to perform
 This pilgrimage, the disregard whereof
 He deems to be the cause of this day's griefs ;
 And therefore, ere the stroke of twelve foreclose
 Upon his pledge, he needs will take his way
 Alone, on foot, toward Jerusalem.

Ruggiero. A brave resolve ! but which to execute
 His body is unequal. Ere he reach

A three days' journey, he shall fall by the way ;
He must be follow'd though he know it not,
And tended at his need. Wilt thou do this ?

Gerbetto. I will, my Lord ; nor shall it hold me long ;
I know the nature of his maladies ;
Scarce for one week can they sustain the toil
Of journeying afoot. But, good my Lord,
I pray you, whether it be days or months,
Be careful, in my absence, of my child ;
Fulfil her father's duties and defeat
The King's designs if evil.

Ruggiero. Ah, the King !
I know that dangerous softness of the King
And how it works in issue. Lovingly,
Like a tame tiger, that long licks the hand
Till he draw blood, then maddens, doth he now
Fondle Lisana. He shall not draw blood
Whilst blood of mine is living in my veins.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Palace at Palermo.*—UBALDO and the
CHIEF JUSTICIARY.

Ubaldo. This passion, Sir, for this doctor's daughter which is lost, is, to speak privately, a kind of madness in the King ; and it is a madness which many moons have shined upon ; it is now nigh upon six since the maiden was seen last, being, I think, the night of my daughter's marriage, when Gerbetto, her father, followed in Count Ugo's wake to Jerusalem. As for these charges against the Count of Arona touching matters of accopt and malversations, they are but colourable ; the true ground of the proceedings is a species of jealousy and amorous rage against the Count, who, it is certain, for fault of some employment that should better commend his virtue and discretion, did very strangely carry off this doctor's daughter and holds her somewhere in concealment.

The Chief Justiciary. The King, as you say, my Lord, speaking privately, must be clean lunatic to make this ado about a doctor's daughter ; seeing that he might disport himself at his pleasure with a hundred doctors' daughters, not to say a hundred ladies of greater estimation and nobility. Nevertheless, the lunacy of a King

must be respected, and I do continually what in me lies to discover where the wench is concealed, and to take the person of the Count.

Ubaldo. Truly the Count shall be no loss at the Council Board; for his words went for more than they were worth with the King, and in matters of statecraft he was but a pedant. I have my own conceit of this matter, which squares not with the King's; and notwithstanding the Count's exorbitancy in the carrying off of a wench, I deem that he is more likely to be found in an old track than in a new one. I would have you set a watch upon the Lady Fiordeliza; and where the hen-bird hath her nest you may look for the cock to come.

The Chief Justiciary. I will take your Lordship's guidance. Know you where the Lady Fiordeliza may be met with?

Ubaldo. She has lately gone to sojourn for a season with my daughter, who lives like a Nun since her marriage, choosing for her nunnery the Castle of Male-spina, which fell to Count Ugo in satisfaction of the debt due to him from the former Lord of it, that castaway, Silisco. There, I think, she will be found, and he thereabouts.

The Chief Justiciary. There shall he be sought. If your good Lordship will bring me to the King, I will crave his signature to these warrants.

SCENE II.—*The Castle of Malespina.*—ROSALBA and
FIORDELIZA.

Fiordeliza. Does nothing ever happen in this castle? I have been gazing up the great avenue for an hour and more, trying to think that there was a Knight Errant pricking forward at the further end; but I saw only two rabbits that crossed the road in a leisurely manner on their affairs, and a squirrel which, for want of something to do, jumped from one tree and flung itself into the arms of another over the way. Look at Lion; he sleeps away his second childhood at the gate, and if you hear a grunt, 'tis that he dreams of his younger days, when once upon a time he saw a stranger and barked. For myself, my only companion is the ancient steward, and his only topic is the wholesomeness of the air; a commendation which I dare not deny, inasmuch as all the persons I have seen beside himself, are ten serving men whose joint ages are nine hundred and thirty-six.

Rosalba. I wish the castle could be made more cheerful for you; but how can it, the present Lord of it being so far away on so perilous an enterprise, and the late Lord Oh *Fiordeliza!* are the imaginations of my heart very wicked when they wander after him?

Fiordeliza. You know best; how should I take the measure of their wickedness?

Rosalba. It is doubt and fear which keep them so busy ; if I did but know more about him I should think less.

Fiordeliza. Something, then, you do know ?

Rosalba. Shall I tell you ? Yes. In a summer-house which was once a temple—you can see the corner of it yonder in the wood on the other side of the brook—is a statue of Silisco, made when he was a boy. A statue of Antinoüs stands opposite to it, and Silisco's is the more beautiful of the two. On the evening after my arrival, as I was looking upon it, I descried in the fold where the hand joins the drapery, a thread of silk, fastened to which was this scroll.

Fiordeliza. Oh, let me see it.

Rosalba. No, *Fiordeliza*, I cannot give it you : see, you will tear it.

Fiordeliza (reading).

*“ Here my footsteps must not be
After this my infancy.
They shall wander far and wide,
By pleasure tempted first and tried ;
Then by passion, which with wings
Shall lift them where the skylark sings ;
Anguish and repentance next
Back shall drive them sore perplex'd.
Whither then ? A grateful mind
A grateful work shall seek and find ;*

*When heroic ardour reigns
In an old man's shrivell'd veins,
Youthful veins were shamed indeed
If they bled not where his bleed."*

He has been here then.

Rosalba. From the farmer on the demesne I learn, that from about the time of Silisco's disappearance from Palermo, there lodged at the farm a person of a light, lofty, and graceful appearance, courteous and winning of demeanour, who answers to Silisco in everything, except that he was not gay, but pensive and retiring. He went hence, no one knows whither, on the day of my arrival.

Fiordeliza. I wish he would come back ; is there no hope of him ?

Rosalba. None, Fiordeliza, none.

Fiordeliza. Why then I return to my former aspiration and I wish for any Knight Errant that it may please Providence to send us.

Rosalba. You said once that flowers and sunshine were enough for you.

Fiordeliza. While the sun is hot and the flowers are happy ; but look at yonder sunflower on one side the arch, how it hangs its head ? and at the hollyhock leaning over from the other ; they are heart-broken about the last carnation, poor thing ! for it died yesterday ; this gusty wind, which is getting up, is to sing its dirge. Lo ! See ! There *is* a Knight Errant !

Rosalba. Where?

Fiordeliza. Behind that mountain-ash; when the wind waves it you'll see him;—there—and I protest I believe he is very handsome. He seems as if he did not know which way to go. Send some one

Rosalba. I see no Knight Errant.

Fiordeliza. How blind you are! there—there.

Rosalba. That, my dear? That is the scarecrow which I told Girolamo to put there yesterday to keep the black-birds from the gourds.

Fiordeliza. How can you be so unkind, Rosalba! Everybody deceives me and I know the scarecrow was put there on purpose—

Rosalba. Nay, you deceived yourself now and I cannot think that you have ever been deceived by another. I should not quarrel with you for seeing that which is not, if you would but believe in that which is; for, trust me, it is when we are most faithless that we are most deceived. Believe in Ruggiero, and you will have present peace and a reward to come. To me experience has given a sharp schooling against distrust, and I will never again let the world's outcry and the masking of circumstance get the better of a faithful instinct.

Fiordeliza. I never did so yet; and when the world and circumstance commended Ruggiero for a young nobleman of excellent discretion and infinite sobriety, my faithful instinct told me, there is something wicked here.

*Morn that look'st so grim and grey,
 Tell me truly, tell me truly,
 What wilt thou be ere mid-day ?
 Who can say, who can say ?
 Flaunting forth in garments gay,
 Darting beams unruly,
 Darting beams unruly.*

No, no ; when he ran off with Lisana, it was but a clenching and confirming.

Rosalba. They disappeared together ; whether he took her away I know not ; but if he did, it was for no evil purpose.

Fiordeliza. Oh no, none : doubtless he withdrew with her to the desert for a season of fasting and humiliation.

Enter MARIANA.

Mariana. Please you, my Lady, the Falconer sends his duty and Alathiella has not touched her food for three days ; he is fearful she will die, and he says the Count gave a hundred crowns for her.

Rosalba. Poor bird ! she doted on her master and has never held up her head since she missed him ; I fear she will die, like some of her betters, of a broken heart.

Mariana. He says he knows but of one thing to do with her, which is to take her to the Conjurer at the Farm.

Fiordeliza. The Conjurer ? who is he ?

Mariana. Have you not heard of him, my Lady ? 'Tis the strangest story !

Fiordeliza. If there be anything strange left us here below, I prithee tell of it; for I thought that everyday droppings had worn the world as smooth as a wash-ball. How came a Conjurer to the Farm?

Mariana. I will tell you, my Lady. It was the very night of the going off of the wart on my thumb and the day after the worm in Maria's nose put out horns, Dame Agata, being in her first sleep, heard a great rushing of wings; and so says she to her husband,—“Osporco, either the Devil is hereabouts or there's a cockchafer;” and then there came a knock; so, says she, “Wait to see if they knock again, and if they do, put your blunderbuss out at the window and ask if there's anything wanted.” Well, the knock came a second time, and then a third; and Osporco looked out and saw a tall man in a horseman's cloak, which said he lacked a lodging; and as he was but one by himself they let him in, and he has lodged there ever since.

Rosalba. But is he a Conjurer?

Mariana. Surely, my Lady, no one but a Conjurer was ever heard of to come flying through the air in that way. And besides that, he is a magnificent man to look at, and orders this and orders that, as though he held the Powers of the Air at his bidding. And then he wanders out by moonlight a-culling of simples; and he heals the sick; and they come to him from ten miles round; though Father Fungoso tells them it were better to die and be saved than be healed and be damned. But

the Falconer says that, be it as it may with us, Alathiella has no soul to trouble her and she may take any cure she can come by.

Fiordeliza. Well, I do not believe he is a Conjuror, or that it will hurt us to heal us. Rosalba, I am sick.

Rosalba. Of what, my love? of solitude or of my society?

Fiordeliza. I must send for this stranger.

Rosalba. Oh, then I know what ails you; it is curiosity.

Fiordeliza. I say I am sick; very grievous sick. Mariana, send word of it to the farm, and say that the stranger must come with all the speed he can.

Mariana. I will say, with what speed he can in the way of nature; but he must not come rushing through the air with wings.

Fiordeliza. In the way of nature will serve; I shall live till he comes in a natural way. But I will give the orders myself. Tell Girolamo to attend me in the conservatory. Come, Rosalba.

SCENE III.—*The Farmstead at Malespina.*—RUGGIERO
alone.

Ruggiero. So flies the year, and flying fades. The sun
Comes not so like a bridegroom from his bed,
And nature greets him with a changing cheek :

The willows wash their tresses in the brook
That shrank before but swells to meet them now ;
The plane-tree leaf is piebald with black blots ;
Upon the snowberry-bush the big drops bead ;
And the goose plants starr'd patterns of her foot
In the moist clay. Swift, changeful year, pass on ;
Sweet was the savour of thy prime, and sweet
Thy fruitage should be ; but it strews the earth.

Enter OSPORCO, the Farmer.

Good-morrow, friend ; the air has some taste now of
the sharpness of the season.

Osporco. Ay, Sir ; the cat sits in the sunniest window-
pane and the bees have left the rosier for the ivy. Well,
every man his own sunshine, is what I say ; and your
friend that left us at shearing-time . . . Ah ! he was a
friendly-hearted gentleman—and very noble, Sir, very
noble ; you would have thought yourself at court ; he
would hand a chair to my wife as though she were the
Queen of the land : and when he went away, my daugh-
ters wept like waterspouts—I thought some of them
would have died of it, and I have but thirteen. My Lady
at the Castle (God be good to her !) often asks me about
him, and I tell her if I were a Countess I would give him
one hundred ducats a year to sit over against me at meal-
times, just to look at.

Ruggiero. Then might she forget her food and be
famished unawares. I think I know whither our friend

is gone ; and, barring accidents of the road and the hazards of long journeyings in foreign parts, it may not be long ere we see him.

Osporco. Tell that to my youngest daughter and you shall see her quiver again with joy like the tail of a lamb that sucks. But I forget my errand. There is an old man at the cottage, Sir, which cannot be persuaded but that you can make him young again if you please, he has heard so much of your skill in curing divers diseases ; and there is a young woman that has a quandary.

Ruggiero. A what ?

Osporco. A quandary, she calls it ; but, indeed, I think it is a crack somewhere. And Gambo, the grazier, hath brought you his wife that hath the ringworm on her finger and the rattlesnake in her tongue, and prays you would take and cure her : but, indeed, if you cure her he cares not that you should take her, and if you take her he cares not that you should cure her.

Ruggiero. You are merry, my friend.

Osporco. The frosty air, Sir. But, to speak soberly, there are at the cottage no fewer than fifteen men, women, and children, which think you can cure anything, and have come to be cured of their simplicities.

Ruggiero. I will attend them. I have said often and I say it again, that my doctor's lore is but the scattered lights that came across me in my studies and meditations. But if they can reach no better skill, they may command mine.

SCENE IV.—*A lane in the Neighbourhood of the Castle of Malespina—A Provost and two Marshalsmen.*

Provost. We must by no means follow him in; for being the castle of the great Chamberlain's daughter, 'twere an offence to enter it.

1st Marshalsman. On the King's errand?

Provost. Better for such as we to look to the Chamberlain than to the King. If a man would prosper, he should be more nimble to please those near above him than those far above him. Even were the King to remember a small service, it should hardly fall in his way to befriend us.

2nd Marshalsman. He would not so much as know our names.

Provost. Moreover, it is better to do no man a displeasure than to do any man a good turn. For you may be sure of reprisals, but who can count upon rewards?

2nd Marshalsman. Truly there are ten revengeful men for one that is thankful.

Provost. Therefore, though we could take the Count no other way, I would not follow him into the castle; but if we watch for him as he comes out we cannot miss him; and if we do not tarry long we may get half-way through the forest with him before nightfall.

1st Marshalsman. Sleeping at St. Elmo's in the forest to-night, we should reach the court on Wednesday.

2nd Marshalsman. Then we are to ensconce ourselves here.

Provost. Behind yonder bushes, close to the gate.

SCENE V.—*The Castle of Malespina.*—FIORDELIZA and
MARIANA.

Fiordeliza. Not if he came back to you weeping, and went on his knees to be forgiven?

Mariana. No, my Lady; if Giovanni were to do so by me, I should say, once gone and gone for ever.

Fiordeliza. 'Twere to be of a most unchristian spirit, if he were truly penitent and you should not forgive him.

Mariana. I would forgive him: but I would kill him first.

Fiordeliza. That were indeed to temper justice with mercy; only the justice should be sharp and the mercy something tardy. Come, Mariana; you are in the bud still,—green and hard. I remember, I, too, when I was young . . .

Mariana. Why, my Lady, eighteen is not old.

Fiordeliza. When I was young I was of your way of thinking; I used to say to myself, You and I, my good Fiordeliza, will not trouble our hearts about mankind, unless they should cling to us and cleave to us and lick the dust from our feet: but change grows out of time as a plant grows out of the earth, and in a year or two we are no more like what we were than the blade is like the

seed. Adversity tames us, Mariana, as winter tames the birds. Do I look pale and sick?

Mariana. No, my Lady; a little pale, it may be, but not sick.

Fiordeliza. That is not as it should be; the Conjurer will not believe me, and he will be here anon. Shut out the light a little. Now go fetch me my scarf, to muffle me up.

[*Exit* MARIANA.]

I'm but the mimic of my former self,
And wretchedly I do the imitation!
Ruggiero! oh Ruggiero! bitterer tears
Than tenderer women weep I weep for thee;
And thou, with all thine insight, never saw'st
Their source, it lies so secret and so deep.
Oh, much I wrong'd thee! many a time and oft
I wounded thee through petulance and pride,
And love's delight in sporting with its prey,
And wayward wilfulness; but though a child
In frowardness and mischief, I was still
A woman in my love—and, oh, compare
Man's love with that, and see how thin the thread,
How frail the tissue! Me nor wounds nor slights,
Insults nor injuries, nor life nor death,
Could e'er have sunder'd. Yes, 'tis gone, 'tis past,—
Past and he knows not and will never know
What treasures of the mine were hidden beneath
The wild-flowers and the weeds! For ever gone!
Methinks that I could weep no less for him

Than for myself, that he should lose my love,
 It is so great and deep. But what cares he?
 He has Lisana's. Had he been but cold
 I could have borne it—but so false, so false!

Re-enter MARIANA.

Mariana. The Conjurer has come.

Fiordeliza. Oh, has he? Here—
 Look—wrap this round me; so,—now bring him in.

[*Exit* MARIANA.]

If he should prove a soothsayer indeed
 He'll draw the curtain from this mystery
 And tell me both what present harbour holds
 Ruggiero, and what fate the future breeds
 For him and me. I trust it is no sin
 Seeking to soothsayers in such straits as mine;
 But if it be, I must. Yet I shall blush
 To question him. I'll turn away my face
 And seem to be, what verily I believe
 I shall be soon, by mortal sickness seized.
 Then, after, I'll revive. [*Lies down on a Couch.*]

Enter RUGGIERO.

Ruggiero. Softly, she sleeps.
 Oh, blessed Sleep! what art can vie with thine
 In healing of the sick! oh, pious Sleep,
 Sister of mercy! nurse her back to health.
 She stirs! Have I awaken'd her?

Fiordeliza. Some spell
Of wondrous potency he mutters now ;
For at his voice there comes a gushing up
Of twenty bubbling springs that fill my breast
With joys of other days.—Sir, if your art
Can track diseases to their caves, I pray you
Pronounce of mine, and whether in the mind
It kennels or the body ; for the print
Might either way incline me.

Ruggiero. Fiordeliza !

Fiordeliza. Who calls me ? Now I know that I am
mad.

What voice is that ?

Ruggiero. The voice of one who once
Could please you, and though that may no more be,
Would still bestead you.

Fiordeliza. 'Tis his voice ! Ruggiero !

Ruggiero. Forgive me, Fiordeliza, if the charm
Of some deceitful hours too quickly past,
Too slowly parted with, misled my steps
To haunt your whereabouts. Forgive me, you ;
I, should I minister to your present need,
Would then forgive myself. What ails you ?

Fiordeliza. Me ?

A headache—nothing—nothing you can cure.
You minister to me ! I thank you,—no :
If need were I could die ; but, praised be God,
I am not in extremity. A quip

That put me in good humour were a cure
For all that ails me.

Ruggiero. Then the word was false
They brought?

Fiordeliza. 'Twas falser than the father of lies
If it cried "help" to you.

Ruggiero. No need of this ;
Of vehement disavowal there's no need
To undeceive me had I thought you kind.
I have but to recall the past.

Fiordeliza. What past ?
Speak out your quarrel with the past ; and I
Will tell you of my quarrel with the present.
I was kind once unless my memory errs,
And if I seem'd to change without a cause
What since has follow'd shows that cause enough
There might have been ; for aught I know, there was.
How read you then the history of the past
To make me seem too harsh ?

Ruggiero. How read I it ?
I read it but as they that run may read ;
A tale of no uncustomary kind :
The love whose dawn beheld its earliest glow
Reflected, as it rose to perfect day
Saw the bright colouring of the vaporous cloud
Grow pale and disappear ; my springing love,
So long as it was pleasant, light, and free,
Was prosperous ; but it pass'd too soon to passion ;

I could not make a plaything of my love ;
I could not match it with your sportive moods
'Till garlands should be conjured into chains ;
I could not lightly agitate and fan
The airier motions of an amorous fancy,
And by a skill in blowing hot and cold
And changeful dalliance, quicken you with doubts,
And keep you in the dark till you should kindle.
I was not ignorant that arts like these
Avail, when bare simplicity of love
Falls flat ; but be they strong or weak, these means
Were none of mine ; and though my heart should break,
(As humbly I believe it will not,) still
More willingly would I suffer by such arts
Than practise them.

Fiordeliza.

Have I then practised arts ?

One art I know,—to judge men by their acts
And not their seemings. I should not be loth
Some faults to own, Ruggiero, did I know
That he to whom I own'd them would own his ;
But there should be a justice in confession ;
Yours is the greater fault ; confess you first.

Ruggiero. Most fully, frankly, freely, from the heart
Will I pour out confessions ; I am proud,
Inflexible, undutiful, self-will'd,
In anger violent, of a moody mind,
And latterly morose ; what further ? sad,
Severe, vindictive.

Fiordeliza. How confession loves
To fight with shadows whilst the substance flies ;
You have not said that in a treacherous hour
You stain'd another's honour and your own.

Ruggiero. That which I have not said I have not done.

Fiordeliza. Where is Lisana ?

Ruggiero. Wheresoe'er she be
Her innocence is with her.

Fiordeliza. But where is she ?

Ruggiero. Secrets that are mine own you may command ;

This is another's.

Fiordeliza. You refuse to tell.

Ruggiero. It is but for a season I refuse ;
I may not tell you till St. Michael's Eve ;
But then I may.

Fiordeliza. Gramercy for the boon !
Seek, Sir, henceforth the love of those you trust
And never more seek mine. Sir, fare you well !
Excuse the blunder which beguiled you hither ;
And hie you, if conveniently you can,
To some more distant spot than whence you came.

Ruggiero. To you and to your vicinage, farewell !
The refuge that is most remote is best ;
A prison at Palermo not the worst,

[*Exit.*

Fiordeliza. A prison ! And the King, as some believe,
Is greedy for his life. Alas ! alas !

How cruelly I spake ! And at the Farm
And nowhere else perchance could he be safe ;
And I have driven him thence, and he will rush . . .
Oh, look ! I see his blood upon my hands !
Come back, Ruggiero,—dear, beloved Ruggiero !
Return—return—I knew not what I said—
Come back to me—forgive me—oh, come back !

[*Exit.*

Enter FRA MARTINO and GIROLAMO.

Fra Martino. Where is the Lady Fiordeliza ? These letters, Girolamo, bring us the fatal tidings which we have so long expected. Your honoured master died at Jerusalem that very hour that we were sadly celebrating his birthday here at Malespina.

Girolamo. Alas ! we seemed to know it then, and the letters that tell of it now might be thought but to certify what was seen darkly before.

Fra Martino. The Chamberlain writes me that the Countess must repair to Palermo with all convenient speed, for certain ceremonies which the law enjoins. But where is the Lady Fiordeliza ? She will be of more comfort to my Lady than I.

Enter MARIANA.

Mariana. Oh piteous spectacle ! oh rogues and slaves !
That I should live to see it !

Fra Martino.

Mariana !

Mariana. Oh, shame upon you ! Shame ! to stand
like stocks

And see him taken ! Do you hear her shrieks ?

She'll die of this—I know she will—oh shame !

There ! hark ! she shrieks again !

Fra Martino.

Who shrieks ? be calm ;

Say what has happen'd ?

Mariana.

They have seized the Count.

Fra Martino. What Count ?

Mariana.

His Lordship of Arona.

Fra Martino.

Where ?

Mariana. There—not a bowshot from the Castle
gate—

Before my Lady's eyes.

Girolamo.

You say not so !

Where were my men ?

Mariana. Your men indeed ! What men ? You have
no men ;

Twenty bald heads I saw put out at windows,

And gouty feet went shuffling over floors ;

But as to manhood, there is more in me

Than in a hundred of such mummies. Oh !

Had there been one stout-hearted wench to back me !

Fra Martino. Run, Girolamo—send a summons round

To all the Count's retainers. Oh, those cries !

Go, take her to her chamber.—Is she there ?

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Station of St. Elmo in the Forest.*—SILISCO
in pilgrim's weeds.

Silisco. Full many from the Holy Land return
Less holy than they went ; my pilgrimage,
In gratitude and earthly love begun,
To heavenly, let me hope, shall lead at last ;
For 'twas not ended when I westward turn'd,
Nor was I more in Palestine, methinks,
A pilgrim and a stranger in the land
Than here in Sicily I feel myself.
Hark ! there are voices ! travellers, no doubt ;
This shelter then will not be all mine own.
Why should it be ? So churlish am I now
That nothing pleases me but Solitude,
She that for shadows keeps an open house
And entertains the Future and the Past.
Yes—there are voices—from which side I know not ;
And through the mist is nothing to be seen
But apparitions thin—the ghosts of trees.

*Enter the Provost and Marshalsmen, with RUGGIERO as
a Prisoner.*

God's mercy ! 'Tis Ruggiero ! Hush, be still,

Unruly tongue ! In custody, I think.

Provost. Foul ways, foul ways ! When a bog, a fog, and a forest conspire, 'tis well for travellers to be housed betimes. Hey ! but here's a Pilgrim before us ! Light a fire, my lads. Ha ! here's the blood of old Guffo on the hearth-stone still. He resisted to the death and we were forced to slay him. God save you, Sir Pilgrim !

Silisco. Save you, Sir !

Provost. You see here a great man, Sir, that was once. But we will say no more. The course of justice, Sir.

Silisco. I have heard that greatness and justice come together more often as opposites than allies.

Provost. Hey ! How is that ? Seek about, lads, in the wood for the driest sticks you can find, and I'll fetch down the rushes from the loft—looking to locks and bars though first.

[*Exeunt Provost and Marshalsmen.*

Silisco. Ruggiero !

Ruggiero. Sir, you know my name ; what more ?

Silisco. Much more, Ruggiero. Am I then so changed

You know me not ? Were you as changed as I
I scarce can think that beard or gown or hood,
Or tawny paintings of the Syrian sun,
Or inward alteration working out,
Could hide Ruggiero from Silisco.

Ruggiero.

Ha !

Silisco ! Grace defend us ! whence art thou ?

Silisco. From Palestine. But is it thus we meet ?
What courtly perfidy or princely lapse
Hath brought these cursed fetters upon hands
That might have preach'd with Paul ?

Ruggiero. Of that anon ;
'Tis but the chafing of the love-sick King
At losing of Lisana. And you come
From Palestine ? Then the good Count is dead ?

Silisco. No care could save him. To my charge he
gave
A priceless relic for Rosalba's hands,
Wherewith I now repair to Malespina.
Ruggiero. Hush ! here's the Provost.

Re-enter the Provost from above.

Silisco. Did you hear a cry ?
A howling as of wolves ? no, did you not ?
Where be your men ?

Provost. What ! wolves Sir ? Blockheads ! dolts !
If there be wolves, why come they not within ?

[*Exit.*

Silisco. Go, seek thy fellow-blockheads in the fog
And spare us time to speak. Lisana, said you ?
Was she the cause of quarrel ?

Ruggiero. She it was ;
Seeing I hid her from his amorous quest,

And where, he cannot to this day divine.
 'Tis in the convent of San Paolo,
 Whereof my aunt is Abbess. She fulfils
 The time of her noviciate there, which past
 She takes the veil. I kept myself conceal'd
 Till that were done ; and now the day draws near,
 St. Michael's Eve, and, luckless that I am !
 These marshalsmen have clutch'd me.

Silisco.

Luckless? No ;

When we two come together, I deny
 That Fortune can be adverse. Two to four?
 What could we wish? Ruggiero, by my life
 My blood is bounding in me at the thought
 As wildly as an unbroken Barbary horse.
 Hark ! are they coming?

Ruggiero.

Now I know thee well ;

Thy blooming, gay, ungovernable youth
 Comes back upon thy face ; but rein it in,
 Rein in, Silisco, the wild Barbary horse ;
 These marshalsmen, untoward as they are,
 But execute the service that they owe ;
 I would not harm them.

Silisco.

Circumvent them then ;

By stratagem we'll spare to break their bones :
 Yes, yes, I see ; by stratagem we'll work ;
 We'll touch them not ; we will not lift a hand ;
 Yet shall they fly like madmen through the wood
 And leave you free. My wits have been to school

In many an exigency exercised
Since last we met, and scarce shall find their match
In clowns like these.

Re-enter the Provost and the Marshalsmen, the first carrying rushes and utensils for cooking, the others dry sticks.

Provost. Ay, put a light to these and we shall soon have a blaze.

Silisco. Oh, Sir! I pray you, Sir, do not step upon the hearth-stone; nor you, Sir, nor you.

1st Marshalsman. What should hinder us? what's in the hearth-stone?

Silisco. I beseech you, do not. See now! they have trampled over it, all three of them.

Provost. Why what, Sir? what then?

Silisco. Why, did you not say that stain on it was from the blood of some malefactor?

Provost. Ay, it was old Guffo. How hard he died, the old fool! He was hacked and chopped from nape to chine before he fell, and the blood streaming down his white beard! Ugh! it makes me shudder to think of it!

Silisco. And know ye not, then, that this is the night of the release of Barabbas?

Provost. I knew it not; but what if it be?

Silisco. Must a man travel to the Holy Land to know that? Surely ye are not so ignorant but ye know that

there is this night a jubilee of all the malefactors in the regions below, and that if any one shall have trodden this day on the blood of a malefactor, his ghost is permitted to rise at twelve o'clock of the night, on the spot where his blood was trampled.

Provost. Where heard'st thou that, Sir Pilgrim?

Silisco. What is there!

[Starts back and overturns the table. The Marshalsmen rush out of the house, the Provost following and calling them back.]

Did I not tell you that their wits were weak? I'll warrant them to run three miles through bog and briar, before they stop to take breath.

Ruggiero. An easy riddance so far; but the Provost is a shrewd fellow and ere long will bethink himself of his charge.

Silisco. Should he waylay us, we have but to trip up his heels and bind him to a tree; and if he hath upon him the key which unlocks these fetters, there is the edge of a file saved. But whither shall we go?

Ruggiero. The convent of San Paolo is not far distant; St. Michael's Eve is at hand; and I would fain bid Lisana farewell, and see her take the veil. We will not seek harbour there before that day, lest we should be tracked and she be hindered; but if thou wilt, let us live like wild hunters in the woods till St. Michael's Eve.

Silisco. Have with you! there's no roof-tree that I love Like the live roof-tree of the forest. Come.

SCENE II.—*A Room of State in the King's Palace at Palermo.*—ROSALBA, FIORDELIZA, and an Usher.

Usher. Madam, his good Lordship your father bade me say he is seeking the King and will presently bring you word what day is fixed for your investiture.

[*Exit.*

Rosalba. This is the chamber. When I see again
The tapestry and old chairs, a very dream
Seems the past year, from which awakening now,
My childhood seems the sole reality.

Fiordeliza. Yet if I err not, when we last were here
Your childhood was the dream ; the life you then
Were wakening to seem'd very sweetly real.
Do you remember? 'twas the second time
You met Silisco.

Rosalba. Three long days had past
(Long though delightful, for they teem'd with thoughts
As Maydays teem with flowers) since I had first
Beheld him, standing in the sunset lights
Beside a wreck half-buried in the sand
Upon the western shore. I see him now,
A radiant creature with the sunset glow
Upon his face, that mingled with a glow
Yet sunnier from within. When next we met
'Twas here, as you have said ; and then his mien
Was lighter, with an outward brightness clad,

That he may hold high festival unhurt
To-morrow. But I doubt not of the day.
Be here to-morrow when the Court is held
And you shall take your lands.

Rosalba. Oh, father dear,
May not this homage be more private?

Ubaldo. What!
A private homage! never heard of one.
'Tis *coram curiâ*; it must be. Come.
St. Michael's Eve shall be no fast for us
And you shall find a table spread below.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter THE KING *and* NITIDO, *Groom of the Chambers.*

Nitido. I have tracked her, my Lord; I have smelt
her out; and she shall be found in the convent of San
Paolo.

The King. Is that certain?

Nitido. She was seen there by the bedside of a singing
girl called Aretina, once one of the wild ones at Palermo,
now dying devout in the convent hospital and nursed by
Lisana. Aretina sent for her brethren to speak a word
of warning to them before she died; they saw Lisana and
brought me word that she was then about to profess, her
noviciate being just out.

The King. Go to Haggai, the old Jew, and bid him
come to me instantly. Provide me a habit of a Fran-
ciscan friar and meet me here an hour after sunset.

SCENE III.—*The Chapel of the Convent of San Paolo.*—
THE ABBESS, SILISCO, and RUGGIERO.

Ruggiero. A welcome day ! And is her mind then
given
To heavenly thoughts and totally discharged
Of that unhappy passion which so seized
Her spirit for the King ?

Abbess. With but one moon
Of her novice, it had drifted by
Like the soft tumult of a summer storm.
But, cousin, of yourself ? say whither next ?
May I in this deliverance rejoice ?
Will you live safely now beyond the seas ?

Ruggiero. Not so ; it was but for Lisana's sake
That I was fain to skulk ; her lot secured,
I feel my freedom ; I am free thenceforth
To enter on captivity.

Silisco. He scorns
To hide his head upon his own behalf
When charges lie against him that assault
His unstain'd honour. Would that I could wend
With him to Court ; for thither, as I learn,
Resorts Count Ugo's widow, whom I seek.
But in Palermo is a villainous tribe
Of Jews that set their faces like a flint
Against me, and with rights my folly gave
To back them formerly, should they find my slot,

Would hunt me to the death, although my skin
Were all my death could give them. Madam, here
I fain would hide my head.

Abess. Ruggiero's friend
Is more than welcome ; and for you, my Lord,
You're opportune ; there's here a hapless girl
Upon her deathbed who craves constantly
To see you, harbouring in her breast, it seems
Some secret that concerns you.

Silisco. And her name ?

Abess. Silvestra, but the name she went by once
Was Aretina.

Silisco. Ha ! I knew her well ;
How came she hither ?

Abess. Brought some six months since
Upon a litter by a turbulent troop
Of wild and shaggy men, who seem'd her friends,
And craved our care to cure her of a wound
Whereof she languish'd, given her in a brawl.
We made her welcome to the hospital,
And there Lisana nursed her night and day,
And though her body might no more be heal'd,
Breathed health upon her soul ; and now her hour
Approaching, there remains upon her mind,
She says, this only burthen. Rest you here,
Good cousin ; here Lisana comes anon,
And ere the rite proceeds you'll take your leave.
My Lord, I'll bring you to this girl at once,

Lest Death precede us, for he comes with wings.

[*Exeunt* ABBESS *and* SILISCO.

Ruggiero (*alone*). Time was when with a sorrowful regard

I had beheld the clustering tresses clipp'd,
The black veil dropp'd upon a face that beam'd
With youthful beauty. It is so no more.
The fairest flower that e'er was born of earth
Were better cropp'd than canker'd.

Enter LISANA.

Lisana.

Oh ! my Lord,

In this a crowning kindness you confer ;
I pray'd for this, and faithless as I was,
Now that the day had come that was the last,
I thought my prayer denied. Oh ! friend beloved,
Who propp'd this weak heart in its weakest hour,
Rejoice with me, and evermore rejoice !
Your work is done, your recompense achieved,
A thankful soul is saved.

Ruggiero.

Lisana, yes ;

I will rejoice ; I do ; though mortal eyes
Must still have lookings backwards. Yet 'tis best ;
The holiest verily are the sweetest thoughts,
And sweetest thoughts were ever of your heart
The native growth.

Lisana.

No more of that, my Lord ;

It savours of the blandishments of earth.

Look onward only—up the eminent path
To which you led me—which my feet have trodden
With gladness, issuing daily to the light,
Till, meeting now the radiance face to face,
Earth melts, Heaven opens, Angels stretch their hands
To take me in amongst them, glory breaks
Upon me, and I feel through all my soul
That there is joy, joy over me in Heaven.

Ruggiero. Then joy too shall be over you on earth.
Mine eyes shall never more behold your face
Till, looking through the grave and gate of death,
I see it glorified and like to His
Who raised it ; but I will not waste a sigh
On what, if seeing, I should see to fade.

Lisana. Farewell ! my Master calls me.

Ruggiero. Fare you well.

I pace a lower terrace ; but some flowers
From yours fling down to me, at least in prayer.

Lisana. Oh beautiful on the mountains are the feet
Of those who bring what you have brought to me !
And joy and beauty shall bestrew your path
If prayers of mine may prosper. Fare you well.

[She retires within the rail of the altar in the back-scene. Sacred music is heard. Processions of monks and nuns pass in. She kneels ; her hair is shorn ; a blessing is pronounced upon her by a Bishop ; she retires ; and the monks and nuns follow.]

Ruggiero. There passes from the sight of man a face
 More fit for angels than for men to see ;
 A face that I shall think of in my prayers
 To nourish my devotion. Now for earth
 And earth-encumber'd ways. Oh wilderness,
 Whose undergrowths and overgrowths conspire
 To darken and entangle—here a mesh
 Of petty prickly hindrance, there the wreck
 Of some high purpose stricken by the storm—
 What wary walking shall suffice to thrid
 Thy thickets? Happy they who walk by faith
 And in the dark by things unseen upheld,
 Knowing that clouds and darkness lead to light
 Else haply not attained, and knowing too
 That in this mortal journeying, wasted shade
 Is worse than wasted sunshine.

Enter SILISCO.

How is this ?

A tear upon your cheek ?

Silisco.

Is that so strange ?

Dear soul ! Her death was worthy to be wept
 With showers of tears.

Ruggiero.

Is Aretina dead ?

Silisco. Died in my arms but now, meek penitent !
 With love and joy upon her lips—so sweet
 'Twas as the dying of a summer's day ;

And blessed was the chance which brought me here
In time to make her happier in her death.

Ruggiero. What was it you could do?

Silisco.

Her mind, poor girl,

Was burden'd with two secrets—one the love
She bare me in her earlier jocund days
Which 'twas a solace to disclose in death—
The other of strange import—on her tongue
To tell me when we jostled in the cave
And base Spadone stabbed her from behind.
'Twas this,—that that same treasure which was brought
From Rhodes on board the luckless Maddalena,—
That treasure which we deem'd Calabrian Seas
Had swallow'd with the Boatswain and the Mate
What time you chased them riding on the storm
And saw them wrecked,—yes,—that that treasure still
Is extant upon earth, lodged in that cave.

Ruggiero. Why then your fortunes are retrieved!

Silisco.

Much more

The fortunes of those three rapacious Jews
Whose claim to my late foundered fortunes clung
And now will choke them as they come to the top.
Still am I fortunate that I can face
All claimants, be they Christians, Jews, or Turks;
And fortunate beyond my hope in this,—
Than I can instantaneously repair
In person to Palermo, to fulfil
My mission to Rosalba.

Ruggiero. Speed you well !
I'll follow you to-morrow. For this night
In courtesy I needs must sojourn here.

SCENE IV.—*The Pass of Smarrimento in the Mountains
near the Convent of San Paolo.*—HAGGAI and SADOC.

Haggai. There's more of moonshine than enough ; but
here
The shadows of the rocks fall black. Ay, here,
If we stand close, he comes forthright upon us
Without a glimpse to scare him.

Sadoc. Three to one
Were better though than two. Should Shallum fail . . .
But let me whistle once again.

[*Whistles.*

Lo ! See—

He comes.

Enter SHALLUM.

Shallum. My brethren, what is here to do ?
Your messenger was instant and I came ;
But truly for these mountains and this pass,
I like them not, and left my purse behind.

Sadoc. Then thou hast nought to lose.

Shallum. Except my life.

Haggai. And hark you ! much to win. Put on this
cloak ;

And when thou hear'st a step, upon thy face
Pull down this mask.

Shallum. What, what ! I will not—nay !
What's this ye have in hand ?

Haggai. Hush ! not so loud.
Do as I bid thee and I'll tell thee all.
Ere long a traveller will this way wend
In Friar's weeds. That traveller is the King.
He brings the gold and jewels, got from us,
For some importunate and secret end,
Ten thousand ducats worth : with some few more
Deftly bestowed, I fathomed his intent ;
(Yon Nitido would give his soul for gold)
'Tis from the Convent of San Paolo,
By traffic partly and by stratagem,
To wrest a Novice for his prey, whom else
They presently should cloister. Foul design
And monstrous ! which to baffle we take back
The gold that in our ignorance we gave.

Shallum. What ! Haggai, would'st thou rob the King ?

Haggai. The King ?
Yea, mine own father, were it for his good.

Shallum. But nay, the very stones of every street
Should rise and join the hue and cry amain
To catch the robbers who had robbed the King.

Haggai. But who shall say that he was robbed ?
—not he ;
To tell it were not more of harm to us

Than shame to him. No, no; he'll get him home
 Discomfited, and hide his face. Look up!
 Be of good courage; make a cheerful noise
 Unto the God of Jacob; verily
 I tell thee, when God put it in my heart
 To think this thing, and that the gems and gold
 At noon that left us should come back at night,
 I was as one rejoicing in his own;
 I skippéd like a ram.

Shallum. I like not this;
 I am an aged man; I am not bold
 As one that gets his living on the road
 With the strong hand.

Sadoc. Hark!

Haggai. Shallum, stand up here.

Shallum. I cannot; my flesh trembleth—nay I cannot;
 My belly cleaveth to the ground.

Sadoc. Then, lo!
 Get thee up yonder, and when we fall on,
 Jump thou from rock to rock, and here cry "Ho!"
 And there cry "Ha!" and "Smite him" on the right,
 And "throttle him" on the left, that thou which art
 But half a man, shall seem as thou wert ten.

Shallum. Yea, I will get up yonder; I will jump.

Haggai. Begone then, for I hear a step. Begone.

[SHALLUM *climbs up the rocks.*]

THE KING *enters, and is assailed by HAGGAI and SADOC, with cries of "Booty! booty! Kill him! cut his throat! What! wilt thou? What! wilt thou? What! ten to one and stand out!" whilst SHALLUM shouts from the rocks overhead. Then enters SILISCO.*

Silisco. What's here! a murder? Villains, take ye that.

[*Stabs HAGGAI, who falls. SADOC and SHALLUM fly.*

Haggai. I'm slain, slain, slain! Oh, woe is me! I die.
Oh, Sadoc, Shallum, cowards, traitors, knaves!
No manhood in you, none! I die, I die.

[*Dies.*

Silisco. Sadoc and Shallum! As I live, this wretch
Is Haggai, the old Jew.

The King (taking the mask from the face). Brave
Pilgrim, yes;

I knew him, and 'tis he. But who art thou
To whom I owe my all unworthy life?

Silisco. My name is Buonauto. Sir, for yours,
I am not so undutiful to ask
What, if the moonlight and my erring ears
Beguile me not, I may be bold to guess,
You loth to speak.

The King. Sir, if you know me, this
You likewise know, that deep as is my debt
For this your service, I have power to pay.

Name what you will.

Silisco. My Lord, when next we meet
It may be I shall ask you to remember
The business of to-night.

The King. Meanwhile, good friend,
Be secret. In my tustle with those knaves
I got some hurts and strains. I pray you, Sir,
To help me hence, and find me, if you can,
A horse to take me to Palermo. So.
I walk but clumsily. I thank you. So.

SCENE V.—*The Audience Chamber in the Palace at Palermo.*—*Enter* STEWARD, UNDER-STEWARD, and *Attendants.*

Steward. Call you this a Hall of Audience? Why 'tis a ship's cabin in a gale of wind. Here, Trollo, move this table to the wall and set the throne upon its legs. Where's Grossi? Be tender with it, for the three legs that are old have the dry-rot and the one that is new hath a warp. Is Grossi here?

Under-steward. No, Sir, he is ill of a surfeit.

Steward. I thought so; a walk betwixt bed and board is the best of his day's work. Where is Tornado?

Under-steward. He hath a quarrel with Secco, and will not come in the same room with him.

Steward. The cause—the cause?

Under-steward. Nay, Sir, I know not that.

Steward. Then I will tell you, Sir; short work's the cause;

Short work it is fills palaces with strife.
Nothing-to-do was Master Squabble's mother,
And Much-ado his child. A chair of state
Each side the throne. The Chamberlain's is one;
The other the Justiciary's. So.
A footstool for the Chamberlain. That gout
Will one day be the death of him. There—so—
Now all's in order as befits a Court;
Chambering is seated on the right of the King,
And Justice on his left. Here's Nitido.

Enter NITIDO, with an ewer and napkins.

What, is the King not risen?

Nitido. Risen but now;

Three hours behind his wont.

Steward. Is he not well?

Nitido. He says that, being troubled in his dreams,
He walk'd in sleep, and falling from the sill
Received some hurts and strains.

Steward. Ay, truly, Sir!

And hath he seen the Doctor?

Nitido. No, nor will;

He says he never in his life was sick
But when he saw the Doctor. He is robed
And will be here anon. Off! Off! he comes.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter THE KING, UBALDO, and the CHIEF JUSTICIARY, followed by the Principal Judicial Functionaries, a crowd of Officers and Courtiers, amongst whom is SILISCO, still in his Pilgrim's garb. TRIBOLO the King's Fool, FIORELIZA, and Ladies of the Court.

Ubaldo. It is a trick of youthful blood. In my youth I too would walk in my sleep. I remember Filippo Reni mistook me for the ghost of Angelina Spinola, whom he had forsaken.

Tribolo. And I would walk too. I remember, walking in my sleep one night, I came into Mistress Barbara Malfatto's bedchamber, and again very suddenly proceeded forth of it by the way of the window ; but whether sleeping I walked out or waking was tumbled out, is not written in the Clown's Chronicle.

The King. Didst thou fall far ?

Tribolo. I fell in the garden, and the stem of a daffodilly was broken, besides my leg. My leg was set, and some foolish women call it the best leg in Palermo to this day ; but the daffodilly died of it ; and his last words were . . .

Ubaldo. Enough, Fool ; stand aside.

Tribolo. *Stand aside, the world is wide,*

There's room for folly and place for pride :

Which is which ?

Quoth the poor to the rich.

Ubaldo. Now, if it please your Majesty, this child—
Where is she?—shall perform her homage due,
And take investiture of Count Ugo's lands.
Where is the Countess?

Fiordeliza. She was here but now ;
She went but to her chamber.

Ubaldo. Go and fetch her.

[*Exit an Usher.*]

The King. Meanwhile, if any here, Sirs, hath a suit,
This is St. Michael's festival ; tis now
His time to speak.

Silisco (*stepping from the crowd*). Sir, if it please your
Grace,

A suit have I.

The King. What suit it be I know not ;
But this I know, that thou hast rights and claims .
Which none but I can rate. Prefer thy suit,
Or let the recompense be mine to name
Unsued for and unsought. Three Jews there be,
The one called Haggai, who died yesterday,
The other two, Sadoc by name, and Shallum,
Whose lives and goods are forfeit to the law.
Those goods, whate'er the value, shall be thine,
Good Pilgrim ; Fame delivers them not less
Than a King's ransom ; but if Fame should err,
Ask more, and it is granted.

Silisco. Sire, the sense
Of loyal service done is, unbegilt,

Worth what you say, the ransom of a King.
 These goods, the forfeits of those felon Jews,
 Were sometime own'd by that unhappy youth
 They prey'd upon, the Lord of Malespina.
 I would accept them gladly at your hands ;
 And yet

The King. Speak freely ; aught beside ?

Silisco.

And yet

More gladly would forego them, and receive
 Another boon,—the pardon, shall I say,
 Where fault is none ?—the pardon of a man
 Whom should you in your royal heart replace
 You should yourself replenish, and repay
 My service fifty-fold—the pardon, Sire,
 Of one whom once you counted with the first
 Of councillors and friends, the Lord Ruggiero,
 Count of Arona.

Ubaldo. Pilgrim, art thou mad ?
 Know'st thou this presence ?

The King.

Let him speak, my Lord ;

He knows his privilege and the presence too ;
 He's by permission bold. The suit he moves
 Is one of grave concern. That outlaw'd Count
 I have some cause to think was falsely charged.
 It may be that too light an ear I lent
 Too willingly to enemies of his
 That were no friends to me. But whilst he hides
 And bids defiance to our writ, our grace

Can scarcely flow toward him.

Silisco. Sire, not long
Shall that obstruction stand against the tide
Of your free grace and favour.

The King. Here is she
Whose comely presence, wheresoe'er she moves,
Makes in itself a festival ; the day
Is more adorn'd.

Enter ROSALBA.

Lady, before I claim
The homage to my sovereignty owing,
'Tis fit that to that sovereignty of yours
Which Nature crowns, I bow. Queen had I been,
Not King, I gladly would have given my crown
In barter for your beauty.

Rosalba. Nay, my Lord,
You had not then so easily been pleased.
I pray you, father, prompt me with those words
I ought to speak.

Ubaldo. Kneel first and put thy hands

The Justiciary. Beseech you pardon me, Lord Cham-
berlain,
This homage by the law may not proceed
Until Count Ugo's testament be read.
None doubts the Countess by the will inherits ;
Still doth the law demand that it be read.

Ubaldo. Ho, ho ! my Lord Justiciary ! What's this ?

Here is the King, the fountain-head of justice !
 Who is it that shall dare block up its course
 With muddy gatherings and old wrecks of laws ?
 You, Sir ? or you ? or you ? The good Count died
 In Palestine, and if a will there was
 No note of it remains.

The King. Indeed, my Lord !
 I would it were not so ; for I must needs
 Stay this procedure. Deem not I was false,
 Sweet Lady, or but coining courtly words
 In owning to a sovereignty of yours ;
 For over both of us the Law is King
 And I am most constrain'd.

Enter an Usher with GERBETTO.

Usher. So please your Grace,
 Gerbetto, the Physician.

Gerbetto. To your Grace
 I bear a mission from the Count deceased,
 Whom I to Palestine attended : this
 He charged me to deliver to none but you.

[*Delivers a packet to the KING.*

The King. 'Tis the Count's hand, though shaken.
 'Tis his will.

Ubaldo. Ah ! there's a guardian Angel ever waits
 Upon your Grace ! You cannot, if you would,
 Run cross or counter ! See, Sirs, here's the will !

You're right, my Lord ; the law is still supreme !
A will there should be, and a will there is.

The King. 'Tis strange in purport. "*I, Count Ugo,*
leave

My body to the earth, my soul to God.
My worldly chattels to my wife I leave
Should she remain unwedded. Should she wed,
Or quit this life, I leave them to a friend
And fellow-pilgrim to this shrine, by name
'Buonaiuto.' Witnessing whereto
I set my hand and seal."

Ubaldo. A pilgrim quotha !

A pilgrim to succeed ! Impossible !

A man unknown, unheard of !

The Justiciary. Strange bequest !

Ubaldo. Waste paper ! Rubbish ! A preposterous will !
The good old Count had doubtless lost his wits
Before he died ; we saw what small remains
Were left him when he took the mad resolve
To travel ; and that little he had left
Did plainly die before him.

Rosalba. Speak not so,

Dear father ! he had doubtless good designs
And knew what he was doing.

The King (to Gerbetto). Was it so ?

Gerbetto. The wits that he took hence, my Lord, he
kept

To his last breath. But I can partly solve

The riddle of this will. The man it names
 Was with the Count throughout; by sea and land,
 In troubles and in dangers numberless,
 In perils of the elements in ships,
 In perils of wild beasts in woods and wolds,
 In perils of the midnight robber's knife,
 By thirst and hunger in the desert tried,
 Fever and sickness in the river's mouth,
 By strife and blows in cities; and through all
 That pilgrim bare himself as vow'd and sworn
 To think of danger, sickness, pain, and death
 As accidents unworthy to be weigh'd
 With one hour's comfort he could yield the Count.
 Thus therefore is it that the Count was moved
 Doubtless to make this will.

The King. And what became
 Of this good pilgrim? Hast thou seen him since?

Gerbetto. We parted, Sire . . . By Heaven, I see him
 now!

This is the man!

The King. This he? our friend at need!
 He's some knight-errant then that roams the earth
 In search of bold adventures.

Silisco. Sire, not so;
 That which for good Count Ugo I perform'd
 Fell short of what I owed him, which was more
 Than kingdoms could repay.

Rosalba. Whate'er it be

You owed him, Sir, it cannot be the half
Of what I owe to you. The lands he left
Will never through my second marriage fall,
As he provided, to redeem the debt ;
But I would fain devolve them

Ubaldo.

Daughter ! Child !

I pray you take me with you. Faith of my body !
Devolve them truly !

Silisco.

Lady, is it so ?

And will no second nuptials pay your debt ?
And have you then forgotten that dear pledge
Which lifted from the dust one downcast heart
And bid it for a season soar to Heaven ?
Or will you not remember him to whom
That pledge was given ? 'Tis not long since, though long
To him the time ; for measuring time by change
Threescore and ten he numbers ; grief and care
Were summon'd to a reckoning and paid up
Their long arrears, and from his prime of youth
Wherein he rambled to his knees in flowers
As heedless as Persephoné watch'd by Dis
On yonder plain, he seem'd to pass to age
Through life-long tracts of time, nor marvels now
That many in this presence know not him
Who scarce may know himself ; and yet by you,
If by none else, he hoped to be remember'd ;
But be he like or unlike what he was,
Known or renounced, remember'd or forgot,

You see, thus stripp'd of this dissembling garb,
Him that was once the Lord of Malespina.

Fiordeliza. Rosalba, are you ill? What face is
this

To greet a friend withal? Look up, look up.

Rosalba. Oh, Fiordeliza, is it he indeed?
Is it Silisco?

Fiordeliza. God in heaven can tell!
Men are such masquers I were loth to say.
But if you list to look him in the face
Perchance some gleam may cross you. What I see
Is a well-favour'd sunburnt gentleman,
Whom I, good easy soul, could be content,
For fault of one should counterfeit him better,
To call my friend, Silisco.

Silisco. Yes, in name,
Perhaps in fortunes, but in nature not,
The same Silisco. Lady, once you said,
"A spendthrift never yet was generous."
The word dwelt with me, and its strength and truth,
By anguish aided and adversity,
Wrought in my heart an inward change entire,
And some things you have heard may seem to show
I am not what I was, ungenerous.
But should I press you now for my reward
I well might seem so. Thus once more to touch
This hand with lips unused to softness now
Is all I hazard.

Rosalba. Oh, forgive, forgive
 The joy that, overjoy'd, belies itself
 And mimics grief. I would not if I could
 Dress it in words, but God, who gave the joy,
 Will give you light to see it. Then will you see
 A love that from the hour when first we met,
 That instant of the meeting of our eyes,
 Possess'd my soul, and suddenly as with a flood
 And bursting of the chambers of the deep
 O'erflow'd my life and nature. Wrestling much
 With destiny, with duty, and with love,
 I sought for guidance and I seem'd to err ;
 But God in mercy to my sinking soul
 Has brought it back to life and back to peace,
 Awakening thus upon a sun-bright shore
 With Love and Hope to greet me.

Ubaldo.

Well ! why, well !

This wheel of Fortune turns about, my Lord.
 'Tis very strange ! but I believe you well,—
 That you will use your riches thus restored
 With better sense of what they're worth.

The Provost.

My Lords,

My duty bids me disabuse your minds ;
 This is no more my Lord of Malespina
 Than I am King of Sicily.

The King.

What? what?

The Provost. This is that very rogue that tripp'd
 me up

And in the forest set my prisoner free,
The Lord Ruggiero.

Silisco. Sire, I needs must own
That I was guilty of that rescue. Still
I hope to be forgiven ; for here is he
I rescued, ready to repair the fault
By re-surrender.

Enter RUGGIERO.

Fiordeliza. Oh, Rosalba, see !
See who is here ! What will be done ? Oh, Heaven
Yet the King looks not angry.

The King. Count, not yet—
Speak not till I have spoken, lest thy pleas
Foretell me of my justice in acquittal.
Of that offence which thou wert charged withal
Touching thine office, I confess thee free :
Some flatterers of some follies of mine own
Were forgers of the charge. I think, besides,
Thou canst acquit thee on a separate score,
Though there myself was thine accuser, moved
I know not by what promptings of the Devil :
I think that thou canst render good account
Of that fair maid Lisana, whom by stealth
Thou took'st so suddenly from the Court.

Ruggiero. My Lord,
The maid you speak of is profess'd a Nun ;

A Nun since yesterday. I lived conceal'd,
For her sake solely, till the Church could claim
That guardianship she had till now from me.

The King. Something of this had reach'd me. You
stand clear

With me, my Lord; and with no little shame
Nor light compunction for my own misdeeds
Your offices and honours I restore.

But where is she with whom to stand absolved
Is best of absolutions—where is she
To whom to be restored is more, I know,
Than Kings can give or take?

Ruggiero. When last we met
A cloudy fate had compass'd me about
And I was not so fortunate to please
Her whom to please in duty, faith, and truth,
Has been my life's endeavour: am I now
More happy, standing in the light?

Fiordeliza. To me
Is it you speak?

Silisco. Rosalba, look! the tears
Break o'er the saucy brightness of her face
First to make answer.

Fiordeliza. What am I to say?
I wonder, Sir, what business 'twas of yours
To make that maid a runaway at first,
And then, when you were tired of her, a Nun.

Ruggiero. Lady, I think you ask me this in sport;

But were it ask'd in earnest, I should pray
Gerbetto to make answer.

Gerbetto. Lady, yes,
'Tis I should speak to this. When summon'd hence
To Palestine, I left my child in charge
To this good Knight, and well hath he fulfill'd
The trust he took upon him.

The King. Surely now
You will not so untoward be to try
His patience longer; think how many a year
His suit has linger'd.

Fiordeliza. Well, Sir, if your Grace
Has less of patience left in looking on
Than I that bear the burthen,—then, I think
It may be, for your ease and for mine own,
I shall be tutor'd to say "Yes"—in time.
The scarecrow, Sir, was married to the maypole
In time; but, bless me! 'twas a tedious courtship.

Ruggiero. On your own time and humour will I wait
As heretofore.

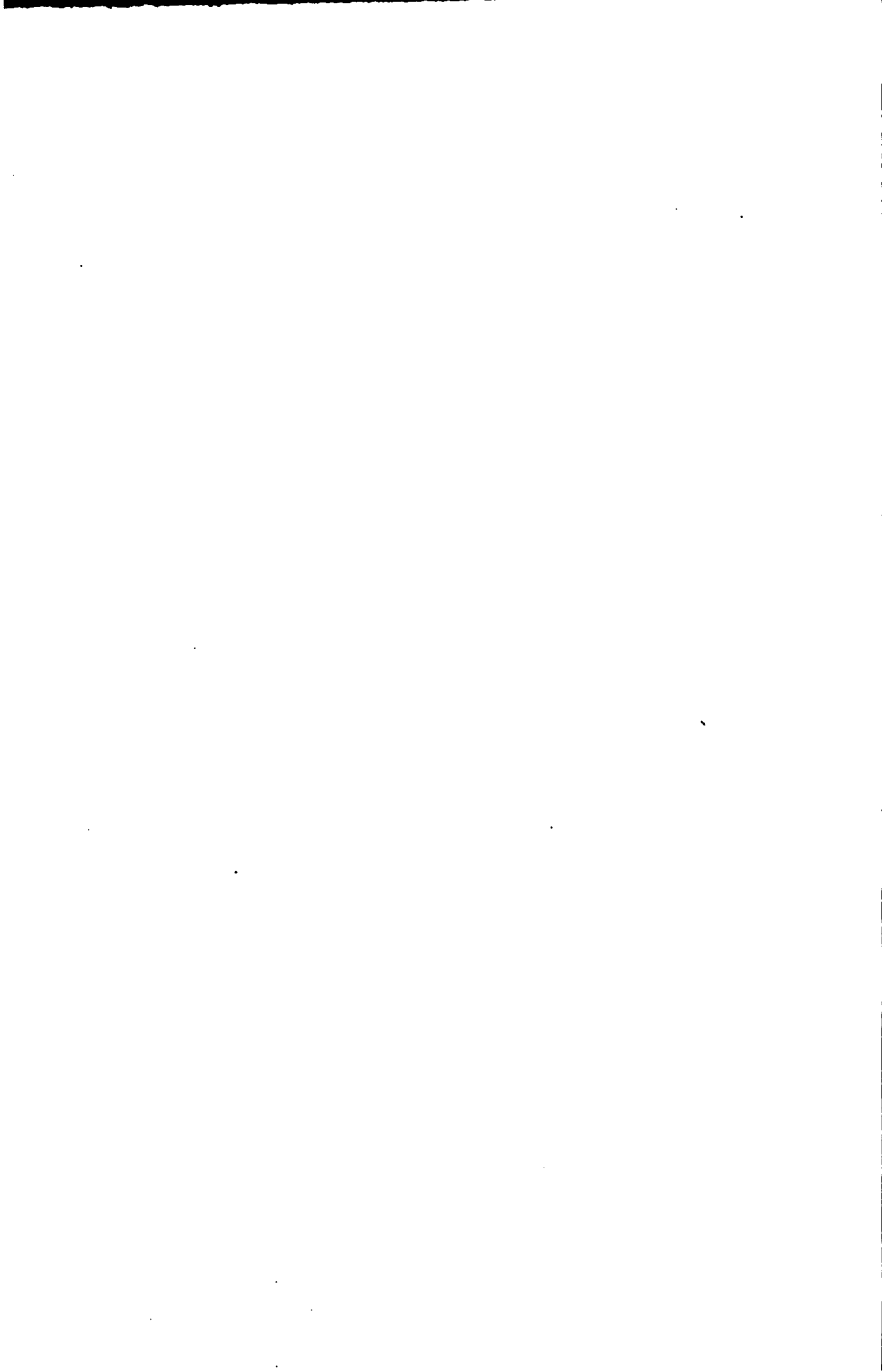
Fiordeliza. Then, dear Ruggiero, YES.
For 'tis my humour that the time be now.

Silisco. Then shall this glorious Now be crown'd the
Queen
Of all the hours in all the ages past,
Since the first Morning's rosy finger touch'd
The bowers of Eden. Grace defend my heart
That now it bound not back to what it was

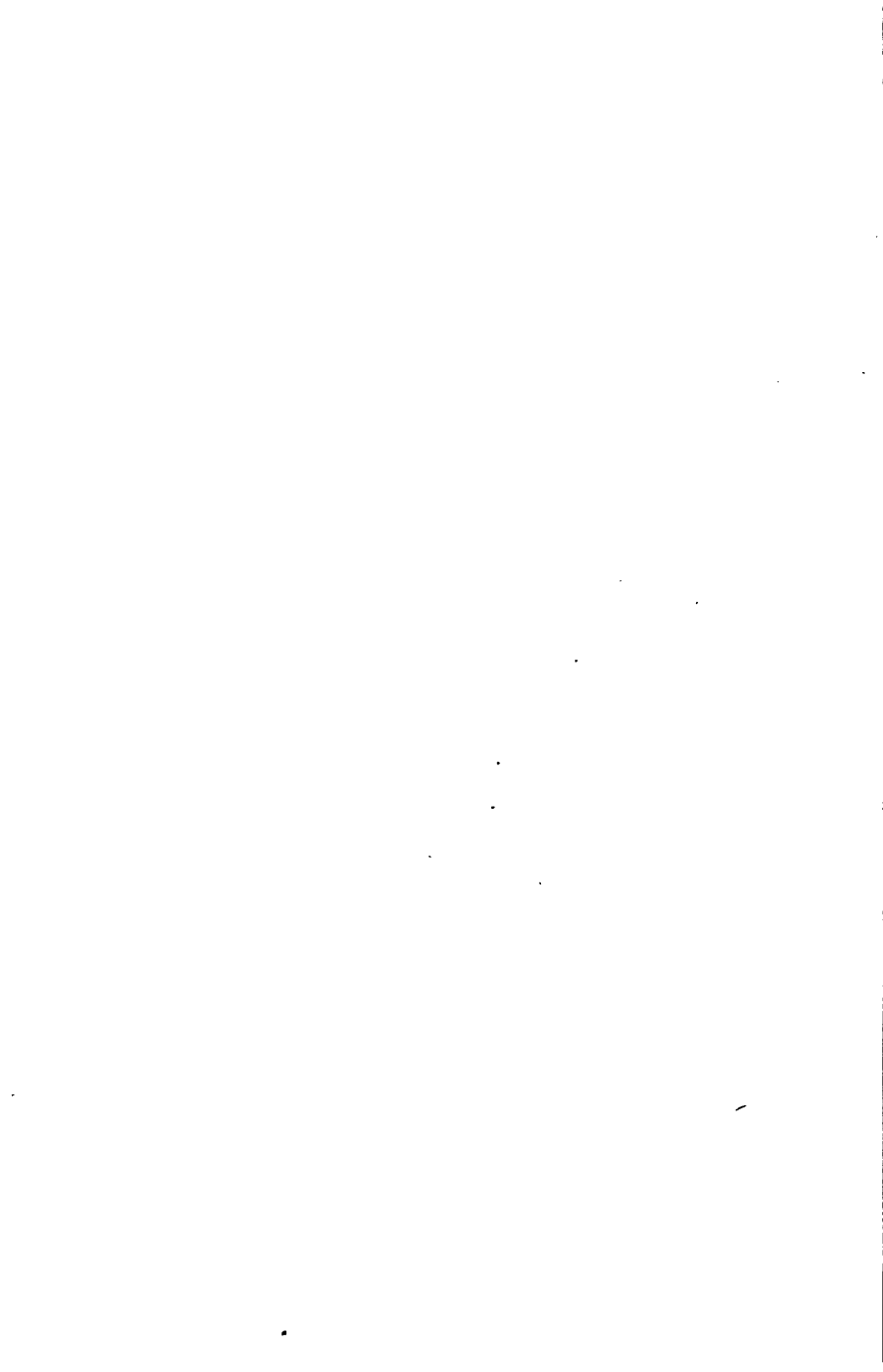
In days of old, forgetting all that since
Has tried and tamed it! No, Rosalba, no—
Albeit yon waves be bright as on the day
When, dancing to the shore from Procida,
They brought me a new joy, yet fear me not—
The joy falls now upon a heart prepared
By many a trouble, many a trial past,
And striking root, shall flourish and stand fast.



ST. CLEMENT'S EVE.



TO
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUC D'AUMALE,
THIS COMMEMORATION
OF A PRINCE OF THE ROYAL HOUSE OF FRANCE,
MORE FAVOURED BY NATURE THAN BY FORTUNE,
IS DEDICATED
WITH GREAT RESPECT
• BY
THE AUTHOR.



PREFACE.

IN this Play I have desired to give some such representation as dramatic writing can convey, of a period in the history of France under Charles VI. when society was reduced, by disorders in the realm and schism in the Church, to perhaps the worst condition of which the Middle Ages afford an example. The only feature of the time which can be contemplated with pleasure is the exceeding love which the people bare to their afflicted King. For the alienation of his mind, though intermittent, relieved him in their eyes from all responsibility for their sufferings ; showing how deprivation of power in a Sovereign (casual it is true in this case, but significant perhaps of the like results in cases in which it is politically ordained), may tend to enhance, rather than abate, the love and reverence of the people. Popular indignation was directed upon others, whilst loyalty and pity held a free course ; and the youthful errors of the King (which were not those of an evil disposition) were forgotten in his calamity. He deserved that they should be forgotten ; for so often as reason returned he seemed to be as tenderly sensible of the sufferings of his subjects as they were of his ; and what little precarious power he possessed from time to time, walking always on the edge of insanity, was exerted for their relief.

His brother Louis, Duke of Orleans, was the representative of the chivalry of France for the time being : " Rien si chevaleresque," says the historian : " D'ailleurs il étoit

aimable, agréable et doux dans ses manières ; son langage étoit facile, raisonnable et séduisant ; il savoit s'entretenir mieux qu'aucun Prince avec les Docteurs et les hommes habiles des conseils du Roi." And in the appeal delivered to the Council by the Abbé of St. Fiacre on the part of his widow, shortly after his death, it is averred to have been known to every one that in eloquence and discernment his equal was hardly to be found ; "*Sapiebat,*" he adds, "*sicut Angelus Domini ;*" whilst in his life and manners he was frank, gentle, and compassionate ; and in personal beauty, says the Abbé, if that were a matter to be spoken of, there needed no more to be said than that he resembled the King.

If the Duke was chivalrous, not so was the age in which he lived. Nor indeed is chivalry (in the sense of nobility of mind) the attribute of any age or of Knights and Nobles at large in any time or country, though there may be more individual examples of it in one age than in another. And those who, like Ariosto (himself born in the fifteenth century), ascribe it to a class, will generally be found, like him, to put it back to a few centuries before any times that they can know much about.

The fifteenth century at all events was full of frauds and treacheries in every walk of life ; and even a chivalrous man in those days, if sagacious, might have been expected to be suspicious. But amongst the chivalrous qualities of Louis Duke of Orleans was a generous, perhaps careless, confidence in men who were not worthy to be trusted. The antagonist by whom he was first confronted at his Brother's court, his Uncle Philippe le Hardi, Duke of Burgundy, was, it is true, as honourable as himself ; and Louis probably made no mistake when, in a will dated in the season of their hostility, with a magnanimous faith in the other's magnanimity, he left his children to the guardianship of his enemy. But his Uncle died before him, and when the quarrel descended to Philippe's son, "Jean sans Peur," Louis' confidence in the honour of an enemy was fatally misplaced.

For whilst the Duke of Orleans represented the chivalry of the time such as it was (not a virtuous or stainless chivalry), the new Duke of Burgundy was an equally genuine representative of its cruelty and pride. If he was without fear, he was also without faith ; and his short career was scarcely less perfidious than ferocious, from the tragedy in the *Vieille Rue du Temple*, till justice met him, in the form of what may be called specific retribution, on the bridge at Montereau.

The fidelity of an historian is not to be expected of a dramatist. Some transposition of events and compression of time have been necessary to bring certain salient incidents of the period within the compass of the action ; and without some variation of detail truth to art must have been sacrificed to historic truth in a larger measure than is demanded for the chief ends which historic truth is designed to subserve. Even incidents which, being historically true, were at the same time eminently dramatic or picturesque, have not always been available ; inasmuch as they could not be harmonized with other dramatic effects. But under these conditions (which are I believe inevitable in all such works) my endeavour has been to represent faithfully the characters of the principal persons and the temper of the times.

The contemporary or nearly contemporary authorities are the *Chronicles of Jean Juvenal des Ursins*, of the *Religieux de St. Denys*, and of *Monstrelet* ; and a narrative almost equally minute, but less diffuse and more animated, may be read in the "*Histoire des Ducs De Burgogne de la Maison de Valois*," by M. De Barante ; an author who, more than any other modern historian, seems to live in the times of which he writes.

EAST SHEEN,

April, 1862.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

CHARLES THE SIXTH of France (*otherwise Charles Le Fou, or Charles Le Bien Aimé*).

LOUIS, *Duke of Orleans, his brother.*

JEAN, *Duke of Burgundy, his cousin (otherwise Jean-Sans-Peur).*

THE BASTARD OF MONTARGIS, } *Followers of the Duke of*
RAIZ DE VEZELAY, } *Burgundy.*

RAOUL DE ROUVROY, }
RANULPH DE ROCHE-BARON, and } *also Burgundians.*
others,

GEOFFREY DE LAVAL, *Page to the Duke of Orleans.*

GRIZ-NEZ, *Fool to the Duke of Orleans.*

HENRI DE VIERZON,

RENÉ D'AICELIN,

LORÉ DE CASSINEL, and *others,* } *Orleanists.*

ROBERT DE MENUOT (*otherwise Robert the Hermit*).

THE PROVOST OF PARIS.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF SENS (*Metropolitan of France*).

The Dukes of BERRI and BOURBON and the Titular KING of SICILY,
Princes of the Blood Royal of France.

FATHERS BUVULAN and BETIZAC, *Augustinian Monks.*

FATHER RENAULT, *Confessor to the Convent of the Celestines.*

PASSAC, *the King's Barber.*

The King's Chamberlain; A Sergeant of the Watch; A Painter;
Priests; Citizens; Officers of Justice.

WOMEN.

THE ABBESS OF THE CELESTINES.

IOLANDE DE ST. REMY, } *Pupils in that Convent.*
FLOS DE FLAVY, }

Nuns, Novices, and Pupils.

Place, PARIS.

Time, NOVEMBER, 1407.

ST. CLEMENT'S EVE.



ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Palace of the Archbishop of Sens.*

The PROVOST OF PARIS and ROBERT THE HERMIT.

Provost. His Grace has not yet risen ; his health is weak ;

But from his chaplain we shall hear anon
Whether it please him, when the Council meets,
To call you in. I doubt not that he will.

Robert. My call is from a greater than his Grace,
Whom both obey.

Provost. Meantime 'tis fit you know
What face we wear at Paris.

Robert. France elsewhere
Bleeds from a thousand wounds. Each step I took
In my long journey hither, brought in sight
Old scars and new. What face the town puts on

Robert. On either head
A vial will I empty.

Provost. Well—so—well—
But if I err not, the Archbishop's Grace
Would gladly know the purport and the drift
Of that you shall discourse.

Robert. It may not be.
Say to his Grace I know it not myself.
Whate'er God puts it in my heart to say
That will I speak ; but counsel will I none
With mortal man.

Provost. The courage of the tongue
Is truly, like the courage of the hand,
Discreetly used, a prizeable possession ;
But what befits the presence of a King
Is boldness temper'd with some touch of fear.

Robert. There where I stand in presence of my King,
There stand I, too, in presence of my God.
Fearing my God I come before my King
With reverence, as is meet, but not with fear.

Provost. Well, for the King, poor gentleman, no
speech
How bold soe'er and telling bitter truth
Would meet a frown from him. His brother shares
The sweetness of his nature. Other clay,
Dug from some miry slough or sulphurous bog,
With many a vein of mineral poison mix'd,
Went to the making of Duke Jean-Sans-Peur.

This knew the crafty Amorabaquin.
 When captives by the hundred were hewn down
 'Twas not rich ransom only spared the Duke.
 'Twas that a dying Dervish prophesied
 More Christian blood should by his mean be shed
 Than e'er by Bajazet with all his hosts.
 Therefore it was to France he sent him back
 With gifts,—and what were they? 'twas bowstrings made
 Of human entrails.

Robert. Choice the offering! Yea,
 Fit bounty of fit patron to fit friend.

Provost. Good Robert, neither thine nor yet that
 voice,

Were it again on earth, which sober'd Saul,
 Can mitigate Duke John, or heal the strife
 Which from these quarrelsome cousins breathes abroad
 War, pestilence and famine. Hope it not.
 Once by his Grace of Bourbon's intercession
 Peace was patch'd up and injuries forgiven.
 Well, some three months was wonderful accord;
 Then came black looks, and then "To arms, to arms!"
 The sole sick hope of France is in the King.
 Awhile his malady remits, and joy
 Lights up the land; then darkness re-descends.
 Give but to him stability of health
 And all were well. Alas! it will not be.

Robert. Whence came the chastisement the mercy
 may.

Provost. Whence came the chastisement we know ;
but how
And wherefore, was a mystery for long years
And diversely discoursed. Urban of Rome
Did nothing doubt 'twas that the King had own'd
Clement of Avignon ; whilst Clement knew
'Twas that he fought not to the death 'gainst Urban ;
His doctors said 'twas that he ceased their drugs ;
All doctors else, that he had sometime ta'en them ;
The people deem'd it in its first assault
A judgment for the imposts and the aids,
But seeing these have doubled since, they fell
From this belief, and as he was a boy
When first afflicted, were it this, they said,
His Council should go mad and not himself.
Thus error is but transient, truth prevails
Sure as day follows night, and now none doubts,
What to wise men was patent from the first,
That 'tis the work of sorcerers, men accursed
And slaves of Satan, and by him suborn'd
Upon this Christian Kingdom to bring down
Disaster and dismay, and snare the souls
Of thousands daily shedding brothers' blood.
But who they be, these sorcerers, there's the doubt ;
Not few have been impeach'd and hang'd or burnt ;
But no success ensuing, the charge, 'tis deem'd,
Was fashion'd in excess of godly zeal
Which Satan misdirected ; thus the quest

SCENE II.—*A Street.*—*A Religious Procession crosses the Stage, chanting a "Gratias agimus" and carrying a Shrine with the true and entire head of St. Denys, accompanied by a throng of citizens.*

1st Citizen. Well, for this mercy of mercies God be praised !

And if his gracious Highness would but please
To walk abroad, should not his eyes behold
The loving'st truly and the joyfulest city
That earth can show.

2nd Citizen. I never saw the like ;
'Tis as a town for many a month besieged
When now the siege is raised and food and wine
Come in by cart-loads. Seem'd we not before
Half starved, and now half tipsy ?

3rd Citizen. Starved we were
And starved we are ; but foul befall the wretch,
If such there be, who would not feed for life
On husks and draff if so it might please God
To keep the King in health.

Woman. Bless him for ever
When he was well, not one so mean among us
But he could spare a smile to make her happy.
Bless his sweet gracious kingly face ! I saw him
Kneeling at mass so comely and so holy !
But Lord, Sirs, he was ghostly pale.

Priest. Poor soul!
 What hath he suffer'd! Never king but David
 Was so tormented; yea, the sorrows of Hell
 Gat hold of him.

2nd Citizen. Alas, and may again!

3rd Citizen. Mercy forbid!

Priest. St. Clement's Eve draws near;
 'Twi'th this and then, watch ye and pray. Ye know
 The ancient verse writ with a raven's quill
 Which threatens at that hour the House of Valois.
 'Tis thus it runs:

"When fourteen hundred years and seven

Have slid since Jesus came from Heaven,

Fates and Furies join to weave

A garland for St. Clement's Eve.

House of Valois, hold thine own!

A shadow sits upon a throne.

Ware what is and is to be,

There's blood upon the Fleur-de-Lys."

Wherefore if aspects evil and malign
 Ye from that House would turn, 'twi'th this and then
 Watch ye and fast and pray.

3rd Citizen. Yes, father, yes;
 And ever 'tis my prayer that God would please
 To point a finger at those sorcerers
 That work the King this ill. Give us to know
 What men they be, we'd slice them into gobbets
 And fling their flesh to the dogs.

2nd Citizen. Look, who comes here ;
Surely the wise and worthy monks from Eu
Who come to search it out, and with them one
That's sore suspected, Passac, the King's barber.

Enter from the side at which the procession had passed out
FATHER BUVULAN and FATHER BETIZAC, followed by
two Marshalsmen with PASSAC in custody and a throng
of Citizens shouting.

Passac. Oh hear me ! Sirs, alas, ye will not hear me !

Citizens. Where is the cart? the cart has fallen be-
hind :

Stop for the cart ; no faggots here, no pitch !

Passac. Oh hear me, Sirs : I ever loved the King,
Yea, was his very worshipper ; I hurt him !
I that would die to give his gracious soul
One moment's peace.

Father Buvulan. My friends, ye are not fools,
Ye are not senseless blocks ; ye have your wits ;
Ye can discern the truth. Behold this barber ;
Look at this bag and ring. What shall be said ?
Here's one that, being barber to the King,
Puts me this ring into a corpse's mouth,
(A Jew's that had been hung was Tuesday week
For strangling Chrisom babies ere the Priest
Sweating with haste could reach to christen them),
Sticks me this ring into this corpse's mouth,

Leaves it three days, then puts it in this bag
Sewn with the dead man's skin and fill'd to the neck
With his accursed ashes, and the bag
Wears next his heart. What shall be said, I ask ?

Citizens. Away to the stake—hale him along—away !
And prod him with your lances as ye go.

Passac. Oh, Sirs, 'tis false ; I never did such things.
Kind, noble Sirs, believe me, for the ring
I had it of my wife when I was courting ;
The bag, Sirs, holds the ashes of St. Maud ;
'Twas given me by the Abbot of Beaumanoir
By reason I had shaven him fifteen years,
When, times being hard, he could not pay in cash
And gave me this.

Father Betizac. Truly the Father of Lies
Sits like a weaver at his loom and weaves.
You'll find him, Sirs, as hardy to deny
The Eve of Pentecost, when he was seen
At midnight in the Rue des Ursulines
Ranging and whirling round and round the gibbet,
Whiles the dead bodies, swinging in the wind,
Sang " Ave Sathanas ! " That too he'll deny.

Passac. As I'm a Christian man, Sirs, it is false.

Father Betizac. I told you so ; I knew he would deny it.

Passac. At midnight on the Eve of Pentecost
I was at nocturns in the Chapel Royal.

2nd Citizen. Oh monstrous liar ! I saw thee with mine
eyes

Ranging and scouring round and about the gibbet
At midnight chimes ; yea, with mine eyes I saw thee ;
Thou hadst put on the body of a cur,
A cock-tail'd cur.

Father Betisac. And did ye mark, my friends,
Now as we pass'd the true head of St. Denys,
And playing on our easy credulous minds
He knelt and cross'd himself,—mark'd ye, I say,
How the head frown'd ?

3rd Citizen. It did ; I saw it frown ;
An angry frown ; I trembled like a leaf.

Passac. 'Twas at these monks it frown'd and not at
me.

'Tis they that are magicians, as I can prove ;
'Tis they.

Father Buvulan. Oh mercy on my sinful soul !
I ne'er knew Satan so enraged before.
Here comes the cart ; bring him along, false hound !
Mark when he burns if the flames be not blue.

Citizens. Bring him along—a faggot each—come on.

Passac. Dolts ! Idiots ! Will ye have my life ? Then
take it ;

And may the curse of God and all good men
And all the blessed Company of Heaven
Swallow you quick, ye blood-bespatter'd knaves,
And send you seething to the bottomless pit ?

Father Betisac. Hoo ! grace defend us ! What ! blue
flames already !

Look to him, serjeants, he is dangerous ;
 So—knot his hands behind him. Up with a psalm :
 Sing as ye go the “Deus ultionum.”

[*Exeunt—the Monks last. Then enter the BASTARD
 OF MONTARGIS and RAIZ DE VEZELAY.*

Montargis. Ay, a good wench I grant you, free and
 merry

Before the wind ; but luff her up and lo !
 Crack goes the topmast, rudder fells the pilot,
 Split flies the foresail. . . . Ha ! is yonder monk
 Yes, by St. George it is. . . . Ho, Betizac !
 I think he hears me. . . . Yes, a lively wench,
 And, as they all are, winning—till she's won ;
 Then comes a change.

De Vezelay. What ! is it even so !
 Has Flos then fallen from her high estate
 To pass for flat ?

Montargis. Save when she's furious. Ha !

Re-enter FATHER BETIZAC.

The man I sought—a serviceable man ;
 Wilt do me a good turn ?

Father Betizac. Your worship's slave,
 Obedient ever. In my way, my Lord ?
 Aught in my way ?

Montargis. In one, friend, of thy ways ;
 For thou hast two ; with roses strewn is this ;
 That in like manner red—but not with roses.

'Tis in the first I need thee ; thou hast spells,
 Potions and powders, shells and herbs and seeds
 Gather'd or mixed when Dian in eclipse
 Made Venus doubly bright.

Father Betizac. My Lord, I have ;
 How come by 'twere not good for me to say
 Nor you to hear. But thus much I may tell ;
 When Ashtaroth and Asmodai were flung
 From heaven to earth, they harbour'd in a cave
 In Normandy, when spitting on the ground,
 There where they spat upgrew a wondrous plant,
 Whereof the leaves, powder'd and mixed in wine,
 Are of that virtue they shall change the hearts
 Of twice-vow'd Vestals.

Montargis. Such a one is she
 Whom I would subjugate ; the Northern Lights
 Shine with no softer radiance, nor frequent
 A frostier region. Lo ! a mineral spell,
 Less named than known in necromantic lore,
 I give thee in acquittance.

[*Gives him a gold piece.*]

Send that drug.

Betizac. 'Tis yours, my Lord.

Montargis.

Ere night ?

Betizac.

My Lord, ere night

I'll send it you.

Montargis. A Cupid of mine own
 I'll send to fetch it, rather. Fare thee well.

[*Exit BETIZAC.*]

De Vezelay. How's this, Montargis? Flos then fell not flat

Till rose another o'er her?

Montargis. Well, 'tis true.

De Vezelay. Why, here's a change! like Carnival to Lent,

Done in a day.

Montargis. Truly a Lenten change
Fits not my festive spirit; nor do I look
For forty days to fast, or four or one.
If not befriended by the friar's philter,
I know by what; for I am of the mind
Of Jean de Malestroit, that scrupulous Count
Who beat his chaplain till the good man bent
To grant him dispensation.

De Vezelay. Ay, but Flos;
Is she to dance along the slipper path
She thinks shall bring her to the house of joy
And find herself confronted by contempt
Even at the gates? for was it not this night
You were to fly together?

Montargis. 'Twas to-night.
There is a midnight service in the chapel.
Flos and her fast friend Iolande St. Remy
Attend it. So do I. The Rue St. Mark
Is twenty paces distant. There should wait
Two saddles empty and some five well fill'd.
Pity it were such goodly preparation

Should run to waste. Now Iolande St. Remy
Sits on the throne of this unvalued Flos
And so shall fill her saddle.

De Vezelay. By consent?

Montargis. The horse consents and that's enough. Ere
dawn

We shall have reach'd Montlhery. On the road
Her strength shall fail and she shall lack support ;
Then comes the cunning Friar's well-mixed wine
And all is as it should be.

De Vezelay. For myself,
I hold it less than loyal by a spell
To work upon a woman.

Montargis. Tut! Reprisals.
She cannot by what conjuring you will
Be more bewizarded than I'm bewitched.
But hark you ! we must take some thought for Flos ;
No midnight freaks for her. My Lady Abbess
Must learn that she is mischievously minded
And lock her up. Raiz, look to this for me
And I will hold thee my true friend for life.
I needs must to the council ; for at three
They meet to wrangle of the King's disease,
And cloudy John expects me.

De Vezelay. Be content ;
Flos shall be cared for—you shall know to-night
With what success.

Montargis. Be diligent. Adieu. [Exit.

De Vezelay. Here is a zigzag ! I am wicked too
In some sort, and with women ; but thus to woo
And thus to win and thus to strike and stab,
Exceeds my tether. Poor forsaken Flos !
Not all her brightness, sportfulness, and bloom,
Her sweetness and her wildness and her wit,
Could save her from desertion. No, their loves
Were off the poise. Her boundless flood of love
Swept out his petty rill. Love competent
Makes better bargains than love affluent ;
He needs had loved her had she less loved him,
And had I less loved her—she might—in time—
But no, she never could have stoop'd to me.
I'll do his errand—not for his sake, but hers.
No better can befall her than this night
To ponder in retreat. Some doubtful tale
I'll tell to waken up my Lady Abbess,
Which, its end answer'd, shall belie itself
And leave the damsel stainless. For her friend,
Poor Iolande, if I can save her, so ;
Not through the Abbess—he would smell me there—
Some other way—and now that I bethink me,
I know the stroke shall strike his lance askew.
My Lord of Orleans is no friend to him
And loves a chance adventure. He shall hear,
And if Sir Bastard come not by a check
I'll yield some credit to his conjurors.
He's cruel over much. I've heard it said,

When Blanche de Honcourt lost her hold, ere long
A body in a sack was seen afloat
Betwixt the bridges. Such things should not be.

SCENE III.—*The Council Chamber in the King's Palace.*—

*The KING, the DUKES OF ORLEANS and BURGUNDY,
the ARCHBISHOP OF SENS, and other Councillors.
Officers of State in attendance, amongst whom are the
BASTARD OF MONTARGIS and the PROVOST OF PARIS.*

The King. My Brother, Cousin John, and my good
Lords,

Much have I long'd once more to meet you here,
And much it sometimes seem'd I had to say;
But, Sirs, my voice is weak, more weak my wits,
Being, as I am, new risen from the grave,—
The grave, I say, wherein my mind was buried,—
And you shall pardon me if tongue or thought
Should falter, one or both. We meet to-day
To reason of my illness; whence it comes
And how to hold it off. But, Sirs, much more
I would that ye should reason of the realm,
Discern what ails it and divine what balm
Shall heal its ghastly wounds. Oh, my good Lords,
It breaks my very heart of heart in pieces,
So often as I wake from these bad dreams,
To find what's real worse. Apply your hearts,

I pray you, to restore my Kingdom's health,
And then take thought for mine.

Archbishop. So please your Grace,
Under God's providence, the Kingdom's health
Attends upon the King's, whose health and weal
Are as the fountain-head whence all the land
Is water'd; 'tis in you your Kingdom finds
All aid and increase, even as the Psalmist saith,
"All my fresh springs in thee."

Burgundy. And therefore first
Behoves us reason of the first, and ask
Who and what are they that with devilish art
Poison the wells and fountain-head of France;
And there be now arrived from Normandy
Two wise and worthy monks, vouch'd by Sanxerre,
Your Highness's true liege and faithful friend,
For men of marvellous aptness to rip up
The works of witchcraft. He avers, my Lords,
The Province hath been purged the last ten years
Of wizards to the number of threescore
And twice so many witches, which is due
Most chiefly to their skill and diligence.
I hold it were no wisdom to forego
Such aid as theirs.

Orleans. One word, my Lords, to that.
What know we of these monks or of their art?
Save only that Sanxerre (whom God forbid
That I should blame, for he is wise and true)

Gives credence to their skill. But wisdom errs
In nought more oft than putting easy trust
In tales when things are dark. For man is loth,
In argument where grounded thought is none
And yet the theme solicitous, to fold
The wings of thought and drop its lids and own
That in a night of knowledge to roost and sleep
Is judgment's sole sagacity. Thus he
That justly should have balanced 'twixt two weights
Substantial both though diverse in degree
Of credibility, shall lose himself,
Intent on vacancy, in snatching shadows
And pondering of imponderable notes.
I say, Sirs, we know nothing of these monks
Nor of their art.

Burgundy. Good cousin, by St. George
Rumour hath wrong'd thee much if of some arts
Thou know'st not more than most. What's that I see
Circling thy left forefinger? Jean de Bar,
Were he alive, could tell us of a work
Wrought on a golden ring which bore enchased
The royal arms of France.

Orleans. And though he's dead,
Mayhap, fair cousin, you shall see him somewhere;
And that ere long, seeing the merry pace
You travel on that broad and trodden way
That leads to his abode. Sirs, Jean de Bar,
Who, as ye know, made traffic of my youth

And coin'd my ignorance, a just death died.
I wish his peers no other. By his aid
(Not gifted with that affable accost
And personal grace which bids my cousin trust
In his own prowess—conquering and to conquer)
I hoped to triumph in affairs of love.
He promised too to call me up the Devil,
Whom (not content with some I daily met
Of aspect diabolic) I craved to see.
These follies of my green unguided youth
Were render'd to the flames with Jean de Bar.
Still of the art itself I spare to speak,
Dilating but, in quality of witness,
The art's practitioners as I have known them :
For whatso'er they feign'd, I plainly saw
The Devil had power on them, not they on him.
But whether a veritable power there be
By cryptic art and more than natural mean
To exorcise, or if not exorcise,
Divine whence comes possession, not to me
Pertaineth to pronounce, but more to him
Who sits amongst us spiritually raised
To speak of spirits with authentic voice.
What saith my Lord Archbishop?

Archbishop.

Sirs, 'tis true,

As by his Grace of Orleans is averr'd
Most wisely, that that function of the Church
Which deals with evil spirits is usurp'd,

'Twere read to better purpose.

Archbishop. My Lords, these monks
I cannot to your confidence commend.
But there is one without attends your pleasure,
A man of life religious and severe,
Both gently born and well and widely known,
Who, might it please your Highness, hath been charged,
So he avers, divinely in a vision
With what he deems a message from on high
To be deliver'd in your royal presence
Nor otherwise divulged. With your kind leave
The Provost shall conduct him in.

The King. At once.
To pious men our ears are open ever.
We'll hear this message. What may be his name?

[*Exit the PROVOST.*]

Archbishop. 'Tis Menuot, but in the popular mouth,
Robert the Hermit. He is strangely clad
For such a presence, but his vows forbid
A garb more seemly.

Orleans. Let his vow be kept.
What is it that he wears? A wildcat's skin
To signify he dreams by day?

Re-enter the PROVOST with ROBERT THE HERMIT.

God's love !

Was wildcat e'er so wild ?

The King. Good Sir, his Grace,
My Lord Archbishop, tells us thou art charged
Some message to make known. Rise then and speak.

Robert. King and my gracious Sovereign, unto whom
I bend the knee as one ordain'd of God,
A message hath been given me, and I am bid
To tell thee in what sort. St. Jerome's Day,
My vows perform'd, I sail'd from Palestine,
With favouring winds at first ; but the tenth night
A storm arose and darkness was around
And fear and trembling and the face of death.
Six hours I knelt in prayer, and with the seventh
A light was flash'd upon the raging sea,
And in the raging sea a space appear'd
Flat as a lake, where lay outstretch'd and white
A woman's body ; thereupon were perch'd
Two birds, a falcon and a kite, whose heads
Bare each a crown, and each had bloody beaks,
And blood was on the claws of each, which clasp'd
This the right breast and that the left, and each
Fought with the other, nor for that they ceased
To tear the body. Then there came a cry
Piercing the storm—"Woe, woe for France, woe, woe !
Thy mother France, how excellently fair
And in how foul a clutch !" Then silence ; then,
"Robert of Menuot, thou shalt surely live,
For God hath work to give thee ; be of good cheer ;
Nail thou two planks in figure of a cross,

And lash thee to that cross and leap, and lo !
 Thou shalt be cast upon the coast of France ;
 Then take thy way to Paris ; on the road,
 See, hear, and when thou com'st to Paris, speak."
 " To whom?" quoth I. Was answer made, " The King."
 I question'd, " What ? " " That thou shalt see, declare,
 And what God puts it in thy heart to speak
 That at the peril of thy soul deliver."
 Then leap'd I in the sea lash'd to a cross,
 And drifting half a day I came to shore
 At Sigean on the coast of Languedoc,
 And parting thence barefooted journey'd hither
 For forty days save one, and on the road
 I saw and heard, and I am here to speak.

The King. Good hermit, by God's mercy we are
 spared

To hear thee, and not only with our ears
 But with our mind.

Burgundy. If there be no offence,
 But take thou heed to that.

Robert. What God commands,
 How smacks it of offence ? But dire offence
 There were if fear of Man should choke God's word.
 I heard and saw, and I am here to speak.
 Nigh forty days I sped from town to town,
 Hamlet to hamlet, and from grange to grange,
 And wheresoe'er I set my foot, behold !
 The foot of war had been before, and there

Did nothing grow, and in the fruitless fields
Whence ruffian hands had snatch'd the beasts of draft
Women and children to the plough were yoked ;
The very sheep had learnt the ways of war
And soon as from the citadel rang out
The larum-peal, flock'd to the city gates ;
And tilth was none by day, for none durst forth,
But wronging the night season which God gave
To minister sweet forgetfulness and rest,
Was labour and a spur. I journey'd on,
And near a burning village in a wood
Were huddled 'neath a drift of bloodstain'd snow
The houseless villagers : I journey'd on,
And as I pass'd a convent, at the gate
Were famish'd peasants, hustling each the other,
Half fed by famish'd nuns : I journey'd on,
And 'twixt a hamlet and a church the road
Was black with biers, for famine-fever raged :
I journey'd on—a trumpet's brazen clang
Died in the distance ; at my side I heard
A child's weak wail that on its mother's breast
Droop'd its thin face and died ; then peal'd to Heaven
The mother's funeral cry, " My child is dead
For lack of food ; he hunger'd unto death ;
A soldier ate his food and what was left
He trampled in the mire ; my child is dead !
Hear me, O God ! a soldier kill'd my child !
See to that soldier's quittance—blood for blood !

Visit him, God, with Thy divine revenge !”
The woman ceased ; but voices in the air,
Yea and in me a thousand voices cried,
“ Visit him, God, with Thy divine revenge !”
Then they too ceased, and sterner still the Voice
Slow and sepulchral that took up the word—
“ Him, God, but not him only nor him most ;
Look Thou to them that breed the men of blood,
That breed and feed the murderers of the realm.
Look thou to them that, hither and thither tost
Betwixt their quarrels and their pleasures, laugh
At torments that they taste not ; bid them learn
That there be torments terribler than these
Whereof it is Thy will that they shall taste,
So they repent not, in the belly of Hell.”
So spake the Voice, then thunder shook the wood,
And lightning smote and splinter'd two tall trees
That tower'd above the rest, the one a pine,
An ash the other. Then I knew the doom
Of those accursed men who sport with war
And tear the body of their mother, France.
Trembling though guiltless did I hear that doom,
Trembling though guiltless I ; for them I quaked
Of whom it spoke ; Oh, Princes, tremble ye,
For ye are they ! Oh, hearken to that Voice !
Oh cruel, cruel, cruel Princes, hear !
For ye are they that tear your mother's flesh ;
Oh, flee the wrath to come ! Repent and live !

Else know your doom, which God declares through me,
Perdition and the pit hereafter ; here
Short life and shameful death.

[*Exit.*

Burgundy. Ho, ho ! My Lords,
What say ye to my Lord Archbishop's friend ?
A prophet or a railer ? Nay, Sirs, speak ;
Or have dumb Devils enter'd you ?

Orleans. My Lords,
I with his Grace of Burgundy my cousin
Stand equally denounced ; yet deem I not
That holy man a railer. To my ears
He spake disastrous truth, and from my soul,
Sore wearied with the burthen of its sins,
I grieve for what is past, and pray that God,
Whose goodness and whose multitude of mercies
I rankly have abused, will give me strength
By works of penitence to rescue France,
War-wasted France my mother, and as a brand
Pluck'd from the burning, her unworthiest son.
And cousin of Burgundy, for all words and deeds
Of this and other days that did thee wrong
I humbly crave forgiveness, first of God
And next of thee ; and in the Celestines
In token of contrition will I found
Two daily masses for thy father's soul.

Burgundy. Gramercy, my good cousin, by St. George
I bear no malice, I, nor ever did.

Here is my hand ; I swear from this time forth
 I'll love thee as myself, yea heartily ;
 And to thine enemies I hold my sword
 As counter as to mine. And now, my Lords,
 To business. For these Augustinian Monks,
 Are they at hand ?

Montargis. My Lord, they were not summon'd.

Burgundy. Not summon'd ?

Provost. But they are not far to seek ;
 For in the Rue des Ursulines but now
 I met them, with a rabble that rear'd a stake,
 And in their hands one Passac at his prayers
 Waiting to be confess'd.

Orleans. What ! Passac ? No !
 My good friend Passac ! He to burn ! God's death !
 Attendance there ! I'll see to that myself.

[*Exit.*

Burgundy. Send for these Monks.

The King. Good cousin, no, not now.
 My head is weak ; I may not tax it more.
 My Lords, pray pardon me ; another day
 I'll ask your further aid. The Monks can then
 Be brought before you. This day's conference
 May well content us, since it heals the strife
 Betwixt our two chief councillors and friends ;
 And more to their accord I bid you look
 Than the frail hope of strength renew'd in me
 To give the kingdom peace. Sirs, fare ye well.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Banqueting Room in the Palace of the Duke of Orleans. Tables spread. A company are assembled, amongst whom are HENRI DE VIERZON, RENÉ D'AICELIN, ENGUERRAND DE CHEVREUSE, LORÉ DE CASSINEL, ALAIN THIBAUT, EUSTACE D'ESTIVET (the Duke's Minstrel), and GRIZ-NEZ (the Duke's Fool). To whom enters the Duke's Seneschal.*

Seneschal. His Highness bids you to sit down and sup;
He will be with you later.

De Vierzon. As he will.

What round white arms withhold him?

Seneschal.

Out, De Vierzon ;

No damsel is it, but a devotee.

De Vierzon. That pretty Theologue De Ricarville
Is both in one. I drink her health and his.

Stay them with flagons, comfort them with apples !

Seneschal. Robert the Hermit 'tis, I tell thee.

De Vierzon.

So !

Then Cupid's case is desperate for a day.

What think ye of this pact betwixt the Dukes ?

Shall it endure ?

D'Aicelin. Till death. But how soon death,

Under the countenance of dear Cousin John,
 May enter to dissolve it, who can tell?
 To-day they rode together on one horse,
 Each in the other's livery. To-morrow
 They are to sleep together in one bed.
 The People stare and deem the day is nigh
 When lamb and lion shall lie down together.

De Chevreuse. Rode on one horse !

D'Aicelin. Yea, Orleans before,
 And Burgundy behind.

Gris-Nez. 'Twas so they rode :
 Two witches on one broomstick rode beside them ;
 But riding past an image of Our Lady
 The hindmost snorted and the broomstick brake.

De Cassinel. Would I were sure my gout would be as
 brief
 As their good fellowship.

De Vierzon. To see grim John
 Do his endeavour at a gracious smile
 Was worth a ducat ; with his trenchant teeth
 Clinch'd like a rat-trap.

De Cassinel. Ever and anon
 They open'd to let forth a troop of words
 Scented and gilt, a company of masques
 Stiff with brocade, and each a pot in hand
 Fill'd with wasp's honey.

D'Aicelin. Nay, no more of him ;
 The wine turns sour. Come, Eustace, wake thee up !

Hast ne'er a song to sing us? Rose and Blanche
 And Florence d'Ivry with her deep-mouth'd eyes
 And Merry Marriette,—where are they gone,
 The score of maids that made thee musical
 In days of old? or if their date be out,
 Have none succeeded?

D'Estivet.

Ah! my youth! my youth!

Gone like a dream, and now at twenty-eight
 I live on recollections. No, my songs
 Have had their day; the charms I sang are fled;
 The ears I charm'd are deafen'd in the dust.
 What would ye with my ditties? But there's one
 His Highness made, which, if I mar it not,
 Should find its way.

D'Aicelen.

Be still, De Vierzon; hush!

Eustace d'Estivet sings to a lute.

At peep of day, at peep of day,
 Day peep'd to spy what night had done,
 And there she lay, and there she lay,
 Blushing in the morning grey
 And hiding from the Sun

Arise, arise, Aurora cries,
 My dainty sister sweet, and throws
 With frolic grace and looks that speak
 Of love and gladness, at her cheek
 A dew-besprinkled rose.

D'Aicelin. Minstrel, well sung, and well conceited,
 Duke;

What is this whispering, Loré?

*Who hath not robb'd enough to bribe ;
 To distance justice in the course
 Who steals a purse should steal a horse ;
 Not hardly the offender fares
 When Accusation hath gone shares :
 Receive thou then, dear brother Fool,
 Monition wise from Folly's School,
 To kiss a Nun nor fear the worst
 Thou should'st have kiss'd the Abbess first.*

De Cassinel. By Peter's keys ! to moralize a kiss
 No preaching have I heard more pertinent.
 Here comes the Duke—no, 'tis but little Geoffrey.

Enter GEOFFREY DE LAVAL.

Geoffrey. His Grace desires you'll none of you depart
 Till he shall join you.

De Vierson. With such wine as this
 To wet our wings, no thoughts have we of flight.
 Is the lean Hermit with his Highness still ?

Geoffrey. No, he is gone ; 'tis Vezelay that's with
 him.

De Vierson. Thou dost not say so ! Well, the times are
 strange ;
 To the backbone Burgundian is he
 And private with the Duke ! What next ?

De Chevreuse.

Why next—

Enter the DUKE OF ORLEANS. They rise to receive him.

Orleans. Kind Sirs, I pray you pardon this neglect ;
 Scant courtesy it was not, but strict need.
 I drink your healths. No, Seneschal, gramercy :
 I'll neither eat nor sit. My trusty friends,
 I have a work in hand will ask your aid.
 The Bastard of Montargis, as I hear,
 Designs this night to seize and spirit away
 A pupil of the Celestines ; which rape
 I would not such a rotten-hearted rogue
 As he is, should accomplish ; wherefore, Sirs,
 Of five of you I crave attendance here
 An hour ere midnight arm'd.

De Vierzon. Your Grace has named
 A service I shall clasp and strain to heart
 Even as my best friend's wife.

De Chevreuse. And so shall I.

De Cassinel. And all.

Orleans. I thank you heartily ; but no ;
 Montargis is attended but by five,
 Whom we must not outnumber. Hie ye home,
 De Vierzon and De Cassinel, and you,
 René d' Aicelin, Enguerrand De Chevreuse,
 And Alain Thibaut ; hie ye home and arm,
 And hither hasten back at your best speed.
 The rest, good-night. And be ye sure, my friends,

For right good service your good wills shall count.

[*Exeunt all but the DUKE and GEOFFREY DE LAVAL.*

Geoffrey. A boon, my gracious Lord.

Orleans.

What is it, boy?

Geoffrey. Let me be one.

Orleans.

No, no ; too young, too young.

They'd blow thy head off like the froth of their ale

And I should lose a monkey that I love.

Geoffrey. My gracious Master, at your side to die
Is all I live for.

Orleans.

Be content, young friend.

The time may come. Thy horoscope and mine

Point to one hour, 'tis said. Enough of this.

Go to the vestiard, wherein thou'lt find

Provision of all garbs for the masqued ball.

Thence to the hall bring thou six pilgrims' weeds.

SCENE II.—*The Interior of the Convent of the Celestines.*

IOLANDE DE ST. RÉMY and FLOS DE FLAVY.

Flos. A charming little Abbess if you will ;
That liberty she grants herself, good soul,
She not denies to others ; so far, well ;
But then comes Father Renault, spare and dry,
With menace of the Bishop and the Chapter,
And in her straits we're straiten'd. Oh, no, no,
I cannot bear it ; some day I shall run ;

Yes, Iolande, I will, I will.

Iolande. Oh Flos !

Oh foolish Flos ! impatient of restraint
 Because you scarce have felt it. The loose rein
 It is that makes the runaway ; too kind
 The Abbess is ; for those who say she errs
 In other ways and worse, God pardon them !
 Or if their tale be true, God pardon her !
 But God forbid that I should know it true,
 For love her I needs must.

Flos. What ! though she's wicked ?

Iolande. Yes, though she's wicked. That is not forbidden.

In pain and sorrow should I love her then,
 As I love you.

Flos. Oh, I am wicked too ?

Iolande. No, there I said too much. But yet with fear,

If not with pain, you fill me. Flos, from my soul
 I hate the man you love.

Flos. Well, you speak out ;

But ere you spake I knew it,

Iolande. Did you but know

The cause !—and I will tell you it in part.
 Last night I had a dreadful dream. I thought
 That borne at sunrise on a fleece of cloud
 I floated high in air, and, looking down,
 Beheld an ocean-bay girt by green hills,

And in a million wavelets tipp'd with gold
Leapt the soft pulses of the sunlit sea ;
And lightly from the shore a bounding bark,
Festive with streamers fluttering in the wind,
Sail'd seaward, and the palpitating waves
Fondly like spaniels flung themselves upon her,
Recoiling and returning in their joy ;
And on her deck sea-spirits I descried
Gliding and lapsing in an undulant dance,
From whom a choral gratulating strain
Exhaled its witcheries on the wanton air :
Still sail'd she seaward, and ere long the bay
Was left behind ; but then a shadow fell
Upon the outer sea—a shadowy shape—
The shadow bore the likeness of the form
Of the Arch-fiend ; I shudder'd for the bark
And stretch'd my hands to heaven and strove to pray
But could not for much fear ; the shadow grew
Till sea and sky were black ; the bark plunged on
And clove the blackness : then the fleece of cloud
That bore me, melted, and I swooned and fell,
And falling I awoke.

Flos. Yes, Iolande,
You're ever dreaming dreams, and when they're bad
They're always about me. I too can dream,
But otherwise than you. The God of dreams
Who sleeps with me is blithe and debonnaire,
Else should he not be partner of my bed.

I dreamt I was a cat, and much caress'd
 And fed with dainty viands ; there was cream
 And fish and flesh and porridge, but no mice ;
 And I was fat and sleek, but in my heart
 There rose a long and melancholy mew
 Which meant, " I must have mice ;" and therewithal
 I found myself transported to the hall
 Of an old castle, with the rapturous sound
 Of gnawing of old wainscot in my ears :
 With that I couch'd and sprang and sprang and couch'd,
 My soul rejoicing.

Iolande. May God grant, dear Flos,
 Your mice shall not prove bloodhounds. That the veil
 Befits you not, I own ; nor if you long
 In secular sort to love and be beloved
 Shall I reproach you ; for if God denies
 The blessing of a heart espoused to Him
 His mercy wills that love should be fulfill'd
 In other kind, more mixed but still divine,
 Less happy but still rapt ; and to this end
 In his own image he created Man.
 The love for Man I blame not ; but oh, Flos !
 There are, though you may miss to see it, men
 Who have transform'd God's image in themselves
 Into another likeness.

Flos. *Iolande,*
 You hate him ; you have said so—'tis enough.
 I love him ; yes, and may my false heart perish

That instant that it leaves to love as now.
And if I thought this heart would so revolt,
Or ere one sun had risen upon its shame,
It should be buried without toll of bell
Six fathom in the earth, and o'er its grave
A letter'd stone should tell its terrible tale,
And say it was a heart that, having fallen,
Would rather rot below ground than above.
Oh, take your arms away—you shall not kiss me—
Sweet Iolande, I know you wish me well,
But is it wishing well to wish me false?

Iolande. Not if your truth were plighted to the true.

Flos. Whate'er his treasons he is true to me ;
True as the bravest of the brave in love ;
True as the lion that laid down its head
O'ersway'd by love divine on Lectra's lap.

Iolande. Deceived past rescue ! Were it Vezelay,
He is not good, but I believe him true,
Know him but too devoted in his love ;
Were it but he !

Flos. More kind is he than good,
Poor mortal ! Yet I love his love for me
And him some little.

Enter the LADY ABBESS.

Abbess. Well, my daughters dear,
The Lord is good and gracious to this House ;
So is his Grace the Founder. Have you heard?

He grants two masses daily for the soul
Of Good Duke Philip, whom may God absolve !
Truly his Grace's bounty knows no end,
Such holy love he has for this poor House.

Flos. Likewise its charming Abbess.

Abbess.

Naughty child !

No more of that. Hark ye ! the bell for Nocturns.
Go, Iolande. For Flos, she stays with me,
For I am ill and she a cheerful nurse.
Mercy ! such shootings in my back ! Oh me !
And such a shaking here ! And then such qualms !
And here a gurgling up ! By God's good help,
St. Bartlemy assisting, I have hope
To struggle through the night—but not alone.
Come, Flos, we'll sleep together. Bless my heart !
Why, Flos is stricken too ! How pale she looks !
This frost will be the death of some poor souls ;
The Marne is frozen over. Come, sweet Flos.

SCENE III.—*The Rue Barbette, near the Porch of the
Chapel of the Celestines.* RAUL DE ROUVROY,
RANULPH DE ROCHE-BARON, HENRI DE FONTENAY,
ANTOINE DES ESSARS, and CHARLES DE SAVOISY,
all armed.

De Fontenay. What if she screams ?

De Rouvroy.

Tell her the night is cold,

And kindly tie a muffler o'er her mouth.

De Fontenay. What if the Sisterhood scream all together?

De Rouvroy. Run for your lives; but if you're deft and swift

The Sisters will have pass'd within the walls

Ere you shall scare them. Pupilage walks last.

De Savoisy. But say the night-patrol should come this way.

De Rouvroy. Then shall some two or three of you fall back

And seem to fight; be desperate and loud,

And whilst the watch is busy with your brawl,

Montargis and his maid will mount and fly.

If need be, set a house or two on fire,

And shout amain for help.

Enter MONTARGIS from the Chapel.

Montargis. Down with your vizors.
God's curse upon that Priest and his discourse!
When tenthly came, and twelfthly, and fifteenthly,
I could have stabb'd him. Strangers too were there,
Pilgrims—what not? who may be meddling
Unless discretion guide them. If they be
They'll rue it. Ranulph, are the by-ways void?
No stragglers?

Des Essars. Right, Montargis; say a cat's grace

That ever looks about her ere she eats.

Montargis. Back, back, I say ; stand back ; I think they come.

Enter from the Chapel the Nuns, preceded by the Priests and followed by the Novices and Pupils, after whom the DUKE OF ORLEANS, HENRI DE VIERZON, RENÉ D'AICELIN, ENGUERRAND DE CHEVREUSE, LORÉ DE CASSINEL, and ALAIN THIBAUT, in Pilgrim's weeds. The Priests and Nuns pass through the gates into the court of the Convent, whereupon MONTARGIS advances.

Montargis. My lady-love, you enter not ; be wise ;
Despairing love dares all ; you must be mine,
And mine you are.

Iolande. Yours ! Wretch beyond all count
The loathsomest that I know, I know you well,
And hate you and defy you.

Montargis. Nay, wild bird,
We'll teach you sweeter singing.

Iolande. Touch not me !

Montargis. With softer touches shall I touch you
soon ;
These rougher for this present you must brook.

Orleans. First turn and touch another.

Montargis. Who art thou
That hold'st thy life so lightly ? Beggar, back !
Get hence ! or if thou hungerest after death

Pass forward but a step.

Orleans. There is my foot.

Montargis. And there thy death.

Orleans. Well aim'd against well arm'd.

Now, thy best ward.

They fight. The other Burgundians come to the aid of MONTARGIS, and are engaged by the Orleanists; MONTARGIS is wounded and disarmed.

Orleans. So! yield thee, Bastard.

Montargis. Ha! thou know'st me? Well;

If to a Knight I yield.

Orleans. A Knight and more.

Montargis. Say'st thou "and more?"

Orleans. More, by St. Paul!

Montargis. My Lord,

That voice and oath chiming together thus

Tell forth your title to respect. I yield.

My friends, put up your swords. My own lies there.

We will withdraw, if so the victor wills.

Orleans. Go, and be wiser. Keep your council. I,
For his sake who befriends, will not betray you.

[Exeunt MONTARGIS and his friends.]

Orleans. Unbar the gate.

De Vierson. 'Tis fast within. Holla!

Within there! Ho! Unbolt the gate.

The Porter (within). Get hence,

Ye graceless knaves, get hence!

Iolande. Brave Sirs, farewell !
And though 'tis little that poor Nuns can do
To show their sense of service, there is one
As great in power as heart, the princely Duke
Our founder, who will value at its worth
A service to the Celestines.

Orleans. My friends,
I wish you joy ; and with this lady's leave
I'll wait on her to-morrow, so to learn
What guerdon you may look for.

Iolande. Heartily
The Lady Abbess and myself will strive
To do you grace and honour. Pray you, Sirs,
Stay by the gate till I shall cross the court,
For all have fled indoors and it is void.

[*Exit.*

Orleans. Now to our beds. Sirs, what she said I
swear ;
A service to the Celestines I prize
At a knight's fee to each. To bed, to bed,
To dream of such a voice as in my ears
Sounds like a Seraph's in a song of praise.

Enter the Watch.

Sergeant of the Watch. Haro ! Haro ! What's here !
Stand, villains, stand !
Clashings of swords and screamings for the Watch !

How dare ye ! To the guard-house every man.

De Vierzon. Off ! laggards, we were keepers of the law,
Not breakers ; we but filled a gap for you.
We fought with certain caitiffs who were fain
To ravish hence a maid ; we rescued her ;
For them, they slank away.

Sergeant. Fie ! tell not me !

We'll have no ravishings nor no rescues here ;
No ravishings nor rescues can be suffer'd
After the Watch is set. To the guard-house, come.
If maidens shall be ravish'd and be rescued
It is the Watch must do it. Come, ye rogues.

De Vierzon. Stand off, old Owlet.

The Sergeant. What ! the manacles ! Ho !

D'Aicelin. Away, ye Clot-pole-catchpoles ! Hence,
away !

[*The DUKE and his friends drive out the Watch.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Court of the House of the BASTARD OF MONTARGIS. The BASTARD OF MONTARGIS and his two Squires, RAOUL DE ROUVROY and RANULPH DE ROCHE-BARON.*

Montargis. The house I speak of bears above the porch

An image of our Lady ; old and batter'd
Are house and image both : none dwells within
Save a bald porter, old and batter'd too.
Let his old ears inform him I have need
To store some wine that comes to me from Bourg,
And hire the house ; give him whate'er he asks ;
Then cask these weapons that I tell you of
And take them thither. On this roll is writ
The names of certain of my men at arms ;
Call them together ; hold them on the wing,
And after nightfall drop them one by one
Into that house. Then keep them fast and close,
And till I come,—mayhap to-morrow night,
Early or late,—let no man pass the door.
Be secret, ye and they.

[*Exit.*

De Roche-Baron. What may this mean?

De Rouvroy. Mischief it means, if I have ears. To-morrow

Will be St. Clement's Eve. The Bastard walks
In the world's eye untroubled, but in heart
He bears his Monday night's discomfiture
As new caged tigers bear captivity.
Some bird has whistled that the booty wrench'd
From him, has fallen to that crowing Duke,
Whom if he hated humanly before
He hates with hatred more than human now.
With that he broods upon a prophecy
Which babbles of St. Clement's Eve, and tells
How on that night the gutters shall run blood,
And lilies redden in the morning sun.
There is an ancient picture too, wherein
St. Clement, with the anchor round his neck,
Sinks and draws with him underneath the wave
A knotted staff, twined with the Fleur de Lys,
And holding on its point a porcupine
Enscrolled with "Far and Near," the Duke's device :
And hearten'd by these figurings and signs
He holds the time auspicious.

De Roche-Baron. But Duke John—

Him must we carry with us ; without him
I hardly deem St. Clement will suffice
To hold us harmless. True, revenge is sweet,
And neither thou nor I have cause to love

His Grace of Orleans ; but revenge were mad
Without the one Duke's warrant and support,
In case of need, to practise on the other.

De Rouvroy. Trust to the Bastard to draw in Duke
John.

He's forward in a scheme for melting down
This newly-solder'd fellowship of the Duke's.
He's gone even now to put it in the pot
Of those two Monk-magicians. As for me,
My lot is cast with his ; whither he dares,
Thither I follow.

De Roche-Baron. With Duke John to boot,
I say the same.

De Rouvroy. No question of Duke John ;
No question but he'll lead him like a lamb.

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in the Château St. Antoine
furnished with a brazen head fixed on a skeleton,
crystal globes, magic mirrors, and celestial squares.—*

FATHER BUVULAN and FATHER BETIZAC.

Father Buvulan. For a brief moment I was high in
hope
They both would burn. Truly he singed his beard
In saving of his barber.

Father Betizac. Well, it shakes us,
Unstable is the commonalty ever ;

The Duke had but to tickle them with tropes,
And Passac was their chuck, their duck, their darling,
Their Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,
That in our heathen fire had walk'd unhurt.
Oh 'tis a fickle and a foolish people !
Their faith is with success ; who faileth falleth.
When we lost hold of Passac, we lost hold
Of credit and repute. De Montenay
Sends me his greeting, and he has no need
Of the enchanted armour. There's a loss
Of some five hundred crowns. De Graville's page
Comes with his cozening master's countermand,
Who cares not that his horoscope be cast
Till better times—God grant his best be bad !
Since Tuesday there has been nor maid nor youth
To spy their spousals in the magic mirror.
All day the knocker sleeps upon the door
As it were dead. What ! now it stirs. Come in.

Enter the BASTARD OF MONTARGIS.

Montargis. So ! Reverend Fathers ! winters such as
these
Make fuel dear ; 'tis cruel to the poor
To waste the store ; when next ye light your fire
Look that there's something on the spit to roast.
Father Buvulan. His Grace of Orleans in his brotherly
love

May, if it please him, set all traitors free
To do their devilish work upon the King.
Our part right loyally have we fulfill'd,
And stand acquitted.

Montargis. In your consciences,—
Yes doubtless in your tender consciences
Ye stand acquitted ; but elsewhere how stand ye ?
The Duke, who snatch'd away his friend the Barber,—
So seasonably, just as his wig was frizzled,—
Think ye with him ye stand acquitted ? No,
Beware his wrath. And let me tell you, friends,
This frizzling of a barber doth but clinch
A foregone condemnation. Have ye heard
How ye were handled at the Council-board ?
Your very eyes and noses could not 'scape,
But seeing that they did not please the Duke,
Plain documents were they of your damnation
Confirm'd in Satan's signature and seal.
To my poor thinking, Sirs, His Grace's speech
Savour'd of pitch and resin. Ye best know
(For through affection and a burning zeal
Ye are well seen in fagots and the stake)
If it be pleasant to ascend the skies
In manner of an incense ; but if not,
I counsel you to find some present shift
For dwelling in the flesh.

Father Betizac. Oh Lord ! Oh Lord !
Oh God be merciful ! What mean you, Sir ?

Know you of aught devised and put in hand
Against our lives?

Montargis. Of what I know, my friends,
I tell you what I may.

Father Botizac. Oh, Sir, sweet Sir,
What may be done? Befriend us in our need.
Will gold redeem us? We have here laid by,
Out of our honest earnings, a round sum
In crown and ducats; will it please you take
And use it at your pleasure?

Montargis. No, Sirs, no;
Gold will do nothing; ye must find a friend
To match a foe so mighty; who is he?
One only Lord there is, one only Prince,
Of such sufficiency as to ward the blows
Of the King's brother. Give yourselves to him
Bravely and wholly. Danger is a dog
That follows if ye fly, flies if ye face him.

Father Buvulan. Surely his Highness knows us for
his own.

Oh, excellent Sir, commend us to his Grace;
We wait upon his every wish and word.

Montargis. Commend yourselves by service. Well ye
know,

If aught your art avails you, who it is
That by his damnable practice hath let loose
These troops of demons that torment the King,—
A sin by so much worse than fratricide

As hell is worse than death ; ye know it well ;
It is the Duke his brother. What ye know
That daringly declare, and ye are safe.

Father Buvulan. Oh, Sir, it was but reverence and
respect

For the Blood-Royal muzzled us till now ;
But at his Grace's honourable bidding
The truth must be declared.

Montargis. His Grace's bidding?
The servant who doth only what is bidden
Shall earn but scant reward. He that divines
His master's need and feeds it, serves him twice ;
Serves him with head and hand and heart and will ;
This is the saving service.

Father Buvulan. Sir, 'tis well ;
This service we will render, and the truth
Unflinchingly avouch.

Montargis. Truth is a gem
Of countless price ; and life too is worth something.
Once more the Council in its wisdom meets
To vex the question of the King's disease ;
Ye shall attend it. Come meantime with me ;
A little of my teaching will ye want
Ere ye proceed adepts in speaking truth.

SCENE III.—*The Convent of the Celestines. Nuns and Novices at work embroidering vestments and altar-cloths.*

1st Novice. I was next before Iolande, and heard a kind of soft scuffle behind, and, turning round, I missed her; and oh! woe is me! I cried, there is a maid gone and it might have been I! And I looked through the grating, and there he stood, a tall man and a beautiful bachelor. He bade the other touch him if he dared; and there were words and oaths, and when they drew their swords I squealed and ran away.

1st Nun. Ay, and it was time, too. Who taught thee to look at a man through a grating?

1st Novice. Nobody, Mother; I was looking for Iolande.

1st Nun. Then do so no more. If a maid look through a grating what may she not see? Peradventure the Grand Turk and all his Janissaries, and I know not what masquings and mummeries; or the six Satyrs which danced at the widow's wedding with no more clothing than a beast's, and by God's providence took fire and were burnt; all except his gracious Majesty, whom God preserve!

2nd Nun. Yes, Sister, there was another saved; which was Jean de Nantouillet; seeing he flung himself into a trough of water which was there for cooling of the wine, and

calling upon St. Winifred, she endowed the water with that virtue that it quenched the flames.

1st Nun. But saidst thou a tall man, eh! and with a long nose?

1st Novice. Tall, Mother; and for his nose, it may be long or may not, as it pleases God; for there was but a small matter of moonlight to see it by. But he was not a Turk, which has tusks, they say, like a boar; nor a Satyr, which is shaggy.

2nd Novice. Twice since has a tall man come hither by the garden gate that was left open for him. I saw him through the casement in the dormitory.

2nd Nun. Fie! fie! This looking out of casements is unseemly. Marcian looked out of a casement and she saw a little boy with a bow and arrow, which was a heathen and shot at her. Was he a fair-faced man with blue eyes and a light-brown beard?

2nd Novice. I know not, Mother, for his hat was drawn over his brows, and he held his kerchief to his face as though he had the toothache.

3rd Nun. Marry, and I'll warrant you God sent a toothache no sooner than he deserved. And if I were Abbess there should be no leaving open of gates for sinners to come in with their blue eyes and their brown beards.

4th Nun. Yea, and their rapiers at their sides like leopards, gaping and prancing up the walks that one knows not which way to turn for them.

5th Nun. No more prating and prattling. Come, Mar-

celine, sing us one of thy holy songs, which is better than our babblement.

3rd Novice. I will sing you the song of the Knight and the Dragon.

From men that naughty are and rude,

Save us, St. Gregory and St. Jude. Amen.

It begins so, Mother, and then it tells what happened.

5th Nun. Go on, child; truly 'tis a good beginning, and very necessary.

3rd Novice.

A good Knight, hight Sir Vantadour,
Got on his horse and rode an hour ;
Out of the city he rode amain,
And came to a forest that stood on a plain.

So full of wild beasts was that wood,
Enter it no man durst nor could ;
And those that did in twain were cleft,
And eaten up till nothing was left.

Through the wood the Knight rode forth
For half a day, from south to north ;
When, lo ! a Dragon he descried,
And on its back a Lady astride.

That Dame and Dragon were akin,
Pride was he and she was Sin ;
The Dragon hiss'd and rear'd his crest,
The good Knight laid his lance in rest.

“Beware,” said Sin, “for Pride is strong,
And mighty to uphold the wrong ;
And woe to those that him attack,
Hissing, with me upon his back.”

The Knight he rode a-tilt and smote
The scaly Dragon in his throat ;
The Dragon writhed and hiss'd and spat,
But nowise blench'd the Knight thereat.

Then call'd the Dragon from six caves
Six Blackamoors that were his slaves ;
The Knight bade each and all advance,
And featly slew them with his lance.

Likewise the Dragon. Sin the while
No longer frown'd, but seem'd to smile ;
And called six Syrens fair to sight,
Who flung their arms around the Knight.

But back he stepp'd, and " Lo ! " said he,
" To fight with maids is not for me ;
I know to fight where fame is won,
But now best courage is to run."

So first he fought, and then he ran,
Sir Vantadour, that righteous man :
And we from his ensample learn,
To flee from Sin and Pride to spurn.

*Holy St. Gregory, grant us grace
To spurn at Sin and spit in her face. Amen.*

6th Nun. Well, I pray God and St. Gregory that Sin come no way near us, nor a Dragon neither ; and if one shall come that is not Sin nor a Dragon, what I say is, he should not come muffled up and no one to see the face of him.

5th Nun. Past a doubt this Knight which comes once and again is the same which snatched Iolande from the hands of the spoiler.

3rd Nun. Which some will say was sore against her will, for all her scuffling and screeching. I am a guileless woman that thinks no ill ; but if ever such a thing happens to me, I shall not stand screeching away to no purpose, I think not indeed. I shall not stand waiting for any chance of a passer-by just to fall out of one man into another.

5th Nun. St. Mary, Sister, it is not for such as thou and I to stand in dread of these dangers.

3rd Nun. Who knows? It is true God has been good to me for sixty years and upwards, but I were too bold to count upon his mercies as though they were never to fail me.

Enter a fourth Novice.

4th Novice. I vow there is the same man again, coming in through the garden gate.

3rd Nun. The same again! Fearful! This must be looked to ; I must see to this.

[*Exit.*

1st Nun. We must all see to it, we that wear the veil. What is this hurry-scurry ! Keep back, Novices ; it is not for you . . . Nay, young legs ! They're all gone before one can cross oneself.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter the LADY ABBESS and FATHER RENAULT.

The Abbess. A woeful plight, poor sinner, woeful—
yes—

Poor Flos! I told her it would come to this.
Poor soul! she never heeded me, no more
Than had I been a magpie or a chough.

Father Renault. That woeful is her plight I well
believe,
And hear with hope; the woefuller the better;
So woe shall work to weal.

The Abbess. Pray God it may!
Pray God you bring it so to work! God grant it!
But what it works to now is bad to worse.
She hates him with a passion and a heat
More senseless than she loved him with before;
And take my word for 't—of a truth you may—
I know her well, and she may sit and sulk
And spare to speak, but well I know her thoughts—
And take my word for 't she is dangerous;
She's brooding, and there's somewhat will be hatch'd;
And she has those—I say not who they be—
At her behest who'll do a deed of blood
For love or lucre; and what scandal then
Should light upon this holy House and me
And all of us. I pray you press it home;
Enjoin her if she harbour in her soul
Bad thoughts of malice and revenge, to speak,
And bid her upon pain of her soul's death
Put them away.

Father Renault. Else shall she not be shriven.
Go, summon her and send her to confession.

By this example we may mark how swift
 The transformation whereby carnal love
 Is changed to carnal hate. I have heard it said,
 There is no haunt the viper more affects
 Than the forsaken bird's-nest. In the Chapel
 I shall await her ; send her to me there.

The Abbess. She's there already and expects you.

Father Renault. Good.

My part accomplished, it will then be yours
 To hold her well in hand.

[*Exit.*

The Abbess. So ; gone at last.
 The Duke is late ; or is he hiding ? Oh !
 My gracious Lord !

Enter ORLEANS.

Orleans. Good Abbess, my good friend,
 Where is she ? No—not here—nor coming ? Nay,
 Is her thank-offering of yesterday,
 Her hand to kiss, the sum ?

The Abbess. My gracious Lord,
 That were but little.

Orleans. Abbess, say you so ?
 You think I ran some hazard of my life ;
 It was not much ; but by the Lord of Life
 If twenty lives were mine to put in pledge
 And on each life were twenty kingdoms staked,

Laugh they that laughter love, that hand to kiss
Should countervail them.

The Abbess. Oh, my Lord, I blush
To hear such things.

Orleans. No need, good Abbess, none.
I am not what I was. Her saintly grace
Hath wrought a miracle and made of me,
Whole sinner that I was, now half a saint.
I think you scarce believe it, but 'tis true ;
That quest I told you of—that sacred quest
Touching the king,—is all my errand now :
Tell her for holy ends I humbly crave
To be admitted to her presence.

The Abbess. Nay,
My gracious Lord, it pleases you to waive
Your royal state ; but it befits not me
To be forgetful. She is near at hand :
She shall attend you.

Orleans. But no word, I pray,
Of who or what I am.

The Abbess. My gracious Lord,
She does not, and she shall not, even surmise,
If I can help it, till your Grace give leave,
The honour that is hers.

[*Exit.*

Orleans. When soul meets soul
I crave a riddance of my royalties.
Save those that wear them, there are none can know

The leaden hand they lay upon the hearts
 Of whosoe'er approaches, numb and dumb,
 That else were sprightly, fervent, fond and free.
 But wherefore do I wish her free and fond?
 And is it but the Devil's self within
 Assures me she has power to cast him out,
 So to betray us both? No, verily,
 Should the unholy ghost entice my soul
 From this its holy purpose, she herself
 Would rescue and redeem it.

Enter IOLANDE.

Fairest friend,
 Is it too soon I come again?
Iolande. Too soon?
Orleans. It would not seem so were my mission told.
 Have I seemed slow to tell it? Then believe
 'Tis that I loved to linger in the joys
 That herald what is grave.
Iolande. You speak of joys,
 And then you speak of that which is not joy.
 What else it is I know not; nor can I guess
 Why you, that have the splendours of the world
 (So thinks the Abbess) in your choice, should choose
 To haunt this dim retreat.
Orleans. If dim it be,
 It's dimness is divine. In years long past

I sought and found another dim retreat ;
And shall I tell you where ?

Iolande.

Tell what you will.

Orleans. Once in a midnight march—'twas when the
war

With Brittany broke out—tired with the din
And tumult of the host, I left the road,
And in the distant cloisters of a wood
Dismounted and sat down. The untroubled moon
Kept through the silent skies a cloudless course,
And kiss'd and hallow'd with her tender light
Young leaf and mossy trunk ; and on the sward
Black shadows slumber'd, softly counterchanged
With silver bars. Majestic and serene,
I said, is Nature's night, and what is Man's ?
Then from the secret heart of some recess
Gush'd the sweet nocturns of that serious bird
Whose love-note never sleeps. With glad surprise
Her music thrill'd the bosom of the wood,
And like an angel's message enter'd mine.
Why wander back my thoughts to that night march ?
Can you divine ? or must I tell you why ?
The worlds without this precinct and within
Are to my heart,—the one the hurrying march
With riot, outrage, ribaldry, and noise
Insulting night,—the other, deep repose
That listens only to a heaven-taught song
And throbs with gentlest joy.

And almost fear to ask. I know but little ;
 Yet know that there are dangers in the world
 I have but heard of. May I trust in you ?
 Oh that 'twere possible to trust in you
 With boundless and inalterable faith !
 Oh that 'twere possible to cast my soul
 On you as on the pillar of its strength !
 But you, too, you are weak ; you say you are ;
 And only God is strong, and in His strength
 And in none other strength may strength be found,
 And in His love and in none other love
 His child may win an unbewildering love,
 Love without danger, measureless content.
 Leave her to seek it there.

Orleans.

Oh, Iolande !

I love you—yet to say so is a sin ;
 And such a sin as only such a love
 And veriest inebriety of heart
 Can palliate or excuse. An earthly bond,
 Earthly as it was woven of earthly aims
 By heedless hands when I was but a child,
 Yet sacred as it binds me to a wife,—
 This earthly sacred bond forbids my soul
 To seek the holier and the heavenlier peace
 It might have found with you.

Iolande.

Go back, go back.

I knew not you were married ; back to your wife ;
 Leave me—forget me—God will give me strength ;

There yet is time, for I am innocent still,
And now each moment gathers guilt. Begone ;
Nor ever come again, nor ever again
Wrong her you speak of, as you did but now
In saying you love me.

Orleans. Yet loving you
I love not her the less,—surely not less ;
Nay with a pitying love I love her more ;
And pitying love shall have a heavenlier home.
For even in the instant I beheld your face
All that this glorious earth contains of good,
As in a new creation, freshly, strangely,
Reveal'd itself, borne in upon my soul ;
And since the mandate which created light
And eyes not mortal then beheld God's works
Not then defaced, no eye of man hath seen
So fair an apparition as appear'd
This earth to me.

Iolande. Home to your wife,—go home.
Your heart betrays itself and truth and me.
You know not love, speaking of love for two.
I knew not love till now ; and love and shame
Have flung themselves upon me both at once.
One will be with me to my death I know ;
The other not an hour. Oh, brave and true
And loyal as you are, from deadly wrong
You rescued me, now rescue me from shame ;
For shame it is to hear you speak of love,

And shame it is to answer you with tears
That seem like softness : but my trust is this,
That in myself I trust not,—nor in you,
Save only if you trust yourself no more
And fly from sin.

Orleans. More precious to my soul
Is your affiance, though with stern reserves,
Than ever soft surrender wild to meet
Love's wildest wish ; nor will I longer dare,
Uplifted by the rapture of the time
Entrancing me from insight, to forget
That what is heavenliest in our mortal moods
Is not as fix'd and founded as the heavens.
Yet do I dread to leave you, leaving thus
My name the victim of all vile reports
Which, when you hear it, you will hear.

Iolande.

No—no.

The evil you have spoken of yourself
I will believe, and not a breath beside.

Orleans. I ask no more—no more—oh, nothing more ;
Not for one tone of that too tender voice,
Not for one touch of that transparent hand ;
No, nothing for myself . . .

Voices without.

What ! Iolande :

Enter two Novices.

1st Novice. Oh ! cry you mercy ! Are you not alone ?

Iolande. You knew I was not.

2nd Novice. Well, perhaps we did ;
 But 'tis no fault of ours, for we were sent.
 The Sisters want you in the Founder's chapel
 To deck the altar for St. Clement's Eve ;
 And Father Renault tells us first and last
 None knows so well to twine the mimic flowers
 And Nature's broidery to counterfeit.

1st Novice. Old Sister Martha, mounting the ladder,
 tried,
 We handing up the flowers ; but from her hold
 Thrice fell the fleur-de-lys ; and she, poor soul !
 Was seized with trembling and would try no more.
 She said it was unlucky.

Orleans. It was strange.

1st Novice. Yes, truly, Sir, it scared us.

2nd Novice. Worse ensued ;
 For in her fright the ladder she o'erthrew,
 Which struck the Founder's banner in its fall,
 And that fell too.

Orleans. That fell before its time ;
 If ancient prophecy may win belief
 That should have waited for St. Clement's Eve.

2nd Novice. Sir, you say true. Come, Iolande ; they wait.

Iolande. I will be there anon. So tell them.

[*Exeunt the two Novices.*]

Orleans. This
 I said, and I will say it once again,
 That for myself I ask nor word nor look

That speaks of more than pardon. What remains
Is but to name mine errand and begone.
For one far worthier than myself I crave
A boon that in the holiest human pity
You may confer. A brother whom I love,—
Whom all men love,—a treasure-house of weal
For France and me,—in his behalf I ask
What none but you can give. Sorely his soul
Is wrung and tortured by the terrible power
Of evil spirits, ever and anon
Re-entering his body through the gaps
Of faltering faith and intermitted prayer,
When struggling nature wearied with the strife
Yields a brief vantage.

Iolande. He shall have my prayers;
'Twill be my sorrow's solace when you're gone
To pray for one you love.

Orleans. And did you know,
In health how kind he is, how good and just,
In anguish how unutterably tried,
You'd pray with tears.

Iolande. I never pray without;
But they shall flow from deeper depths for him.

Orleans. For prayers I ask—for prayers and something
more.

A vial is there in the Bernardins
Which holds a relic of transcendant price,
The tears of Mary Magdalene, let fall

Then when she stood before the tomb of Christ
 Ere Christ appear'd ; an Angel as they fell
 Caught them, and later gave them to St. John
 In Patmos ; to St. Bernard from St. John
 Successive Saints devolved them ; and such power
 Is theirs, that should a virgin whom no sin
 Nor sinful thought hath violated, dip
 Her finger in them, calling Christ to aid,
 And trace upon the brow of one possess'd
 The figure of the Cross, the unclean spirit
 Will instantly depart ; and never more
 To one so fortified can fiend or imp
 Make good his entrance. Now you know what boon
 In what behalf I beg.

Iolande. Am I the maid
 That may do this? Oh, would that I were worthy !
 But if no holier hath the call, then I,
 Beseeching God of His abounding grace
 To give sufficiency, will work in faith.

Orleans. His blessing then upon your work and you !
 I will betake me to the Bernardins,
 Where is enshrined the relic. Once again,
 But in the hallowing presence of a rite
 More solemn than a service for the dead,
 We meet ; and then, if so your conscience wills,
 We part for ever.

Iolande. Once and no more.

Orleans.

Meanwhile

The Lady Abbess will instruct you more
Touching myself, my Brother, and the weight
And import of your task.

[*Exit.*]

Enter the LADY ABBESS.

Abbess. Well, pretty one ;
You know not yet what crown of honour . . . Yes,
And worthily you wear it—here's a colour !
I wonder if *my* cheeks will e'er again
Glow like a meteor, and *my* dangerous eyes
Throw out blue lights . . believe me once they could.
Well ! there's a time for all things ! I protest
You look so stately and so lifted up
I think you know what Knight you have in hand ;
I think he told you.

Iolande. No, dear Lady-Mother ;
Nor do I greatly care. How brave he is,
How kind, how generous, how great of heart,
I know—what care I for his name ?

Abbess. Good child,
Say not you care not till you know. What, what !
I will not tell you if you say you care not.
Now do you care ?

Iolande. Yes, I believe I do.
Who is he ?

Abbess. Louis, by the Grace of God
Of Orleans, Valois, Blois, and Beaumont Duke,
Count of Touraine ! Hi ! hi ! Beshrew thy heart !

The red blood ebbs amain ; the fleur-de-lys
Has beaten back the roses.

Iolande. Oh ! my Mother !
Then he whose malady I am charged to cure,—
He is the King ! Oh Mother, yes, I know—
“ A treasure-house of weal to France and him ; ”
He said to France. Mother, no hour shall fly,
No minute that I shall not pass in prayer.
Send for the Hermit ; tell him in the chapel
I shall be found.

Abbess. Well, well, my child, I will.

SCENE IV.—*Another Apartment in the Convent.*—FLOS DE
FLAVY and RAIZ DE VEZELAY.

Flos. Talk not to me of love ; I loathe its name
More than blue plague or the unburied corse
That none dares touch. Give me thy hand ; I have it ;
But is it mine ?

De Vezelay. For ever and for ever !

Flos. Mine for all work that I shall put it to ?

De Vezelay. In all submission thine.

Flos. Now give me this ;
[*Draws his dagger from its sheath.*

Thy dagger's haft is fashion'd to a cross,
As though for handling by some Christian Knight
Apt to avenge a woman. Vain pretence !
Oh empty emblem ! Out of date in France.

What dagger now leaps lightly from its sheath
Save in a tavern brawl?

De Veselay. Now by my soul
You do us less than justice. Women's wrongs
Find yet in France avengers.

Flos. Is it so?
Then swear upon this Cross to prove it so.
Swear to avenge me, and be swift to strike—
I say not whom, lest naming of his name
My lips be wither'd and my human speech
Turn'd to a serpent's hiss.

De Veselay. That do I swear;
And by what's holiest in the heart of man
I hold myself herein God's minister
Of wrath and judgment, and your will as His.

Flos. Give me thy hand again. It is too white.
I dedicate this hand to truth and love,
And hatred and revenge. White as mine own!
Dye it and bring it back to me to-morrow,
And I will clasp it to my heart. Farewell.

SCENE V.—*The Council Chamber.*—*The KING, the DUKE OF ORLEANS, the DUKE OF BURGUNDY, the ARCHBISHOP OF SENS, and other councillors; the BASTARD OF MONTARGIS, the Abbot of the Bernardins, the Captain of the King's Guard, and others in attendance.*

Orleans. The worthy Abbot here, my Lords, will vouch

It has been tried a hundred times and more
Nor e'er found wanting.

Abbot. Never yet, my Lords.
The last demoniac who was dispossess'd
Was one from Vermandois,—a damsel plagued
With many devils, that she raved and shriek'd
And tore her clothes. A virgin of St. Cloud
Dipping a finger sign'd her, whereupon
A volley of blue sparks flew from her mouth,
Then crows and winged serpents ; and with that
She dropp'd her arms and knelt, and praising God,
Gave thanks for her deliverance like a lamb.

Orleans. You hear. Since which she rests inviolate.
Enough, Lord Abbot : we will weigh your words.

[*Exit the Abbot of the Bernardins.*]

Burgundy. May it please your Majesty, I question not
But that the tears shall work for good ; they may ;
But this should hinder not that means be sought
To track these devils home to them they serve ;
And these sagacious Monks, as I am told,
Have now their noses on the slot. They wait
To tell their tidings. Ho there ! bring them in.

[*Exit* MONTARGIS.]

Orleans. For me, my Lords, as soon would I consult
With Satan's self as with his mimes and minions ;
But since they please my Cousin, let them come.
I think—what smell is this ?—they're not far off.

Re-enter MONTARGIS *with* FATHER BUVULAN *and* FATHER
BETIZAC.

Burgundy. Rise, holy Fathers ; say to my Lord the
King

How speeds your quest ?

Archbishop. But first, I pray you, tell
Whether it be by sorcery ye work,
Or holier ways.

Father Buvulan. My Lord Archbishop, no ;
'Tis not by sorcery ; but as Moses wrought
His wonders, and by Jannes and by Jambres,
Egyptians and Sorcerers, was misdeem'd
To be a Sorcerer like themselves, so we
By Sorcerers and their crew are Sorcerers call'd,
But by the faithful faithful. For our art,
We draw it from the holiest source, a book
Which God to Adam for his solace gave
When he had wept a hundred years for Abel.
He that shall read this volume when the Moon
Conjoins with Jupiter in the Dragon's head,
Shall know of secret counsels that are hatch'd
In Satan's kingdom.

Orleans. In what language, Sir,
Is this book written ?

Father Buvulan. That which was used, my Lord,
In Paradise.

Orleans. Who taught it you ?

Father Buwolan. My Lord,
The Book I speak of teaches it.

Burgundy. Well, well ;
To the purpose. Say, if ye know, what man
Sends by his execrable art these fiends
To vex the King, himself a fouler fiend
Than any that obey him.

Father Betizac. Honour'd Lords,
We know, but dare not tell.

Burgundy. How! dare not tell !
How dare ye to be silent if ye know?

Father Betizac. My Lord, so loth are we to deem it
true,
Although we know it, we would fain believe
Our art this once betrays us.

Burgundy. Tush! no words,
Or words of weight ; no trifling, Friars, here.
Speak to the point, or take your hummings hence.

Father Betizac. Oh, Sirs, but it is perilous to accuse
Men in high places! 'twere an ill return
For our outspoken fearless honesty
Should we lie open to the vengeful strokes
Of guilty greatness ; and we humbly crave
Some warrantise that what we're bid to speak
Spoken shall bring no jeopardy of life
Or liberty or goods.

Burgundy. Now look ye, Friars ;
I've heard you heretofore with patience ; yes,

With singular patience, bred of that respect
 In which I hold you, so far I have heard you.
 But I am not a Saint ; patience has bounds :
 And if ye do not instantly speak out,
 By God I'll have your heads.

Father Buvulan. Ah ! my good Lord,
 You deal too hardly with our just intent ;
 But being so bidden we must needs obey
 Though it may cost us dear. My Lord, the man
 Who to our sorrowing insight was reveal'd
 The worker of this evil on the King
 Stands in this presence on the King's right hand,
 His Grace the Duke of Orleans.

Orleans. Death and Hell !
 Ye felon Monks, accuse ye me ?

Archbishop. My Lords,
 This is plain blasphemy—these men blaspheme—
 My Lords, these men, I say these men, my Lords,—

Orleans. These men, Archbishop ? Venomous snakes,
 not men ;
 Fell vipers hissing through the mask of Monks.
 Detestable Apostates, come ye here,
 Yea to the face and front of Majesty,
 To trample on the Royal blood of France !
 Rear up thy head, thou sacrilegious snake,
 Ope thy white lips and spit that lie again
 In the King's face.

Archbishop. I say, my Lords, once more,

These men profane this presence, speaking words
That are most impious, and unfit to utter,
And I may add, untrue, and very fearful,
Transgressing and o'erleaping, so to say,
Those bounds of modesty which good men honour,
Insomuch that I verily stand amazed.

Orleans. I say no more. I am ashamed to waste
Good honest anger on a reptile's sting,
Or scold at kites and jackdaws. Sir my Brother,
I deign not to reply to this foul charge,
But leave it to your justice.

The King. They shall die,
Yea, instantly, an ignominious death.
Ho! Captain of the Guard, arrest these Monks.

[*The Guard is called in and the Monks pinioned.*]

My ever loving and beloved Brother,
Who from our earliest years hast been to me
A staff and stay,—my dear delight in weal,
My solace in affliction,—be it known
Who strikes at thy fair fame strikes at my heart,
And as a traitor to the realm and me
Shall suffer death.

Father Betizac. Oh mercy! spare our lives!
My honour'd Lord of Burgundy, save us, save us.

Burgundy. I save you! Take them hence.

Orleans. But first, a word;
Of your own malice, though as deep as hell,
Ye have not learnt this lesson. Tell from whom,

Beside the Devil, ye derived it ; tell,
And I myself may plead for you.

Father Buvulan. My Lord,
You are most merciful and a Christian man.
We were assured his Grace of Burgundy
Knew more of this than we.

Orleans. My cousin John !
Burgundy. What, I, ye miscreant jugglers !
Montargis. Take them hence—
Off with them—off ! and gag them, lest their lies
Should spread amongst the people.

Father Betizac. Base, false Knight !
[*The Monks are gagged and carried off.*]
Burgundy. My royal Cousin, what has moved these
Monks

To mingle me with their malignities,
I do protest I know not. Before God
I am as innocent of this wrong to you
As when my mother whelp'd me.

The King. Doubt it not,
My noble Brother. Think not that our Cousin,
Who did but yesterday at the altar's foot,
In token of a life-long good accord,
Partake with you the Bread of Life and Love,
Would ever so surrender his purged spirit
To evil counsels as to soil himself
With perfidies like these.

Orleans. I well believe it ;

And do as freely from my heart absolve
My Cousin of complicity in this,—
Yea with a faith as absolute—as myself
Of that I'm charged with. I would not believe
A cat had stolen my cream upon the oath
Of two such knaves as these; how should I then
Believe for them my royal Cousin wrought
To poison my good name? He did it not;
No, by the honour of the Fleur de Lys,
He did it not. My pledge I here renew
Of friendship and alliance.

Burgundy. And I mine;
Here is my hand.

Orleans. So be it. Now, my Lords,
Our day's work thus determined, God be with you!
With your good leave, my Brother.

The King. Lords, farewell;
Our Brother, as we think, will wish us with him.

[*Exeunt the KING and the DUKE OF ORLEANS.*]

Burgundy. I crave a word of counsel ere we part:
We see, Sirs, how no week can pass but breeds
Some new device for healing of the King;
And what we now have witness'd proffers proof
How easily in this good men may err,
The dupes of knavish craft. Touching these tears,
My cousin may be right or may be wrong;
Certes his purpose and intent is good;
But that his counsellors and instruments

Are unimpeachable, demands a doubt :
 The Abbot of the Bernardins, I hear,
 Is but a wily and a slippery saint ;
 And for my cousin's virgin, who but knows
 What manner of maids they be that trade with him.
 Then for the tears ; there is another bottle,
 Shrined in the Convent of St. Genevieve,
 Which some think is the truer. How this be
 I know not ; but I know it is not meet
 Such things be hazarded in wantonness ;
 And to this end it is I ask your aid.
 I deem that whoso shall essay such things,
 If harm should follow, howsoe'er excused,
 Should expiate the issue with their lives.
 So rash attempts shall fitly be foreslowen,
 And none shall tamper with the King's disease
 Save those that in themselves and in their means
 Have a full faith. Hold up your hands for "Yea."

[All hands are holden up.]

It is decreed. I will not keep you now.

Farewell. Montargis, stay with me. Farewell.

*[Exeunt all but the DUKE OF BURGUNDY and
 the BASTARD OF MONTARGIS.]*

Well, this is strange, Montargis ; by St. George
 I nothing know what made those Monks so bold ;
 They had no cue from me.

Montargis. And by the Dragon
 I'll swear it was the truth that made them bold ;

For certain is it what they said was true ;
The King's bedevill'd by the Duke, no other ;
Men do not deal in dangerous crimes for nought,
And who but he could profit ?

Burgundy. Who but he ?

Let but the King be kept incapable,
He thinks to rule supreme.

Montargis. And for what cause
Saved he up Passac, whose infernal arts
Compass the King from hour to hour ?

Burgundy. But why
The Monks should be so desperate for the truth
At forfeit of their heads . . .

Montargis. That craves reply.
Why true then,—let me see. Faith ! they were stung
At the Duke's meddling with their roast, the barber,
And, taking count he would avenge him, reckon'd
Their vengeance should have won the race of his.

Burgundy. And when their reckonings ran them on
a rock
They hail'd to me, beshrew them ! It is well
My Cousin seems to think no evil.

Montargis. Seems.

Burgundy. Not honest, think'st thou, in his seeming ?

Montargis. Nay,
Your Highness searches men with inquisition
Subtler than mine. You're positive the Monks
No warrant had from you. I that am bound

To know you nice and scrupulous of speech,
 May swear to what you say. But who beside
 Will take it for a truth that men so mean
 And lowly of condition would thus dare
 To put their quarrel with a potent Prince
 To mortal issue, save at his behest
 Who only is more powerful still? 'Tis vain
 To dream the Duke, or any man, how'er
 He mask the vengeful battery of his thoughts,
 Acquits you in his heart; 'tis not in man
 To hold you innocent; and if you deem
 The Duke so minded, you are lull'd to sleep,
 That so the dagger of a dire revenge
 May waken you to death.

Burgundy. By Anthony's cap
 I swear I had no part in this at all,
 Nor knew of their intent.

Montargis. Sir, 'tis all one;
 Part or no part, 'tis credited to you,
 And will be ever. Go not abroad, I pray,
 Unarm'd or unattended. Be advised;
 You are not safe. From this time forth you walk
 With pitfalls in your path. 'Tis you or he
 Must fall to rise no more.

Burgundy. Well, I'll beware.

Montargis. One vantage you may suck from what hath
 chanced.

The Monks, thus dying for the word they spake,

Will leave an echo in the people. These
Will now misdoubt the Duke; and if mischance
Should haply overtake him, some will say
It was not undeserved. Let care be used
To spread the accusation; taking note
The Monks, as they were led to death, were gagg'd
To stifle it. Bid waverers call to mind
The dealings of the Duke in earlier years
With Jean de Bar, and that enchanted ring
Which still he wears, that gives him absolute sway
O'er women, be they ne'er so chaste; which ring
He scrupled not most impiously to employ
Even in the Holy Week. Noise that abroad;
And likewise that he hath a chamber, lock'd,
Which none may enter, where the pictures hang
By scores, of ladies o'er whose virtue thus
He foully triumph'd.

Burgundy. Truly, I have heard
Of such a chamber.

Montargis. More than heard have I,
For I have seen it.

Burgundy. Hast thou? By St. George
Thou hast an entering art; how got'st thou in?

Montargis. Sir, by the golden key; there is no lock
Which that key fits not. To your Highness too
Free entrance shall it open, would you view
This zodiac of fallen stars.

Burgundy. Some idle hour.

But go, Montargis, see if the Monks be safe ;
And bring me word. I am but ill at ease ;
'Twould comfort me to hear their heads were off.

SCENE VI.—GEOFFREY DE LAVAL *and* EUSTACE
D'ESTIVET.

Geoffrey. He bade me tell you he no longer needs
That ditty destined for a serenade,
Nor other amorous songs, how sweet soe'er,
Your art can minister. If sing you must
Still of love only, then he'd have you sing,
Not of love's dalliance, rather what he deems,
Thro' grace bestowed, not less but more divine,
Love's dirge.

Eustace. My boy, when boyhood's happy years
Are past and gone, too aptly wilt thou learn
That Love and Death are mates ; for either love
Dies in the living, or the living dies.
Oh boy——

Geoffrey. But I am older than you guess ;
You think, because my beard a little lags,
That I know nought of love. Oh, but I do ;
And this I know,—if what you say of love
Is true, and in the living love can die,
Then rather would I that I died outright
Than that the love which is my life should die
And I should seem to live.

Eustace. And may I know
For whom it is that thou would'st die?

Geoffrey. For whom?
Well, there are two; his Highness is the one;
The other is a maid, whose name is—no,
I must not tell it.

Eustace. Not to me? Dear youth;
Thou'lt find not one that tenders more thy weal;
God grant that if one day I sing a dirge,
It may not be for thee.

Geoffrey. God grant it—yes,
Because my horoscope, his Highness says,
Points to one hour with his.

Eustace. Nay, is it so?
Well, he that sings the dirge of love and joy
Needs not to single out this hour or that;
Still less that youth or maid. One song I sang,
In other years, that touched upon that key,
And if I could remember it . . . "I asked" . . .

Geoffrey. You must—you must remember it. You shall.

(*Eustace sings*):

I asked a sweet Spirit above
That looked on the earth with a sigh,
What ails thee, oh Spirit of Love,
And whence comes thy sorrow and why?

As I looked, said the Spirit, it chanced
Two lovers, a maid and a boy,
Came before me, enraptured, entranced,—
What I saw was the dayspring of joy.

But if it was joy you descried,
 Why was there no joy in your face?
 'Twas joy that you saw, and you sighed;
 Love's feast, and you could not say grace.

He answered,—The near and the far
 For me come together in sight,—
 The beauty that shines like a star,
 The cloud and the blackness of night;

Of friendship the Spring and the Fall,
 Love's glory that Shame overtook,—
 All visions of Hope, and through all
 Reality's bitter rebuke.

'Twas a bridal, and anthems were loud
 That pealed for the maid and the boy—
 But her veil was entwined with a shroud—
 What so sad as the dayspring of joy?

Geoffrey. 'Tis well for them that have the art, like you,
 To put away their sadness into songs.
 'Twas with a tender and a gracious grief
 The Spirit deigned to look on human woes;
 But had he not the solace of a sight
 That reaches farther than an earthly far
 And sees another dawn?

Eustace. There—now I own
 A ripeness must be thine beyond thine years,
 And truly beyond mine; for I but sing,
 And thou art fain to preach.

Geoffrey. Hark, hark! the chimes.
 One, two, three, four . . . the hour is come, and now,—

If Iolande be steadfast, and the King,
As hitherto, consenting,—shall be wrought
The miracle of the tears: The Duke gave leave,
And I can pass you through the chapel doors ;
But we must go at once and see unseen.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The working-room of a Painter. The
BASTARD OF MONTARGIS and the PAINTER.*

Montargis. Well, Sir, these foolish women, as I said,
Beset me for my picture—no escape ;
And if a hundred crowns may answer it,
There is the gold ; and being thus besieged,
I hold my ransom cheap.

Painter. The sum, my Lord,
Has more relation to your quality
Than my deserts. A side-face shall it be ?
Or no—a full face ; for 'tis but in that
The story of the face is told at large.
The full face portraiture should much divulge,
Aud yet much more adumbrate Turn to me
It may be of one look alone delivered,
And yet with many pregnant All but straight—
Your pardon—so—A little more this way
There, there, I have it. For the scar, my Lord,
Shall it be painted ?

Montargis. As you please.

Painter. The scar

Is portion of the story ; it shall stand.

So now to work.

Montargis. Excuse me ; not to-day ;
My leisure serves not ; but some fortnight hence
I'll come again. Whose face is that, I pray,
That gleams from yonder panel ?

Painter. That, my Lord ?
It is her Grace of Burgundy's.

Montargis. True—true ;
You told me so before—stolen as she sat
Over the lists at Nêslé.

Painter. 'Tis but a sketch,
Yet of great price to me ; for this, wrought out,
Builds up the fortune of my piece in hand,
Salomé in the hall of Herod.

Montargis. Hah !
That face befits the argument. The mole
Upon the neck,—is that, as some aver,
An added charm, or is it not a blemish ?

Painter. There is a power in beauty which subdues
All accidents of Nature to itself.
Aurora comes in clouds, and yet the cloud
Dims not, but decks her beauty. Furthermore
Whate'er shall single out a personal self
Takes with a subtler magic. So of shape ;
Perfect proportion, like unclouded light,
Is but a faultless model ; small defect
Conjoint with excellence, more moves and wins,

Making the heavenly human.

Montargis. For myself,
Unto things heavenly am I devote,
And not to moles and weals or humps and bumps.
Yet I consent, her Grace of Burgundy
Has charms, as you have painted them, that vie
With any France can boast.

Painter. 'Tis kind, my Lord,
In you to say so ; but I spared no pains.
Look closer ; mark the hyacinthine blue
Of mazy veins irriguous, swelling here,
There branching and so softening out of sight.
Nor is it ill conceited. You may mark
The timbrel drooping from her hand denotes
The dance foregone ; a fire is in her eye
Which tells of triumph ; and voluptuous grace
Of motion is exchanged for rapturous rest.

Montargis. 'Tis all exceeding good. I take my leave ;
And, you forbidding not, some fortnight hence
I come again.

Painter. At your command.

Montargis. Good day.

[*Goes out, but returns.*]

I have bethought me of a friend whose soul
Lies in the hollow of her Grace's hand,
Soft fluttering like a captured butterfly,
To whom this picture were the very leaf
That it would feast on. In his amorous eyes

This portrait would be worth a thousand crowns.
Trust it to me, I prithee, for one day,
That I may show it to my friend.

Painter.

My Lord,

So soon as it has stamp'd its effigy
Upon that altar-piece I told you of,
'Tis yours to sell ; and for a forward step
So please you in the mean time, take and show it.
Permit me to attend you. By your leave.

SCENE II.—*The Chapel in the King's Palace.* IOLANDE
and ROBERT THE HERMIT.

Robert (kneeling at the altar). Father, that throned in
glory and in light

O'erseest all things, and this Earth thy work
In its first newness fresh from Thee survey'dst
And saw'st that it was good, behold it now
Old and adulterate with pain and sin
And cursed with strife, whilst anguish and despair
Cry piercingly, but not to Thee, for pity,—
Behold it now a world of blood and tears :
And as by power Thou mad'st it fair at first,
So by Thy mercy, so by Thine infinite love,
So by Thy heavenly washing, cleanse it now :
Almighty Father, spare this realm of France :
Father, this region, fairest of the earth

Whilst Thou wast with us, wanting Thee is foul ;
 And from its filth and rank corruption teem
 All loathsome, all unutterable crimes.
 Oh may the few that serve Thee serve Thee so
 That many may be saved ! Visit this vine
 Which Thou didst plant and erewhile mad'st so strong ;
 Visit thy royal husbandman King Charles,
 That, charged to tend it, he have Thee to aid,
 And fainting not, have power to chase and smite
 The wild boar breaking in. And if this Maid
 Be chosen of Thee, a vessel of Thy grace,
 Shower Thou Thy blessing on her high endeavour.

[*He rises.*]

Maid, I adjure thee for the last time now
 If any breath of earthly passion dim
 Heaven's mirror in thy mind, renounce this rite ;
 For as the blessing were beyond all price
 If thou and thine attempt indeed were bless'd,
 So deep were thy damnation if, through sin
 Of self-deceit, or frailty of the flesh,
 Or wavering faith, or human loves at war
 With heavenly, thou mad'st havock of this hope.

Iolande. Hermit, I saw her ; she was robed in white,
 With golden hair that glisten'd in the sun,
 And eyes that look'd in turn from me to Heaven
 And Heaven to me, compassionate and pure
 And radiant with celestial love and joy.
 "I am Saint Mary Magdalene," she cried ;

And then, as though she caught the word from Christ,—
“Forward to Zoar ; faint not, look not back ;
If doubt assail thee, for that o'er thy soul
The shadow of a sin hath fled, deem
That doubt to be but devilish, and know
That dear and sacred in the sight of God
As innocence itself is blest contrition ;
Else why was I beloved, and whence this crown ?”
With that, the glory round her head shone forth
With sevenfold lustre, and she vanish'd.

Robert.

See ;

The Duke, the King.

*Enter the KING, the DUKE OF ORLEANS, The ABBOT OF
THE BERNARDINS, with the phial, and PASSAC.*

The King. Brother, I prithee bid the Sacristan
Leave jangling of those bells.

Orleans.

I hear no bells ;

'Tis but your fancy, Brother. I have heard
The ear hath phantoms, like as hath the eye,
And men hear sounds that are not. It is common.

The King. True ; once I thought my body was a
church,

My head the belfry ; and you'd scarce believe
What clangour and what swinging to and fro
Went on, and how the belfry rock'd and reel'd,
Till Death, the knock-kneed laggard, came to church ;

Then all was peace.

Orleans. No more of that. Look, look,—
There by the altar is that spotless maid
On whom the sainted Magdalene drops anew
Her tears of tenderest love, which, turn'd to balm,
With potent touch shall heal and fortify
This shaken yet majestic soul of France.
Make no delay.

The King. Oh Virgin fair and pure !
Thou hast a goodly presence, and thy face
Is like the face of one who longs for Christ
And sees Him coming in the clouds with power ;
And now thou drawest near, thou'rt not of earth ;
For there's a glory round thee, and thine eyes
Are as that Seraph's which I saw long since
When God was good and gracious to my soul
And sent me messages of love. Oh maid !
I see a Heavenly message in thy face,
And know thee more than human.

Iolande. Royal Sir,
It is a vision you behold, not me ;
I see it too ; whichever way I look
Is light and glory ; for it fills the place,
And angels' eyes meet mine.

Robert. Let none gainsay
That angels' eyes behold this work. Oh thou
Redeem'd from sinful love by love divine,
Who, weeping in the darkness nigh the tomb,

Wast by the angels bidden not to mourn
For Christ was risen, which heard thou went'st thy way
With fear and with great joy,—teach us to weep
In such wise that great joy may come through tears,
Knowing Him risen : thou debtor unto whom
Love brought forgiveness and forgiveness love
Redounding each to other, ask for us
That love and pardon our great debt demands :
Thou who with tears didst wash the feet of Christ,
Wash them again with tears,—wash them again
With tears of intercession for the sins
Of God's afflicted servant, Charles of France.

The King. I know him—'tis the Hermit—he does
well

To clothe himself in skins. Brother, a word ;
It is not meet I undergo this rite
In Royal robes ; I should be humbly clad ;
I and the Hermit will change clothes.

Orleans.

Nay, nay,

This is no time to linger ; kneel as you are.
Lord Abbot, place the phial on the altar.
Now, sainted Iolande, beloved of God,
Perform your hallow'd function.

The King (kneeling).

Be it so.

Iolande. I, as divinely call'd, and by the grace
I trust is given me, sign thee with this Cross ;
And by God's power, and by the Cross of Christ,
And by the virtue of these sacred tears

Wept by Saint Mary Magdalene, enjoin
 All evil spirits that inhabit here,
 If any now inhabit, to depart,
 And I command that none henceforth shall dare
 To vex the soul of this anointed King.

Robert. Amen ! amen ! so be it !

The King.

There they go—

That's Astramon,—that's Cedon ; get ye hence,
 False traitors ! My Lord Abbot, follow, follow ;
 And sprinkle holy water in their track,
 Or they will turn again. Good Hermit, follow.

[*Exit followed by* ROBERT THE HERMIT, *the* ABBOT,
and PASSAC.

Iolande. Hear me, Angelic Host ! Seraphic Bands,
 And Spirits that erst imprison'd here on earth
 Have burst your bonds and mounted, list to me,
 A child of earth, to whose weak hands were given
 The spear and shield of Christ,—oh bear me up
 Now that my task is done,—lift up my heart,
 For it is trembling, tottering, fainting, sinking,
 And teach it such a song of joy and praise
 As, borne aloft toward the mercy-seat,
 May mix with hallelujahs of your own !
 And oh that I were worthier, and that now,
 Upspringing from my consummated task,
 I might but be released and join your choirs
 In endless anthems ! God of boundless love,
 Take me, oh take me hence !

Re-enter PASSAC.

Passac. My Lord, the King,
As hath been sometime heretofore his wont,
Hath bid us take away his sword.

Orleans. Well, well ;
No matter ; say no more.

Passac. He calls for you.

Orleans. I come. Oh, Iolande, a hasty vow
Was that I vow'd, that when thy work was wrought
I never more would ask to see thy face.
Once, once again I must. Ere the sun set
I bring thee tidings of the King.

A cry within. My Lord ;

Orleans. I come, I come.

Iolande. I fear you now no more ;
Christ hath me by the hand and I am safe.

Orleans. Passac, attend her to the Celestines.
Who calls so loud? I come, I say, I come.

SCENE III.—*The Secret Cabinet in the Palace of the DUKE OF ORLEANS, hung round with Pictures, each concealed by a curtain. The DUKE OF BURGUNDY, the BASTARD OF MONTARGIS, and an Attendant.*

Montargis (to the Attendant). Withdraw the curtains and retire.

Burgundy. Too true ;

Wild as the winds, they tell me, wild as the winds.
 He knows not those about him nor himself ;
 Son of Perdition, Scape-goat, Man of Sin,
 He calls himself, and foams at all who say
 "Your Grace," "Your Highness," or "my Lord the King."
 No madman who believes himself a King
 Is so enamour'd of his royalties
 As this poor King envenom'd is against them.
 To see the Fleur de Lys most angers him,
 And when he can he tears it. One alone
 Hath power upon him (whence derived we know),
 The Milanese enchantress Valentine,
 My worthy Cousin's wife ; who reads such books
 As when the hangman burns, he puts on gloves
 For fear of what may happen. In his rage
 He seized the old Archbishop by the throat,
 Bidding him cease philandering and fiddling
 And dig himself a grave beneath the gallows.
 The Archbishop, in a mortal terror, cried,
 "Oh let me go and I will do it ;" then
 He squatted on the floor, and laugh'd.

Montargis.

This day,

If ever, shall your Highness seize the reins.
 The people are inflamed ; in every street
 They gather, hurling curses at his head
 Whose practice once again hath crazed the King.
 The death, too, they demand, of that young Witch
 Whose art the Duke hath used.

Burgundy. That was decreed
Beforehand.

Montargis. Sir, a Council should be call'd
Ere this cools down.

Burgundy. Already it is call'd ;
It meets at six.—Ho ! here's a galaxy
Of glowing dames ! Well done, my amorous Cousin !
Whate'er his errors at the Council-board,
By Becket's bones I cannot but commend
His choice of paramours. Banners are these
Ta'en in Love's warfare, and hung up to tell
Of many a Noble, many a Knight despoil'd.
Ha ! were it not a frolic that should shake
Grim Saturn's self with laughter, could we bring
The husbands hither,—each to look round and spy
The blazon of his dire disgrace.

Montargis. 'Twere sport
That were I following my father's hearse
Would make me roar with merriment.

Burgundy. Who's this ?
Tell me the name and quality of each
In order as they come.

Montargis. This is Adele,
Wife of the Seneschal de Montenay.
Beautiful vixen ! for three years and more
He caged her in his castle on the Yonne,
To teach her tameness ; and she learnt revenge ;
Whereof her present love is part and lot.

Yond Cupid painted in the vault above
 Poison'd his arrow when he shot at her.
 She mimics gracefully a fondling softness,
 But there's less danger in a bear's embrace
 Than her caressings.

Burgundy. God ha' mercy ! Pass ;
 Who is the next ?

Montargis. Evangeline St. Cler,
 The lily of Bordeaux, Count Raymond's daughter ;
 An easy, lazy lady, freely fraught
 By nature with a full complacency
 And swelling opulence of inward joy
 Sufficient to itself, that knows no want,
 Too careless happy to have need of love.
 And leave her unmolested, she were chaste
 As Thekla in the cave ; but urged and press'd,
 Resistance is too troublesome ; she's kind,
 And if a lover wring his hands and weep,
 She can refuse him nothing.

Burgundy. Weep for a wench !
 I'd have the fool well whipp'd. I know the next ;
 She, if I err not, is De Chauny's spouse.

Montargis. Pressing a portrait to her pouting lips,
 Which once were not so pale ; and whence the change
 Ask her successor smiling opposite,
 The Jew Rispondi's daughter fresh from Rhodes.
 A polish'd corner of the Temple she,
 Dove's eyes within her locks ; an innocent child,

Sold as a toy and senseless as a toy,
Who hardly knew what love or sin might mean.
Her reign was short.

Burgundy. And then the next !

Montargis. Which ! This ?

Burgundy. She with the timbrel dangling from her
hand.

Montargis. I know not this ; this was not here before.
The one beyond it

Burgundy. Not so fast ; this face
I surely must have seen, though not, it may be,
For some time past ; it hath a princely grace
And lavish liberty of eye and limb,
With something of a soft seductiveness
Which very strangely to my mind recalls
The idle days of youth ; that face I know,
Yet know not whose it is.

Montargis. Nor I, my Lord ;
Albeit the carriage of the neck and head
Is such as I have somewhere seen.

Burgundy. But where ?
Familiar seems it, though in foreign garb ;
And whether it be Memory recalls
Or Fancy feigning Memory . . . Death of my soul !
It is my wife.

Montargis. Oh no, my Lord, no, no,
It cannot be her Highness.

Burgundy. Cannot, cannot—

Why, no, it cannot ; for my wife is chaste,
 And never did a breath of slander dim
 Her pure and spotless fame ; no, no, it cannot ;
 By all the Angels that keep watch above
 It cannot be my wife . . . and yet it is.
 I tell thee, Bastard of Montargis, this,
 This picture is the picture of my wife.

Montargis. And I, my Lord, make answer it is not.
 I could as soon believe that Castaly .
 Had issued into Styx, Besides, look here,—
 There is a mole upon the neck of this,
 Which is not on your wife's.

Burgundy. That mole is hers ;
 That mole convicts her.

Montargis. What? a mole? Well,—yes,
 Now that I think of it, some sort of smirch,—
 A blot, a blur, I know not what . . .

Burgundy. That mole.
 Oh see, Montargis, look at her ; she smiles,
 But not on me,—but never more on me !
 Oh would to God that she had died the day
 That first I saw that smile and trusted her ;
 Though knowing the whole world of women false,
 Still trusted her,—and knowing that of the false
 The fairest are the falsest, trusted still,
 Still trusted her—Oh my besotted soul !
 Trusted her only—oh my wife, my wife !—
 Believing that of all the Devil's brood

That twist and spin and spawn upon this earth
She was the single Saint—the one unfallen
Of this accursed Creation—oh my wife !
Oh the Iscariot kiss of those false lips !
With him too—to be false with him—my bane,
My blight from boyhood.

Montargis. Verily therein
Was foul-play worse befoul'd ; no arts but his,
And theirs who taught him, with their rings and rods,
Powders and potions, could have breach'd the wall
Of that fair citadel.

Burgundy. I'll have his blood.

Montargis. My Lord, I do beseech you, be not rash.
I own this is not at all points the place
Where I could wish to find, hung up to view,
A portrait of her Grace of Burgundy :
But patience is a virtue which the times
Demand of married men ; to shout one's shame
Were but to add to injury disgrace ;
Make not an open scandal ; keep it close ;
Nor give to every mocking mountebank
A theme for jest.

Burgundy. No scandal ; there's no need ;
But ere yon sun shall set, that villain dies.

Montargis. 'Tis just he should ; and, as the world wags
now,
There will be twenty triumph in his death
For two that seem to mourn.

Burgundy. He dies, by God!
This hand shall kill him if none other.

Montargis. Nay,
Such handiwork should not become your Grace.
Give me your warrant and the deed is done.

Burgundy. Ere the sun sets.

Montargis. A later hour were better;
We want not daylight for a deed like this.

Burgundy. I sleep not till he's dead. Come thou
with me,
And take thy warrant.

Montargis. Sir, at your command.

Burgundy. Look here, Montargis :

[*Drawing his sword.*

Should a breath be breathed
That whispers of my shame, the end is this.

[*Stabs the portrait in the heart.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*—DE VEZELAY *meeting his Squire.*

De Vezelay. What of Montargis? Hast thou found his track?

Squire. 'Twas dark ere I had reach'd the spot; but there

I spied him; he was muffled in his cloak
And skulk'd beneath a porch you'll find half way
Betwixt the Celestines and Gate Barbette;
It bears for sign the image of our Lady.
I left Philippe to watch and came to tell.

De Vezelay. Then there shall he be met with.

Squire.

He is arm'd.

De Vezelay. Else could I not assail him. Should I fall,

Take thou this token unto her thou knowest,
And say I gladly would have lived to serve her,
Wherein defeated, I as gladly die:
Which ended, to my mother take this purse;
It sums the wealth of Raiz de Vezelay.

SCENE II.—*The Convent of the Celestines.*—*The DUKE OF ORLEANS and IOLANDE.*

Orleans. You knew not, Iolande, but I knew well,
The import of that word which Passac brought,—
“He bade us take away his sword.” Poor soul!
So long as sense is with him he takes thought
For all, and ever as the clouds within
Speak to his spirit of a coming storm,
Desires to be disarm'd.

Iolande. Alas! Alas!

Orleans. Take courage and take comfort; look not
back;

'Tis that way darkness lies. God knows thy heart;
He knows thou wrought'st devoutly and in faith,
And though He grant thee not a Kingdom's health,
'Tis for the Kingdom's sins, and not thine own,—
For mine and for the Kingdom's sins,—none else,
That He denies thee; nor for these for long;
Thy power, supernal even now in me,
Through me shall work its way to purge the realm,
And victory and peace shall yet be thine,
Though now defeated. Forth then from the Past,
And bid it get behind thee. Hope and joy
Shall blossom from this ruin.

Iolande. With joy and hope
Let never more my name be named on earth.

Wrought I in faith? But what then are the fruits?
I wrought in sin, and shame is my reward.

Orleans. Nay, never, never yet have sin or shame
Stain'd thy resplendent soul, nor ever shall
One gift hath been refused thee, one reward,
But thou art still Heaven's chosen child, and Heaven
Is in thine eyes and lips and brow and voice;
Nor even in the rapture of that rite
Believed in through belief in Heaven's behest,
Wert thou so like an Angel sent to save
As in thine anguish now. If not the King,
Yet surely me hast thou been sent to save,
Nor wilt thou cast me,—oh! no, no, not now,—
From that pure presence which is safety's self.
Oh! say not now our paths must be apart;
I could have borne,—I thought I could have borne,—
To leave thee and to see thy face no more,
Caught in a gust of triumph and of joy
That swept thee out of sight; but as thou art
Not Earth nor Hell shall part us.

Iolande.

Earth and Hell!

It is for Heaven to part us. Earth and Hell
Are closing round and pressing in upon us
And shutting out the very sight of Heaven.
Oh, leave me; I have told thee I am weak,
Weak through the overthrow of faith and hope,
Weak through the triumph of malignant Powers,
And weak through what beside I will not say.

But in the chambers of my soul, one light
 Still burns, and shows me, wildered though I be,
 That saving strength is found in self-distrust.
 If thou wouldst learn of me, learn that.

Orleans.

Oh God !

But canst thou not believe I plead not now
 Nor ever will, though fifty fiends should rise
 And clutch in fury at their former prey,
 For aught but what is gracious and divine,
 Thy gracious guidance, thy divine support
 To rescue from their rage, not me alone,
 But many a million more ; for France through me
 Is blasted and accursed, and her through me
 May'st thou redeem from darkness and from death,
 And ransom and assoil. 'Tis France that pleads.

Iolande. Prince, tempt not me, nor tamper with thyself.
 Nor thou nor I are Saviours of mankind :
 They have another. Oh ! in Him, not me,
 Seek grace and strength, and in His armour clad
 Go forth and conquer. No, not me, not me !
 For never was it meant when God array'd
 Thy spirit with a lustre more than man's
 That it should bend with less than manhood's might
 And seek support in me.

Orleans.

Oh, Iolande,

Thy mandate if the demon dared dispute,
 That dare not I. The very ground thou tread'st
 Is holy ; it is dedicated earth

Which never more shall foot of mine profane.
But wheresoe'er it journeys, ever there
The vision of thy presence floating round
Shall every path and every precinct guard,
And he that was the slave of sense and sin
Shall be thy soldier in the cause of Christ,
Far from thee and yet near.

Enter FLOS DE FLAVY.

Flos. Where is she? Iolande, oh fly! Begone!
Take instant flight; a message has been brought
From Raiz de Vezelay in fearful haste;
The people clamour and the Council sits
To judge thee; and no safety but in flight.

Iolande. Great God! one Angel watcheth o'er me still,
Sent by Thy pardoning love,—the Angel Death.

Orleans. The Council sits to judge her! Who hath
dared
Without my summons to convene it?

Flos. Sir,
The people rage and say they will have blood.
His Grace of Burgundy in Council sits,
And, to appease them, he hath pledged his faith
That judgment should be pass'd.

Orleans. His Grace is mad;
Or else 'tis in the dark he strikes, nor knows
Why nor at whom. Fear not for Iolande;

I'll to the Council instantly, and all
 Will then be right. My cousin and myself
 Are now in amity, and were we not,
 We ever have been, as we ever shall,
 Frank friends or open foes. All will be right.
 I'll tell them it is I shall answer this ;
 For 'twas of my devising.

Iolande. Oh ! no, no ;
 You shall not go ; all was well done by you ;
 The guilt was only mine.

Orleans. Sweet Iolande,
 Your arms about me thus would once have strain'd
 The staunchest of my purposes—but now . . .

[*Breaks away.*]

ROBERT THE HERMIT *enters.*

Robert. Is this a time for clippings and embracings ?
 Kneeling in prayer were meeter ; know'st thou not
 What threatens thee, and hear'st thou not thy knell ?

Orleans. I know what threatens those that threaten
 her.

[*Exit.*]

Flos. It is the people that I fear the most ;
 They are as cruel as that dangerous Duke,
 And madder than their King.

Robert. Unhappy maid,
 Haste thee to Sanctuary ; a dreadful fate

Awaits thee else.

Iolande. Hermit, it is but death.

Let me stay here. What death am I to die?

Is it by fire? God grant it be by fire!

For holiest men aforetime have so died.

Oh Hermit! am I utterly unworthy

To die like them?

Robert. Maiden, the hand of God

Hath written up thy sin. Thy fatal touch

Polluted and depraved the inherent grace

Of those most holy tears.

Iolande. Oh 'tis most true;

My guilt is great; the visions of the sense

Beguiled my wandering soul, and I misdeem'd

Fallen nature's ecstasies for grace divine.

Robert. Look further for thy fault. How and whence
came

That treachery of the sense? the love of God

Enamours not the sense, nor, being pure,

Conspires with that, like losels o'er their cups,

To inebriate the soul and so betray;

For love of God the Father, God the Son,

And God the Holy Ghost, comes not with heat,

With seizure, transport, and with ravishment;

Since these are wild and fugitive as the lights

That dance and flicker o'er a new-fill'd grave,

And where these are, there are the fumes of death

And savour of corruption—amorous love

Tainting the love of Christ. I saw even now
 Him that went hence reluctantly let go.
 Search thou thy heart ; avoid the wrath of God ;
 And that thou may'st avoid it, take thou heed,
 Nor brave in wantonness the wrath of man.
 It were presumptuous sin to court that death
 Which God in His great mercy and good time
 Grants or withholds.

Flos. Yes, Iolande, oh yes ;

'Tis tempting Providence to linger. Come.

Iolande. Take me to Sanctuary. I will wait God's time.

SCENE III.—*A Street. In front is the porch of a house,
 surmounted by an image of the Virgin. The BASTARD
 OF MONTARGIS and RAOUL DE ROUVROY.*

De Rouvroy. This north wind bites. I am half sick
 with cold.

Montargis. The night is chill ; but something in my soul
 Dances and sparkles like yon frosty star.
 To watch for her I love or him I loathe
 Is better than a bed of down.

De Rouvroy. God's life !

I shall be frozen to the door-post soon ;
 My dagger hand is numb.

Montargis. Think of thy wrongs ;
 Hast thou no spark of Hell-fire in thy heart

To keep thee warm?

De Rowroy. This hanging by and waiting
Is what I hate. Come but the work to hand,
It warms me well. Hear'st thou? what noise is that?

Montargis. 'Tis but a sheaf of snow slid from a roof.
'Tis vain to hearken for a tread to-night;
Unless he come accompanied and talk,
You'll see him ere you hear him.

De Rowroy. Hark! the chimes!
Eight and three quarters.

Montargis. Look, he comes! hide, hide.
[*They retire under the porch.*]

*Enter the DUKE OF ORLEANS and GEOFFREY DE LAVAL,
his Page.*

Orleans. Now haste thee home, and bid the Seneschal
Bring me swift muster of the men-at-arms
Wherever I may be.

*Montargis (springing from the porch, followed by De
Rowroy and others).* That is in Hell.

[*Stabs him.*]

Orleans. Ha! know ye whom ye strike? Villains,
'tis I,
The Duke of Orleans.

Montargis. The man we want.

Orleans. I know thee not, nor whence thy grudge to
me;

But thou hast struck the life.

[*Falls.*

Montargis. And will again.

[*Aiming again at the Duke, whose Page, throwing himself on his master, is stabbed and dies.*

Montargis. Fool, what thy master needed not is thine.
He hath enough.

De Rouvroy. What! is he dead? Make sure.

Montargis. Look in the gutter; full of blood he was;
But if that drain him not . . . Fly for your lives!
There's some one comes.

[*Exeunt MONTARGIS and his gang.*

Enter DE VEZELAY and his Squire.

De Vezelay. What horrible sight is this! The Duke!
the Duke!

Orleans (raising himself.) And who art thou? Is't not
De Vezelay?

Not many minutes have I left of life,
De Vezelay—

[*Seeing the body of his Page.*

Alas! poor faithful boy!
And couldst not thou be spared! De Vezelay,
Lift me and take me to the Celestines
Alive or dead. Despatch thee. If God will
I fain would reach the Celestines alive.

[*Faints.*

De Vezelay (assisted by his Squire, takes up the Duke).
Accursed be my feet that came too late,
My hand, that could not find a time to strike
Ere this was acted. Bastard! man of blood!
'Tis thou, 'tis thou that didst this murder. So!
Swiftly, but smoothly, to the Celestines.

SCENE IV.—*The Council Chamber. The DUKES OF BURGUNDY, BOURBON, and BERRI, the titular KING OF SICILY, and divers high Functionaries and Officers of State.*

Burgundy. I will be sworn, my Lords, the Duke my
Cousin
Can clear himself of this. The people fume,
And rub again old rancours, and in chief
That satyr's dance, when, as by miracle,
Of five that from his Brother's torch took fire,
Masking in garbs of tow, and burn'd to death,
The King alone escaped, thanks be to God!
They murmur, too, of Passac's rescue, wrought,
As they misdeem, in malice to the King;
Whence they, by evil inference, charge the Duke
That he design'd the present woe. For me,
I hold him innocent, though much misled.

Bourbon. Good Nephew, for the witchcraft let the
witch
Be answerable singly; mix not up

His name with hers.

Berri. When she hath smelt the fire,

Doubt not the people shall be pacified.

Burgundy. Clerk, is the warrant ready?

Clerk. Here, so please you.

[*As he signs the warrant, enters MONTARGIS,
who whispers in his ear.*]

Burgundy. And next, my Lords, the testy time
consider'd,

Behoves us to take order with all speed
Touching the Regency. My Cousin's claim
Stands first. I marvel that he is not here;
I scarce can think the city so incensed
But he might find his way in safety hither.
Yet, though he slights us, let it not be said
His absence slurr'd his rights. The vulgar voice
Is loud against him; but what skills it? Noise
Shall never fright prescription from its course,
Nor shall a puff of popular discontent
Move ordinance aside.

[*Shouting is heard in the streets.*]

Berri. What cries be these?

Burgundy. Know'st thou, Montargis?

Montargis. Sir, the citizens

Demand the death of that young Sorceress

Who practised on the King.

Burgundy. There is her doom.

[*Gives him the warrant.*]

See thou the citizens be satisfied ;
Their urgency is just.

[*Exit* MONTARGIS.]

Bourbon. But hark again !
I seem to hear an uproar here within,
A hideous shrieking.

Enter the King's Chamberlain.

Chamberlain. Oh, my Lords ! my Lords !
A treason—such a treason—such a deed—
A deed so barbarous, all the world's despite
Can never match it, hath been done—Oh God !
So black a treason . . .

Burgundy. What, upon the King !

Chamberlain. Not on the King, my Lord,—the Duke
—the Duke—

His Grace of Orleans.

Burgundy. God in heaven forefend !
What hath befallen him ?

Chamberlain. Dead, dead, my Lord ;
Most foully murder'd.

Burgundy. My sweet Cousin dead !

Chamberlain. Stabb'd in the street as he was hastening
hither :
Scantly attended and unarm'd.

Berri. Stabb'd dead !

Sicily. Merciful Heaven ! Whose monstrous deed is
this ?

Bourbon. Oh God, Thy hand is heavy on this realm !
When will the measure of Thy wrath be full,
And horrible portents cease ?

Sicily. Who did it ? Who ?
Who did this murder ?

Burgundy. Ay, Sir, speak ; who did it ?

Chamberlain. I know not who, but they are more than
one,
And running different ways.

Berri. Send for the Provost !
Set double guards upon the city gates,
And let none pass.

Chamberlain. The Provost is astir
And the whole city in the streets. The gates
Are closely guarded, and 'twas seen by some
Whither the murderers fled. With these for guides
The Provost tracks them.

Bourbon. Nephew, are you ill ?

Burgundy. Ill ? No ! who says I'm ill ?

Bourbon. You're deadly pale.

Burgundy. Who can abide so terrible a blow
And keep the crimson in his cheeks ? Who's safe,
If thus the very gutters of our streets
Run with the blood of Princes ? Who's secure ?
Which of us next ? Send for the Provost.

Berri. Nay,
It were but hindering him to call him hither ;
He's hot upon the quest.

Burgundy. Then God forbid
That we should hinder him.

Berri. Why lo ! he's here.

Enter the Provost of Paris.

Sicily. Speak ; hast thou found them ? Hast thou
found the fiends
That did this execrable deed ?

Provost. My Lords,
Some of their number tried the Gate Barbette,
But found it shut ?

Berri. And whither fled they then ?

Provost. I think, my Lords, I know ; and might I
search
Whose house I will, high, low, or rich or poor,
Or though the noblest in the city, then
I'll stake my head these traitors shall be caught.

Bourbon. Search where thou wilt ; in Paris none, thou
know'st,
May dare to shut his door against the Provost,
Save only Princes of the Blood.

Provost. My Lords,
The powers I crave are such as bear no note
Of reservation.

Bourbon. Take them to the full.
What say ye, my good Brothers and my Cousin ?

Sicily. All privilege push'd by, break every bar
That stays thee.

Berri. Even as we would ourselves ;
Hut, hovel, royal palace, all alike,
Enter and search.

Burgundy. Nay, hold ye there. For me,
I'll have no nuzzling catchpole cross my door,
As though misdoubting that a royal roof
Should harbour cut-throats.

Bourbon. Cousin !

Provost. In your hands,
My Lords, I place my office. 'Tis for you
To do your pleasure.

Berri. Nephew, should thy door
Be solely barr'd, when all stand open else,
There were a second slaughter done this day,
And thy good name the victim.

Sicily. By God's death,
I would myself impeach thee. And behold !
I see thy plain impeachment in thy face ;
And if thy Cousin's ghost should rise before thee
And say thou didst it, I were not more sure
Of thy most damnable guilt ; and with my sword
I'll probe and search and prove it.

Burgundy. Spare thy threats,
Good Uncle. It was I that did this deed.

Bourbon. Too well I knew it from the first.

Sicily. And I.

Berri. And dar'st thou say thou didst it, thou that
satt'st

Pledging him at my board but yesternight,
And with him at Christ's table didst partake
A pledge more sacred still? Dar'st say 'twas thou!

Sicily. Oh shame to knighthood and our Royal
House!

Pluck from thy miscreant crest the Fleur de Lys
And stick the deadly hellebore in its place;
For from this hour attained is thy blood,
And from the Royal Tree of France thy branch
Is lopp'd and on a dunghill cast to rot
With all that's base and abject. Hence! begone!
Get hence, or I will spurn thee with my foot
And push thee out of door.

Burgundy. Beware, good Sirs,
The day we meet again.

[*Exit.*

Sicily. Pursue him, Provost,
Arrest him.

Berri. Be not hasty. First take note
Which way the people tend.

Bourbon. 'Tis well advised;
Let's muster each of us our several guards
And draw them to a head; the people else
May turn upon us.

Sicily. Then why sit we here?
Up and be doing! for each minute lost
May give him wings to fly. Get we to horse.

SCENE. V.—*The Convent of the Celestines.*—IOLANDE
kneeling beside the body of the DUKE OF ORLEANS. In
front RAIZ DE VEZELAY and FLOS DE FLAVY.

Flos. She hears us not. Vex not her ears with
 words ;

They do no good.

De Vezelay. But if she linger here
 Her death is sure.

Flos. Thou know'st her not ; I do ;
 She will not fly.

De Vezelay. Alas, then she is lost !

Flos. Her soul is hardly with her. 'Tis with his.
 Since she took water and with her kerchief wash'd
 The blood-stains from his face, she hath not stirr'd.
 How grand he looks ! Death's grandeur and his own.

Iolande. Not cold—not yet.

De Vezelay. Did she not speak ?

Flos. To us ?

No, not to us.

Iolande (springs to her feet). Great God ! Look there,
 look there !

The blood is gushing freely from the wound.

De Vezelay. Then is the murderer near.

Enter the BASTARD OF MONTARGIS.

Montargis (affecting to start back). Oh piteous sight !
 Oh woeful spectacle ! What, lies he there,—

He that was yesterday so bold and gay !
At this even they that loved him not would weep,
And how should I forbear ?

Iolande. Assassin, hence !

Profane not thou the presence of this corse,
Lest it arise and slay thee. Felon, hence !

Montargis. What ! charge you me with this unhappy
deed ?

And call you me a murderer ?

Flos. Yea, she doth.

Montargis. Ha ! doth she truly ? she is ill advised.
Her pardon should I weigh but at its worth
The charge of one, who, if I read aright
The warrant in my hand, herself is charged
With deeds more terrible than she lays on me ;
Foul witchcraft link'd with treason ; for which crimes
I come, as by this warrant is commanded,
To take her to her doom.

Flos. Fell miscreant, hold ;
Approach her not.

Montargis. Stand from me, or by Heaven
I'll shake thee from my path.

De Vezelay. False child of Hell,
Home to thy dam !

[*Stabs him, and he falls.*]

Montargis. Perfidious Raiz, why this ?
I never did thee wrong.

De Vezelay. For all mankind,

Whom thou hast wrong'd in putting on the mask
Of manhood who wast born and bred a fiend,
I take this vengeance.

Enter the Provost of Paris followed by Officers of Justice.

Provost. What new gap for life
Is open'd here? More blood? Without, within,
In streets and houses, ay in churches too,
Rage violence and slaughter, and this night
The very skies rain blood.

[Turning to the body of the DUKE OF ORLEANS.

Unhappy Prince !

I honour'd thee in life, and do I now
Forget to do thee reverence !—Ha ! by Heaven,
Unless mine eyes play false, this writhing wretch
Is he whose malice slew thee, and my zeal,
Though hasting, is belated. Say, whose hand
Was his that balk'd the headsman of his due
And laid this traitor low ?

De Vezelay. That hand was mine.

Provost. I blame thee not, but would not he should
die

Till he be question'd at the Châtelet ;
The rack shall bring some hidden truths to light
Which else were buried with him.

Montargis.

I appeal

From them that sent thee to my Sovereign Lord,
His Grace of Burgundy.

Provost. Appeal to him !
His Grace hath fled the city.

Montargis. Fled ! So— Well—
Take thou my body ; for the breath that's in't,
Beware that it take wing not by the way,
For now it flutters even as for a flight
More distant than the Duke's.

Provost (to the Officers). Sirs, take him hence.
Montargis. One moment, Sirs, I pray you. Ere I go,
Fain with this lady would I make my peace.
My purpose was that she should share my flight,
And of this warrant I possess'd myself
To save her, not to harm. This to attest
Behold what's here,—the hand and seal of Death.

Iolande. Make thou thy peace with God, and not with
me ;
For in God's court and presence we shall stand,
Both thou and I, this night.

Provost. Sirs, we lose time ;
I say, convey him hence.

[*Exeunt the Provost and his Officers, with MONTARGIS. Clamour and tumult is heard without, and enter ROBERT THE HERMIT.*

Robert. Oh haste thee, haste !
A rolling mass of fury comes this way ;
Fly by the wicket : Raiz de Vezelay,

Attend her, I beseech thee ; I, the while,
Will from the window speak to them, and strive
To stem the torrent.

Iolande. Hermit, it is I
Must speak, and vindicate the fame of him
Whose lips are silent.

*[She advances to the window, is struck by an arrow
shot from the crowd, and falls. At the same
time the doors are forced and the crowd ap-
pears, but pauses at the sight of the DUKE'S
body and of IOLANDE fallen.]*

Hermit, I am slain ;
And that is well. Christ will receive my soul,
Knowing that though I fondly loved another,
I strove to love but Him. That other too
Christ will receive ; for if he sorely sinn'd,
Deep was his penitence and large his love.
I seem to see the Citizens at the door,
But now mine eyes wax dim,—or else my mind,—
And all things swim and glimmer. Cease, dear Flos,
Thou vainly striv'st to staunch it ; let it flow.
I see more clearly now. Ye that love truth,
And of these fearful miserable days
Would justly judge, accuse not in blind wrath
Him that lies there, whose true and generous soul
Was faithful to the King. 'Twas mine, 'twas mine,
The fault was mine, that though I work'd in faith
And sought the King's deliverance, all was vain

Being I was not worthy. Lo ! I die,
And bless the hand from which this arrow flew,
And ask forgiveness, first of God, and next
Of you, the People. Free among the dead.

[*Dies.*

Robert. Back, Citizens ; that which ye sought ye have ;
Though now methinks ye would ye had it not ;
And some are weeping. Hie ye to your homes.

[*The people retire.*

He turns to FLOS and DE VEZELAY.

Arise, if horror have not stark'd your limbs,
And bear we to the Chapel reverently
These poor remains. In her a fire is quench'd
That burn'd too bright, with either ardour fed,
Divine and human. In the grave with him
I bury hope ; for France from this time forth
Is but a battle-field, where crime with crime,
Vengeance with vengeance grapples ; till one sword
Shall smite the neck whence grow the hundred heads,
And one dread mace, weighted with force and fraud,
Shall stun this nation to a dismal peace.

NOTES.



PREFACE, p. 137.

ON the very day on which the Duke of Orleans died was born Dunois, Bastard of Orleans (the offspring of his amour with Madame De Chauny), who was cherished by his widow with a love not less than that which she bare to her own children, and to whose wisdom and prowess Charles VII. owed the restoration of Normandy and Guyenne to the crown of France ; whilst his legitimate son, Charles Duc d'Orleans, wounded and taken prisoner at the battle of Agincourt, applied himself to literature and poetry for his consolation during a mournful captivity of twenty-five years. " Il faisait des vers mieux que personne en France, et trouvait un douloureux plaisir à célébrer, dans de touchantes ballades, le regret de passer sa vie loin de son pays, de sa famille, de ses amours, et de rester oisif et inutile, sans pouvoir gagner la gloire des chevaliers. Il déplorait aussi les calamités et rappelait l'ancienne renommée du noble royaume de France, lui reprochant ses désordres qui avaient attiré la colère céleste. Il demandait à Dieu de lui accorder, avant d'arriver à la vieillesse, les plaisirs de la paix et du retour. D'autres fois il reprochait à la Fortune d'exercer sur lui une si rude seigneurie, et de faire si fort la renchérie.

“ ‘ Dois-je toujours ainsi languir ?

Hélas ! et n'est-ce pas assez ?

Ce triste refrain revenait à chaque couplet de la ballade, et elle finissait ainsi :

“De ballader j'ai beau loisir,
Autres déduits me son cassés,
Prisonnier suis, d'amour martyr ;
Hélas ! et n'est-ce pas assez ?”

Barante, vol. vi. pp. 228, 229.

The gifts and attainments which adorn the exile of a Prince of the House of Orleans in our own time, are not therefore without a precedent in times past.

Act III., Last Scene, p. 226.

This scene and song will not be found in the earlier editions of the play, and the song is mine only by an act of appropriation and the conversion of another's prose into verse of my own. The prose is Lady Minto's, in her *Life of Hugh Elliot*, p. 202 :—“In looking over such a correspondence as this, the map of a whole life is unrolled before one. The starting point and the goal, the sunshine and the rain-cloud, are seen together : the same glance shows us the cause and consequence of action, the visions of hope and the experiences of reality, the growth and decay of friendships, the rapid succession of gladness and grief : and thus, ‘looking before and after,’ and pondering what might have been, what has been, and what may be again, the thought rises in one's mind, that if there be in other spheres spectators of these shifting scenes of life, they see few sadder sights on earth than the dawn of human joy.”

Act IV., Scene III., p. 239.

This scene has been altered since the first publication of the play ; if, as I believe, improved, I am indebted for the improvement to the remarks of an anonymous writer in a

literary journal,—made, I think, with a true critical insight, though, I am sorry to say, not in a friendly spirit.—(*Note in the Second Edition.*)

P. 247.

*“ And say I gladly would have lived to serve her,
“ Wherein defeated, I as gladly die.”*

So speak from their graves the Spanish lovers and martyrs of Liberty in Landor's Inscription :

“ Emeriti . lubenter . quiesceremus .

“ Libertate . partâ .

“ Quiescimus . amissâ . perlubenter.”

THE EVE OF THE CONQUEST.

TO THE AUTHOR'S WIFE.

DEAR Alice, through much mockery of yours
 (Impatient of my labours long and slow
 And small results that I made haste to show
From time to time), you scornfullest of reviewers,
 These verses work'd their way : "Get on, get on,"
Was mostly my encouragement : But I
 Dead to all spurring kept my pace foregone
And long had learnt all laughter to defy.
I thought, moreover, that your laugh (for hard
Would be the portion of the hapless Bard
Who found not in each comment, grave or gay,
Some flattering unction) . . . In your laugh, I say,
A subtle something glimmer'd ; 'twas a laugh,
If half of mockery, yet of pleasure half.
And since, on looking round, I know not who
 Will greet my offering with as good a grace
 And in their favour give it half a place,
These flights, for fault of better, short and few,
Dear Alice, I must dedicate to you. ▪

MORTLAKE, *Nov.*, 1847.

THE EVE OF THE CONQUEST.



A CLOUDY night descended on the slopes
Of Mountfield, and the scatter'd woods beyond,
Where lay the Saxon force ; and now the wind,
Till sunset that had seem'd to hold its breath,
Burst forth in gusts and flaws, the sea far off
Sounding a dirge a day before the time.
A flush of light was in the Southern sky,
Cast from the Norman camp, and more remote
At intervals around, from Lunsford-heath
To Broad-oak-cross, and Udimore to Hooe,
The frequent watchfire glimmer'd, where the boors,
Though scared yet greedy, grimly lurk'd aloof,
Expecting plunder when to-morrow's storm
Should leave the wreck of battle on the plain.
So fell the night.

 Upon the Saxon flank
A forest stood, within whose wavering skirt
Was scoop'd a shelter for King Harold's tent ;

And thither, when the fitful wind was lull'd,
Came sounds of jollity and boisterous songs,
Which did not please the King.—“Leofwyn, Brand,
Go bid the chiefs abate this barbarous mirth,
And counsel them that cannot sleep to pray.”
They went, and shortly there was silence. Then
The King composed himself as seeking rest :
But though his limbs were motionless, the Page
Who watch'd him, noted that his eyes were closed
More fast than if in sleep, and that his lips
Were ever and anon compress'd to curb
A quivering movement. Suddenly he rose,
 nd shouted for the Page—but he was there.
“Go, Ina, ere the night waste further, go,
And bring me from the Convent where she sleeps
Edith, my daughter ; I would hold discourse
With her of former days ; and wanting this
My soul is not consenting to repose.”

So Ina through the tangled thickets ran,
Much carping at the absence of the Moon,
And doubting in the darkness lest his speed
Through misdirection should induce delay.
But soon he reach'd the Convent in the groves
Of Penshurst, now the shield of Harold's house,
Long after to be otherwise renown'd.
“Sleeps she, the Lady Edith?” “No,” they said,
“Nor will she be persuaded ; she is now

At nocturns in the Chapel." Thither he :
But ere his entrance had the service ceased.
She knelt upon the altar steps alone
In mourning loosely clad, with naked arms
That made an ivory cross upon her breast.
She mourn'd and pray'd for that revolted Earl,
Her uncle Tostig, he that fell at York
A month before, in arms with aliens join'd,
In overthrow with that Norwegian King
Who gat from Harold what, when terms were named,
The Saxon proffer'd with abrupt disdain—
"Six feet of ground,—or seven, for he was tall."
She mourn'd her uncle, spite of his revolt,
Because she loved the stock whereof she came,
And knew them noble even when most misled.
"The King would see you, Princess, ere he sleeps,
For he is troubled in his mind." She rose,
And rising seem'd the vision of a Saint,
Awaiting her assumption. In her mien
Celestial beauty reign'd with sovran grace
And holy peace which holier raptures left,
Not colourless, but like a sunset sky,
Partaking of their glories. So she rose ;
And bending as once more she cross'd herself,
Went forth in haste though calm.

By shorter paths,
For they were known to her, she led the way,
By garth and croft, and through the ferny brake,

And o'er the stepping-stones that spann'd the stream,
And where the deer-browsed elms in Penshurst Park
Spread o'er the sward their level circular roofs :
And nimbly now, and with less doubtful speed
Than Ina's by the parting ways perplex'd,
They reach the forest in whose wavering skirt
Was scoop'd a shelter for King Harold's tent.

Meanwhile the King sate brooding, deep in thought ;
Nor, save for mandates needful to be given
As notices were brought from spies and scouts,
Had raised his forehead from his folded hands :
The time was tedious to the troubled King.
At length the imbedded floor of tough beech leaves,
Slow to rejoin the dust from which they came,
Return'd the tremulous pressure of a foot
So light and soft the Woodland Genius
Mistook it for an echo of the steps
By Oreads planted there in days of old.
Then Harold, rising as the Princess knelt,
Threw off the cloud that veil'd him, and appear'd
His very self, a man of godlike mould,
Radiant, but grave.—The greeting o'er, he sat
Upon a rough-hewn couch with rushes strown ;
And she upon a mantle at his feet
Half sat, half lay, her face upturn'd to his,
Hands clasp'd across his knee.

Then spake the King :—

“ Since sunset, when the marshalling of the force
Was ended, in this dark nocturnal void
The Past has come upon me. Should I fall
To-morrow, I shall leave behind me few,—
It may be none,—to tell with friendly truth
My tale to after-times. Of those that now
Surround me, and have battled by my side
In former fields, too many are estranged
Through love of lucre, seeing I withheld
The spoil of that rich victory in the North,
To spare my people, ravaged by the wars :
These, if surviving me, shall bear me hard.
The many, for whose dear behoof I lose
The suffrage of the few, are slow to praise
A fallen friend, or vindicate defeat.
To-day the idol am I of their loves ;
But should I be to-morrow a dead man,
My memory, were it spotless as the robes
That wrapp'd the Angels in the Sepulchre,
Should see corruption. Therefore in the ear
Of one whom Nature destines to outlive,
If God should so see good, my mortal term
Arriving soon or late, I fain would leave
Some notice of those things wherein I err'd,
And those wherein they err that taint my fame.
Thy brethren tend their charges or repair
Their strength in sleep ; but thou art wise to know,
And lov'st to hearken. So long as thou liv'st,

Of what I tell do thou thy memory make
 A living record ; and before thou diest,
 Unmix'd with lies and flatteries, in the book
 Wherein the Saxon Kings are chronicled,
 See it be written."

With a wistful gaze

The Princess waited while her sire revolved
 The matters he would speak of. More than once
 She press'd her lips upon the massive hand
 That lay beside her, rough and weather-stain'd ;
 Then gazed again. He knew not what she did :
 His thoughts were travelling into distant times.
 At length they wrought to utterance :—

"In my youth

How gaily deck'd, how fortunately fair,
 My life before me lay ! My father then
 Had graciously and of his bounty given
 The crown to Edward, his obsequious King.
 I ruled in Kent, and held through him such power,
 That justice, which the people long had ceased
 To dream of and forgotten to be due,
 Was feasible ; and mercy, which had seem'd
 A gift reserved to God, was mine to grant.
 So love flow'd on me from a thousand springs
 And pour'd itself around me like a flood.
 I flourish'd as a bay tree. By my side
 A noble brotherhood of six fair youths
 Grew lustily, my father's younger sons ;

Of whom, with loyal and fraternal faith,
Four have still follow'd me through chance and change
Inalterable ; two have pass'd from earth
And stand before their Judge : I judge them not.
Last of the six in order, first in love,
Was Ulnoth, in the beauty of his prime,
Who seem'd a creature sent by God to fill
The world with love. A goodlier sight this earth
Beheld not in its goodliest golden days.
A frank and friendly joy adorn'd his face,
Exuberant, but in its wildest mood
Forgetful of no courtesy nor grace
Of generous kindness, dealt to high and low
Like rain and sunshine, profuent from the heart,
With no respect of persons, a good-will
That could not be contain'd. Ulnoth I loved
Next to thy mother, Edith, while she lived ;
And when her spirit, purified by pain
Whilst here abiding, was translated hence,
I loved him of the living best. That love
I to this hour rejoice in and retain,
Not deeming what it cost me worth a sigh.
Thus in the earlier years of Edward's reign
Well fared my father's house.

But joy is short ;

And soon upon our glorious break of day,
So rich in sunshine and so fresh with dew,
We saw the darkness gather on that side

Whence now the storm assails us. Normans soon
Began to flock to impotent Edward's court ;
Who, in his wily weakness, whilst he shower'd
His favours on our house, yet hated most
(A customary baseness in the weak)
Him to whom most he owed, and sought to sap
My father's fortunes when he seem'd to build.
The Norman courtiers, who could dance and sing
Or fast and pray at pleasure, worm'd their way,
And quickening the dull hatreds that they found,
Pour'd very poison in King Edward's ears.
By falsehood they prevail'd ; nor less by truth.
They told him, which was true, that we despised
His person and his power : they said besides
We practised to overturn the tottering throne
That now we overshadow'd ; which was false.
But whatsoever shall furnish pleas for fear
Finds credit with a coward, and the King,
Believing all they bid him, strove to bate
Our formidable fortunes, and to lift
His foreign minions into power. They thence
Took courage whom they injured to insult ;
And Eustace Count of Boulogne, on his way
To France by Dover, with such desperate pride
Demean'd himself, the townsmen rose in arms,
And I, who ruled the seaboard, was constrain'd
To drive him back. The King's accustom'd fear
Was startled into anger, and he bade

My father and myself appear forthwith
Before the Witena. We raised a force :
But then my father falter'd, and the King
Propounding terms, a compact, to my heart
Most grievous, was concluded ; from which seed
Sprang mostly my misfortunes and my faults.
For Ulnoth as a hostage was consign'd
For surer custody to William's hands,
This Norman Duke.

Ere long my father died ;
And Edward's dread and hatred of our house
Relenting, for 'twas he had scared him most,
I grew in greatness ; and the wars in Wales—
Which country 'twas my fortune to reduce
To unaccustom'd tameness—and with these,
Earl Alfgar's insurrection—which, though fierce,
I quell'd by force and heal'd by clemency—
Exalted my renown, and to my zeal
Experience added ; and as Edward's health
Went yearly more to waste, the people's voice
Design'd me for the throne.

My path seem'd straight
At home, but I foresaw that foreign leagues,
And strife and envy, should confront my steps
When once afoot ; and knowing this I knew
What dangers should arise to Ulnoth then,
If he were then still caged in William's court.
For though the Norman had not yet divulged

His own preposterous claims, yet him I knew
With all my foreign foes confederate.

Wherefore, or e'er the stirring time should come,

'Twas my first care to compass the release

Of Ulnoth. To my instances the King

Made answer still that William, and not he,

Detain'd him ; but in truth he greatly grudged

This mainprize of my loyalty to let loose.

To William thus remitted, I resolved

To him to go ; which doubtless pleased the King,

As privy to the Duke's audacious schemes,

Nor loth that I should stumble on his toils.

“ Through divers dangers, shipwreck first, and next
Captivity, I reach'd the Norman court.

Right joyful was that day. The politic Duke

Received me with all honours short of those

To sovereign Princes paid. Procession, game,

Banquet and dance, with songs of every strain,

Lays, virelays, delays, and roundelays,

A fortnight of festivities fill'd out.

But festive beyond all that song or dance

Could publish of festivity, to me

Was Ulnoth's face,—fulfill'd of all delight,

That seem'd to lavish like a miser's heir

Its hoard of joy. The meanest of the train

That follow'd at my father's heels or mine

In former days, appearing to him now,

Even as a brother would have welcomed been :
What welcome then was mine !—of all his race
The one who loved him best, whom best he loved,
Through dangers to his house of bondage come,
And haply his deliverance to achieve.
From treating with the Duke I held aloof
Till I should see and learn : with Ulnoth still
Delighting to consume the livelong day,
Associate in the chase, or as he list,
In groves and gardens, regally adorn'd
With fountains and with daintiest flowers, nor less
With frequent gleam of damsels, thither brought
By choice or chance, or choice attending chance,
In throngs or sole, that many a chaplet twined,
And chaunted many a lay.

Of these the first

In station and most eminently fair,
Was Adeliza, daughter of the Duke.
A woman-child she was : but womanhood
By gradual afflux on her childhood gain'd,
And like a tide that up a river steals
And reaches to a liliated bank, began
To lift up life beneath her. As a child
She still was simple,—rather, shall I say,
More simple than a child, as being lost
In deeper admirations and desires.
The roseate richness of her childish bloom
Remain'd, but by inconstancies and change

Refer'd itself to sources passion-swept.
Such had I seen her as I pass'd the gates
Of Rouen, in procession, on the day
I landed, when a shower of roses fell
Upon my head, and looking up I saw
The fingers which had scatter'd them half spread
Forgetful, and the forward-leaning face
Intently fix'd and glowing, but methought
More serious than it ought to be, so young
And midmost in a show. From time to time
Thenceforth I felt, although I met them not,
The visitation of those serious eyes,
The ardours of that face toward me turn'd.
These long I understood not; for I knew
That she in fast companionship had lived
With Ulnoth; and albeit his joy and pride
Had been in eloquent speech to magnify
My deeds, insomuch that the twain had lived
And revell'd in my story, yet I deem'd
That she must needs have prized beyond the theme
The voice that graced it: and contrasting now
My darkening days with Ulnoth's gracious prime,
I scarce could bring myself to think that eyes,
Howe'er by fancy misinform'd, could err
From him to me. But Ulnoth was a boy
When first she knew him, nor was yet renown'd:
And woman's fancy is more quick to read
In furrow'd faces histories of wars

And tales of wonders by the lamp of fame,
Than in the cursive characters of youth,
How fair soever written, to descry
A glorious promise. Thus betwixt these twain
A bud that might have blossom'd into love
Was sever'd ere it set. For Ulnoth's part,
He, in his nature buoyant, lightly held
By all his loves save that he bare to me ;
And lightly, with a joyful pride, he saw
Her heart to me surrender'd, and himself
Of some unsettled moiety disseised.
Such shape to him the matter took. For me,
Her excellence of beauty, and regards
Rapt oftentimes, forgetful of the earth,
Of earthly attributions unaware
In him her fancy glorified,—regards
That seem'd of power to make the Heaven they
sought,—
Did doubtless touch what time, and public cares,
And household griefs, had left me of a heart.
I loved the lady with a grateful love,
Tender and pure, not passionate.

Meantime,

I search'd the Duke, and saw myself by him
With subtlest inquisition search'd in turn.
His eye was cold and cruel, yet at times
It flash'd with merriment ; his bearing bold,
And save when he had purposes in hand,

Reckless of those around him, insomuch
He scarce would seem to know that they were there :
Yet was he not devoid of courtly arts ;
And when he wish'd to win, or if it chanced
Some humour of amenity came o'er him,
He could be bland, attractive, frankly gay,
Insidiously soft ; but aye beneath
Was fire which, whether by cold ashes screen'd,
Or lambent flames that lick'd whom at a word
They might devour, was unextinguish'd still.

“ It chanced he had a quarrel now afoot
With Conan, Count of Bretagne, against whom
He took the field. I gladly with him went
For exercise in arms, and gave what aid
I could in council. But the more he found
In me of succour and resource, the more
A jealous care possess'd him. Not the less
He courted and cajoled me, costliest gifts
Conferring with a light and lavish hand.
My suit for Ulnoth's liberty at once
He granted ; and, of all he had to give
The prime of gifts most precious in his eyes,
His daughter Adeliza, in his heart
He plainly purposed then, if all went well,
To proffer. Her from cradled infancy
He carried with him wheresoe'er he went
By land or sea, in peace or war, and now

In camp or town, in tent or citadel,
She ever was at hand to share the joy
When we return'd successful from assault
Or deed of arms.

One evening in the dusk,
The sunset red confronting the pale Moon,
Returning I alighted at her tent,
But not successful. Barely and with blows
And desperate riding for full many a mile
Had I that day escaped an ambuscade :
My horse, as I dismounted, fell down dead,
(Which grieved me to the heart, for we were friends,)
And I was pale with sorrow and fatigue
And somewhat by mishap discountenanced.
She met me at the door, and in my face
Read more than what was true ; and presently
Espying as I laid my casque aside
Some streaks of blood that she mistook for mine,
She fainted. In my then disconsolate mood
A softness such as hers distill'd itself
Like balm upon my being ; and when at length
Her spirit was rekindled from its trance
And reassured, I told her my life's blood
Should thenceforth vaunt a value not its own
As flowing from a consecrated fount,
A heart thenceforward hers. She hid her face
An instant in her hands, then flung them forth,
Revealing all the passion of her joy,

That neither smiled nor laugh'd, but mantled high
Effulgent and ineffably divine.

A moment more and she was gone ; her soul
Demanding solitude and secret haunts
To put away its treasure.

I forthwith,

As honour now enjoin'd me, sought the Duke,
And craved her hand in marriage. William smiled ;
And there was satisfaction in his smile ;
But simple satisfaction was not all.
An exultation temper'd by a doubt
Was in it, and a joy with fear commix'd,
And tainted by a secret self-rebuke
For odious aims and treacherous intents.
In simulated frankness he bestow'd
The priceless boon, with only this reserve,—
That seeing she was yet of age unripe,
The nuptials should not now be solemnized,
But wait his time ; which, softly he subjoin'd,
His heart should hasten. But, ere many days,
The portent that perplex'd me in his smile
I well could construe. By uneasy hints
And intimations sounding me, the Duke
Unfolded soon his lust to be a King,
And seize on England. He essay'd to gild
This thunder-cloud of dark design to me
With promise of a station next himself,
Earldoms and honours, all the crown could give.

Earldoms and honours ! Had my fallen estate
Been lowlier than the lowliest Saxon serf's,
And hopeless, not of crowns alone, but bread,
The Tempter, though the same that tempted Eve,
Could not in all his devilry have devised
The bribe that would have bribed me to betray
My country to a foreign yoke. I felt
As worse than wrong or rapine, blows or death,
The insult of the overture. Withal,
Knowing my danger should I once disclose
My anger and my just resolves, or wake
Suspicion, I descended to defeat
Like arts with like, dissembling with fair shows
My inward indignation, although clear
In blank refusal of my fealty.

“ With anxious outlook sought I next to know
If yet the road to England open lay
For me and Ulnoth ; nor had far to seek :
Advices soon were brought me, as by friends
Betraying for my sake the Duke's behests,
But verily by instruction from himself,
That all the ways were guarded : we were watch'd ;
And, for a further menace, hints were dropp'd
Of dungeons, gyves, and tortures,—things too vile
For William, in whose eyes the world's esteem
Went not for nothing, truly to perpend,
But such as it was infamous to name.

" As calmly as I might I now survey'd
 The state in which I stood. I call'd to mind
 With what a cordial confidence at first
 I sought his hospitality ; how since
 We side by side had fought ; how schemes of mine
 Had borne him fairest fruit ; and twice mine arm
 Had saved him when in peril of his life.
 I thought of these things, and mine inmost soul
 Revolting from his perfidy, resolved
 It should not prosper. Edith ! shall I dare
 In presence of thy purity to speak
 Of what I bent my nature to sustain !
 I swear with purposed falsehood to uphold
 The Duke's pretension. Then the way was free ;
 And hastily as flying from my shame,
 To England I return'd.

The rest thou know'st.

Ambition, and my country's love for me,
 And mine for her, with hatred of that foe
 Whose dangerous dealings had ensnared my soul,
 Engross'd me ; I address'd my every thought
 To fortify the league of Saxon Earls,
 And, other recollections dash'd to earth,
 I married Morcar's sister ; by that tie,
 Though death dissolved it in a short three months,
 Making the North mine own. A few months more
 And Edward's death ensued. The Witena
 Had counsell'd him to leave the crown to me

By testament : but he had dreamed a dream
 How a pale comet in the Northern sky,
 That then was nightly visible, shook its head,
 And the Seven Sleepers turn'd themselves in sleep.
 He made no will. But not the less the cry
 Rang out in one concert from North to South,
 From East to West, 'Earl Harold shall be King !'
 My marriage had forewarn'd the Duke, whose ships,
 Full fledged, were waiting till the wind was fair,
 When Tostig and Hardrada's wild descent
 And transient triumph summon'd me to York.
 A bloody day determined in the dust
 Their pride and prowess. Scarcely were they cold
 When posts from Pevensey at speed despatch'd
 Announced the Duke's approach. At double speed
 I march'd to meet him. Here we stand opposed ;
 And here to-morrow's sun, which even now,
 If mine eyes err not, wakes the Eastern sky,
 Shall see the mortal issue. Should I fall,
 Be thou my witness that I nothing doubt
 The justness of my doom : but add thou this,—
 The justness lies betwixt my God and me.
 'Twixt me and William"

Then uprose the King :

His daughter's hands half startled from his knee
 Dropt loosely, but her eye caught fire from his :
 He snatch'd his truncheon and the hollow earth
 Smote strongly that it throb'd : he cried aloud—

“Twixt me and William, say that never doom
Save that which sunders sheep from goats, and parts
’Twixt Heaven and Hell, can righteously pronounce.”
—He sate again, and with an eye still stern
But temperate and untroubled, he pursued :
“’Twixt me and England, should some senseless swain
Ask of my title, say I wear the crown
Because it fits my head.”

King Harold paused :
And resting for a moment’s space his brow
Upon his hands, revolved a different theme.

—“Oh, Edith,” he resumed, “of one thing more
I fain would speak, if but the words will come :
My vow to Adeliza rankles here
As though my heart were broken in its breach ;
For she was faithfuller than her sire was false.
To her, if I be slain, do thou repair,
(For in the Norman camp or in the fleet
She surely shall be found,) and bid her know
I swerved not from her in my heart, but Fate,
Ruled by her father’s mandate, had decreed
We could not meet in marriage : Say beside
I make not this the scapegoat of my guilt,
Which amply and in anguish I avow ;
Nor make I it a pretext to implore
Her prayers and her forgiveness ; seeing these
Would be, though faithlessness were loveless too,

Assured me by her nature's sweet constraint :
But I bequeath this message of my love,
That, knowing thus it died not with my death,
Her sorrow, by a soft remembrance soothed,
May sleep and dream and dreaming things divine
Be gloriously transfigured by a hope.
For love that dies not till the body dies
Shall with the soul survive."

King Harold ceased :

For now a phantom of a sound, that seem'd
Blown by a distant trumpet from the South,
Caught his quick ear : He sprang upon his feet :
Then cheerfully the Saxon trumpets blew
Their prompt reply : The leaders from their tents
Came trooping, jocund, with a nimble tread,
Their helmets glancing in the early sun ;
And as they gain'd the forest's edge, the cry
Of "Harold" rose. Him Edith help'd to arm ;
Which ended, and a brief embrace exchanged,
Upborne upon the blessing he bestow'd
She with a lofty courage went her way.

Long was the day and terrible. The cries
Of "God to aid !" "The Cross !" "The Holy Cross !"
With songs of Roland and of Roncesvalles,
Were heard, then lost in dumbness and dismay.
A mighty roar ensued, pierced through and through
By shrillest shrieks incessant, or of man

Or madden'd horse that scream'd with fear and pain—
Death agonies. The battle, like a ship
Then when the whirlwind hath it, torn and tost,
Stagger'd from side to side. The day was long ;
By dreadful change of onset or feign'd flight,
And rout and rally, direfully drawn out,
Disastrous, dismal. Night was near, and still
The victory undetermined, when a shaft
Pierced Harold in the throat. He fell and died.
Then panic seized the Saxon host, pursued
With hideous rage, till dropp'd the pall of night,
And darkness hid the horrors of the field.

In Waltham Abbey on St. Agnes' Eve
A stately corpse lay stretch'd upon a bier.
The arms were cross'd upon the breast ; the face,
Uncover'd, by the taper's trembling light
Show'd dimly the pale majesty severe
Of him whom Death, and not the Norman Duke,
Had conquer'd ; him the noblest and the last
Of Saxon Kings ; save one the noblest he ;
The last of all. Hard by the bier were seen
Two women, weeping side by side, whose arms
Clasp'd each the other. Edith was the one.
With Edith Adeliza wept and pray'd.

STANZAS.

SOFT be the voice and friendly that rebukes
The error of thy way,
For sickness hath the summer of thy looks
Touch'd with decay.

Now may be pardon'd, even for virtue's sake,
Words less of gall than grief—
The warning of autumnal winds that shake
The yellowing leaf.

They bid thee if thou leav'st thy bloom behind,
Bethink thee to repair
That ravage, and the aspect of thy mind
To make more fair.

Let not thy loss of brightness be a loss,
Which might be countless gain,
If from thy beauty it should purge the dross,
Eat out the stain.

Then beauty with pure purposes allied
Wouldst thou account—to lift
The minds of men from worldliness and pride—
A trust—not gift.

Oh! may thy sickness, sanative to thee,
Bring thee to know that trust!
That so thy soul may to thy beauty be
Not less than just.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF
THE HON. EDWARD ERNEST VILLIERS.
WHO DIED AT NICE, ON THE 30TH OCTOBER, 1843.

I.

A GRACE though melancholy, manly too,
Moulded his being : pensive, grave, serene,
O'er his habitual bearing and his mien
Unceasing pain, by patience temper'd, threw
A shade of sweet austerity. But seen
In happier hours and by the friendly few,
That curtain of the spirit was withdrawn,
And fancy light and playful as a fawn,
And reason imp'd with inquisition keen,
Knowledge long sought with ardour ever new,
And wit love-kindled, show'd in colours true
What genial joys with sufferings can consist :
Then did all sternness melt as melts a mist
Touch'd by the brightness of the golden dawn,
Aerial heights disclosing, valleys green,
And sunlights thrown the woodland tufts between,
And flowers and spangles of the dewy lawn.

II.

And even the stranger, though he saw not these,
Saw what would not be willingly pass'd by :
In his deportment, even when cold and shy,
Was seen a clear collectedness and ease,
A simple grace and gentle dignity,
That fail'd not at the first accost to please ;
And as reserve relented by degrees,
So winning was his aspect and address,
His smile so rich in sad felicities,
Accordant to a voice which charm'd no less,
That who but saw him once remember'd long,
And some in whom such images are strong
Have hoarded the impression in their heart
Fancy's fond dreams and Memory's joys among,
Like some loved relic of romantic song
Or cherish'd master-piece of ancient art.

III.

His life was private ; safely led, aloof
From the loud world,—which yet he understood
Largely and wisely, as no worldling could.
For he by privilege of his nature proof
Against false glitter, from beneath the roof
Of privacy, as from a cave, survey'd
With steadfast eye its flickering light and shade,
And justly judged for evil and for good.

But whilst he mix'd not for his own behoof
In public strife, his spirit glow'd with zeal,
Not shorn of action, for the public weal,—
For truth and justice as its warp and woof,
For freedom as its signature and seal.
His life thus sacred from the world, discharged
From vain ambition and inordinate care,
In virtue exercised, by reverence rare
Lifted, and by humility enlarged,
Became a temple and a place of prayer.
In latter years he walk'd not singly there ;
For one was with him, ready at all hours
His griefs, his joys, his inmost thoughts to share,
Who buoyantly his burthens help'd to bear,
And deck'd his altars daily with fresh flowers.

IV.

But farther may we pass not ; for the ground
Is holier than the Muse herself may tread ;
Nor would I it should echo to a sound
Less solemn than the service for the dead.
Mine is inferior matter,—my own loss,—
The loss of dear delights for ever fled,
Of reason's converse by affection fed,
Of wisdom, counsel, solace, that across
Life's dreariest tracts a tender radiance shed.
Friend of my youth ! though younger yet my guide,
How much by thy unerring insight clear

I shaped my way of life for many a year,
What thoughtful friendship on thy deathbed died
Friend of my youth, whilst thou wast by my side
Autumnal days still breathed a vernal breath ;
How like a charm thy life to me supplied
All waste and injury of time and tide,
How like a disenchantment was thy death !

SENT WITH SOME LEAVES AND FLOWERS FOUND IN A
BOOK TO THE PERSON WHO HAD PUT THEM THERE
THIRTY YEARS BEFORE.

OH tender leaves and flowers,
 Though wither'd, tender yet ;
What privilege of joy was ours
 In youth when first we met.

Bright eyes beheld your bloom,
 Fair hands your charms caress'd,
And not irreverent was the doom
 That laid you here to rest.

Sweet phantoms, from your bed
 Thus re-arisen, you paint
The likeness of a love long dead
 In faded colours faint.

Oh tender flowers and leaves !
 By all our vanish'd joys—
By glittering spring-tide that deceives,
 By winter that destroys—

Though nought can now restore
 The perish'd to its place,
Eyes dimm'd by time and tears once more
 Shall look you in the face.

LAGO VARESE.

(VISITED IN 1827.)

I STOOD beside Varese's Lake,
Mid that redundant growth
Of vines and maize and bower and brake
Which Nature, kind to sloth
And scarce solicited by human toil,
Pours from the riches of the teeming soil.

A mossy softness distance lent
To each divergent hill ;
One crept away looking back as it went,
The rest lay round and still ;
The westering sun not dazzling now, though bright,
Shed o'er the mellow land a molten light.

And rambling on by creek and cove,
I found upon the strand
A shallop, and a girl who strove
To drag it to dry land :
I stood to see—the girl look'd round—her face
Had all her country's clear and definite grace.

She rested with the air of rest
 So seldom seen, of those
 Whose toil remitted gives a zest
 Not languour to repose.
 Her form was poised yet buoyant, firm though free,
 And liberal of her bright black eyes was she.

Her hue reflected back the skies
 That redden'd in the West ;
 And joy was laughing in her eyes
 And bounding in her breast,
 Its sovereignty exulting to proclaim
 Where pride could make no mutiny, nor shame.

This sunshine of the Southern face,
 At home we have it not ;
 And if they be a reckless race,
 These Southern, yet a lot
 More favour'd on the chequer'd earth is theirs,—
 They have life's sorrows, but escape its cares.

For her if Sorrow lay in wait
 The ambush was of flowers,
 And hers was such a smile as sate
 Triumphant on the Hours ;
 A smile it was that seem'd to claim for earth
 Some lost inheritance of primal mirth.

There is a smile which wit extorts
From grave and learned men,
In whose austere and senile sports
The plaything is a pen ;
And there are smiles by shallow worldlings worn
To grace a lie or laugh a truth to scorn :

And there are smiles with less alloy
Of those who, for the sake
Of some they love, would kindle joy
Which they can not partake :
But hers was of the kind which simply say
They come from hearts ungovernably gay.

And oh ! that gaiety of heart !
There lives not he to whom
Its laugh more pleasure will impart
Than to the man of gloom ;
Who if he laugh, laughs less from mirth of mind
Than deference to the customs of mankind.

The day went down ; the last red ray
Flash'd on her face or ere
It sank—and creeping up the bay
The night-wind stirr'd her hair ;
The crimson wave caress'd her naked feet
With coy approach and resonant retreat.

True native of the clime was she,
 Nor could there have been found
 A creature who should more agree
 With everything around,—
 The woods, the fields, and genial Nature, rife
 With life and gifts that feed and gladden life.

Congenial all that met the sight,
 But in what met the mind
 The spirit's intuition might
 A discrepancy find ;
 For foresight is a melancholy gift
 That bares the bald and speeds the all-too-swift :

Methought this scene before mine eyes,
 Still glowing with yon sun
 That seem'd to melt the myriad dyes
 Of heaven and earth to one,
 A divers unity—methought this scene,
 These undulant hills, the woods that intervene,

The multiplicity of growth,
 The corn-field and the brake,
 The trellised vines that cover both,
 The purple-bosom'd lake,
 Some fifty summers hence may all be found
 Rich in the charms wherewith they now abound.

And should I take my staff again,
And should I journey here,
My steps may be less steady then,
My eyesight not so clear,
And from the mind the sense of beauty may
Even as these bodily gifts have pass'd away :

But grant mine age but eyes to see,
A still susceptible mind,
All that leaves us, and all that we
Leave wilfully behind,
And nothing here would want the charms it wore,
Save only she who stands upon the shore.

LAGO LUGANO.

(VISITED IN 1843.)

I.

GONE are some sixteen summers since the day
When rambling by Varese's reddening lake,
I met that merry maid, and for her sake
Wove the brief chaplet of that perishing lay :
Now let me weave another if I may,
For once again my wandering way I take
Thro' lands where music chimes from every mouth,
And where the sun lights up with cloudless ray
The chambers of the South.

II.

Gone are those summers—youth and health are gone,
And feebler and less frequent are the gleams
That startled erst my heart and fill'd my dreams
From transitory faces that but shone
An instant on my path ; and few or none
Are now the soaring hours when fancy teems
With visions fair : so be it ! I recall
The past without regret—for here is one
Whose love repays me all.

III.

My youth without its hardness and alloy
I have in her, and much that ne'er was mine,—
A simple heart, a human face divine
Where tears of tenderness with radiant joy
Will oftentimes alternate nor destroy
Each other's traces,—these with wit combine
And graver gifts, to yield me treasures more
Than all youth's fancies fugitive and coy
Returning could restore.

IV.

And she was with me, and alone we stray'd
By Lake Lugano one delightful morn,
Through woods not yet dismantled nor forlorn,
For old October slept beneath their shade
Forgetful of his function, to upbraid
The leaves' light dancing and the fields forewarn
Of coming winter : like the light leaves we
In sunshine were as sumptuously array'd
As summer's self could be.

V.

We pass'd the wood, and where high walls between
And through rich vineyards thick with clusters red
A causeway to the owner's dwelling led,
We rested in the shade ; for there a screen
Of branches of the vine had fashion'd been

To arch the causeway's entrance overhead :
Nature had nearly done it ; but the art
Of some kind hand that loved her might be seen
As architect in part.

VI.

The lake lay glimmering through the wood below ;
From its sweet shores upsprang the mountains stern,
And mid the loftiest we could well discern
One that was shining in a cusp of snow :
A butterfly went flickering to and fro
Hard by, and seeing he had yet to learn
That arduous lesson how to spend an hour
Of holiday aright, we bade him go
And fasten on a flower.

VII.

Our book for us : of amaranthine hues
The flowers that to the free but searching sight
Did there disclose their inmost beauty bright !
Flowers were they that were planted by the Muse
In a deep soil which the continual dews
Of blessing had enrich'd : no lesser light
Than what was lit in Sydney's spirit clear
Or given to saintly Herbert's to diffuse
Now lives in thine, De Vere.

VIII.

So pass'd the noontide hour ; the breathless air
 Propitious to the intent mind's equipoise,
 And silent all, save now and then the noise
 Of a light rustling in the ivy, where
 With short quick run and sudden stop and stare
 The lizard fled surprised. But strenuous joys
 And claiming respite from their stress and strain
 Are those which verse imparts, if read with care
 And written to remain.

IX.

Now therefore we arose and went our way ;
 And as we pass'd the dwelling where abode
 The owner of the vineyards, in the road
 There stood two daughters of the house : the sway
 Of English manners overturn'd that day
 Permitted us to speak : a marvellous mode
 Of foreign speech was mine, but it express'd
 To willing listeners what I wish'd to say
 As amply as the best.

X.

A frank amusement in the eyes of each
 Detracted nothing from their courteous cheer ;
 Their sister voices were, though sweet, not clear,
 But sounded softly hoarse, as sounds the beach
 Of some cliff-shelter'd cove or inland reach

Where the sea slumbers,—voices to our ear
That spake a life of liberty and ease,
Where simple hearts redound to simple speech,
And simple pleasures please.

XI.

We ask'd for fruit ; yet kindlier than before
They bade us in, and we were seated soon
In the bower'd window of a large saloon ;
A wench whose face a double welcome wore
For them and for herself, produced good store,
And fast the minutes fled : companions boon
By flowing cups exalted scarce could be
Than those two girls irradiated more,
More happy than were we.

XII.

Too fast the minutes fled ! We bade adieu
To each kind sister not without regret,
Nor linger'd now ; for now the sun was set,
And of the stars, though most were faint, a few
Began to glitter in the paler blue.
Ere long we reach'd our goal—a point where met
Lake, vineyard, chesnut wood, and whence was seen
Fairest of mountains, soft but awful too,
St. Salvador serene.

XIII.

Thence we return'd, revolving as we went
 The lessons this and previous days had taught—
 In rambling meditations ; and we sought
 To read the face of Italy, intent
 With equal eye and just arbitrament
 To measure its expressions as we ought :
 And chiefly one conclusion did we draw,—
 That liberty dwelt here with Heaven's consent,
 Though not by human law.

XIV.

A liberty imperfect, undesign'd,—
 A liberty of circumstance ; but still
 A liberty that moulds the heart and will
 And works an inward freedom of the mind.
 Not such is statutable freedom : blind
 Are they to whom the letter that doth kill
 Stands for the spirit that giveth life : sore pains
 They take to set Ambition free, and bind
 The heart of man in chains.

XV.

Ambition, Envy, Avarice, and Pride—
 These are the tyrants of our hearts : the laws
 Which cherish these in multitudes, and cause
 The passions that aforetime lived and died
 In palaces, to flourish far and wide

Throughout a land—(allot them what applause
 We may, for wealth and science that they nurse
 And greatness)—seen upon their darker side
 Bear the primæval curse.

XVI.

Oh England! “Merrie England,” styled of yore!
 Where is thy mirth? Thy jocund laughter, where?
 The sweat of labour on the brow of care
 Makes a mute answer—driven from every door!
 The may-pole cheers the village green no more,
 Nor harvest-home, nor Christmas mummers rare;
 The tired mechanic at his lecture sighs,
 And of the learned, which, with all his lore,
 Has leisure to be wise?

XVII.

Civil and moral liberty are twain:
 That truth the careless countenances free
 Of Italy avouch'd; that truth did we,
 On converse grounds and with reluctant pain,
 Confess that England proved. Wash first the stain
 Of wordliness away; when that shall be,
 Us shall “the glorious liberty” befit
 Whereof, in other far than earthly strain,
 The Jew of Tarsus writ.

XVIII.

So shall the noble natures of our land
 (Oh nobler and more deeply founded far
 Than any born beneath a Southern star !)
 Move more at large, with ampler reach expand,
 Be open, courteous, not more strong to stand
 Than just to yield,—nor obvious to each jar
 That shakes the proud ; for Independence walks
 With staid Humility aye hand in hand,
 Whilst Pride in tremor stalks.

XIX.

From pride plebeian and from pride high-born,
 From pride of knowledge no less vain and weak,
 From overstrain'd activities that seek
 Ends worthiest of indifference or scorn,
 From pride of intellect that exalts its horn
 In contumely above the wise and meek,
 Exulting in coarse cruelties of the pen,
 From pride of drudging souls to Mammon sworn,
 Where shall we flee and when ?

XX.

One House of Refuge in this dreary waste
 Was, through God's mercy, by our fathers built,—
 That house the Church : Oh England, if the guilt
 Of pride and greed thy grandeur have abased,
 Thy liberty endanger'd, here be placed

Thy trust : thy freedom's garment, if thou wilt,
To piece by charters and by statutes strive,
But to its personal rescue, haste, oh haste !
And save its soul alive.

XXI.

Thus pour'd we forth our hearts : but now 'twas late ;
The stars were fully out, and other light
Was none ; in secret sessions of the night
The mountains closing kept a gloomier state.
A boat whose oars with punctual sound sedate
Seem'd like the pulse of silence, stole in sight
And sped us to the town.—End, end they must,
Such days ! But lasting are the gains and great
They leave behind in trust.

To H. C.

(In reply.)

It may be folly—they are free
Who think it so, to laugh or blame,
But single sympathies to me
Are more than fame.

The glen and not the mountain-top
I love ; and though its date be brief,
I snatch the rose you send, and drop
The laurel leaf.

STANZAS.

DEAR Nina, how betides it that with you
Sickness and Sorrow, which since Time was born
Were Youth's destroyers, seem but to renew
The twilight softness of your dewy morn?
You days of Charlton, how you laugh'd to scorn
The imminent Future! Portion it its due;
I look in those large eyes whose tender blue
The darken'd hair now deepens, and maintain
That Time with all his following forlorn,
Sickness and Sorrow, Injury and Pain,
If a Destroyer, is an Angel too.

Dante, the glorious dreamer, was he wrong
The "Mount of Preparation" to invest
With sapphire hues, and people with a throng
Of happy Spirits? One at his behest
Sang the remember'd strain he loved the best,
Whereby he knew that early loves are strong
Met in the "Second Region:" I so long
There wandering, hear a voice when daylight fades
And shines the Love-Star singly in the West,
Sweeter than what was sweetest in the shades
Of Purgatory, Casella's broken song.

THE AMPHITHEATRÉ AT POZZUOLI.

THE strife, the gushing blood, the mortal throe,
With scenic horrors fill'd that belt below,
And where the polish'd seats were round it raised,
Worse spectacle ! the pleased spectators gazed.
Such were the pastimes of times past ! Oh shame !
Oh infamy ! that men who drew the breath
Of freedom, and who shared the Roman name,
Should so corrupt their sports with pain and death.

—The pastimes of times past? And what are thine,
Thou with thy gun or greyhound, rod and line ?
Pain, terror, mortal agonies, that scare
Thy heart in Man, to brutes thou wilt not spare.
Are theirs less sad and real ? Pain in Man
Bears the high mission of the flail and fan ;
In brutes 'tis purely piteous. God's command,
Submitting His mute creatures to our hand
For life and death, thou shalt not dare to plead ;
He bade thee kill them, not for sport, but need.
Then backward if thou cast reproachful looks
On sports bedarkening custom erst allow'd,
Expect from coming ages like rebukes
When day shall dawn on peacefuller woods and brooks,
And clear from vales thou troublest, custom's cloud.

TWO WAYS OF LIFE.

ALWINE, ADELAIS, HILDEBRAND.

A FOREST SCENE.

Alwine. THE path is to your right ; be not alarm'd ;
For I have haunted this old forest long
And learnt its ways.

Adelais. I have no fears—with you.

Hildebrand. I heard a horn but lately, nor long since
I saw the King. It is not far we've wander'd ;
And after facing that so insolent Sun
In all his mid-day triumph mounting high,
How grateful is this gloom ! these sylvan vaults,
How they protect the spirit !

Adelais. I could dream
I were a maid that for the cloister quits
The monarch's court, finding in this retreat
That peace the world refused her.

Hildebrand. Rather say
That peace it had not to bestow. Your thought
Might fancy from her wardrobe well attire.

With many an apt similitude ; to chaunt
 Morning and evening service there is here
 A numerous choir, nor is their song of praise
 Less sacred because cheerful ; and at noon
 Comes meditative stillness, or by fits
 Some soft confession of a wandering wind
 Makes silence audible and sweet repose
 Aware that it exists. By fancy fed
 'Tis thus we revel in resemblances ;
 But truth . . .

Alwine. Renounces and abjures them ! No ;
 Love, if you will, the woods, and love their ways,
 But, I beseech you, love not for their sake
 The life to which you liken them. Believe me,
 The cloisters of the forest merit praise
 For innocence and peace, which never yet
 Those of the convent justified.

Adelais. To me
 Ere yet my credulous childhood had been taught
 To question what I saw, the cherub choir,
 The chaunt, the thuribule, the stoled procession,
 Seem'd heaven itself more than the way to heaven ;
 And as the tournaments and shows of war
 Fill high the hearts of boys, so me a girl
 Did ceremonials of the Church enchant,
 Raise to religious rapture, and uplift
 With fond desires to wage the war of faith
 In a conventual life. And are they gone ?

Those fond desires—that rapture of the heart?

Alwine. They are—they are—I give them God's good speed.

Hildebrand. Far other lessons shall we learn from Him

Who for the love of man was made a man,
Walking the earth in love, by links of love
With man associate humanly in life,
And human sorrow deifying in death,
That so this cursory world He might bequeath
A practicable passage, not impure
Since trodden of His feet.—I stretch too far
The privilege of the old to teach their betters.
Farewell—that cry recalls me to the chase.

[*Exit.*

Alwine. A tale there is pertaining to this wood
Which, but that I should tell it ill, might steal
Some moments you would not repent to spare
From the day's pastime.

Adelais. Place me on the trunk
Of that uprooted oak, where shine and shade,
Moved by the wandering minstrel in the trees,
Dance to his music. Tell me now the tale.

Alwine. Once on this forest's edge a castle rose
That dwarf'd to very shrubs its loftiest oaks,
A ruin now, half buried, half o'ergrown.
Sole did it stand, dividing warlike states,
As midway in a torrent some huge rock ;

And in it dwelt a maid whose shapely form
 Was like the hare-bell that so lightly springs
 Out from the huge rock midway in the torrent ;
 And from its turrets could the maid descry
 A convent in a valley, which with looks
 Wistful and sad she oft regarded long,
 For she was weary of wild usages,
 And sick because the eyes that look'd at her
 Were cold, and obdurate, and haughty.

Adelais.

All ?

Alwine. Some more, some less.—And finding thus no
 rest,

She went one night to seek the Sibyl's cave
 Deep in the forest, and to know from her
 (That Sibyl ever young who witness bare
 With David of the course and end of time)
 Which life were worthier,—that which braved the world
 And all its trials, or which fled the world
 And knew no trials, but was blankly pure.

Aldelais. What answer made the Sibyl ?

Alwine.

None by word.

She took her by the hand and led her far
 Through brake and briar in darkness many a rood,
 And stopp'd where bubbled up a fountain clear
 Beside an ancient cross : Lo ! here, she said,
 Life springeth : then with measured step sedate
 Advanced again, but counting as she went,
 And stopp'd again : and here, she said, behold.

The parting of the ways—life sunders here.
 With that she sang a low sweet melody,
 Mysterious but penetrating too,
 Which with a slow and subtle magic crept
 Into the bosom of the darkness. Soon
 It ceased, and as it ceased, a glorious light
 Forth from the bosom of the darkness burst,
 And fill'd the ways of life.

Adelais. What ways were they?

Alwine. The maiden where she stood could see but
 twain,

Each a long avenue ; of yews was this
 And palms commingled ; that, of various growth ;
 Each with a roof of intertangled boughs,
 And crossways at the close an open grave.
 Midway the path beyond the one grave grew
 A single cypress ; at each end the other
 A willow. Down the path of palms and yews
 A bloodless phantom of a woman walk'd,
 Hooded and veil'd, with languid step and slow
 And oft reverted head. Once and again
 A holy rapture lifted her, and scarce
 She seem'd to touch the ground ; but presently
 It left her, and with languid step and slow
 And drooping posture pass'd she on her way,
 Still praying as she went, but stumbling still
 Through weariness o'er sticks and straws, and still
 With sticks and straws she quarrell'd as she pray'd.

When she approach'd the grave that crossways closed
The avenue, though weary of the way,
She seem'd not glad, but shudder'd and recoil'd,
Shaking through weakness of her weariness ;
And though she upward look'd, look'd backward too,
And so with arms that clasp'd the solitude
She slowly disappear'd :—This way of life,
The Sibyl said, is the way celibate,
Where walks erroneous many a monk and nun :
The good therein is good that dies therein
And hath no offspring ; neither hath the evil ;
For He that out of evil bringeth good
Begets no issue on the evil here :
Probation blotted from the book of life
With evil good obliterates ; for these two,
In quality though opposite and at war,
Are each to each correlative and essential,
And evil conquer'd maketh moral good,
With virtue, which is more than innocence.
But now, she said, behold that other way.
The maiden turned obedient, and beheld
Where at the outset from a myrtle bower
A figure like Aurora flush'd with joy
Leapt lightly forth, and dancing down the path
Shook the bright dewdrops from the radiant wreath
That crown'd her locks profuse : ere long the flush
Subsided, and the bounding steps were stay'd ;
But firmly still and with a durable strength

She travell'd on : not seldom on her way
A colour'd cloud diaphanous, like those
That gild the morn, conceal'd her ; but ere long
She issued thence, and with her issued thence
A naked child that roll'd amongst the flowers
And laugh'd and cried : a thicker cloud anon
Fell round her, and from that with sunken eyes
She issued, and with stains upon her cheek
From scalding tears ; but onward still she look'd
And upward still, and on her brow upturn'd
And on the paleness of her penitent face
A glory broke, the dayspring from on high :
Thenceforth with loftier and less troubled strength
And even step she trod the tremulous earth,
Elastic, not elate : the grave was near
That crossways cut the path ; but with her went
A company of spirits bright and young
Which caught the blossoms from her wreath that fell
And gave them back ; and as she reach'd the close,
Gazing betwixt the willows far beyond
Full many a group successive she descried
With wreaths like hers ; and as she softly sank
A heavenly hope that like a rainbow spann'd
A thousand earthly hopes, its colours threw
Across the gloomy entrance of the grave.
This, said the Sibyl, is the secular way—
With joys more free and nobler sorrows fraught,
Which scatter by their force life's frivolous cares

And meaner molestations : stern the strokes,
The struggles arduous which this way presents,
And fearful the temptations ; but the stake
Is worthier of the strife, and she that wins
Hears at the gate of heaven the words "Well done"
And "Enter thou."—The Sibyl ceased ; the maid
Look'd round, and saw—not her, but in her place
A suppliant bending low : he press'd her hand
Imploringly, and ask'd her,—“Of those ways
Which choosest thou ? and is it not the last ?”
What answer to that lowly suppliant gave
That maiden mild ?

Adelais.

I think she answer'd "Yes."

THE HERO, THE POET, AND THE GIRL.

SOMETHING between a pasture and a park,
Saved from sea-breezes by a hump of down,
Tossed blue-bells in the face of April, dark
With fitful frown :

And there was he, that gentle hero, who,
By virtue and the strength of his right arm,
Dethroned an unjust king, and then withdrew
To tend his farm :

To whom came forth a mighty man of song,
Whose deep-mouthed music rolls thro' all the land,
Voices of many rivers, rich or strong,
Or sweet or grand.

I turned from Bard and Patriot, like some churl
Senseless to Powers that hold the world in fee,—
How is it that the face of one fair girl
Is more to me?

SONNET IN THE MAIL COACH.

WHAT means at this unusual hour the light
In yonder casement? Doth it hint a tale
Of trouble, when some maiden mourner pale
Confides her sorrows to the secret night?
Or doth it speak of youth uprising bright
With glad alacrity ere morning break
To chase a hope new-started ; or—but lo!
The wan light creeps with stealthy motion slow
Across the chamber : shall we token take
From this that o'er sick bed or mortal throe
Sad watch is kept?—Small answer can I make,
Nor more can of that dim-seen watcher know,
Than that some object, passion, throb, or ache,
Has kept some solitary heart awake.

STANZAS.

FOR me no roseate garlands twine,
But wear them, Dearest, in my stead ;
Time has a whiter hand than thine,
And lays it on my head.

Enough to know thy place on earth
Is there where roses latest die ;
To know the steps of youth and mirth
Are thine, that pass me by.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY,

AFTER READING CERTAIN CRITICISMS ON "HIS LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE."

FAREWELL, great heart ! how great shall they
Who love true greatness truly know,
Though from thy grave the popinjay
Cry "tear him" to the carrion crow.

Farewell, pure Spirit ! o'er thy tomb,
Write canker'd critics what they please,
A temple rises, and the womb
Of Time is big with devotees.

REPROACH REPROVED.

REPROACH me not ; for if my love run high,
Unjust complainings well may drain it dry ;
Reproach me not ; if love run low, reproach
Did never yet set dried-up love abroad.

THE FLIGHT.

PERCHED on a rafter in a windy barn,
Head on one side inquisitive, blue lids
Winking at gleamings of the moonshine white,
In meditative stillness Thomas stood,—
Thomas of Emily the best beloved,
Thomas the best of owls. Revolving long
The past, the present, in his secret soul,
Thoughts nursed in silence, thoughts that gathered
strength

From reticence, arose,—and they were these :
This Emily means well, is kind, nay more,
I may presume to say reveals herself
In accents which no owl with ears to hear
And half a heart, can choose but understand ;
The food that she provides is plentiful
And good, and I were but a thankless owl
To murmur (though the partridge-wing last night
Might better have been raw) ; the enemy,
Small but tormenting, ambushed in my down
She valiantly confronts and shares my pain :

All this I grant, and, granting all, still ask
 Is she a helpmate meet? How so? By night
 I wake, she sleeps; I sleep by day, she wakes.
 Can she catch mice? I doubt it. And her voice,
 Expressive though it be, nor wanting tones
 Significant of love, may not compare
 With one that in the watches of the night
 Will sometimes reach me, echoing from afar,—
 The voice of that ideal treasured long,
 Long treasured in my heart, the voice of her,
 Madge Howlet of the Ivy Tod. Farewell,
 Fond Emily! Georgina too, Farewell!
 And Riversdale! my friends, but not my kind;
 Nature is strong within me; I will break
 The bonds of alien custom: Madge, I come.

By yon moon that keeps her place
 Ordered in the realms of space,
 By the stars that hold their courses,
 By the streams that know their sources,
 By the dateless solitudes
 Of the immemorial woods,—

Madge, I come:

By the voice of old that spoke
 From the inside of an oak,
 Saying to my kith and kin
 Here is house-room, enter in,—

Madge, I come:

By the souls of all the owls
That with pride ancestral swelling
Scorned the ways of barn-door fowls
And with Nature had their dwelling ;
By the Fathers of our line,
Ominous deemed, if not divine,
Sacred erst to Proserpine,
Whom wise Glaucopis, born of Jove,
Honoured above all the grove,
Whence descended to our race
Godlike gravity of face,—
 Madge, I come :
 What ruin old,
 In wood or wold,
 Sent forth that cry,
 “ Fly, fly, oh fly ! ”
 ’Tis Nature’s voice,
 And I obey ;
 If Madge rejoice
 Let mourn who may—
To Man and all his Emilies, Adieu !
I fly, oh woods, oh wolds, oh Madge, to you.

OLYMPIA MORATA.

WRITTEN AFTER VISITING HER GRAVE AT HEIDELBERG.

A TOMBSTONE in a foreign land cries out,
Oh Italy! against thee: She whose death
This stone commemorates with no common praise,
By birth was thine: but being vowed to Truth,
The blood-stain'd hand that lurks beneath thine alb
Was raised to strike; and lest one crime the more
Should stand in thine account to heaven, she fled.
Then hither came she, young but erudite,
With ardour flush'd, but with old wisdom stored
(Which spake no tongue she knew not), apt to learn
And eloquent to teach,—and welcomed here
Gave the brief beauty of her innocent life
An alien race to illustrate; and here
Dying in youth (the beauty of her death
Sealing her life's repute), her ashes gave
An honour to the land that honour'd her.

—Jerusalem! Jerusalem! which killest
The Prophets! if thy house be desolate,
Those temples too are desolate and that land
Where Truth's pure votaries may not leave their dust.

SONG.

THE bee to the heather,
The lark to the sky,
The roe to the greenwood,
And whither shall I?

Oh, Alice! oh, Alice!
So sweet to the bee
Are the moorland and heather
By Cannock and Leigh!

Oh, Alice! oh, Alice!
O'er Teddesley Park
The sunny sky scatters
The notes of the lark!

Oh, Alice! oh, Alice!
In Beaudesert glade
The roes toss their antlers
For joy of the shade!—

But Alice, dear Alice!
Glade, moorland, nor sky,
Without you can content me,
And whither shall I?

HEROISM IN THE SHADE.

WRITTEN AFTER THE RETURN OF SIR H. POTTINGER FROM CHINA,
IN 1845.

I.

THE Million smiles ; the taverns ring with toasts ;
A thousand journals teem with good report
And plauditory paragraph ; with hosts
Of thankful deputations swarm the streets ;
His native city of her hero boasts ;
The minister who chose him, in the choice
Exults ; and prompted to its part, the court
The echo of the country's praise repeats,
And by the popular pitchpipe tunes its voice.

II.

But where is he whose genius led the way
To all this triumph ? Elliot, where is he ?
—When first that Monster of the Eastern sea,
That hugest empire which for ages lay
Becalmd beneath the sun, with strange see-saws
Convulsively unsheath'd its quivering claws,
'Twas he that watch'd its motions many a day,

Foreseeing and foretelling that the sleep
 For those unnumber'd centuries so deep
 Would pass ; and when its rage and fear at length
 Shook off the numbness from its labouring strength,
 'Twas he whose skill and courage gagg'd its gaping jaws.

III.

Justice, Truth, Mercy,—these his weapons were ;
 And if the sword, 'twas wielded but to spare
 Through timely terror worse event. With rare
 And excellent contemperature he knew
 How best on martial ardour to confer
 The honours that are then alone its due
 When patience, prudence, ruth are honour'd too.
 When to relent he saw, and when to dare,
 Sudden to strike, magnanimous to forbear :
 Prone lay the second city of that land,
 Third of the world, a suppliant at the feet
 Of him whom erst she gloried to maltreat !
 But then a great heart to itself was true—
 On the rash soldier's bridle was the hand
 Of Elliot laid, with calm but firm command.

IV.

Thou mighty city with thy million souls !
 To England, through that rescue, art thou made
 A treasure-house of tribute and of trade !
 To England, whose street-statesmen, blind as moles,

Scribe-taught, and ravening like wolves for blood,
 Spared not his wisdom's temperance to upbraid
 Who thus thy ruin righteously withstood.
 Thou mighty city, for thy ruler's faults,
 Not thine, how many an innocent had bled,
 How many a wife and mother hung her head
 In agony above thy funeral vaults,
 What horrors had been thine, what shame were ours,
 If he, by popular impulses betray'd,
 Or of rash judgments selfishly afraid,
 Had render'd up thy wealth and blood to feast
 That hunger of the many-headed beast
 Which its own seed-corn tramples and devours.

v.

But service such as his, to virtue vow'd,
 Ne'er tax'd for noise the weasand of the crowd,
 Most thankless in their ignorance and spleen.
 His glory blossoms in the shade, unseen
 Save by the few and wise ; to them alone
 His daring, prudence, fortitude are known.
 —In the beginning had his portion been,
 Even as a pilot's in a sea unplough'd
 By cursive keel before, when winds pipe loud
 And all is undiscover'd and untried,
 To take the difficult soundings in the dark,
 And then with tentative and wary course,
 And changing oft with change of wind and tide,

The shoals to pass, evade the current's force,
 And keep unhurt his unappointed bark ;—
 A tentative and wary course to steer,
 But ever with a gay and gallant cheer.
 This task perform'd, when now the way was clear,
 The armament provided, and the mark,
 Though hard to be attain'd, was full in sight,
 Upon his prosperous path there fell a blight,
 Distrust arrested him in mid-career.

VI.

Another reap'd where he had sown : success,
 Doubtless well-won, attended him to whom
 The harvesting was given : his honours bloom
 Brightly, and many a rapturous caress
 The populace bestows—what could they less ?
 Far be from me malignly to assume
 Such praise, how oft soe'er it may have swerved
 From a just mark, must needs be undeserved :
 But knowing by whom the burthen and the heat
 Was borne,—with what intrepid zeal, what skill,
 Care, enterprise, and scope of politic thought,—
 Through labours, dangers, obloquy, ill-will,
 Battle, captivities, and shipwreck, still,
 With means or wanting means, alert to meet
 In all conjunctures all events,—if aught
 Could make a wise man wonder at the ways
 Of Fortune, and the world's awards of praise,

'Twould be, whilst taverns ring and tankards foam
 Healths to this hero of the harvest-home,
 To think what welcome had been his whose toil
 Had fell'd the forest and prepared the soil.

VII.

What makes a hero? Not success, not fame,
 Inebriate merchants and the loud acclaim
 Of glutt'd avarice, caps toss'd up in the air,
 Or pen of journalist with flourish fair,
 Bells peal'd, stars, ribands, and a titular name,—
 These, though his rightful tribute, he can spare ;
 His rightful tribute, not his end or aim,
 Or true reward ; for never yet did these
 Refresh the soul or set the heart at ease.

—What makes a hero? An heroic mind
 Express'd in action, in endurance proved :
 And if there be pre-eminence of right,
 Derived through pain well suffer'd, to the height
 Of rank heroic, 'tis to bear unmoved,
 Not toil, not risk, not rage of sea or wind,
 Not the brute fury of barbarians blind,
 But worse,—ingratitude and poisonous darts
 Launch'd by the country he had served and loved :
 This with a free unclouded spirit pure,
 This in the strength of silence to endure,
 A dignity to noble deeds imparts
 Beyond the gauds and trappings of renown :

This is the hero's complement and crown ;
This miss'd, one struggle had been wanting still,
One glorious triumph of the heroic will,
One self-approval in his heart of hearts.

ST. HELEN'S-AUCKLAND.

I WANDER o'er each well-known field
My boyhood's home in view,
And thoughts that were as fountains seal'd
Are welling forth anew.

The ancient house, the aged trees,
They bring again to light
The years that like a summer breeze
Were trackless in their flight.

How much is changed of what I see,
How much more changed am I,
And yet how much is left—to me
How is the distant nigh !

The walks are overgrown and wild,
The terrace flags are green,
But I am once again a child,
I am what I have been.

The sounds that round about me rise
Are what none other hears ;
I see what meets no other eyes,
Though mine are dim with tears.

The breaking of the summer's morn—
The tinge on house and tree—
The billowy clouds—the beauty born
Of that celestial sea,

The freshness of the faëry land
Lit by the golden gleam
It is my youth that where I stand
Comes back as in a dream.

Alas, the real never lent
Those tints, too bright to last ;
They fade and bid me rest content
And let the past be past.

The wave that dances to the breast
Of earth, can ne'er be stay'd ;
The star that glitters in the crest
Of morning, needs must fade :

But there shall flow another tide,
So let me hope, and far
Over the outstretch'd waters wide
Shall shine another star.

In every change of Man's estate
Are lights and guides allow'd ;
The fiery pillar will not wait,
But parting, sends the cloud.

Nor mourn I the less manly part
Of life to leave behind ;
My loss is but the lighter heart,
My gain the graver mind.

THE LYNNBURN.

Revisited in 1839.

I.

Again, oh stream, beloved in earlier years
And not unsung, within thy wooded glen
I stand, and inwardly my hushed heart hears
The same remembrancer that murmured then ;
For thou wert with me ere the haunts of men
Were trodden of my feet, and thou could'st gloze
Even in the days long past of younger days than those.

II.

And I would ask, melodious recluse
Whose sameness measures change, if I be still
Like him who whilom turned his fancy loose
To chase the shadows thro' thy woods at will ;
I would be told of change for good and ill,
And know if I be capable, as once,
To thy low call to make a musical response.

III.

The old plank bridge is gone—the stone-built arch
Is but a sorry substitute to me ;
But mining still beneath that leaning larch
The same slow current spreads itself : I see
Reflected there a face how changed since we
Were neighbours, and so oft at eventide
(Then was thy sweet voice sweetest) wandered side by
side.

IV.

Some twenty years have held since then their course
In light and shade, in smiles and bitterness,
And so long I have been to thee perforce
Occasional, not constant ; not the less
In gladness have I sought thee and in distress,
And counsel sweet we still together took
At every change of life in this sequestered nook.

V.

What did'st thou witness first? the life of dreams,
Of genial nights and mornings run to waste,
Ambitious hopes, a fancy fired by themes
Of thoughtless passion, labour much misplaced
In aping wild effusions where false taste
Bedecks false feeling, visionary love
For what not earth below affords nor Heav'n above.

VI.

This ere I left thee : Then the sturdier state
Of youthful manhood, prompt for action, proud
Of self-reliance, strenuous in debate,
Presumptuous in decision, by a crowd
Of busy cares encompassed, which allowed
For dreaming sensibilities scant scope ;—
Yet room for one fair face vouchsafed, one fearful hope.

VII.

A will disordered, hurried mind, and heart
Though wearied yet intolerant of rest,
Thou cunning'st adept in the healing art
I brought to thee ; well knowing thou wert blest
With wondrous power to still the troubled breast ;—
Than thou none more, save Siloa's brook which feeds
The flowers that breathe their balm from sempiternal
meads.

VIII.

Another change ;—the face was no more seen,
The hope expired : the appetite for rule,
Advancement, civil station, which had been
Therewith allied, began thenceforth to cool :
To be the powerful, serviceable tool
Of statecraft seemed inglorious, and with feet
Less shackled did I then revisit this retreat.

IX.

'Twas summer, and I heard the cushat coo,
And saw the dog-rose blooming in the groves ;
All was as fresh as when the world was new ;
I plucked the roses, listened to the doves,
Forgetful for a season of fixed loves
And fugitive caresses—I was free :
Then came the Muse and laid her thrilling hand on me.

X.

Not wholly slighted had she been before,
But now my heart was hers by night and day ;
I loved her not for honours that she wore
In the World's eye, rich robe and wreath of bay,
But for herself—and therefore did I pay
My service due with labour slow and sure
In secret many a year, content to be obscure.

XI.

A change again ;—my name had travelled far,
And in the World's applausive countenance kind
I sunned myself—not fearing so to mar
That strength of heart and liberty of mind
Which comes but by hard nurture : Me, tho' blind,
God's mercy spared—from social snares with ease
Saved by that gracious gift, inaptitude to please.

XII.

To thee I fled ; and it was then thy mood
To teach Autumnal lessons ; for a blast
Blown by the North had weeded from thy wood
The yellow leaf, but o'er the russet past,
That graver beauty leaving to the last
By strength of stem preserved : Thou said'st " Behold
Such colours life should keep when skies are dark and
cold."

XIII.

My "yea" fell flat : The interests that are youth's
And youth's alone, could now no more be mine ;
The soul's deep, sacred and sufficing truths ;
Seemed to dim eyes too distantly divine ;
A world that will not flatter, to resign
Costs little : but life's wherewithal ran low
When bounty at my need new sources bade to flow.

XIV.

For of the many one who smiled at first
On better knowledge wore a smile as bright ;
And still when dreariness had done its worst
And dryness weaned the multitude, despite
Of doubts and sore disturbance that pure light
Burnt up reanimate, wherein to live
Was the one genuine joy that Earth had now to give.

XV.

Last change of all, I hither brought my bride,
At whom each sweetest, freshest woodland flower
Laughed as to see a sister by its side ;
And old eyes glistened in that gladdening hour ;
For who are they in yon square border tower
Half up the hill ? and in the cottage near
Whose is the old grey face so tender and so dear ?

XVI.

My weal had been their last and only stake
In life's decline ; and doubt and fear and pain
Long, largely had they suffered for my sake :
To them whose hearts did never touch profane
Of worldly cares corrode or pleasures stain,
(How peaceful but for me !) at length I brought
The charm that soothed to rest full many an anxious
thought.

XVII.

Thou garrulous stream, my youth's companion sweet,
In earlier years if I have loved thee well,
In after years if oft my faithful feet
Assiduously have sought thy sylvan dell,
If to my heart thy voluble voice can tell
So much so softly, am I wrong to raise
My voice above thine own in publishing thy praise ?

ERNESTO.

THOUGHTFULLY by the side Ernesto sate
Of her whom, in his earlier youth, with heart
Then first exulting in a dangerous hope,
Dearer for danger, he had rashly loved.
That was a season when the untravell'd spirit,
Not way-worn nor way-wearied, nor with soil
Nor stain upon it, lions in its path
Saw none,—or seeing, with triumphant trust
In its resources and its powers, defied,—
Perverse to find provocatives in warnings
And in disturbance taking deep delight.
By sea or land he then saw rise the storm
With a gay courage, and through broken lights
Tempestuously exalted, for awhile
His heart ran mountains high, or to the roar
Of shatter'd forests sang superior songs
With kindling, and what might have seem'd to some,
Auspicious energy :—by land and sea
He was way-founder'd—trampled in the dust

His many-colour'd hopes—his lading rich
 Of precious pictures, bright imaginations,
 In absolute shipwreck to the winds and waves
 Suddenly render'd.

By her side he sate :

But time had been between and wov'n a veil
 Of seven years' separation, and the past
 Was seen with soften'd outlines, like the face
 Of nature through a mist. What was so seen?
 In a short hour, there sitting with his eyes
 Fix'd on her face, observant though abstracted,
 Lost partly in the past, but mixing still
 With his remembrances the life before him,
 He traced it all—the pleasant first accost,
 Agreeable acquaintance, growing friendship,
 Love, passion at the culminating point
 When in a sleeping body through the night
 The heart would lie awake, reverses next
 Gnawing the mind with doubtfulness, and last
 The affectionate bitterness of love refused.
 —Rash had he been by choice—by wanton choice
 Deliberately rash ; but in the soil
 Where grows the bane, grows too the antidote ;
 The same young-heartedness which knew not fear
 Renounced despondency, and brought at need
 With its results, resources. In his day
 Of utter condemnation there remain'd
 Appeal to that imaginative power

Which can commute a sentence of sore pain
For one of softer sadness, which can bathe
The broken spirit in the balm of tears ;—
And more and better to after days ; for soon
Upsprang the mind within him, and he knew
The affluence and the growth which nature yields
After an overflow of loving grief.
Hence did he deem that he could freely draw
A natural indemnity. The tree
Sucks kindlier nurture from a soil enrich'd
By its own fallen leaves ; and man is made
In heart and spirit from deciduous hopes
And things that seem to perish. Through the stress
And fever of his suit, from first to last,
His pride (to call it by no nobler name)
Had been to love with reason and with truth,
To carry clear through many a turbulent trial
A perspicacious judgment and true tongue,
And neither with fair word nor partial thought
To flatter whom he loved. If pride it was
To love and not to flatter, by a breath
Of purer aspiration was he moved
To suffer and not blame, grieve, not resent,
And when all hopes that needs must knit with self
Their object, were irrevocably gone,
Cherish a mild commemorative love,
Such as a mourner might unblamed bestow
On a departed spirit.

Once again

He sate beside her—for the last time now :
And scarcely was she alter'd ; for the hours
Had led her lightly down the vale of life,
Dancing and scattering roses, and her face
Seem'd a perpetual daybreak, and the woods
Where'er she rambled, echoed through their aisles
The music of a laugh so softly gay
That spring with all her songsters and her songs
Knew nothing like it. But how changed was he !
Care and disease, and arduous unrepress'd,
And labours unremitted, and much grief,
Had written their death-warrant on his brow.
Of this she saw not all—she saw but little—
That which she could not choose but see she saw—
And o'er her sunlit dimples and her smiles
A shadow fell—a transitory shade—
And when the phantom of a hand she clasp'd
At parting, scarce responded to her touch,
She sigh'd—but hoped the best.

When winter came
She sigh'd again ; for with it came the word
That trouble and love had found their place of rest
And slept beneath Madeira's orange groves.

To V.R.

VICTORIA, by the grace of God
Of Loveland and of Joyland Queen,
The path that heretofore you trod
A dainty primrose path has been :

And whither next? Makes answer Hope,
"The generations of the days
Have travell'd up a sunny slope
To lose themselves in golden haze ;

"But Love and Innocence are strong,—
What hath been shall be, they and I
Asseverate,—and to us belong
Some natural gifts of prophecy."

So Hope : a dear young friend of ours,
Dear when she drinks the morning dew,
Dear when she shines through evening showers,
And dearest when she tells of you !

ODE.

I.

TIME was, Virginia, when the poem made
By passionate Nature in creating you
Like to a minister of flame had play'd
Around my path, and wheresoe'er I stray'd
Had open'd to my view
The earth in robes of purple light array'd
And gemm'd with morning dew.

II.

Those times return not—let them not return—
But let me not forget that once they were ;
Far be from me that Fancy's age should err
In quest of guerdons youth alone can earn ;
But must I therefore cease to yearn
After the mood when evening notes prolong
Some distant echoes of the matin song ?
O Nature ! sedulous to read
Thy lore, shall I thy sway dispute ?
No, let my Being still proceed
Involving all, seed, flower, and fruit,

The current still recur—
 No, let me still hold fast
 Treasures of old amass'd,
 And in Imagination's votive urn
 Let me, with rites more sad than stern,
 Deposit only, not inter,
 The ashes of the bright and beautiful Past.

III.

Strong are the hours and days ;
 Youth's mortal part decays ;
 But there are powers on earth more strong than Time :
 Give me your hand, Virginia ; we will go
 To where the old streams carol as they flow
 (Whilst the late-blown blossoms bend
 To list the strain that ne'er shall end)
 Telling of many a charm and many a rhyme
 Born ere your birth, when I was in my prime.

IV.

The Morning Stars together sang,
 With chaunted loves the woodlands rang,
 When, in the glorious solitude of dawn,
 I walk'd, and made the earth that I beheld :
 Whether by native power impell'd
 From inward germ the brain-creation sprang,
 Or by constructive force was deftly drawn
 From flower-crown'd ruins of poetic Eld ;

Whether to secret wood-embosom'd lawn
 I summon'd Satyr, Nymph, and Faun,
 Or call'd up shapes divine
 Seen of no eye but mine
 (Though to some shape of this Earth's brood
 Bearing belike a sweet similitude),
 Or saw through rocky rift of mountain range
 Far off a blue and sunny sea
 And full in sail a carrack bound to me,
 Charged with a freight of something rich and strange,
 Words, spells, and witcheries, with power endued
 To build me up a name
 Of perdurable fame,
 Which should not suffer wrong by death or change.

v.

Gone—gone, Virginia, are both dawn and noon ;
 Yet fled they not too swiftly nor too soon :
 Much they found of what they sought,
 Much they left of what they brought :
 God speed them ! for in yonder evening sky
 As bright a vision meets as charm'd an eye.
 I see again in heaven's own texture wrought
 The sea of sunniest blue,
 The carrack full in view,
 The mountain range, the rocky rift,
 Ethereal lawns of softest green
 Sequester'd and serene,

And woods where Fauns and Satyrs lift
 Their shaggy long-ear'd heads the boughs between.
 And not in colour'd clouds descried,
 But here in substance verified,
 Shines forth a living mind in such a mien
 As Fancy may have sometimes seen
 When wandering in her youth through kingdoms wide
 She dream'd a dream of Faëry Land and sigh'd
 After the Faëry Queen.

VI.

Farewell! The mood is past : Fair friend, adieu !
 The mood is past ; but I have owed to you
 A flash of light that in the abyss profound
 Show'd me forgotten forms. They sleep—they sleep—
 But not in death. Deep calleth unto Deep.
 Farewell ! a blessing treads upon the ground
 You tread ; your very breath a blessing breathes ;
 And in the regions where the lost is found
 My youth and yours shall meet : That forecast sheathes
 A sharp regret, and stills an idle sound.

NOTES.



Page 311, stanza vii.

*" No lesser light
Than what was lit in Sydney's spirit clear
Or given to saintly Herbert's to diffuse,
Now lives in thine, De Vere."*

As there are two poets of this name, father and son, it may be proper to mention that these lines have reference to Aubrey De Vere, Author of "Thomas à Becket," "Antar and Zara," etc. Of the two stanzas at p. 332, the former is by him.

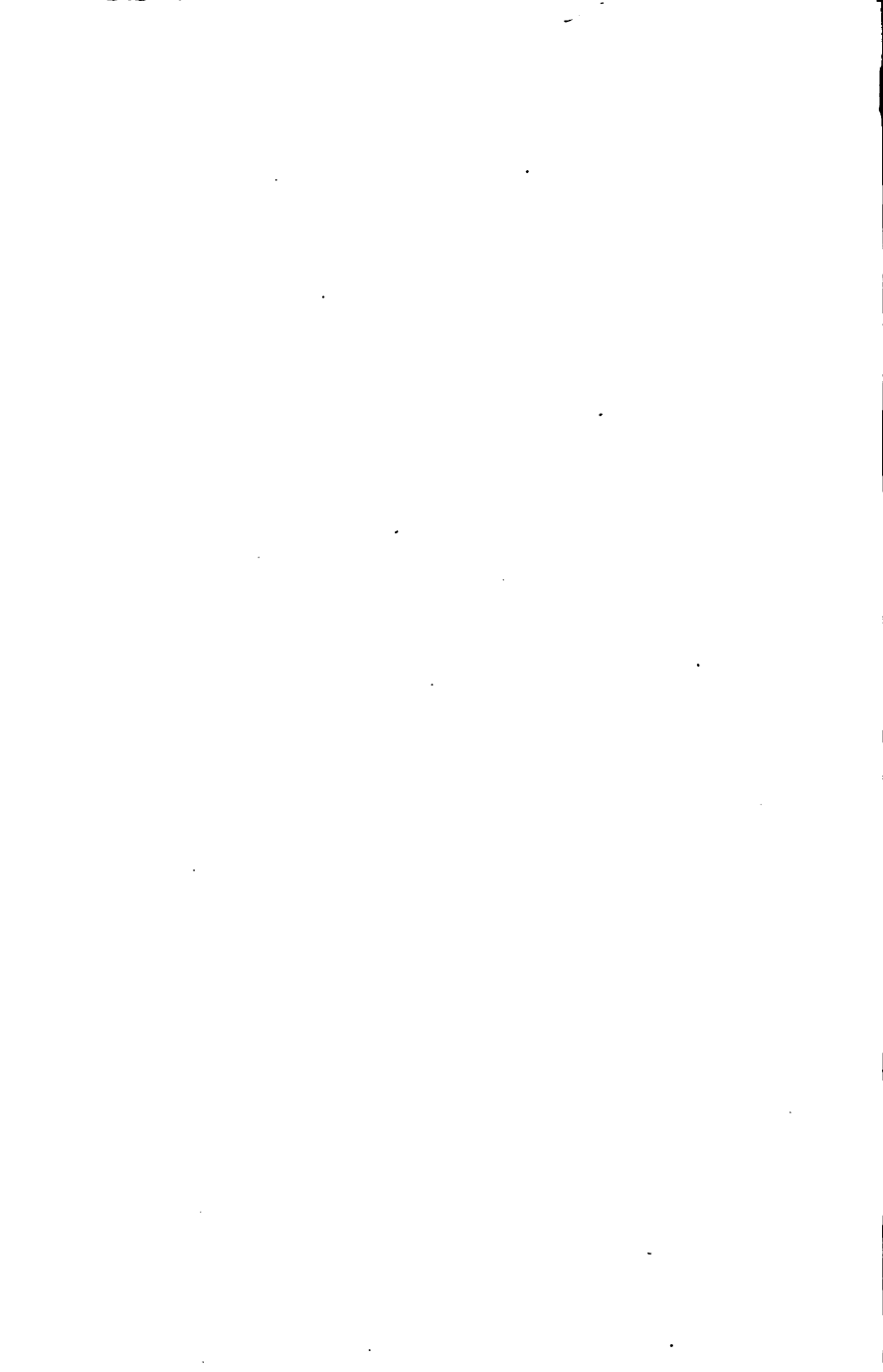
Page 336.

"Olympia Morata."

The inscription on her tomb at Heidelberg is as follows :—

DEO IMM : S

Et virtuti ac memoriae Olūmpiae Moratae Fulvij
Morati Ferrariensis philosophi filiae, Andreae Grüttele
-ri Medicj cōjugis, lectissimae feminae cui ingenium ac sin-
-gularis utriusq; linguae cognitio, in morib' autē probitas
-sumūmq; pietatis studiū : supra comunem modū sepe
-existimata sūt. Quod de ejus vita hominū iudiciū
-beata mors, sanctissime ac pacatissime ab ea obita, di-
-uino quoq; confirmavit testimonio:
Obijt mutato solo A. salut. d. l. v. sup milles: b: aetat. xxix.
hic cū marito et Emilio frē sepulta: Gulielm. Rasealo
nus M. d.
B.B.M.M.P.P.



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