

article, and had a notion that, by wearing it, he would be speedily cured. The countess thought her son's request rather odd; but being loath to refuse anything that would give him even a visionary satisfaction, she instantly set about her inquiry after the happiest lady in Naples, with the view of requesting her kind offices after the manner described. Her enquiry was tedious and difficult; everybody she could think of, or who was pointed out to her, was found, on searching nearer, to have her own share of troubles. For some time, she almost despaired; but having nevertheless persevered, she at length was introduced to one—a middle aged married lady—who not only appeared to have all the imaginable materials of worldly bliss, but bore every external mark of being cheerful and contented in her situation. To this unfortunate dame the countess preferred the request, making the circumstances of the case her only excuse for so strange an application. "My dear countess," said the lady, "spare all apology, for, if I had really been qualified for the task, I would most gladly have undertaken it. But if you will just follow me to another room, I will prove to you that I am the most miserable woman in Naples." So saying, she led the mother to a remote chamber, where there was nothing but a curtain which hung from the ceiling to the floor. This being drawn aside, she disclosed, to the horror of her visitor, a skeleton hanging from a beam! "Oh, dreadful!" exclaimed the countess: "what means this?" The lady looked mournfully at her, and after a minute's silence, gave the following explanation: "This," she said, "was a youth who loved me before my marriage, and whom I was obliged to part with, when my relations compelled me to marry my present husband. We afterwards renewed our acquaintance, though with no evil intent, and my husband was so much infuriated at finding him one day in my presence, as to draw his sword and run him through the heart. Not satisfied with this, he caused him to be hung up here, and every night and morning since then, has compelled me to come and survey his remains. To the world I may bear a cheerful aspect, and seemed to be possessed of all the comforts of life; but you may judge if I can be really entitled to the reputation which you have attributed to me, or be qualified to execute your son's commission."

The countess Corsini readily acknowledged that her situation was most miserable, and retired to her own house, in despair of obtaining what she was in quest of, seeing that, if an apparently happy woman had such a secret sorrow as this, what were those likely to have who bore no such appearance? "Alas," she said to herself, "no one is exempt from the disasters and sorrows of life—*there is a skeleton in every house!*"

When she reached home, she found a letter conveying intelligence of her son's death, which in other circumstances would have overturned her reason, or broken her heart, but, prepared as she was by the foresight of her son, produced only a rational degree of grief. When the first acute sensations were past, she said resignedly

to herself, that great as the calamity was probably no greater than what her fellow-creatures were enduring every day, and she would therefore submit with tranquillity.

The application of this tale, tinged as it is with the peculiar hue of continental manners and ideas, must be easy to every one of our readers. They must see how great a fallacy it is to suppose that others are, more generally than ourselves, spared any of the common miseries of life, or that *we*, in particular, are under the doom of a severe fate. They may be assured that beneath many of the most gorgeous shows of the world, there lurk terrible sores, which are not the less painful that they are unseen. The very happiest-looking men and women, the most prosperous mercantile concerns, have all their secret cankers and drawbacks. The pride the noble, the luxury of the opulent, even the dignity and worship of the crown, all have a *something* to render them, if it were known, less enviable than they appear. We never, for our part, enter upon any glittering and magnificent scene, or hear of any person who is reputed to be singularly happy, but we immediately think of the probability which exists, that our own humble home and condition, disposed as we sometimes may be to repine about them, comprise just as much of what is to be desired by a rational man as the other. Even so in the great capitals, where affluence and luxury are so wonderfully concentrated, and all the higher orders appear so singularly well lodged and fed and attended to, we cannot help looking to the other side and imagining for every one his own particular misery. The houses appear like palaces; but the idlest spectator may be assured of it, as one of the incontrovertible decrees of Providence, *that there is a skeleton in every one of them.*

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PREACHING.—The "right kind of teaching" you never can have so long as you keep teachers at it six hours, any more than you can have the "right kind of preaching," so long as you keep the preachers at it half the week, and all day Sunday.—*Crandal.*

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THE BIBLE.—In the adaptation of the word of God to intellects of all dimensions, it resembles natural light, which is equally suited to the eye of the minutest insect, and to the extended vision of man.

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FAME is an undertaker that pays but little attention to the living, but bedizens the dead; furnishes out their funerals, and follows them to the grave.

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"Reforms have fallen into the hands of ungodly men." Then it is because of the remissness and coldness of the church.

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The mind has more room in it than most people think, if you would but furnish the apartments.

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Greatness of mind is always compassionate.