

followed him. On being seated in his room, he related to me the following: "Some time after our meeting in the omnibus, I went back to Spain to resume my duties as a professor of the French language, and likewise to resume my life of dissipation, or rather debauchery, in company with one whom I called my friend, though he was really one of the worst characters the world ever saw; but he had more money than myself, and he bore the brunt of our orgies. Very soon, owing to my disreputable conduct, I lost all my pupils, and whilst waiting for their return, I sat smoking from morning till night; and in order to show my contempt for the Bible which you had sold me, and which I had taken good care not to open, I began tearing out leaf after leaf, for no other purpose than to light my pipe or my cigars. One day when I was wanting one of these leaves, I looked in vain for the remnant of the book, of which perhaps one-third was still left; but not finding it, I thought no more about it. By little and little, I marked with surprise that my boon companion was becoming cool towards me. I no longer found him in the places of pleasure or amusement where we had been in the habit of spending a considerable portion of our time, and I became the more sensible of his absence from his being no longer at hand to pay what I had expended. Very soon my position became intolerable. Over head and ears in debt, and being no longer able to obtain credit anywhere, not even for the worth of a sou, I became aware of the dire fact, that the moment was approaching when, if I wanted to live, I must needs beg in the streets. Before, however, getting to this point, I determined to apply for some assistance to my old companion. I went and knocked at his door, which was opened, to my intense delight, as well as to my eternal welfare, as you will presently learn. As I saw that the countenance of my former friend was not frowning at me, I took courage; and after having explained to him my sad position, I exclaimed: 'Help me, or else I shall die of hunger; for I know no one else in Madrid; and though it is but too true that I am a very sorry character, and as bad as you or any one else can think me, I cannot turn thief.' On this my companion interrupted me, and smilingly said, 'I am all the more bound to help you,