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FOUR ITALIAN CITIES.

BY THE EDITOR.



GENOA.

My first impressions of Italian peasant life, as caught from the windows of a railway carriage, were painful ones of its extreme poverty. I saw hundreds of peasants returning from market, riding in their paltry little carts, or on their meagre donkeys,

but mostly toiling on foot along the hot and dusty highway, driving a few goats or gaunt and hungry-looking swine—both men and women coarsened with field labour, unintelligent, and in appearance anything but the light-hearted, picturesque race they are so often portrayed by poet or painter. The Italians of the better class who shared our railway carriage, possessed more of the vivacity and sprightliness attributed to their race. I was much amused at the impassioned gesticulation and intonation of a young lady and a military officer, who seemed to converse as much by gesture and tone of voice as by articulate expression. Our military friend was very polite, and took evident pleasure in answering my questions, and pointing out the points of interest on the road, and on leaving the carriage, raised his hat—as I found was the general custom—to each person in the compartment.