

A LEGEND OF VENICE.

"Daughter! Thy ghostly father telleth me
Thou hast not been to holy shrift of late :
And since this so unwonted lack in thee
Grieves his good heart, do thou no longer wait.
Perhaps, unknown to us, some enemy
Of thy sweet soul envies thy mortal state."
So spake the aged parent to his child,
Who—save in love—was dutiful and mild.

She gently answered, 'she would do his will;
And gazing in his face with radiant air,—
As though a thought of heavenly love did thrill
Her soul—she said : "The Church hath kindly care
For all,—The happy folk, as well as ill,—
Since the dear Virgin-mother reigneth there :
And haply, there, my heart, all fault confessing,
Shall take from holy love increase of blessing."