

hair rise stiffly on my head : as to my companion, when I could look at him, his face was oddly spotted with lived colours ; his lips were compressed, and his nostrils widely dilated.

The being who had interrupted our contemplation in so disagreeable a manner, was a poor old woman, a miserable keeper of cattle, who, resting with one hand on a knotty staff, extended the other to us, crying : *Charita, Christiani ! per l'amor di Dio !*

— Old witch ! you deserve that I should send you rolling down into the town, exclaimed don Ignazio, whose countenance had become purple ; wicked old woman !

— Be calm, Signor Ignazio ! I then said ; for I was surprised at a passion so unchristian, and I also felt great joy at having escaped with no worse effect than the fright ; I even gave some small coins to the woman, from whose dull and sunken eyes I saw big tears flow.

— Ah ! Signor, she said to me, may heaven preserve you for your mother if she still lives ! I shall go and pray to the Madonna and Jesus Christ for you and for the soul of my poor daughter.

This manner of testifying her gratitude, seemed to me so extraordinary that I felt inclined to stop and talk with her, when Don Ignazio taking my arm, said :—

— Come, we will leave this old woman, who after all, perhaps neither deserves my anger or your compassion, for she is both very unfortunate and very guilty. Come, and on the road I will tell you her story, if you are curious to hear it.

— I am very curious, I assure you.

— Listen to me then :—The woman we have left is a keeper of cattle who inhabits a hut in the environs.—Giuseppa, or rather, as we call her for brevity Peppa, came and settled here about twenty years ago, after the death of her husband, a cultivator of land at Vico. She had but one child by her marriage, this was a girl, gifted with all those fragile marks