THE FACE OF CHRIST.

(AN OLD LEGEND.)

ALL of us have heard the story of the artist who sold his soul to the devil for the power of painting to the life whatever subject he chose ; but not all of us know the whole story of the bargain, how it was broken and what happened thereafter, as it is told herein.

His name was Camillo, and there were scenes in his life which he did not care to remember, and which, consequently, he painted over with others even less comforting. At the age of fifty, his memory was a charnel-house of dead recollections : his wife had left, his children quarreled with him ; most of his friends he had wronged or been wronged by ; and he had made a large fortune and a great name for himself. It was not strange, therefore, that, at this very period, he should be notified by the devil of the termination of their contract,and the consequent immediate foreclosure of the mortgage upon his soul.

The mere idea of such a thing brought out the sweat upon Camillo's forehead ; but, having a month allowed him to settle his worldly affairs,he spent one night in tossing sleeplessly between his silken sheets, or restlessly pacing the floor of his luxurious chamber, and another in still wilder wanderings over the hills around his villa ; the third morning he sent for Padre Antonio, the curé of his native village.

The father had now grown to be an old, old man ; but he came at once at the summons of Camillo. The counsel which he gave is a part of the old well-known legend : that the artist should use the skill his contract still insured to him, in painting the Face of Christ.

It was perhaps in virtue of his trained aesthetic sense, perhaps of his ambition, that Camillo decided to paint, not the dying or sorrowful Saviour, which so many artists have attempted and failed, but something still more difficult,the Christ of every day life. By his contract with the devil he was able to reproduce his subject to the very life. It was a wonderful picture. Just what form the features wore, or the color of the hair and beard, I am not