

ITALY'S VESPER BELLS

BY REV. P. B. HAVEN, D. D.
Hark! It is the Vesper bell,
Sounding forth the hour of prayer;

THE FLOWER OF THE FLOCK

CHAPTER VI.—(CONTINUED)

He had hardly spoken these words,
When the old man seized his head.

'You will see what comes of it,
Mother,' said the son, maintaining his
own opinion.

'Her age is on the side of it,' said
the mother with a thoughtful look;

'She is not far from twenty, and that
is a splendid age. It is a difficult
piece of work to keep a young girl...

'You must have fixed your eyes indeed
if you can see through the tricks of a
young maiden,' replied Ernest.

'Love is very cunning,' remarked
Lisbeth, with a significant glance at
her husband.

'The gentleman looks very pale,'
whispered the girl to her mother.

'Do not be afraid, the good woman
will soon cure you,' said Lois, encour-
agingly to the trembling man.

'I must look after the coffee,' said
the old woman, as the husband and
Lois withdrew.

'Where is Bertina, Maurice?' asked
Lois of the little boy who sat alone at
the large table.

'Why have you come so early to-
day?' she whispered.

'Anxiety on your account brings me
here, Katherine. Give me your word
that you will not cross the lake this
afternoon.'

'The merry expression of her face
had given place to one of sad and
anxiety. A ray of happiness shone in
her eyes...

'Do, my boy,' said Mark, and he
gave his son a slap upon the shoulder.

'I will fetch it for you if you like,'
said Ernest.

'The stranger held him back, took
mother and son by the arm, and lead-
ing them to the table, sat down with
them.

'I must relate to you an occurrence
of my past life,' he said, 'that you may
know in what way I am connected with
that ring.'

All eyes were directed to him in ex-
pectation. Lois, whose countenance
expressed the greatest surprise, tried
impatiently to quiet the noisy little
maiden...

'I was book-keeper in a large mer-
cantile house in Bremen, said the
stranger, and twenty years since left;

'I was not accustomed to wet
clothes,' said Lois.

'We can help that,' said Ernest,
with a glance at his wife.

'Yes, dear sir, sit down and rest,'
said the old woman, laying down her
spoon, while Ernest rose, and coming
forward offered the stranger a seat.

Katherine made room for the new
guest, and he took his place in the
family party in a friendly manner,

'The gentleman looks very pale,'
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