

[*Opens the package, and with deep emotion reads,*

“ Daughter of a Noble Race,—When you have to read these lines, pardon I beseech you the great sin which the ambition of her, whom you supposed to be your mother, prompted her to commit against you. Know then my dear child that you are the daughter of the Count Marino, and that her whom he fancies is his daughter is my child. When you were only a few weeks old, you were placed in my charge by the Count and Countess, who went abroad; my own child was about the same age as yourself. They remained abroad for many years, and when they returned I substituted my child for theirs. They did not know the deception, and the Lady Beatrice whom they suppose to be their daughter, is still considered as such. In the accompanying packet you will find evidence enough to prove what I say.

“ MARIANA PEITRO, your unhappy Foster Mother.”

These are the papers which for weeks past I have

Diligently sought, but could not find.

I have them now, but alas! what avails the knowledge

Which they contain, since she whom it would

Have benefitted is dead? Oh no—it cannot be!

She is not dead—perhaps she only sleeps—
alas! no—

This crimson tide proclaims the fearful truth!

Oh death!

Thou dread unfathom'd word—I realize it now!