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*An epistle of Francis Petrarch, to M. Niccola Acciajoli, great Steward of the Kingdom of Naples, on the Coronation of King Lewis: Taken from Code 4824 of the vatican library. With an introduction explaining the state of the Kingdom at that time. From the Italian Mercury.*

## Introduction.

**N**ICCOLA or Niccolò Acciajoli, to whom the epistle is directed, was born in Florence in 1310 of a middling family, but such as produced great men in arms and letters. His father sent him to Naples at the age of twenty-one years, having there a house of commerce, which flourished in such a degree, that he sometimes lent money to Great King Robert. Catharine of Valois, Princess Dowager of Taranto, who was called Empress of Constantinople, a gallant lady, took the young Acciajoli into favour, and intrusted him with the education of her children and management of her affairs; by this means, and his extraordinary abilities, he became great and powerful in that kingdom, and was afterwards one of the patrons of Petrarch.

King Lewis was second son of the aforesaid Catherine of Valois, and became consort of Jane, Queen of Naples, his cousin, in the following manner.

The same Queen had first married Andrew, younger brother of Lewis King of Hungary; but his slothfulness, the tender age of Jane, who was no more than sixteen years of age, and the barbarity and tyranny of the Hungarians in Naples, occasioned great confusion and disorders in that country; which happening soon after the splendour of the reign of the illustrious King Robert, the Neapolitans (according to Costanzo) perceived that difference which is betwixt day and night.

A conspiracy was formed in Naples to kill the idle and inept king, at the head of which was Charles Duke of Durazzo; and the very great insolence of the Hungarians, together with the news that Clement vi had already dispatched bulls for the coronation of Andrew, hastened his death. On the evening of the 17th of September, 1345, whilst the king was in the queen's apartments, one of his attendants came to tell him, on the part of