

this disguise got out of the palace: But the next day he was found, and the monarch was obliged to satisfy the queen's resentment, by ordering him to be hanged on a tree. Bertholde besought the king to take care of his family, and to let him chuse the tree on which he was to die. The monarch freely consented, and gave him a guard to see that the executioner gave him his choice: The trees of every wood for many miles round were examined, and Bertholde, very wisely, objected to all that were proposed, till the executioner and guard being weary of the fruitless search, set him at liberty. At their return, the guards found the king lamenting the loss of a faithful and able servant; he rejoiced to hear that he was still alive, and having found the place of his retreat, went himself to persuade him to return to court; this he not only accomplished, but reconciled him to the queen. He was then made prime minister, and under his influence the reign of this prince was happy, and his people enjoyed all the felicity they could reasonably desire. But the particulars of this part of his life, says our author, are forever excluded from our knowledge; since this part of the manuscript has been unhappily eaten up by the rats; but as the inveterate enemies of all the ancient records of history have left his will untouched, we shall here give it to our readers.

*To all those who shall see or read this present writing, health and a good appetite..*

'I Bertholde, great grandson of Bertolazo, grandson of Bertazzo of Bertin, and son of Bartolin, of the village of Bertagana, knowing that we are all mortal, and neither more or less than bladders filled with wind, which the least accident reduces to nothing, and that when we are arrived at the age of 70, as I am at this day, it is time to think of begetting a retreat, and to wish a good repose and good night, to our companions: For these causes, finding some grains of good sense in my bald head, I am willing to set my affairs in order, by making this my last will and testament; as much for my own satisfaction, as for that of my friends and relations, to whom I have some obligations; for which reason I have sent for Sieur Corfollio for him to write my last will, as follows.

1. I leave to master Bertholde, my brother, the venerable cobbler of our village, my shoes, and 8d in good money, for having several times lent me his awl, to put them in order, and for having done me other services equally considerable.

Item, To my uncle Sambuco, gardener, I also leave my old straw hat, for having

sometimes given me a bunch of leeks, sometimes some onions, and at other some cloves of garlick to get me an appetite.

Item, I leave to master Allegratto, the king's butler, my large leathern belt and purse, for having many times filled my rundlet with wine, and for other services not less important.

Item, To master Martin, cook to the servants, my knife and fork, for having sometimes regaled me with beans and onions, food infinitely more delicate to me than pies, tarts, ragouts, and all the other regales and dainties which would have soon sent me to my grave.

Item, At my coming to court, I left my wife Marcolfa, and my young son Bertholdin, and have never let them know where I am, for fear they should follow me hither: I leave Marcolfa, my wife, the little piece of land I have possessed, till my son arrives at the age of 25; after which he shall enjoy it on the following terms, to wit, that if he marries, he shall never unite himself to a person above his station; that he shall not be intimate with his superiors; that he shall eat when he has it, and work when he can; that he shall not take counsel of those who do not know how to govern themselves, nor remedies of a sick physician; that he shall do his duty to every body, be vigilant in his affairs, not interfere in those he does not understand; that he shall desire nothing, be contented with what he has; that he shall seriously consider that there are more lambs go to the butchers than sheep, and more young men die than old. If he reflects soberly on these things, and performs them, he cannot fail of being happy in this world, and dying quietly.

Item, Having no other goods, since I would never accept of any thing from the king, though he has frequently offered and pressed me to receive large sums of money, jewels, moveables, rich apparel, lands, castles, feignories, fine horses, and a thousand other rich presents; which would have robbed me of that repose and tranquillity, which, next to health, are the most precious blessings of life; which might make me engage in all the impertinences which I have seen practised by almost all those that possess them, and would therefore have justly rendered me odious to all the world; for insolence commonly walks by the side of those, whom fortune has raised from the dust to great employments: In short, having been always willing to remain poor, I have nothing to leave my king; but as I believe he has received some benefit from my advice, I will