

idea of surprise and joy as she hung weeping upon his neck. But they were delicious tears and her husband kissed them away with far greater rapture than he had ever before felt, and they sank overpowered with emotion in each other's arms.

It was necessary, however, to use the utmost precaution in retaining the fortune they had so strangely won; after explaining the plans he had in view, and engaging his wife's promise to keep it secret, he returned to his new house. His wife, still affecting to retain her grief for his loss, frequently took care before all her neighbors to recommend her poor children to the notice of the gentleman, who uniformly treated them with kindness.

One morning, having at length resolved upon a play, he rose early, and bent his way to the church of Santa Calterina, where he knew a venerable and devout monk, named Fra Anselmo, almost worshipped by the people of Pisa.

He here announced a very important piece of business, respecting which he wished to consult the conscience of the learned friar. The good father conducted him into his cell, where Gabriello introduced himself as Lazzaro di Maestro Basilio, relating at the same time his whole family genealogy, and how he had remained sole heir to the whole property through the plague.

He at last came to the story of poor Gabriello, the fisherman, laying the whole blame of the accident upon himself in persuading the wretched man to accompany him in a fishing excursion along the Arno. He then proceeded to relate the deplorable circumstances in which he had left his family. He said, taking into consideration the cause of the calamity, he felt it weigh so heavily upon his conscience that he was resolved at all risks to make every reparation in his power. But what reparation could be made to a woman, who, however lowly her condition, had fondly loved her husband, except by consoling her for her loss by directing her affections towards another object.

"And the truth is," he continued, "I am willing to marry her and become a father to her children; and then perhaps God will forgive me for the great sin I have committed in taking him out fishing with me."

Though the pious father here smiled, it appeared so conscientious a proposal that he did not venture to oppose it, saying that he would

not fail in this way to obtain the mercy of Heaven upon many of his past sins. Hearing this comfortable doctrine, Gabriello opened his purse-strings and presented the friar with thirty pieces, observing that he wished the mass of San Gregorio to be sung for three Mondays together to ensure peace to the soul of the deceased fisherman. The venerable monk's eyes brightened at the sight and the promised mass should be sung the very next Monday.

With respect to the projected alliance, he observed to Gabriello that he rather praised him for his regard to wealth and nobility in the proposed union. "Make no account of it," he continued, "you will be rich enough in the grace of Heaven; we all belong to the same father and the same mother, and virtue is the only nobility. I know both her and her parents: you could not do better, for she is born of a good family. So go home, my good senior, and I will attend you when you please."

"Well, to-day, to-day, then!" cried Gabriello as he prepared to depart.

"Oh! leave it to me," returned the friar, "and take my blessing with you, my son, and bring the ring in the meantime."

Gabriello hastened home, and purchased the ring accordingly, persuading himself there could be no harm in making sure everything was quite correct in the difficult circumstances under which he labored.

So, with the consent of all the lady's friends and relations, the marriage was celebrated a second time.

Gabriello, in the person of Lazzaro, then conducted his wife to her new house, where a splendid feast was prepared, and all their friends met to receive them.

Soon after, Gabriello gradually assuming the manners of a gentleman, dismissed the old maid and man-servant with liberal gratuities, and set up a handsome equipage and noble establishment.

He astonished all Leonardo's friends with the striking improvement that had taken place in the simpleton's manners, while his wife, Santa, became exceedingly genteel in all her actions. The twice-married pair spent together a happy and tranquil life, and had two sons subsequently born, who, assuming a new family surname, called themselves De Fortunati, and from their children sprung a race of men renowned both in letters and in arms.