

—“Thou shouldst know, said the holy man.—“I do know,” returned Camillo. “Well, give me my penance, absolution, and the blessing, father, and let me return home with a clean heart and a quiet conscience.”—“There is a veil upon the face of thy picture ?” asked the father. The artist assented, with a troubled glance. “Then be thy penance this,” said Father Antonio : “to place the picture in the room of thine house thou dost most frequent, and to remove the veil. And when those eyes have read so deeply in thine heart that thou seest thyself as they see thee, then, come hither if thou wilt—for absolution and the blessing of peace. Now God be with thee ; farewell”.

Camillo went his way homeward with a heavy heart.

“And but now I was so happy and so blest,” quoth he to himself. “Was it well done of the father to disturb my peace ?” he asked. Yet he did not neglect to perform his penance.

A week later, he sought the priest once more.—“My father,” said he, I am a far worse man than I dreamed. How dared I ask for absolution ? For when I had hung in my studio the picture you know of, lo ! I looked around the walls, and, ask me not, I cannot tell thee. Alas, that I should have wrought evil to so many souls !” Think you that I can ever atone ?” “Thou shouldst know,” said the priest. “Return, and look once more on the Face of Christ.”

So Camillo returned. And the next day he rose early and went his way to the house of that woman who had risen up and fled from the face of this picture.—“Thou and I,” said the artist, “have done much evil together ; shall we now do much good ?”

And the woman agreed. So she sold her jewels and her fine raiment and what precious things she had, and Camillo did the like ; and they found other women known to them both, and gathered them into one house, and persuaded them to live a godly and virtuous life. Then Camillo went away to his own house, expecting to look without fear into the Face of Christ. For, indeed, there was nothing frightful there, but looks of tender love and eyes of searching purity.

But the next morning he went to the chief picture-dealer in the city, and ordered him to go here and there