

a wooden box, the seams of which have been closed with some resinous substance.

"Where are the men?" the asked, hastily.

"Safe out of harm's way," returned Bartolommeo. "I gave them their reward, and I come now to claim mine. Did you not promise a carress from those lips if I did your bidding?"

She leaned towards him, and pressed her large full lips to his. He received it—the kiss of a duchess—not because he loved *her*, or even that he sought to return it. His cold dispassionate self-love only suggested that it would answer his purpose some time to boast of having been kissed by the Duchess of San Giuliano. It was the first and last kiss that Bartolommeo Canacci ever received from woman.

The morning of the 1st of January rose bright and clear over Florence. It was the morning of the Sabbath and the first of a new year. Christmas wreaths hung in all the dwellings—Christmas offerings lay on every table mingled with those of the dawning year.

The Duke of San Giuliano open his eyes that morning in terror and affright from a painful and agonising dream. The sun shone warm and bright into his apartment, but he did not heed it for some moments. His whole soul was absorbed in the frightful visions of the night. From another apartment he heard the voice of his wife. Latterly he had hated its very sound. It seemed to him now that it was that of some condemned spirit, so fiendish and shrill it had become.

He rose to get rid of the sound by opening the windows and leaning far out. The fresh morning air soothed and tranquillised him. His thoughts reverted to Caterina Canacci, and he felt a momentary pang of remorse that he had ever sought to lead that beautiful and innocent being into guilt. He felt condemned and miserable that he had brought her to the possibility of shame or disgrace. Momentary because when, for above all pleasant sounds of morning, the voice of his household fiend rose, shrill and tempestuous on his ear, he felt that, compared with *her*, Caterina was an angel of light.

He closed the window impatiently, and prepared to dress. It was the custom then to send up the clean linen in a basin or basket covered with silk, and the one which he used for that purpose—a large one—stood on the dressing-table. He opened it, and saw that it contained a wooden box. In the lock was a small key, which he turned.

Oh, what a pitiful sight met his distracted gaze! Worse even than his last night's hideous dream, for there, from that casket, the eyes of Caterina were upturned to his face, though the lustre had for ever departed! Two hours after the duke's attendant, who had been awaiting she sound of his bell, ventured to enter his room.

He found him in the delirium of fever, with the beautiful head lying beside him on the pillow, and his fingers twining among the long dark locks that swept from the bed to the floor. A long illness followed, from which he recovered to find that the duchess had fled from the terrible vengeance threatened by the populace, more than from any terror of the law, which would probably have not been enforced against one of her rank, such was the impunity with which the nobles at that period could commit the greatest crimes.

Bartolommeo Canacci was not of noble birth, and therefore suffered the punishment, by death, of his crime. He was condemned to lose his head. The duke never saw his wife again, nor were the three *sqherri*, who murdered the beautiful Caterina ever again seen in Florence. The house in the Via de Pilastri is said to be standing at the present day, although more than 200 years have elapsed—one of the monuments of the reign of the Medici.

Wit and Wisdom.

ABOUT MEN.

Better a man with paradoxes than a man with prejudices.—*J. J. Rousseau*

One of the principal occupations of men is to divine women.—*Lacretelle*.

Men may say of marriage and women what they please: they will renounce neither the one nor the other.

Young saint, old devil; young devil, old saint.—*Proverb*.

Experience is the name men give to their follies, or their sorrows.—*A. de Musset*.

For one Opheus who went to Hell to seek his wife, how many widowers who would not even go to Paradise to find theirs!—*Petit-Senn*.

When a lover gives he demands—and much more than he has given.—*Parny*.

How many men would be mute if they were forbidden to speak well of themselves and evil of others!—*Mme. de Fontaine*.

He who is never guilty of follies is not so wise as he imagines.—*La Rochefoucauld*.

The less one sees and knows men, the higher one esteems them, for experience teaches their real value.—*Marguerite de Valois*.

We rarely confess that we deserve what we suffer.—*Quesnel*.

Fortune does not change men: it unmasks them.—*Mme. Neckar*.

Man corrupts all that he touches.—*Montaigne*.

The sowing of wild oats is necessary in the life of man. Libertinism is a leaven that ferments sooner or later.—*J. J. Rousseau*.

The devil must be very popular, since the sacrifice of a god for men has not rendered them any better.—*Piron*.

A philosopher is a fool who torments himself during life, to be spoken of when dead.—*D' Alembert*.

Beware of him who meets you with a friendly mein, and, in the midst of a cordial salutation, seeks to avoid your glance.—*Lavater*.

An idle man is like stagnant water: he corrupts himself.—*Latena*.

Greece, so much praised for her wisdom, never produced but seven wise men: judge of the number of fools!—*Grecourt*.

In all companies there are more fools than wise men; and the greater number always get the better of the wiser.—*Rabelais*.

A fool always finds some one more foolish than he to admire him.—*Boileau*.

I cannot see why women are so desirous of imitating men. I could understand the wish to be a boa constrictor, a lion, or an elephant, but a man! that surpasses my comprehension.—*T. Gautier*.

An indiscreet man is an unsealed letter: every one can read it.—*Chamfort*.

A man should never blush in confessing his errors, for he proves by his avowal that he is wiser to-day than yesterday.—*J. J. Rousseau*.

Promises retain men better than services. For them, hope is a chain, and gratitude a thread.—*T. Petit-Senn*.

Scripture says; the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord." I say, "The beginning of wisdom is the fear of man."—*Chamfort*.

He who prays and bites has not a little of the devil in him.—*Lavater*.

A man who lives in indifference is one who has never seen the woman he could love.—*La Bruyere*.

What we call a gentleman is no longer the man of nature.—*Diderot*.

Man is nothing but insincerity, falsehood, and hypocrisy. He does not like to hear the truth, and he shuns telling it.—*Pascal*.

Man, I tell you, is a vicious animal.—*Moliere*.

Poet.—I suppose you like having one side of MS. paper left blank?

Editor.—Yes, if you can't be persuaded to leave both sides blank.

Rouder.—What would you do if you were to waken up and find a burglar going through your pockets?

Slouder.—I'd pity the poor fellow.

A SWEEPING FAILURE.—The hired girl.