VENDETTA:

The Story of One Forgotten.

CHAPTER XXVII.—Continued. I understood her. She wanted to get back her own letters to the dead man, lest her intimacy with him should leak out in some chance way for which she was unprepared. I was at most glad she showed me to what a depth of vulgar vice she had fallen. There was no question of pity or forbearence in her case. If all the tortures invented by savages or sheep in the tortures invented by savages or stern in-quisitors could be heaped upon her at once, such punishment would be light in comparison with her crimes,—crimes for which, mark you, the law gives you no remedy but divorce. Tired of she wretched comedy, I looked at my watch.
"It is time for me to take my leave of you,"

It is time for me to take my leave of your Isaid, in the stiff, courtly manner I affected.

"Moments fly fast in your enchanting company! But I have still to walk to Castellamare, there to rejoin my carriage, and I have many things to attend to before my departure many things to attend to before my departure.

many things to attend to before my departure this evening. On my return from Avellino shall I be welcome?"

"You know it. I only wish you were not going at all. Dearest, do not stay long away. I shall be so unhappy till you come back?"

"Absence strengthens love, they say," I observed with a forced smile. "May it do so in our case. Farewell, cara mia! Pray for me; I suppose you do pray a great deal here?"

"Oh, yes," she replied, naively: "there is nothing else to do."

I beid her hands closely in my grasp. The

I held her hands closely in my grasp. The engagement ring on her finger, and the dia-mond signet on my own, flashed in the light

Hke the crossing of swords.

"Pray," then I said. "storm the gates of heaven with sweet-voiced pleadings for the repose of poor Ferrari's soul! Remember he loved you, though you never loved him. For your sate he crossed. loved you, though you never loved him. For your sake he quarrelled with me, his best friend -for your sake he died! Prey for him-who knows," and I spoke in thrilling tones of earn-estness, "who knows but that his too-hastily departed spirit may not be near us now-hear-

ing our voices, watching our looks!"
She shivered alightly, and her hands in mine "Yes, yes," I continued more calmly;
"you must not forget to pray for him—he was
young and not prepared to die."

My words had some of the desired effect upon

her, . . , . for once her ready speech failed,—she seemed as though she sought for some reply and found none. I still held her

"Promise me !" I continued; "and at the same time pray for your dead husband! He and poor Ferrari were close friends, you know; it will be pious and kind of you to join their names in one petition addressed to Him 'from whom no secrets are hid,' and who reads with unerring eyes the purity of your intentions. Will you do it?"

She smiled a forced, faint smile.
"I certainly will," she replied in a low voice; "I promise you."

She watched me as I fastened my coat and began to draw on my gloves.

"Are you going now!" she asked somewhat * Yes, I am going now, cara mia," I said.

"Yes, I am going now, cara man, I said.
"Why! what makes you look so pale?"
For she had sudd nily turned very white.
"Let me see your hand again," she demanded with feverish cagerness, "the hand on which

I placed the ring!"
Smilingly and with readiness I took off the

glove I had just put on.
"What odd fancy possesses you now, little
one?" I asked with an air of playfulness.
She made no answer, but took my hand and examined it closely and curiously, and she laughed a little hard, mirthless laugh.

"""" Your hand," she muranted incoherently,
"with—that—signet—on—it,—is exactly like—

And before I had time to say a word she went

on into a violent state of hysterica—sobs, little eries, and laughter all intermingled in that wild and reasonless distraction that generally unnerves the strongest man who is not accustomed to it. I rang the bell to summon assistance; a lay-sister answered it, and seeing Nina's condition, rushed for a glass of water and summoned Madame la Vicaire. This latter, entering with her quiet step and inflexible demeanor, took in the situation at a glance, dismissed the of water, sprinkled the forehead of the interesting patient, and forced some drops between her clembed teeth. Then turning to me she inquired, with some stateliness of manner, what

had caused the attack?

"I really cannot tell you madame," I said with an air of affected concern and vexation. certainly told the Countess of the unex pected death of a friend, but she bore that news with exemplary resignation. The circumstance that appears to have so creatly distressed her is that she finds, or says she finds a resemblance between my hand and the hand of her deceased husband. This s ems to me absurd, but there

And I shrugged my shoulders as though I were annoyed and impatient.

Over the pate, serious face of the nun there flitted a smile in which there was certainly the

"runs." Shut in by the lofty Appenines, built on the slope of the hill that winds gently down ghost of sarousm.
"All sensitiveness and tenderness of hear, into a green and fruitful valley through which the river Sabato guahes and gleams white against cieft rocks that look like war-worn and you see!" she said in her dhill, passionless tones, which loy as they were, somehow conveyed to my ear another meaning than that implied by the words she uttered. "We candeserted castles, a drowsy peace encircles it, and a sort of stateliness, which compared with the riotous fun and folly of Naples only thirty 'We cannot perhaps understand the extreme delicacy of her feelings, and we fail to do justice to Egeria were placed in rivalry with the painted waxen image of a half-dressed ballet-dancer. Few lovelier sights are to be seen in nature than

Here Nine opened her eyes, and looked at us with piteous plaintweness, while her bosom heaved with those long, deep sighs which are the finishing chords of the Sonata Hysteria.

"You are better I trust?" Continued the You are better, I trust?" continued the nun, without any sympathy in her mono-toneus accents, and addressing her with some reserve. "You have greatly slarmed the Count Oliva."

"I am sorry—" began Nina feebly
I hastened to her side.
"Pray do not speak of it!" I urged, forcing something like a lever's arder into my voice. "I regret beyond measure that it is my misfortune to have hands like those of your late husband! I assure you I am quite miserable about it. Can you forgive me?"

She was recovering quickly, and she was evidently conscious that she had behaved somewhat foolishly. She smiled, a weak pale smile; but she looked very scared, worn and ill. She rose from her chair slowly and

languidly.

"I think I will go to my room," she said, not eggarding Mere Marguerite, who had withdrawn to a littl distance, who stood rigidly erect, immovably featured, with her silver srucifix glittering coldly on her still breast.

"Good-bye, Cesare! Please forget my standity, and write to me from Avelling." been forced to practice in Naples in order to at-tain my ends,—and it was a relief to me to be for a time as though I were a poor man. The house in which I found room that suited

stupidity, and write to me from Avellino,"
I took her outstretched hand, and bowing over it, touched it gently with my lips. She turned towards the door, when suddenly a mischievous idea seemed to enter her mind. She looked at Madame la Vicaire and then came back to me.

me, was a ramblingly built, picturesque little place, situated on the outskirts of the town, and the woman who owned it, was in her way, "Addio, amor mio !" she said, with a sort of a character. She was a Roman she told me rapturous emphasis, and throwing her arms round my neck she kissed me almost passion. with pride flashing in her black eyes guess that at cace, by her strongly-marked features, her magnificently moulded figure, and her free, firm tread—that step which is swift

Then she glanced maliciously at the nun, who,

amusement with young girls and women of the world. I am accustomed to it, though I feel its cruelty more than I ought to do. Ladies like the Countess Romani think that we —we, the sepulches of womanhood,—sepulchres Ladies like the Countess Romani think that we we, the sepulchees of womanhood,—sepulchees that we have emptied and cleansed to the best of our ability, so that they may more fittingly hold the body of the crucified Christ: these of our shi ity, so that they may more fittingly hold the body of the crucified Christ; these grandes dames, I say, fancy that we are ignorant

of all they know,—that we cannot understand love, tenderness or passion. They never reflect, how should they, that we also have had our his-

tories—histories, perhaps, that would make angels weep for pity! I, even-I—" and she struck her breast fiercely, then suddenly recellecting herself, she continued coldly—" The rule of our convent, signor, permits no visitor than one hour that hour than the permits of the perm

to remain longer than one hour-that hour has

expired. I will summon a sister to show you the way out."

that to enact my part thoroughly. I ought to attempt to make some defence of Nina's conduct; "permit me to say a word!

My fiance is very young and thoughtless. I really cannot think that her very innicent part-

ing caress to me had anything in it that was meant to purposely annoy you."

head to receive her blessing, she passed noise-

One moment later, and a lame and aged lay-

sister came to excert me to the gate. As I passed down the stone corridor a side door opened

ed down the stone corrulor a stude door opened a very little way, and two fair young faces peeped out at me. For an instant I saw four lauphing bright eyes, I heard a smothered voice say, "c'est un vieux wapa/" and then my

say, "c'est un vieux wapa /" and then my guide, who though lame was not blind, per-

ringing merriment that echoed from within. On reaching the outer gates I turned to my

venerable companion, and laying four twenty franc pieces in her shrivelled palm, I said:

"Take these to the Reverend Mother for me, and ask that Mass may be said in the chapel to-

morrow for the repose of the soul of him whose name is written here."

adding in lower and more solemn tones:

And I gave her Guido Ferrari's visiting card,

The old woman looked startled, crossed her-

self devoutly; but she promised that my wishes should be fulfilled, and I bade her fare-

well and passed out, the convent gates closing with a dull clang behind me. I walked on a

with a dult clang defined me. I wanted on a few yards, and then paused, looking back. Few, very few, a mong the theusands of young women who leave the scene of their quiet school days for the social whirligg of the world, ever

learn to take life in earnest, love in earnest, sorrow in earnest. To most of them life is a large dressmaking and mil-

linery establishment; love a question of money and diamonds; sorrow a solemn cal-culation as to how much or how little mourning

s considered becoming or fashionable. And fo

creatures such as these we men work-work till

our hairs are grey and our back bent with toil-

Truly we ought to be glad if we are only ridi-

living who does not now and then throw a small

stone of insolent satire at her husband when his back is turned? What, Madame? You, who

read these words—you say with indignation—"Certainly there is, and I am that woman!"

Ah, truly? salute you profoundly!—you are, no doubt the one exception!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

desecrated by the Vandal tourist. Persons holding "through tickets" from Messrs. Cook

or Gaze do not stop there; there are no "sights" save the old sanctuary called Monte

Veryine standing aloft on its rugged hill, with all the memories of its aucient days clinging to

can look back through a vista of eventful

years to the eleventh century, when it was

erected, so the people say, on the ruins of a temple of Cypele. But what do the

sheep and geese that are whipped abroad in herds by the drovers Cook and Gaze know

of Monte Vergine or Cybele? Nothing,—and they care less; and quiet Avellino escapes from

their depredations, thankful that it is not marked on the busin as map of the drevers'

miles away, is as though the statue of a nude

a sunset from one of the smaller hills round

Avelling,—when the peaks of the Appenines seem to catch fire from the flaming clouds, and

below them, the valleys are full of those tender

purple and grey shadows that one sees on the canvases of Salvator Rosa, while the town itself looks like a bronzed carving on an old shield, outlined clearly against the fazzling lustre of the sky.

o this retired spot I came,—glad to rest for a

time from my work of vengeance,—glad to lay down my burden of bitterness for a brief space,

and become, as it were, human again, in the

sight of the near mountains. For within their

close proximity, things common, things mean seem to slip from the soul,—a sort of largeness

pervades the thoughts, the cramping posiness of

daily life has no room to assert its sway, -a grand hush falls on the stormy waters of passion, and like a chidden babe the strong

man stands, dwarfed to an infinite littlenes

in his own sight, before those majestic monarchs

of the landscape, whose large brows are crowned with the blue circlet of heaven.

I took up my abode in a quiet, almost humble

lodging, living simply, and attended only by Vincenzo. I was tired of the ostentation I had

it like a wizard's cloak, and wrapping it in sort of mysterious meditative silence.

lessly from the room.

who killed him !"

The nun glanced at me, her eyes flashed dis-

"Wast one instant, madame," I said, feeling

orchard. It was a treen green strip of votants and foliage—about eight acres of good land, planted entirely with apple trees.

"Yes, truly!" she said, showing her white teeth in a pleased smile as I made the admiring remark she expected. "Avelling has teeth in a pleased smile as I made the acmiring remark she expected. "Avellino has long had a name for its apples—but, thanks to the Holy Mother, I think in the season there is no fruit in all the neighborhood finer than mine. The produce of it brings me almost enough to live upon—that and the house, when I cen find signori willing to dwe'll with me. But faw strangers come hither: with me. But few strangers come hither; sometimes an artist, sometimes a poet-such as these are soon tired of gaiety, and are glad to rest. To common persons I would not open my door—not for pride, ah, no! but when one has a

girl, one cannot be too careful."
"You have a daughter, then:"
Her fierce eyes softened.
"One—my Lifla. I call her my blessing, and too good for me. Often I fancy that it is because she tends them that the trees bear so dainfully.

"You think it was all affection for you, no doubt, signor? A very natural supposition, and I should be sorry to understand and its so smilingly behind the team, it seems

to me that her very face brings luck to the

doubt, signor? A very natural support of and I should be sorry to undeceive you."

She paused a moment and then resumed:
"You seem an earnest man;—maybe you are destined to be the means of saving Nina; I could say much,—yet it is wise to be silent. If you love her do not flatter her; her over I looked fatigued, and left me to myself. I looked fatigued, and left me to myself.

I looked fatigued, and left me to myself. I looked fatigued, and left me to myself. and during my stay I saw very little of her, Vincenzo constituting himself my weeling vanity is die runi. Anni, who knows?" and during my stay I saw very little of sign of the cross as I respectfully bent my a sort of amiable slave, always looking to the sign of the cross as I respectfully bent my a sort of amiable slave, always looking to the sign of the cross as I respectfully bent my a sort of amiable slave, always looking to the sign of the cross as I respectfully bent my a sort of amiable slave, always looking to the sign of the cross as I respectfully bent my a sort of amiable slave, always looking to the sign of the cross as I respectfully bent my a sort of amiable slave, always looking to the sign of the cross as I respectfully bent my a sort of amiable slave, always looking to the sign of the cross as I respectfully bent my look details of my comfort, and studying a sort of amiable slave, always looking to the smalleat details of my comfort, and studying wishes with an anxious solicitude that touched while it gratified me. I had been fully three days in my retreat before he ventured to enter upon any conversation with me, for he had observed that I always sought to be alone, that I took long, solitary rambles through the woods and across the hills; and, not dairy to break through my tacituraity, he had contented himself by merely attending to my material comceived the opened door and shut it with an forts in silence. One afternoon, however, after angry bang, which, however, did not drown the ringing merriment that echoed from within, he lingered in the room.

The Eccellenza has not yet seen Lilla Monti?" he asked hesitatingly.

I looked at him in some surpri e. There was a blush on his olive-tinted cheeks and an unusual sparkle in his eyes. For the first time I was a handsome

young fellow.
"Seen Lilla Monti!" I repeated, half-absently: "oh, you mean the child of the landlady? No, I have not seen her. Why do you ask?" "He met with a sudden and unprepared death. Of your charity, pray also for the man Vincenzo smiled. "Pardon, Eccellenza! but

Vincenzo smiled. "Pardon, Eccelenza".

she is beautiful, and there is a saying in my province—Be the heart heavy as a stone, the sight of a fair face will lighten it!"

I gave an impatient gesture. "All folly, Vincenzo! Beauty is the curse of the world. Read history, and you shall find the greatest cancustors and sages ruined and disgraced by conquerors and sages ruined and disgraced by

He nodded gravely. He probably thought of the announcement 1 had made at the banquet of my own approaching marriage and strove to my present observation. But he was too discreet to utter his mind aloud,—he merely said,
"No doubt you are right, Eccellenza. Still one is glad to see the roses bloom, and the stars whipe and the form hells readdly and the reconcile it with the apparent inconsistency of shine, and the foam-bells sparkle on the waves,

so one is glad to see Lilia Monti."

I turned round in my chair to observe him -the flush deepened on his cheek as I regarded him. I laughed with a bitter sad-

work till all the joy and zest of living has gone from us, and our reward is,—what? Happiness?—Seldom. Infidelity?—Often. Ridicule? "In love, amico, are thou? So soon!-thre culed and thrust back to occupy the second place in our own houses; our lady-wives call that "kind treatment." Is there a married woman days—and thou hast fallen a prey to the smile of Lilla! I am sorry for thee!"

He interrupted me esgerly.
"The Ec ellenza is in error! I would not The Eccelenza is in error: I would not dere—she is too innocent,—she knows nothing! She is like a little bird in the nest, so soft and tender,—a word of love would frighten her; I she uld be a coward to utter it."

Well, well! I thought, what was the use of

well, well: I thought, what was the use of that I know what kind hands have been at seering at the poor fellow! Why, because my own love had turned to ashes in my grasp, should I mock at those who fancied they had found the golden fruit of the Hesperides?

She looked surprised. She did not make his coffee too often." Vincenzo, once a soldier, now half courier, half valet, was something of a poet at heart; She looked surprised. She did not understand. Evidently to her mind Vincenzo was Avellino is one of those dreary, quiet, and picturesque towns which have not as yet been he had the grave meditative turn of mind common to Tuscans, together with that amorous fire that ever burns under their lightly-worn

mask of seeming reserve.

I roused myself to appear interested. "I see, Vincenzo," I said with a kin'lly air of barter, "that the sight of Lil'a Monti more than compensates you for that portion of the Neapolitan carnival which you lose by being here. But why you should wish me to behold this paragon of maidens I know no; unless you would have me regret my own lost youth A curious and perplexed expression flitted over his face. At last he said firmly, as though bis mind were made up;
The Eccellenza must pardon me for see-

ing what perhaps I ought not to have seen, But what ?" I asked.

"Eccellenza, you have not lost your youth."
I turned my head towards him again—he was looking at me in some alarm-he feared some outburst of anger. Well!" I calmly calmly. "That is your

idea is it, and why?"

"Eccellenza, I saw you without your spretacles that day when you fought with the unfor-tunate Signor Ferrari. I watched you when you fired. Your eyes are beautiful and terrible the eyes of a young man, though your hair is white

Quietly I took off my glasses and laid them on the table beside me.

"As you have seen me once without them, you can see me again," I observed gently. "I wear them for a special purpose. Here in Avellina the purpose does not hold. Thus far I confide in you. But beware how you betray my confidence."

Eccellenza!" cried Vincenzo in truly pained

scents, and with a grieved look. I fore and laid my hand on his arm. "There I was wrong—forgive me. You are honest; you have served your country well enough to know the value of fidelity and duty. But when you say I have not lost my youth, Vincenzo! I have lost it –it has been killed within me by a great sorrow. The strength, the suppleness of limb, the brightness of eye, these are mere outward things; but in the heart and soul are the chill and drear bitterness of deserted age. Nay, do not smile; I am in truth very old—so old that I tire of my length of days; yet again, not too old to appreciate your affection, amico, and—"here I forced a faint smile, "when I see the maiden Lills. I will tell you frankly what I think of her."

Vincenzo stooped his head, caught my hand within his own, and kissed it, then left the room abruptly, to hide the tears that my words had brought to his eyes. He was sorry words had orought so his eyes. He was sorry for me, I could see, and I judged him rightly when I thought that the very mystery surrounding me increased his attachment. On the whole I was glad, he had seen me unde-

Then she glanced maliciously at the nun, who had lowered her eyes till they appeared fast shut, and breaking into a low peal of indolently shut, and breaking into a low peal of the room.

I was somewhat confused.

The suddenness shut, and break shut, the rest of meaning them once.

One day I saw Lilla. I had strolled up to a surrounded by fine of them once.

One day I saw Lilla. I had strolled up to a surrounded by fine of them once.

I was somewhat confused.

The word in them once.

One day I saw Lilla. I had strolled up to a surrounded by fine of them once.

I was somewhat confused them once.

I was somewhat confused them once.

One day I saw Lilla. I had strolled up to a surrounded by fine of them once.

I had

unnecessary. To make a religeuse is a common amusement with young girls and women of the world. I am accustomed to it, though not in heaven!"

Thus she spoke with flashing eyes and purfacely its cruelty more than I ought to do.

Ladies like the Countess Romani think that we received the counters Romani think that we received the counters relieved by the white kerchief that was knotted about her shoulders; and round her small well-shades like the Counters Romani think that we shaped head the rich chestnut hair was coiled in thick shining braids.

I felt that I must see her face, and for that I felt that I must see her face, and for that reason went back to the church door and waited till she should pass out. Very soon she came towards me, with the same light tim d see that I had before noticed, and her fair young features were turned fully upon me. What was there in those clear candid eyes that made me involuntarily bow my head in a reverential salutation as she passed? I know not It was not beauty—for though the child was lovely I had seen lovelier; it was something inexplicable and rare—some-

it was something inexplicable and rare—some-thing of a maidenly composure and sweet dignity that I had never beheld on any woman's face before. Her cheeks flushed softly as sho modestly returned my salute, and when she was once outside the church door she paused, her amall white fingers still clasping the carven brown beads of her rosary. shyly yet brightly,—

If the Eccellenza will walk yet a little fur-

ther up the hill he will see a finer view of the mountains.". Something familiar in her look-a sort of reflection of her mother's illness-made me sure

flection of her mother's illness—made me sure of her identity. I smiled.

"Ah! you are Lilla Monti?"

She blusted agaid.

"Si, Signor. I am Itilia."

I let my eyes dwell on her searchingly and almost sadly. Vincenzo was right: the girl was beautiful, not with the forced hot-house beauty of the social world and artificial constraint, but with the loveliness and fresh radiance which nature gives to those of her cheriahed ones, who dwell with her in peace. I had ished ones, who dwell with her in peace. I had seen many exquisits women,—women of Juno-like form and face—women whose eyes were basilisks to draw and compel the soul of men,—but I had never seen any so spiritually fair as this little peasant maiden, who stood fearlessly yet modestly regarding me with the

innocent inquiry of a child who suddenly sees something new, to which it is unaccustomed. She was a little fluttered by my earnest gaz; and with a pretty curtsey turned to descend the hill. I said gently,—
"You are going home, fauciulla mia?"
The kind, protecting tone in which I spoke reassured her. She answered readily.
"I Six signers. My mother waits for the to help." signor. My mother waits for me to help her with the Eccellenza's dinner. I advanced and took the little hand that held

the resary.
"What!" I exclaimed playfully, 'do you still work hard, little Lillie, even when the apple season is over ?"

She laughed musically.
"Oh! I love work. It is good for the tem-People are so cross when their hands are And many are ill for the same reason. idle. Yes, truly!" and she nodded her head with grave importance, "it is often so. Old Pietro, the cobbler, took to his bed when he had no shoes to mend, yes; he sent for the priest and said he would die, not for want of money,—oh, no! he has plenty, he is quite rich,—but because he had nothing to do. So my mother and I found some shoes with holes and took them to him; he sat up in bed to mend them, and now he is as well as ever And we are careful to give him something always."

She laughed again, and again looked grave. "Yes. yes!" she said, with a wise shake of her little glessy head, "one cannot live with-out work. My mother says that good women are never tired, it is only wicked persons who are lazy. And that reminds me I must make haste to return and prepare the Eccellenza's

"Do you make my coffee, little one?" I asked, and does not Vincenzo help you?" The faintest suspicion of a blush tinged her

'On, he is very good, Vincenzo," she said demurely, with downcast eyes; "he is what we call buon' amico, yes indeed! But he is often glad when I make coffee for him also; he likes it so much! He says I do it so well! But per haps the Excellenza will prefer Vincenzo?" I laughed. She was so naive, so absorbed in

her little duties,—such a child altogether. "Nay, Lilla, I am proud to think you make anything for me. I shall enjoy it more now that I know what kind hands have been at

nothing but a good natured young fellow, whose palate could be pleased by her culina y skill; she treated him, I dare say, exactly as she would have treated one of her own sex. She seemed to think over my words, as one who con iders a conundrum, then she apparently gave it up as hopeless, and shook her head lightly as though dismissing the subject.

"Will the Eccellenze visit the Punto d'Angelo?" she said brightly, as she turn d to go.

I had never heard of this place, and asked her

to what he alluded.
"It is not far from here," she ax lained, "it is the vew I sp ke of tefore. Just a little further up the hil you will see a flat grey rick, covered with blue gentians. No one knows how they grow, they are always there, blooming in summer and winter. But it is said that one of Goo's own great angels comes once in every mouth at midnight to bless the Monte Vergine and that he stands on that rock. And, of course, wherever the argels tread there are flowers, and no eterm can destrey them—not even an avalanche. That is why the people call it the Punto d'Angelo. It will please you to see it, Eccellanza,—it is but a wa'k of a little ten minutes."

And with a smile, and a curtsey as pretty and as light as a flower might make to the wind, she left me, half running, half dancing down the indocence of heart. Her pure lark-like notes floated upward bowards me where I stood, wish fully watching her as she disappeared. The warm afternoon sunshine caught lovingly at her chesthut hair, turning it to a golden bronze, and touched up the whiteness of her throat and arms, and bright-ned the scarlet of her bodice, as she descended the grassy slops, and was at last lost to my view amid the folia e of the surrounding trees.

CHAPTER XYIX.

Is ghed heavily as I resumed my walk. I realized all that I had lost. This lovely child with her simple fresh nature, why had I with her simple an one and wedded her not met such an one and wedded her instead of the vile creature who had been my soul's undoing? The answer came swiftly, Even if I had seen her when I was f.e., I doubt if I should have known her value. We min of the world who have social positions to support, we see little or nothing in the peasant type of womanhood; we must marry "ladies," so-called -educated girls who are as well versed in the world's ways as ourselves, if not more so, And so we get the Cleopatras, the Du Barrys, the Pompadours, while unspoilt maidens such as Lilla too often become the household drudger of mechanics or day laborers, living and dying in the one routine of hard work, and often knowing and carine for nothing better than the mountain-but, the farm-kitchen, or the covered stall in the market-place. Surely it is an ill-balanced world so many mistakes are made; Fate plays us so many apparguised, as it was a relief to me to be without my smoked glasses for a time, and during all such blind madmen, knowing not whither we the rest of my stay of Avellino I never wore that it is no longer fashionable to believe in a devil but I care nothing for fashion! A devi there, is I am sure, who for some inscrutable reason has a share in the ruling of this planet—a devil who delights in mocking us from the cradle to the grave. And perhaps we are Lever so hopelessly, utterly fooled as in our marriages! Uccupied in various thoughts, I scarcely saw

where I wandered till a flashing glimmer of blue blossoms recalled me to the object of my walk. I had reached the Punto d'Angelo. It was, as Lilla had raid, a flat rock, bare in every place save at the summit, where it was /thickly cov-

view was indeed superb-from the leafy bosom of the valley, the green hills like smooth, undulating billows rolled upwards, till their emerald verdure was lost in the dense purple shadows and tall peaks of the Appenines; the town of Avellino lay at my feet, small yet clearly defined as a miniature painting on porcelain; and a little further beyond and above me rose the grey tower of the Monte Vergine itself, the one sad and solit-ry-leoking object in all the luxuriant riante landscape.

I sat dawn to rest not as an intruder on the

angel's flower-embroidered throne, but on a grassy knoll close by. And then I bethought me of a packet I had received from Naples that morning—a packet that I desired yet hesitated to open. It had been sent by the Marquis had been privately buried with all the last re-ligious rites in the cemetery, "close to the funeral vault of the Romani family," wrote D'Avencourt, "as, from all we can hear or dis-cover, such seems to have been his own desire.

opening the first one, in the expectation of ind-ing some clue at to his last wishes, we came to the conclusion that you, as the future husband of the ledy whose signature and handwriting you will here recognize, should be made aware of the contents, not only for your own sake, but in justice to the deceased. If all the letters are of the same tone as the one I unknowingly opened, I have no doubt Ferrari considered himself a sufficiently injured man. But of that you will judge for yourself, though, if I might venture so far in the way of friendship, I should recommend you to give careful consideration to the enclosed correspondence before tying the matrimonial knot to which you alluded the other evening. It is not wise to walk on the edge of a precipios with one's eyes shut! Captain Ciabatti was the first to in-form me of what I now know for a fact—namely, that Ferrari left a will in which everything iy, that herrari left a will in which everything he possessed is made over unconditionally to the Countess Romani. You will of course draw your own conclusions, and pardon me if I am guilty of trop de zète in your service. I have now only to tell you that all the unpleasantness of this affair is passing over very smoothly and without scandal—I have taken care of that. You need not prolong your absence further than you feel inclined and I absence further than you feel inclined, and I, for one, shall be charmed to welcome you back to Naples. With every sentiment of the highest consideration and regard, I am, my dear

Conte,
"Your very true friend and servitor,
"Dayreppe D'Avencoup "PHILIPPE D'AVENCOURT."

I folded this letter carefully and put it aside The little package he had sent me lay in my hand—a bundle of neatly-folded letters tied to gather with a narrow ribbon, and strongly per fumed with the faint sickly perfume I knew and abhorred. I turned them over and over the edges of the note-paper were stained with blood,—Guido's blood,—as though in its last sluggish flowing it had endeavored to obliterate all traces of the daintily-penned lines that now awaited my perusal.

Slowly I untied the ribbon. With methodical deliberation I read one letter after the other. They were all from Nina-sll written to Guide while he was in Rome, some of them bearing the dates of the very days when she had feigned to love me-me, her newly-accepted husband. One very amprous epistle had been written on the self-same evening she had plighted her troth to me! Letters burning and tender, full of the most passionate protestations of fidelity, overflowing with the sweetest terms of endearment; with such a ring of truth and love throughout them that surely it was ro wonder that Guido's suspicions were all unawakened, and that he had reason to believe himself safe in his tool's One passige in this poetcial and paradise romantic corespondence fixed my attention; it

ran thus:—
"Why do you write so much of marriage
to me, Guido mio!

I studied these words attentively. Of course understood their drift. She had tried to feel her way with the dead man. She had wanted to marry me, and yet retain Guido for her lonely heurs, as "her lover always!" Such a pretry, ingenious plan it was! No thief, no Her dark bold eyes filled with tears and her her war with the dead man. She had wanted she; but the law locks after thieves and murderers. For such a woman as this, Law says. Divorce ber—that is your best remedy.

Divorce her! Let the crimical go scot free Others may do it that choose, - I have different ideas of justice ! Tying up the packet of letters again, will their suckening perfume and their blood-stained edges. I dr-w out the last graciously worded a I had received from Nina. Of course I heard from her every day, she was a most faithful corre pondent! The same affectionate exn essions characterized her letters to me a those that had deluded her dead lover, with this difference, that whereas she of marrage to Guido, to me she drew the most tou bing pictures of her desclate con-duion: how lonely she had felt since her "dear d.tim: how lonely she had felt since her "dear hu band's" death, how rejoiced she was to think that she was soon again to be a happy wife—the wife of one so noble, so true, ed devoted as I was! She had left the convent and was now at home, when should she have the happiness of welcoming me, her best-beloved Cesare, back to Nap'ss Sec certainly deserved some credit for artistic lying; I could not understand how she man-aged it so wel!. Almost I admired her skill, as one sometimes admires a cool headed burglar, who has more skill, cunning, and pluck than his comrades. I thought with biumph that though the wording of Ferrari's will enabled her to secure all other letters she might have written to him, this one little packer of cocumentary

keeping till the time came for me to use it against her. And how about D'Avencourt's friendly advice concerning the matrimonial knot? "A man should not walk on the edge of a precipice with his eyes shut." Very true. But if his eyes are open, and he has his enemy by the throat, the edge of a precipice is a convenient position for hurling that en my down to death in a quiet way, that the world need know nothing of. So for the present I preferred the precipice to walking on level ground.

evidence was more than sufficient for my tur-

poses. And I resolved to retain it in my own

I rise from my seat near the Punto d Angelo. It was growing late in the afterroon. From the little church below me soft bells rang out the Angelus, and with them chimed in a solemn and harsher sound from the turret of the Monte Vergine. I lifted my hat with the customary reverence, and stood listening, with my feet deep in the grass and scent-

with my reet deep in the grass and scene ed thyme, and more than once glanced up at the height whereon the venerable sanctuary held its post.

The bells ceased ringing; I descended the hill and returned homeward through a shady. Valley, full of the odor of pines and bog myrtle. On reaching the cate of the Signors Montile. On reaching the gate of the Signora Monti's On reaching the gate of the Signors Montrs humble yet picturesque dwelling, I heard the sound of laughter and clapping of hands, and looking in the direction of the orchard, I saw Vincenzo hard at work, his shirt-sleeves rolled up to the shoulder, splitting some goodly logs of wood, while Lilla stood beside him, merrily applauding and encouraging his efforts. He seemed quite in his element, and wielded his axe with a regularity and vigor I should scarcely have expected from a man whom I was accustomed to see performing the somewhat effeminate duties of a valet-de-chambre. I watched him and the fair girl beside him for a

was a true Tuscan, from the very way he handled his wood-axe; I could see that he loved ment, tears glittered on herdark llashes and interest one bear on the life of the his fern. Someting in her graceful, noiseless and herdark lashes and filed and her fern. Someting in her graceful, noiseless and her fern. Someting in her graceful, noiseless and filed and her fern. Someting in her graceful, noiseless and her fern. Someting in her graceful, noiseless and filed and her fern. Someting in her graceful, noiseless and filed and her fern. Someting in her graceful, noiseless and filed and filed

would have days of unwearying contentment, would have days of unwearying contentment, rendered beautiful by the free fresh air and the fragrance of flowers,—his evenings; would alip softly by to the tinkle of the mandoline, and the sound of his wife and children's singing.

What fairer fate could a man desire?—what life more certain to keep health in the body and peace in the mind? Could I not help him to his happiness. I wondered? I who

peace in the mind? Usua I not help him to his happiness, I wondered? I, who had grown stern with long broading upon my vengeance.—could I not aid in bringing joy to others? If I could, my mind would be somewhat lightened of its burden—a burden grown heavier since Guido's death, for from his grown heavier since Guido's death, for from his blood had sprung forth a new group of Furies, that lashed me on to my task with scorpion whips of redoubled wrath and passionate ferobated to open. It had been sent by the Marquis whips of redoubled wrath and passionate teroD'Avencourt, accompanied by a courteous city. Yet if I could do one good action now—
letter, which informed me that Ferrari's body had been privately buried with all the last religious rites in the cemetery, "close to the ligious rites in the cemetery, "close to the funeral vault of the Romani family," wrote funeral vault of the Romani family," wrote funeral vault of the Romani family," wrote funeral vault of the Romani family, wrote the row. I looked and saw that she had been privately buried with a same than the laugh of a very young child. What amused her now. I looked and saw that she had D'Avencourt, "as, from all we can hear or discover, such seems to have been his own desire. He was, it appears, a sort of adopted brother of the lately deceased Count, and on being informed of this circumstance, we buried him in accordance with the sentiments he woul i no doubt have expressed had he considered the possible nearness of his own end at the time of the combat."

With regard to the packet enclosed, D'Avencourt continued—"the accompanying letters were found in Ferrari's breast-pocket, and on opening the first one, in the expectation of find-doubt he warm rays of the late sun fell with so much amorous tenderness. Poor little Lilla! A penknife would have made as much impression as her now. I looked, and saw that she had taken the axe from Vinceuzo, and lifting it in her little hands, was endeavoring bravely to imitte the strong and telling stroke; he meanwhile stood aside with an air of smiling survive mingled with a good deal of admiration for the slight active figure arrayed in the warm rays of the late sun fell with so much amorous tenderness. Poor little Lilla! A penknife would have made as much impression as her now. I looked, and saw that she had taken the axe from Vinceuzo, and lifting it in her little hands, was endeavoring bravely to imitte hands, was endeavoring bravely to imitte he axe from Vinceuzo, and lifting it in her little hands, was endeavoring bravely to imitte his etrong and telling stroke; he meanwhile stood aside with a pair of amiling at the little hands, was endeavoring bravely to imitte his etrong and telling stroke; he mean-while strong and telling stroke; he mean-while stro must impression as her valorous blows produced on the inflexible, gnarled, knotty old stump she essayed to split in twain. Flushed and breathless with her efforts, she looked and breathless with her efforts, she looked prettier than ever, and at last, baffled, she resigned the axe to Vincenzo, laughing gaily as her incapacity for wood-cutting, and daintily shaking her apron free from the chips and dust, till a call from her mother caused her to run swiftly into the house, leaving Vincenzo working away as arduously as aver. ever. I went up to him; he saw me approachne, and paused in his labours with an air of slight embarrassment.
"You like this sort of work, amico?" I said

gently.
"An old habit, Eccellenza—nothing more. It reminds me of the days of my youth, when I worked for my mother. Ah! a pleasant place it was—the old home just above Fiesole." His eyes grew pensive and sad. "It is all gone now—finished. That was before I became a soldier. But one thinks of it sometimes."

"I understand. And no doubt you would be glad to return to the life of your boyhood?" He looked a l ttle startled.

"Not to leave you, Eccellenza!" I smiled rather sadly. "Not to leave mc. Not if you wedded Lilla Monti?"

His olive cheek flushed, but he shook his

head.
"Impossible! She would not listen to me. She is a child."

"She will soon be a woman, believe me! A

ittle more of your company will make her so.
But there is plenty of time. She is beautiful,
as you said; and something better than that,
she is innocent—think of that, Vincenzo! Do you know how rare a thing innocence is-in a woman? Respect it as you respect God; let her young life be sacred to you." He glanced upwards reverently.
"Eccellenza, I would as soon tear the Madon.

"Eccelled 28, I would as soon tear the Madon-ne from her altars as vex or frighten Lilla!" I smiled and said no more but turned into the house. From that moment I resolved to let this little love-idyll have a fair chance of success. Therefore I remained at Avellino much longer than I had at first intended much longer than I had at first intended—not for my own sake, but for Vincenzo's. He served me faithfully; he should have his reward. I took a pleasure in noticing that my efforts to promote his cause were not altogether wasted. I spoke with Lilia often on indifferent matters that interested her, and watched her constantly when she was all unaware of my observant gaze. With me si e was as frank and fearless as a tame robin; but after some days I found that she robin; but after some days I found that she grew thy of mentioning the name of Vincenzo, that she blushed when he approached her, that she was timid of asking him to do anything for her; and from all these little signs I knew her mind, as one knows by the 10°y streaks in the

sky that the sunrise is near.
One afternoon I called the Signora Monti to my room. She came, surprised, and a little anxious. Was anything wrong with the service? I reassured her house-wifely scruples, and came to the pant at once.

"I would speak to you of your child, the little Lilla," I said kindly. "Have you ever

lips quivered.
"Truly I have," she replied with a wistful sadness; "but I have prayed, perhaps foolishsadness; "but I have prayed, perhaps foolishly, that she would not leave me yet. I love her so well; she is slways a baba to me so small and sweet! I put the thought of her marriage

from me as a sorrowful thing."
"I understand your feeling," I said. "Still, suppose your daughterwedded a man who would be to you as a son, and who would not part her from you?—for instance, let us say Vincetzo?" Signora Monti smiled through her tears.

"Vincenzo! Re is a good lad, a very good lad, and I love him; but he does not think of Lila; he is devoted to the Eccellenza. "I am aware of this devotion," I answered.
"Still I believe you will find out soon that he loves your Lills. At present he saws nothing— he fears to offend you and alarm her; but his eyes speak—so do hers. You are a good woman,

a good mother; wa'ch them both, you will soon tell whether love is b tween them or no. And see," here I handed her a sealed envelope, "in this you will find notes to the amount of four thousand frames." She uttered a little cry of amazement. "It is Lilla's do sty whoever she marries, though I this kahe will marry Vincezo. Nay .- no thanks, money is of no value to me; and this is the one pleat ure I have had for many weary months. Think well of Vincenzo,—he is an excellent fellow.
And all I ask of you is, that you keep this
little dowry a secret till the day of your fair
child's espousals." Before I could prevent her the enthusiastic

woman had seized my hand and kissed it. Then she lifted her head with the proud, free-born dignity of a Roman matron; her broad bosom heaved, and her strong voice quivered with

suppressed em ition.
"I thank you, signer, she said simply, "for Lilla's sake! Not that my little one needs more than her mother's hands have toiled for, thanks be to the blessed saints who have had us both in their keeping! But this is a specal blessing of God sent through my hands, and I should be unworthy of al prosperity were I not grateful. Eccellenza, pardon me, but my eyes are quick to see that you have suffered sorrow. Good actions lighten grief. We will pray for your happiness, Lilla and I; till the last bleath leaves our lips. Believe it—the name of our benefactor shall be lifted to the saints night and morning, and who knows but good may

I smi'ed faintly.
"Good will come of it, my excellent signors, that I am all unworthy of your prayers. Rather pray," and I sighed heavily, "for the dead, that they may be toosed from their sins."
The good woman looked at me with a sort of kindly pity mingled with awe, then murmuring once more her thanks and blessings, she left the

room. A few minutes afterwards Vincenso entered. I addressed him cheerfully.

"Absence is the heat test of love, Vincenzo; prepare all for our departure! We shall leave Avelling the day after to morrow."

And so we did. Julia horded slightly down-

And so we did. Lilla looked slightly downcast, but Vincenzo reemed satisfied, and I augured from their faces, and from the mysterious smile of Signora Menti, that all was going well. I left the beautiful mountain town with regret, knowing I should see it no more. I touched Lilla's fair check lightly at | parting, and took what I knew was watched him and the rair girl beside unit to a few moments, myself unperceived.

If this little budding romance were left alone, done some little good gave mystired heart a twould ripen into a flower, and Vincenzo sense of satisfaction and represent feeling I had not experienced since I died and rose again not experienced since I died and rose again.

from the dead, it is a note of tembra of its

The Canadian pepers are calling Mr.