

Drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved.—S. of Sol. v. 1.

“Non Buono.”

(NOT GOOD)

“**I**STANT fields are green.” So runs the proverb; and how often has each one of us proved its truth. Such at all events was the experience of two Irish tourists on a scorching day, as they rambled along a dusty road, through a lovely Italian valley. They had walked a considerable distance, and had become unpleasantly hot and thirsty, when to their intense delight they heard the welcome sound of running water, apparently not far off. It did not take long to cross the little field which separated them from the cool stream which seemed sent specially for their refreshment, and soon they found themselves stooping down to take a delicious draught.

Suddenly they were startled by a thin, sweet, childish voice calling out in tones of evident alarm, “Nonbuono! Non buono!” (“not good! not good!”) and turning round, they saw a little peasant girl running in their direction, gesticulating wildly, as if to dissuade them from their purpose. On questioning the little

one, they discovered, to their dismay, that the waters of the pretty stream were strongly poisonous, and to drink of it would certainly be most dangerous.

What a disappointment! To have heard the soothing murmur of the wished-for brook; to have seen the water at their very feet, bright and sparkling; and yet to have been compelled to turn away in disgust from its tempting presence! yes, it was disheartening in the extreme. And yet how thankful they were to the little peasant girl for so kindly warning them of their danger without which warning they certainly would have suffered.

But after all, is not this a picture of what the world offers us to satisfy our soul's thirst? We all know what it is to thirst and long for something that can satisfy. We hear the sound of the world's gay laughter; we gaze upon its sparkling allurements; and we eagerly grasp at its tempting offers of satisfaction. But listen! do we not hear a still small voice calling out, “Non buono! Non buono! Stop, drink not of these deceitful waters, they will not satisfy—they will surely hurt your soul!” Yes, gentle reader, they are poisonous—every one. Turn aside from them, as the

tourists did from the hurtful stream, and inquire where pure and health-giving water may be found.

The little child knew of a spring, and hastening to it, soon returned with a vessel full of delicious water, for which our friends were deeply thankful. Only a little child! and yet how gladly was the precious gift accepted from her tiny hands.

Oh! why do thirsty sinners reject the life-giving water offered to them by the pierced outstretched hand of Him who said: “If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink.” (John vii.) “Who-soever will, let

him take the water of life freely.”

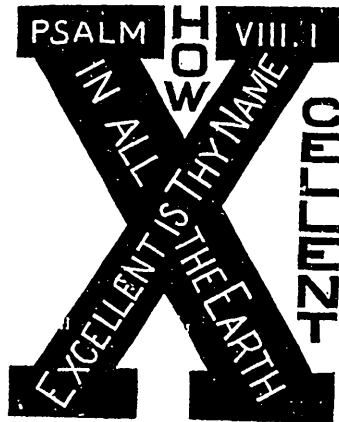
I heard the voice of Jesus say
Behold I freely give
The living water, thirsty one
Stoop down and drink and live.
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream:
My thirst was quenched; my soul revived;
And now I live in Him.

—Grace and Truth.

THE SOURCE OF ALL.—Behind the snowy loaf is the mill-wheel, behind the mill is the wheat-field, on the wheat-field falls the sun-light, above the sun is God.—F. Russell Lowell.

THE GOSPEL ALPHABET. No. 24.

He is **Excellent** in power. Job xxxviii. 27.
How **Excellent** is Thy lovingkindness! Psalm xxxvi. 7.
The righteous is more **Excellent** than his neighbour. Prov. xii. 26.



How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.
It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest.

The Lord hath done **Excellent** things. Isaiah xii. 5.
He (Jesus) hath obtained a more **Excellent** name. Hebrews i. 4.
His name alone is **Excellent**. Psalm cxlviii. 13.