

Miscellany.

THE SCULPTOR OF MODENA.

CONTINUED.

"Look ye, signor sculptor," exclaimed the count, "appears to me that you kept Marianna Torello long while in your studio to-day. By San Marco I will not do. I shall accompany her the next day myself."

"Very well," returned Zanello, and he would have passed on, for he saw that the young man was led with wine. But the count was not yet done. "I was at the ducal palace when the lady died, not an hour since, and she had surely been ears. Now what caused them?" he asked in an angry tone.

"I know not the object of your question," replied Zanello; "nor do I choose to make a street of one like Marianna Torello. Let me pass."

"Not yet, for, by my soul, you shall answer me."

"I shall answer you no questions here upon that subject, sir count. If you respect the lady, you will not make her name a by-word for your companions."

"Now, by the Parent of us all," cried Pazzi, drawing his sword and changing color, "you shall answer for this."

"For what?" asked Zanello, apparently unmoved.

"Your insolence, vile dog!"

The sculptor was keen enough to see that the count was despatched. He was aware of the young nobleman's fiery temper, and now that the heat of the wine cup was added to it, there could be little hope of pacification.

"Sir count, I beg of you that you will respect yourself enough to avoid a street brawl. I would do quietly on my way."

"Out upon thee, dog. Draw, or I'll split the as would a goose."

"Beware, or you may rush too far. Put up your sword."

"Oh, what a coward! Take that for your insolence."

As the count spoke, he struck the sculptor a blow across the cheek with the flat of his blade, and at that the other noblemen set up a loud, derisive laugh. Zanello drew his rapier and stood upon his guard, but he did not offer to strike.

"At him," cried one of the party, at the same time slapping the count upon the shoulder to incite him.

"Ay," added another, he's drawn. Point the dog."

"One moment gentlemen," said Zanello, with a strange calmness in his tone. "This broil is none of my seeking, and even now I would go on my way in peace. Let me pass gentlemen."

"Not until you are punished," hissed the count.

Pazzi made a lunge at the sculptor as he spoke. But it was safely parried, and from that instant Zanello appeared a different man. A livid spot came upon either cheek, his eyes burned with a steady, deep light, and his muscles were set like iron.

"Beware, sir count," he uttered, as he parried the fourth stroke. "I cannot stand upon the defensive much longer."

But Pazzi heeded not the warning. He was too much blinded with passion to see that under the present circumstances the sculptor was his superior in every respect, and he continued to strike out with an utter recklessness, seeming bent only on the desire of taking the life of his antagonist.

"Signors," said Zanello, turning to the count's companions, but at the same time guarding against the blows that were furiously aimed at him, "will you not remove your friend and put a stop to this disgraceful scene, for see the people are even now collecting?"

But the young men were too much excited to do any such thing, and they only clapped their hands and urged Pazzi on.

Zanello had borne all that he could. At length he received a prick upon the shoulder, and his forbearance was gone. He advanced a step, threw off a blow that was aimed at his neck, and on the next instant his rapier had passed through the count's body. He withdrew his weapon, and after a few wild thrusts, Julian Pazzi sank upon the pavement. His friends were sobered in an instant, and they gathered about the fallen man and lifted him up, but he was dead!

"You had better flee while there is opportunity, signor."

Zanello turned and saw an old man standing by his side.

"God knows that I could not help it," he uttered, and thrust his rapier back into its sheath.

"That is plain enough to me," said the old man "for I saw it all. But you know the laws of Modena. Death is the inevitable punishment for such a crime as this. You have slain a Modenese nobleman, and for a plebian that is death under any circumstances. Flee while there is yet time."

Zanello did hurry away from the spot, but he went towards his own studio. When he reached his room, he began to walk nervously to and fro. His mind was the seat of strange emotions; but at length he stopped before the statue, and having thrown off the screen, he became lost in contemplating the dreamy ideal that had moved him an hour ago.

On the morning following the death of the Count Pazzi, Marianna Torello had prepared to go to the sculptor's studio, but before she set off, she received a summons to attend the duke. Antonio Guido Duke of Modena, was a stern, iron-willed man and about forty years of age. He ruled in the Duchy with the most rigid adherence to the laws, and it had any kind impulses, they never manifested themselves, in connection with his dispensing of justice.

"Did you send for me?" asked Marianna, as she approached the duke.

"Yes, my sweet child. You need not go to the sculptor's to-day."

"Shall I go to-morrow?"

"No; you need go there no more."

"No more!" faintly echoed the maiden, changing color.

"No, Marianna. I have bad news for you. Shall I break it to you now?"

"Yes," tremblingly murmured the fair girl.

"You may as well hear it now, as at any time. Your lover is dead."

"Dead?" repeated Marianna, with a quick cry. "Zanello dead?"

"Zanello!" uttered the duke, starting as though he had been stung. "It is the Count Pazzi who is dead."

A quick look of relief shot across the girl's features, but it was not quick enough to escape the eye of the duke. He had long been used to read people's thoughts from their faces, and it was no difficult task for him now to read the whole of his ward's secret. Marianna knew that she had betrayed herself, for she hung down her head and trembled violently.

"Marianna," at length resumed the duke, "you have exposed to me a thing I could not otherwise have believed. But it has come in season to save you. I will not blame you, for perhaps I myself am to blame. I ought not to have sent you there. But you will go there no more. Zanello is in prison. It is he who killed the count."

Marianna gazed for a moment up into the face of her guardian, and then she sunk back. She would have fallen to the floor, but the duke sprang forward and caught her. She was insensible. She had passed from the pain that had seized her heart for the shock had bereft her of all power. An attendant was summoned, and the form of the poor girl was borne away.

An hour later and the sculptor stood before the ducal throne. He was in chains, and strongly guarded. The duke looked upon him sternly, but the artist did not shrink, nor even tremble.

"Zanello," said the duke, "you are charged with having slain the Count Julian Pazzi."

"He did fall at my hands, my lord; but I only defended myself," calmly replied the sculptor.

"He taunted me most bitterly, and drew upon me without any provocation."

"And yet you killed him?"

"Yes, my lord."

"You know your fate, then?"

"I know the laws, my lord."

"And they are rigid?"

"Yes."

"Then I have to pronounce sentence. You must assuredly die."

"It is hard, my lord duke. Had I not resisted, the count would have killed me. I resisted, and now the law kills me."

"You should have escaped."

"But I am only a man."

The duke was struck by this last answer—not only by the words, but by the strange tone in which they were spoken. But he could not help the artist, for there were two laws, either of which would condemn him. One was, that in all street conflicts resulting in death, the survivor should suffer; and the other, that any plebian who should cause the death of a patrician should pay the penalty with his life. From this law the duke often made exceptions, but never from the latter; for even had he been inclined so to do, he would not have dared to meet the indignation of the nobility, which would have been sure to follow it.

"Your doom is fixed signor. You will go back

to your prison, and from thence to the scaffold. I hope God may have mercy on your soul."

The guard would have led the prisoner away, but he hesitated.

"My lord duke," he said, "I know there is no use in asking for my life, but yet I have a boon to beg. I would not die until I have finished the task I have already so nearly completed."

"You allude to the statue of the Virgin," said the duke, while a cloud came over his face.

"Yes."

"And do you think you will have the Signora Marianna for a model?"

Zanello changed color, for he knew by the duke's look and tone that he had discovered the secret of his heart, but he quickly threw off the perturbation.

"Nay, most noble signor, I cannot copy those features if I would. I have the ideal in my own mind, and I must give it life before I die. It shall be yours, and all it shall cost you will be the respite I need. Grant me this boon. In a week I can do it."

"But you cannot go back to your studio."

"I can have a room in the prison, and my implements may be carried thither."

The duke considered a few moments, and in the end he resolved to grant the sculptor's request. He wanted the statue, for he had set his heart upon it.

"Well," he at length said, "I will give you 8 days. Will that be sufficient?"

"Yes my lord."

"Then do your work; and at the expiration of that time you die. I can do nothing more for you."

Antonio waved his hand as he spoke, and the sculptor was led from the hall. After he had gone the duke sought the apartment of his ward, but he found her weeping so bitterly that he could not find it in his heart to trouble her. He could only regret that he had ever thought of sending her to the sculptor's studio.

Within a close apartment, in the strong prison of Modena, the sculptor was at work. The window from which his light came was sufficiently large, but it was securely protected with stout iron bars. There was no need however, of all this precaution, for nothing could have tempted Zanello from his work. He had finished the drapery and the last touches had been put to the hands and breast. The face alone was now the theme of the artist's study. No one to have seen him, would have dreamed that he was under the sentence of death. His every thought was upon the creation that was growing beneath his hands and his dark eyes burned with the fire of genius alone. They betrayed no fear or cowering dullness.

At times he would hesitate in his work, and commence pacing the narrow room. Then he would sink down upon his stool, and bury his brow in his hands but 'twas not his death doom that busied him—'twas the idol he sought—the features he would breathe upon his marble; and when he had called them to mind he would spring to his work again.

Thus had he worked for several days. The face of the marble virgin had begun to assume the garb of life, and the artist was more enthusiastic than ever. It was late in the afternoon, and Zanello was improving the last rays of light that were to be his for that day, when suddenly he was aroused by the turning of a key in the lock of his door. He did not like this, for he had been promised that no one should interrupt him except at stated times. The door was slowly opened, and the form of a monk appeared. The visitor carefully re-closed the door.

(Conclusion in our next.)

ANECDOTES OF RAVENS.—The following interesting account of a raven's preference for a canine companion is given in the Saturday Magazine:—The latter was a large otter dog, and was kept chained up in a stable-yard where the raven began by occasionally snatching a morsel from the dog's feeding pan, before he had finished his meal. As this was not resented, the raven always attended at meal times, and occasionally took away a scrap in his beak, beyond the reach of the dog's chain, and then returned with it, play about, and hang it on the dog's nose, and when the poor beast was in the act of snapping it up, dart off with it. At other times, he hid the morsel under a stone, beyond the length of his chain, and then, with a cunning look, mounted upon the dog's head. He, however, always ended by giving the dog the largest portion, or the whole of the scrap thus played with. The life of this raven was saved by the dog, who seeing the poor bird nearly drowned in a tub of water, dragged his heavy kennel till he could put his head over the tub, when he took the raven up in his mouth, and laid him gently upon the ground, where he soon recovered.

One day, a person, travelling through the forest to Winchester, was much surprised at hearing the following exclamation, "Fair play, gentlemen! fair play! For God's sake, gentlemen, fair play!" The traveller looking round to discover from whence the voice came, to his astonishment, beheld no human being near. But hearing the cry of "Fair play" repeated, he thought it must proceed from some creature in distress. He immediately rushed into that part of the forest whence the cries came, when, to his astonishment, he beheld two ravens combating a third with great fury, while the sufferer, which proved to be a tame one belonging to a gentleman in the neighborhood, kept loudly vociferating "Fair play," which so interested the traveller, that he instantly rescued the oppressed bird.

WHAT WILL YOU TAKE?—In one of the neighboring villages in the Hoosier State, as we gather from a note to the Knickerbocker; not many miles from the banks of the Ohio, lives Judge B——, an eccentric character, who is ever ready to accommodate himself or others, as occasion may offer. Being invited by a party of friends, whom he chanced to meet while passing a grocery, (one of those establishments peculiar to small towns, where "tar, treacle, and testaments," and other creature comforts are "sold by the small," to step in and take a "little something" for his stomach's sake, he readily consented; and although the variety of liquors was by no means as extensive as may be found in the more fashionable resorts of your great metropolis, yet the freedom of choice was as readily granted; and the question was proposed—"Judge B——, what will you take?" The Judge, after carefully surveying the stock in trade, for a few minutes, replied:—"I believe I will take a mackerel," which, receiving, he politely wished his friends a pleasant time over their "red eye," and retired. He wasn't asked to "take" anything after that!

HORRORS OF THE SLAVE TRADE.—Commander Lynch, in the official report of his mission to Africa, just published by Congress, gives the following instance of the cruelties practiced by the slave traders:—

"Of the horrors of the slave trade, few have a distinct conception. A single instance, which occurred in this locality, will give an idea of the reckless barbarity which attends it. Prior to recent treaties, English cruisers could not capture vessels of other European nations along the coast, (and cannot now American,) unless there were actually slaves on board. In 1830 his Britannic Majesty's ship "Medina" gave chase to a suspicious sail hovering off the mouth of this river. On board the latter was a female slave, whose presence, as much as that of hundreds, would insure the capture and condemnation of the vessel. As the most effectual means of removing the poor wretch from sight—for even her dead body would bear damning testimony—she was lashed to the anchor, and with it cast overboard. The search was thus baffled, and the slaver allowed to pass unmolested.

THE WATER WORKS AT THE NEW CRYSTAL PALACE.—The water-works of Versailles have been hitherto the finest in the world. They are but rarely put in motion, the cost being, it is said, £500 each time. From an interesting article in *Fraser's Magazine*, it appears that the waterworks at Sydenham will be five times as expensive, and will play fifty times in the year. The water will be brought through an artesian well from a depth of 500 feet. While the spectator is gazing, the unseen flood will be driven upwards of 900 feet to the reservoirs. At a given signal the fountains will play, and the ground terrace, for two thousand feet, will let fall a living fringe of silver from dolphins' mouths into the long drawn basin at their feet. The central fountain will shoot up 230 feet, and its 1,000 jets are contrived to form a moving constant pyramid, like some Arctic glittering peak of ice. So extraordinary will be the circulating system of this magic garden, and such the force of the pressure, that 2,000 tons of water will be forced through its entire frame every minute.

MINISTERIAL WIT.—A witty clergyman had been lecturing one evening in a country village, on the subject of temperance, and as usual, after the lecture, the pledge was passed round for signatures.

"Pass it along that way," said the lecturer, pointing toward a gang of bloated and red-nosed loafers near the door. "Pass it along,—perhaps some of those gentlemen would like to join our cause."

"We don't bite at a bare hook," gruffly muttered one of the rummies.

"Well," replied the ready clergyman, "I believe there is a kind of fish called suckers that do not bite."

Jean Jacques Rousseau has written somewhere; "The empire of Russia will endeavor to subjugate Europe, but in the struggle will herself be conquered. Her Tartar subjects, or her neighbors, will become her masters."