

the Evil One. But I had an object to answer, and I entered into negotiations for getting the cheese out of the hat, and offered, what Mr. Trapbois calls a "con-si-de-ra-tion," to be allowed to examine both hat and umbrella nearer, to see if I could find any mark or initials, giving a clew to their former owner. For a long time my efforts were useless; the cheese in the hat was intended for the lord, and they were afraid of offending the umbrella by allowing me to take any liberty with it; but a good-temper, and a cheery way, gets on wonderfully with simple folk, and at length they listened to my wish, but refused my gift. I could not, however, find any thing to reward my search.

On returning to Vienna the mystery was cleared up. It appears, that an English traveler making a tour in those parts on foot, had been overtaken by a gaunt man in a strange costume. The uncouth figure addressed him in an unknown tongue; and all presence of mind, for a moment, deserted him. Without pausing to reflect if the greeting were friendly or hostile, he thought to conciliate his gigantic acquaintance (having no money about him) by offering the only things he could dispose of; so, taking off his hat, and resigning his umbrella with it into the hands stretched out in wonder to receive them, the English traveler took to his heels.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE BARDI.

A TRUE OLD TALE.

THE Via Dei Bardi is one of the most ancient streets of Florence. Long, dark, and narrow, it reaches from the extremity of the Ponte Rubaconte to the right of the Ponte Vecchio. Its old houses look decayed and squalid now; but in former days they were magnificent and orderly, full of all the state of those times, being the residences of many of the Florentine nobility. How many struggles of faction, how many scenes of civil war, have these old houses witnessed! for in the period of their splendor, Florence was torn by intestine feuds; from generation to generation, Guelfs and Ghibelines, Bianchi, and Neri, handed down their bitter quarrels, private and personal animosity mingling with public or party spirit, and ending in many a dark and violent deed. These combatants are all sleeping now: the patriot, the banished citizen, the timid, the cruel—all, all are gone, and have left us only tales to read, or lessons to learn if we can but use them. But we are not skilled to teach a lesson; we would rather tell a legend of those times, recalled to mind, especially at present, because it has been chosen as the subject of a fine picture recently finished by a Florentine artist, Benedetto Servolino.

In the Via dei Bardi stood, probably still stands, the house inhabited by the chief of the great and noble family from whom it takes its name—we write of the period of the fiercest struggles between the Guelfs and Ghibelines; and the Bardi were powerful partisans of the latter party. In that house dwelt a young girl of uncommon

beauty, and yet more uncommon character. An old writer thus describes her: "To look on her was enchantment; her eyes called you to love her; her smile was like heaven; if you heard her speak, you were conquered. Her whole person was a miracle of beauty, and her deportment had a certain maidenly pride, springing from a pure heart and conscious integrity."

From the troubled scenes she had witnessed, her mind had acquired composure and courage unusual with her sex, and it was of that high stamp that is prone to admire with enthusiasm all generous and self-devoting deeds. Such a being, however apt to inspire love, was not likely to be easily won; accordingly, the crowd of lovers who at first surrounded Dianora gradually dropped off, for they gained no favor. All were received with the same bright and beautiful smile, and a gay, charming grace, which flattered no man's vanity; so they carried their homage to other shrines where it might be more prized, though by an inferior idol. And what felt Dianora when her votaries left her? We are not told; but not long after, you might see, if you walked along the street of the Bardi toward evening, a beautiful woman sitting near a balcony: a frame of embroidery is before her; but her eyes are oftener turned to the street than to the lilies she is working. It is Dianora. But surely it is not idle curiosity that bends her noble brow so often this way, and beams in her bright, speaking eyes, and sweet, kind smile. On whom is it turned, and why does her cheek flush so quickly? A youth of graceful and manly appearance is passing her window; his name is Hyppolito: he has long cherished the image of Dianora as Dante did that of his Beatrice. In loving her, he loved more ardently every thing that is good and noble in the world; he shunned folly and idleness, and strove to make himself worthy of what he believed Dianora to be. At length, one of Cupid's emissaries—whether nurse or friend the chronicle does not tell—aided Hyppolito in meeting Dianora. One meeting succeeded another, till she gave him her heart, as such a true, young heart is given, with entire confidence, and a strength of feeling peculiar to herself. But what could they hope? Hyppolito's family were of the opposite party, and they knew it was vain to expect from them even a patient hearing; nor were the Bardi behind in proper feelings of hatred. What was to be done? There was but one Dianora—but one Hyppolito in the world; so have many wise young people thought of each other both before and since the days of the Ghibelines; but these two might be excused for thinking so, for many who saw them were of the same opinion. To part—what was the world to them if they were parted? Their station, their years, their tastes—so removed from noisy and frivolous pleasures—their virtuous characters, seemed to point out that they were born for each other. What divided them? One only point the adverse political feelings of their families. Shall they sacrifice themselves to these? No.

Thus reasoned Hyppolito; but we think the chronicles exaggerate the virtues of Dianora's character; for how many a girl unchronicled by fame has, before the still tribunal of her own sense of duty to God and her parents, sacrificed her dearest hopes rather than offend them; and this, with all her heroism, Dianora did not, but gave up all these dear early claims for her new love.

Delays were needless, for time could do nothing to smooth their path; so it was determined that Hyppolito should bring a ladder to Dianora's window, and, aided by their friend, they should find their way to a priest prepared to give them his blessing. The night appointed came—still and beautiful as heart could wish; the stars sparkling in the deep blue sky, bright as they may now be seen in that fair clime. Hyppolito has reached the house; he has fixed the ladder of ropes; there is no moon to betray him; in a minute, his light step will have reached the balcony. But there is a noise in the street, and lights approaching; the night-guard is passing; they have seen the ladder, for the street is narrow. Hyppolito is down, and tries to escape—in vain. They seize and drag him to prison. What was he doing there? What can he reply? That he meant to enter the house, to carry something from it, or commit some bad deed, can not be denied. He will not betray Dianora; it would only be to separate them forever, and leave her with a stained name. He yields to his fate; the proofs are irresistible, and, by the severe law of Florence at that period, Hyppolito must die. All Florence is in amazement. So estimable a youth, to all outward appearance, to be in reality addicted to the basest crimes! Who could have believed it? But he confesses; there is no room for doubt. Pardon is implored by his afflicted friends; but no pardon can be granted for so flagrant a crime.

Hyppolito had one consolation—his father never doubted him; if he had, one glance of his son's clear, though sad eye, and candid, open brow, would have reassured him. He saw there was a mystery, but he was sure it involved no guilt on Hyppolito's part. Hyppolito also believed that his good name would one day be cleared, and that his noble Dianora would in due time remove the stain that clouded it. He consented to die, rather than live separated from her. Yet poor Hyppolito was sorry to leave the world so young; and sadly, though calmly, he arranged his small possessions, for the benefit of those he loved, and of the poor, to whom he had always been a friend.

He slept quietly the night preceding the time fixed for his execution, and was early ready to take his place in the sad procession. Did no thought cross Hyppolito's clear mind, that he was throwing away, in weak passion, a life given to him by God for noble ends? We know not; but there he was—calm, firm, and serious. His only request was, that the procession might pass through the street of the Bardi, which some thought was a sign of penitence, an act of humiliation. The sad train moves on. An old

man sitting at a door rises, strains his eyes to catch a last glimpse of Hyppolito, and then covers them in anguish, and sinks down again. This is an old man he had saved from misery and death. Two youths, hand-in-hand, are gazing with sad faces, and tears run down their cheeks. They are orphans: he had clothed and fed them. Hyppolito sees them, and even in that moment remembers it is he who deprives them of a protector: but it is too late to think now; for he is approaching the scene of his fault and the place of his punishment, and other feelings swell in his heart. His brows are contracted; his eyes bent on the house of the Bardi, as if they would pierce the stones of its walls; and now they are cast down, as though he would raise them no more on earth. But he starts, for he hears a loud shriek, a rushing, and an opening of the crowd: they seem to be awed by something that approaches. It is a woman, whose violent gestures defy opposition; she looks like a maniac just escaped from her keepers; she has reached Hyppolito; his fettered arms move as if they would receive her, but in vain. She turns to the crowd, and some among them recognize the modest and beautiful daughter of Bardi. She calls out: "He is innocent of every crime but having loved me. To save me from shame, he has borne all this disgrace. And he is going to death; but you can not kill him now. I tell you he is guiltless; and if he dies, I die with him."

The people stand amazed. At last there is a shout: "It must be true! he is innocent!" The execution is stopped till the truth is ascertained, and Dianora's statement is fully confirmed. And who shall paint the return from death to life of poor Hyppolito? and to such a life! for blazoned as the story of her love had been, Dianora's parents, considering also her firm character, subjected even the spirit of party to the voice of affection and reason; and Hyppolito's family, softened by sorrow, gladly embraced their Ghibeline daughter. Whether in after-life Hyppolito and Dianora were distinguished by the qualities they had shown in youth, and whether the promise of affection was realized by time and intimate acquaintance, no chronicle remains to tell. This short glimpse of both is all that is snatched from oblivion—this alone stands out in bright relief, to show us they once were; the rest is lost in the darkness of time.

The moment chosen by the artist is when Dianora rushes from her house into the midst of the crowd, and reaches Hyppolito, surrounded by priests and soldiers. It is easy to see to what a varied expression of passion and action this point of the story gives rise.

A CURIOSITY IN NATURAL HISTORY.

THE crustacean class of animals, of which the lobster, crab, and shrimp are familiar examples, have this peculiarity of structure—that their soft bodies are inclosed within a coat-of-mail formed of carbonate and phosphate of lime. In fact, they carry their skeleton outside their