



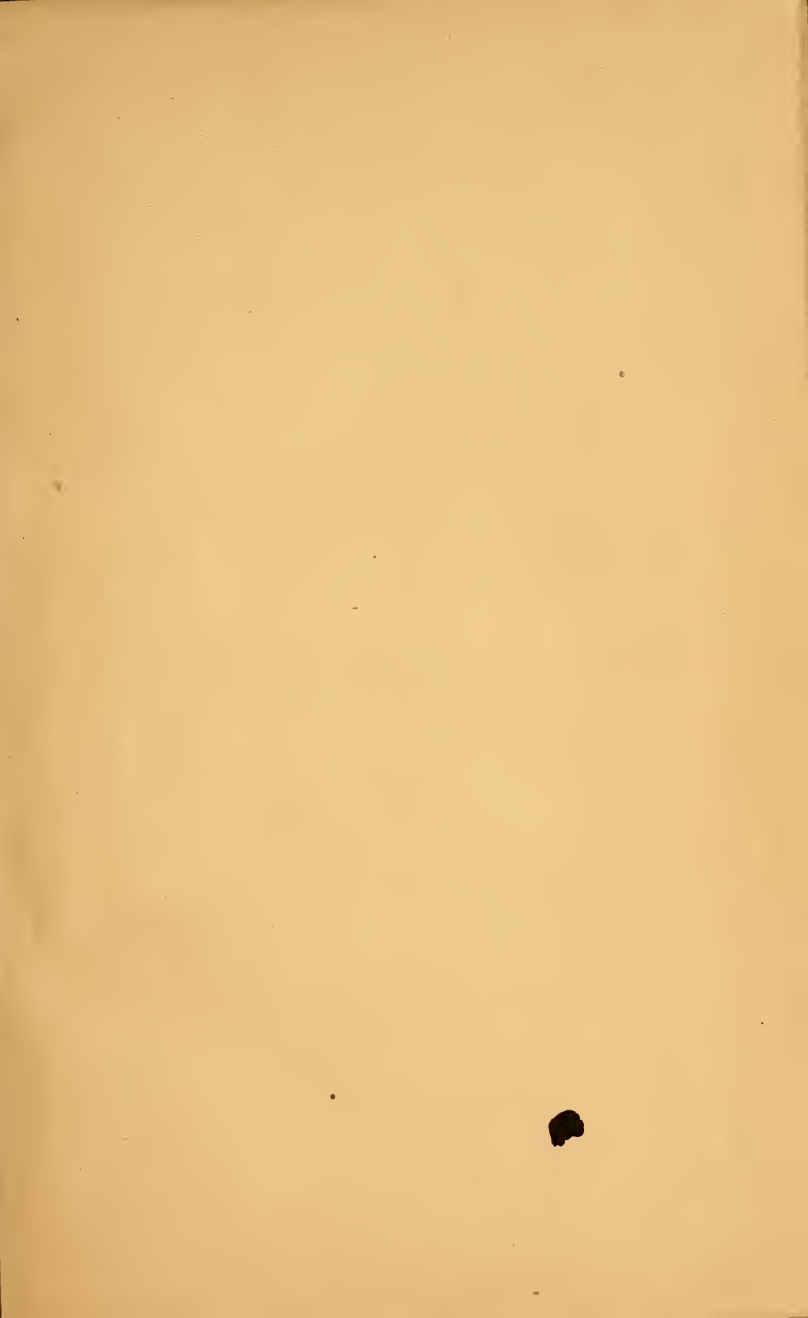


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PIPPA PASSES
A DRAMA

AMONG
THE GREAT MASTERS

By
Walter E. Rowlands

Among the Great Masters of Literature

Among the Great Masters of Music

Among the Great Masters of Painting

Among the Great Masters of Oratory

*12mo, handsome cover design, boxed separately or
in sets*

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Louis Meyere

“ Ah, the clear morning! I can see Saint Mark's ”

Photogravure. From drawing by Louis Meynelle.

Browning, Robert

Pippa passes

Boston

1807

PR 4218

A1

1902

I DEDICATE
MY BEST INTENTIONS, IN THIS POEM,
ADMIRINGLY TO
THE AUTHOR OF "ION,"
AFFECTIONATELY TO
Mr. Sergeant Calhoun

R. B.

London, 1841



INTRODUCTION

“Pippa Passes” was published in 1841, occupying the initial number of “Bells and Pomegranates,” and was first reprinted in the “Poems” of 1849. Mr. Gosse says that the general public was first won to Browning by this drama. Certainly the play still remains one of the most popular of the poet’s works.

The idea of “Pippa Passes” came to Browning one day in his youth while he was wandering through Dulwich Wood. He heard a gipsy-girl singing, and imagined some one “walking thus alone through life; one apparently too obscure to leave a trace of his or her passage, yet exercising a lasting though unconscious influence at every step.” The image took the shape of Felippa, or Pippa, the little silk-winding girl of Asolo. No-

where in literature, probably, can be found a more effective illustration of the Biblical text, "A little child shall lead them."

The drama is a moral tonic. Even if a reader could be found with the obtuseness or hardihood to deny its brilliant workmanship, he would be forced to admit its wholesome atmosphere and profound ethical motive. The latter is summed up in Pippa's songs :

"All service ranks the same with God,"

and

"God's in His heaven, —
All's right with the world!"

The play will not yield half its beauties at first reading. The person whose favorite poets are Longfellow and Mrs. Hemans may even think it very difficult in places; yet it is not at all obscure. It simply demands, like all of Browning's writings, exceedingly close attention. "Pippa Passes" is a book to read, re-read, study, and love.

Browning himself, it will be remembered, disclaimed all intention of furnishing intellectual amusement for an idle man. He thinks so swiftly that it is never easy to follow him without concentration of mind; his thoughts reach so high into the empyrean that they are sometimes cloud-capped.

Yet a little hard climbing is tremendously rewarding. What a view from the summit! All human nature lies before us in panorama, and of no one of Browning's works is this truer than of "Pippa Passes." "Its mental basis," says Sharp, "what Rossetti called 'fundamental brain-work,' is as luminous, depth within depth, as the morning air. By its side the more obviously profound poems, 'Bishop Blougram' and the rest, are mere skilled dialectics." The clarity as well as profundity of the drama is also emphasized by Mr. Stedman, who calls it "the most simple and varied of Browning's plays — that which shows every side of his genius, has

most lightness and strength, and, all in all, may be termed a representative poem." Mr. William Vaughan Moody has recently characterized it still more unequivocally as "that perfect fruit of Browning's youthful imagination."

"Pippa Passes" is less properly a drama than, to quote Mr. William Sharp, "a lyrical masque with interspersed dramatic episodes and subsidiary interludes in prose." It is hardly necessary to read a dozen lines in order to be convinced that the play is essentially unactable. There is no verisimilitude in the speech of the little silk-winding girl; she uses language quite beyond the range, or even the conception, of a peasant. The whole drama is surcharged with the imaginative language of pure poetry. Yet the personages — while they do not always talk in character — are not the poet himself masquerading. They are strongly conceived, individual, and consistent. It would seem,

therefore, as though their manner of speech were due to some original theory of art entertained by the author, rather than to carelessness or ignorance. Browning deliberately sets out, it would appear, to disregard the mere verity of facts in the interest of a higher truth. If he abandons the actual dialect of a mill-girl, he still expresses only such emotions as she might easily have had. It is not photography; it is the real reaching out into the ideal; the prose of fact married to the poetry of imagination. Browning sets free the pent-up emotions in the dumb little heart, and demonstrates that he knows the child better even than she knows herself.

But there are other reasons besides this departure from commonplace verisimilitude, which make this a reading drama rather than a stage drama. The action lacks the unity of a strongly executed plot. The leading groups of characters are scarcely acquainted

with the fact of each other's existence. There is no sub-plot or subtle interweaving of motives, and the main episodes themselves touch without cohering. The principal *Dramatis Personæ* are connected in the reader's mind only because the life of each is influenced by the singing of Pippa. Never was a play which escaped actual incoherence so episodic and loosely strung.

A still further objection to "Pippa Passes" as a stage play lies in the fact that of the four chief episodes three are fragmentary. What do we know respecting the fate of Luigi? What of the future of Jules and Phene? We do not learn even when or in what manner the Bishop will see Pippa restored to her rights. "Pippa Passes" is assuredly a production of great brilliancy and of extraordinary charm, but a successful *play* in any conventional sense it can hardly be called. It is a lyrical drama or a dramatic poem.

“Pippa Passes” is a group of four scenes, together with a prologue, three interludes, and an epilogue. The first two interludes and the fourth scene are in prose. Half a dozen beautiful songs are interspersed throughout the play.

The characterization is varied in the extreme. The persons who figure in the action include street-girls, students, police officers, a Catholic bishop, a sculptor, a wealthy landowner, and a young Italian conspirator. The real heroine, of course, is —

“Pippa, who winds silk,
The whole year round, to earn just bread and milk.”

We are introduced to her in her garret chamber on the dawn of New Year’s Day, her one holiday in the year. She springs out of bed at sunrise with the resolution to enjoy to the full the day of unaccustomed leisure. She is tempted to envy a little the fortunate ones of Asolo whose holiday is continuous

throughout the year: "Great haughty Ottima," who has the passionate homage of her lover, Sebald; Jules, the artist, who is about to wed Phene, a young girl of wonderful beauty; Luigi and his mother, "unmatched . . . for true content," and Monsignor, the Bishop, "that holy and beloved priest," who is expected from Rome to visit his brother's home at Asolo. Pippa crowds down her temptation to envious feeling, however, and reflecting that God's love is best after all, goes forth from her chamber with a light-hearted song to enjoy her New Year's holiday. Now it happens that "Asolo's four happiest ones" are in grave moral peril, and as they reach respectively the very crisis of their spiritual destiny, Pippa passes, all unconsciously, with a song on her lips which is perfectly adapted to awaken the conscience of the tempted soul and strengthen its wavering choice of right. All of these folk whom the silk-winding girl has thought so far

above her are saved from the danger which threatens them, and their lives are vitally changed through her humble influence. When evening comes Pippa climbs to her bare room with a final happy song and falls asleep without the least suspicion that her life or words have been of interest or service to any one.

The other characters of the play offer strong contrasts: Ottima, "magnificent in sin," is a woman of courageous, independent personality, wholly given over to a guilty passion. Her aged and infirm husband, Luca, has been killed by her lover, Sebald, and herself, and Sebald is just suffering from a new-born remorse. Ottima has all but succeeded in winning him back by her blandishments when Pippa passes, singing "God's in his heaven," and the man's disillusionment is complete. Their conversation on the hillside, with its tragic ending, is justly pronounced by the editors of the Camberwell Browning, "one of the most tremendous

scenes in all literature." Especially marvellous is the passage recalling the thunderstorm in the forest, — "Buried in woods we lay, you recollect." There is nothing finer in the whole range of modern poetry.

Jules, the artist, is the victim of a savage practical joke, played upon him by his rival artists, who envy and hate him. They have decoyed him into a love affair with a beautiful paid model, whom they have thrown in his way, and whom he thinks to be possessed of ideal purity. He has no sooner married her than he discovers the imposture, and is about to cast her off when Pippa passes singing the lovely song of Queen Katharine's page. He instantly changes his purpose, and resolves to awaken the latent soul of the ignorant girl, who has been a party to the deception, and finally decides to seek a new future with his bride in her land of Greece.

Luigi is a young Italian patriot, who conceives it to be his mission to kill the Emperor

of Austria. He has an evening meeting with his mother in a turret on the hillside near Asolo. His mother endeavors to dissuade him from his purpose, and he is about to yield on being reminded of the proposed visit of his betrothed in June ; but Pippa passes at this moment, and her song strengthens his wavering courage. He leaves the tower, and thus escapes the police who have been watching him.

Monsignor the Bishop has an interview with his superintendent in the palace by the Duomo regarding the estate of the Bishop's late brother, which the ecclesiastic covets for himself. Now it happens that Pippa, though all unknown to herself, is the daughter of the deceased brother, and thus the real heiress of the estate. Maffeo tempts the Bishop to remove the girl from his path, and explains the trap already set for her ruin, soliciting Monsignor's acquiescence in the plot. The Bishop hesitates, torn between duty and

covetousness, when Pippa passes, and her song stabs his conscience. He has his evil counsellor arrested and punished. By what has truly been called "a beautiful piece of dramatic justice," Pippa is shown to have saved herself through having saved the Bishop.

Boston, July 19, 1902.

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PERSONS

PIPPA.

OTTIMA.

SEBALD.

Foreign Students.

GOTTLIEB.

SCHRAMM.

JULES.

PHENE.

Austrian Police.

BLUPHOCKS.

LUIGI and his MOTHER.

Poor Girls.

MONSIGNOR and his Attendants.

PIPPA PASSES

A DRAMA



NEW-YEAR'S DAY AT ASOLO IN THE TREVISAN. —

*A large, mean, airy chamber. A girl, PIPPA,
from the silk-mills, springing out of bed.*

DAY!

Faster and more fast,
O'er night's brim, day boils at last ;
Boils, pure gold, o'er the cloud-cup's brim
Where spurting and suppressed it lay : 5
For not a froth-flake touched the rim
Of yonder gap in the solid gray
Of the eastern cloud, an hour away ;
But forth one wavelet, then another, curled,
Till the whole sunrise, not to be suppressed,

Rose, reddened, and its seething breast 11
 Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then over-
 flowed the world.

Oh, Day, if I squander a wavelet of thee,
 A mite of my twelve hours' treasure,
 The least of thy gazes or glances 15
 (Be they grants thou art bound to, or gifts
 above measure),

One of thy choices, or one of thy chances
 (Be they tasks God imposed thee, or freaks
 at thy pleasure) —

My Day, if I squander such labor or leisure,
 Then shame fall on Asolo, mischief on me!

Thy long blue solemn hours serenely flow-
 ing, 21

Whence earth, we feel, gets steady help and
 good —

Thy fitful sunshine-minutes, coming, going,
 In which earth turns from work in gamesome
 mood —

All shall be mine ! But thou must treat me
not 25

As the prosperous are treated, those who
live

At hand here, and enjoy the higher lot,
In readiness to take what thou wilt give,
And free to let alone what thou refusest ;

For, Day, my holiday, if thou ill-usest 30

Me, who am only Pippa — old-year's sorrow,
Cast off last night, will come again to-morrow :
Whereas, if thou prove gentle, I shall borrow
Sufficient strength of thee for new-year's
sorrow.

All other men and women that this earth 35

Belongs to, who all days alike possess,
Make general plenty cure particular dearth,
Get more joy one way, if another less :

Thou art my single day God lends to leaven
What were all earth else with a feel of
heaven ; 40

Sole light that helps me through the year,
thy sun's !

Try, now! Take Asolo's Four Happiest
Ones —

And let thy morning rain on that superb
Great haughty Ottima, can rain disturb
Her Sebald's homage? All the while thy
rain 45

Beats fiercest on her shrub-house window-
pane,

He will but press the closer, breathe more
warm

Against her cheek; how should she mind the
storm?

And, morning past, if midday shed a gloom
O'er Jules and Phene, what care bride and
groom 50

Save for their dear selves? 'Tis their mar-
riage-day;

And while they leave church, and go home
their way

Hand clasping hand, within each breast would
be

Sunbeams and pleasant weather spite of thee.

Then, for another trial, obscure thy eve 55
With mist, will Luigi and his mother grieve —
The lady and her child, unmatched, forsooth,
She in her age, as Luigi in his youth,
For true content? The cheerful town,
warm, close,
And safe, the sooner that thou art morose,
Receives them! And yet once again, out-
break 61
In storm at night on Monsignor they
make
Such stir about — whom they expect from
Rome
To visit Asolo, his brothers' home,
And say here masses proper to release 65
A soul from pain — what storm dares hurt
his peace?
Calm would he pray, with his own thoughts
to ward
Thy thunder off, nor want the angels' guard.
But Pippa — just one such mischance would
spoil

Her day that lightens the next twelvemonth's
toil 70

At wearisome silk-winding, coil on coil !

And here I let time slip for nought !

Aha ! you foolhardy sunbeam, caught

With a single splash from my ewer !

You that would mock the best pursuer, 75

Was my basin overdeep ?

One splash of water ruins you asleep,

And up, up, fleet your brilliant bits

Wheeling and counterwheeling,

Reeling, broken beyond healing — 80

Now grow together on the ceiling !

That will task your wits.

Whoever it was quenched fire first, hoped to
see

Morsel after morsel flee

As merrily, as giddily — 85

Meantime, what lights my sunbeam on ?

Where settles by degrees the radiant cripple ?

Oh, is it surely blown, my martagon ?

New-blown and ruddy as Saint Agnes' nipple,



*“Worship whom else? For am I not, this day,
Whate'er I please?”*

Photogravure. From drawing by Louis Meynelle.



Louis Meynell



Plump as the flesh-bunch on some Turk
bird's poll! 90

Be sure if corals, branching 'neath the ripple
Of ocean, bud there, fairies watch unroll
Such turban-flowers; I say, such lamps
disperse

Thick red flame through that dusk green
universe!

I am queen of thee, floweret; 95

And each fleshy blossom

Preserve I not — safer

Than leaves that embower it,

Or shells that embosom —

From weevil and chafer? 100

Laugh through my pane, then; solicit the bee;

Gibe him, be sure; and, in midst of thy glee,

Love thy queen, worship me!

Worship whom else? For am I not, this
day,

Whate'er I please? What shall I please
to-day? 105

My morning, noon, eve, night — how spend
my day?

To-morrow I must be Pippa, who winds
silk,

The whole year round, to earn just bread
and milk :

But, this one day, I have leave to go,

And play out my fancy's fullest games ; 110

I may fancy all day — and it shall be so —

That I taste of the pleasures, am called by
the names

Of the Happiest Four in our Asolo !

See! Up the hillside yonder, through the
morning,

Some one shall love me, as the world calls
love : 115

I am no less than Ottima, take warning!

The gardens, and the great stone house
above,

And other house for shrubs, all glass in
front,

Are mine; where Sebald steals, as he is
wont,

To court me, while old Luca yet reposes;
And therefore, till the shrub-house door
uncloses, 121

I — what now? — give abundant cause for
prate

About me — Ottima, I mean — of late,
Too bold, too confident she'll still face down
The spitefullest of talkers in our town —
How we talk in the little town below! 126

But love, love, love — there's better love,
I know!

This foolish love was only Day's first offer;
I choose my next love to defy the scoffer:
For do not our Bride and Bridegroom sally
Out of Possagno church at noon? 131

Their house looks over Orcana valley —
Why should I not be the bride as soon
As Ottima? For I saw, beside,
Arrive last night that little bride — 135

Saw, if you call it seeing her, one flash
Of the pale, snow-pure cheek and bright black
tresses,

Blacker than all except the black eyelash ;
I wonder she contrives those lids no dresses !

So strict was she, the veil 140

Should cover close her pale

Pure cheeks — a bride to look at and scarce
touch,

Scarce touch, remember, Jules! — for are
not such

Used to be tended, flower-like, every feature,
As if one's breath would fray the lily of a
creature? 145

A soft and easy life these ladies lead !

Whiteness in us were wonderful indeed.

Oh, save that brow its virgin dimness,

Keep that foot its lady primness,

Let those ankles never swerve 150

From their exquisite reserve,

Yet have to trip along the streets like me,

All but naked to the knee !

How will she ever grant her Jules a bliss
So startling as her real first infant kiss?
Oh, no, — not envy, this! 156
Not envy, sure! — for if you gave me
Leave to take or to refuse,
In earnest, do you think I'd choose
That sort of new love to enslave me? 160
Mine should have lapped me round from the
beginning,
As little fear of losing it as winning;
Lovers grow cold, men learn to hate their
wives,
And only parents' love can last our lives.
At eve the Son and Mother, gentle pair, 165
Commune inside our turret; what prevents
My being Luigi? While that mossy lair
Of lizards through the winter-time, is stirred
With each to each imparting sweet intents
For this new year, as brooding bird to bird
(For I observe of late, the evening walk 171
Of Luigi and his mother always ends
Inside our ruined turret, where they talk,

Calmer than lovers, yet more kind than
 friends),

Let me be cared about, kept out of harm,
 And schemed for, safe in love as with a
 charm ; 176

Let me be Luigi! — If I only knew
 What was my mother's face — my father,
 too!

Nay, if you come to that, best love of all
 Is God's ; then why not have God's love
 befall 180

Myself as, in the palace by the Dome,
 Monsignor? — who to-night will bless the
 home

Of his dead brother ; and God will bless in
 turn

That heart which beats, those eyes which
 mildly burn

With love for all men! I, to-night at
 least, 185

Would be that holy and beloved priest.

Now wait! — even I already seem to share
In God's love: what does New-Year's hymn
declare?

What other meaning do these verses bear?

All service ranks the same with God. 190
If now, as formerly he trod
Paradise, his presence fills
Our earth, each only as God wills
Can work — God's puppets, best and worst,
Are we; there is no last nor first. 195

Say not "a small event!" Why "small?"
Costs it more pain that this ye call
A "great event" should come to pass,
Than that? Untwine me from the mass
Of deeds which make up life one deed
Power shall fall short in or exceed! 201

And more of it and more of it! — oh,
yes —

I will pass each, and see their happiness,

And envy none — being just as great, no
doubt,

Useful to men, and dear to God, as they!
A pretty thing to care about 206

So mightily, this single holiday!

But let the sun shine! Wherefore repine?

With thee to lead me, O Day of mine,
Down the grass-path gray with dew, 210

Under the pine-wood blind with boughs,

Where the swallow never flew

Nor yet cicala dared carouse —

No, dared carouse! [*She enters the street.*]

I. — MORNING. *Up the Hillside, inside the Shrub-
house. LUCA'S Wife, OTTAMA, and her para-
mour, the German SEBALD.*

SEBALD [*sings*].

Let the watching lids wink!

Day's ablaze with eyes, think —

Deep into the night, drink!

OTTIMA.

Night? Such may be your Rhineland nights,
perhaps;

But this blood-red beam through the shutter's
chink — 5

We call such light the morning's: let us
see!

Mind how you grope your way, though!
How these tall

Naked geraniums straggle! Push the lat-
tice

Behind that frame! — Nay, do I bid you? —
Sebald,

It shakes the dust down on me! Why, of
course 10

The slide-bolt catches. — Well, are you con-
tent,

Or must I find you something else to spoil?

Kiss and be friends, my Sebald! Is it full
morning?

Oh, don't speak then!

SEBALD.

Ay, thus it used to be!
 Ever your house was, I remember, shut 15
 Till midday; I observed that, as I strolled
 On mornings thro' the vale here: country
 girls
 Were noisy, washing garments in the brook,
 Hinds drove the slow white oxen up the
 hills;
 But no, your house was mute, would ope no
 eye! 20
 And wisely; you were plotting one thing
 there,
 Nature another outside. I looked up —
 Rough white wood shutters, rusty iron bars,
 Silent as death, blind in a flood of light.
 Oh, I remember! — and the peasants laughed
 And said, “The old man sleeps with the
 young wife!” 26
 This house was his, this chair, this window
 — his!

OTTIMA.

Ah, the clear morning! I can see Saint
Mark's;

That black streak is the belfry. Stop:
Vicenza

Should lie — there's Padua, plain enough,
that blue! 30

Look o'er my shoulder, follow my finger!

SEBALD.

Morning?

It seems to me a night with a sun added.

Where's dew, where's freshness? That
bruised plant, I bruised

In getting thro' the lattice yester-eve,
Droops as it did. See, here's my elbow's
mark 35

I' the dust o' the sill.

OTTIMA.

Oh, shut the lattice, pray!

SEBALD.

Let me lean out. I cannot scent blood here
Foul as the morn may be.

There, shut the world out!
How do you feel now, Ottima? There,
curse

The world, and all outside! Let us throw
off 40

This mask: how do you bear yourself?
Let's out
With all of it!

OTTIMA.

Best never speak of it.

SEBALD.

Best speak again and yet again of it,
Till words cease to be more than words.
"His blood,"
For instance — let those two words mean
"His blood" 45

And nothing more. Notice, I'll say them
now,
"His blood."

OTTIMA.

Assuredly if I repented
The deed —

SEBALD.

Repent? who should repent, or why?
What puts that in your head? Did I once
say
That I repented?

OTTIMA.

No, I said the deed — 50

SEBALD.

"The deed" and "the event" — just now it
was
"Our passion's fruit" — the devil take such
cant!

Say, once and always, Luca was a wittol,
I am his cutthroat, you are —

OTTIMA.

Here's the wine ;
I brought it when we left the house above,
And glasses too — wine of both sorts.
Black ? white then ? 56

SEBALD.

But am not I his cutthroat ? What are
you ?

OTTIMA.

There trudges on his business from the
Duomo
Benet the Capuchin, with his brown hood
And bare feet — always in one place at
church, 60
Close under the stone wall by the south
entry ;
I used to take him for a brown cold piece

To get him from the fire. Nothing but
 saying 75
 His own set wants the proof-mark, roused
 him up
 To hunt them out.

SEBALD.

Hark you, Ottima,
 One thing's to guard against. We'll not
 make much
 One of the other — that is, not make more
 Parade of warmth, childish officious coil, 80
 Than yesterday — as if, sweet, I supposed
 Proof upon proof were needed now, now first,
 To show I love you — yes, still love you —
 love you
 In spite of Luca and what's come to him —
 Sure sign we had him ever in our thoughts,
 White sneering old reproachful face and all!
 We'll even quarrel, love, at times, as if
 We still could lose each other, were not tied
 By this — conceive you?

OTTIMA.

Love!

SEBALD.

Not tied so sure!

Because tho' I was wrought upon, have
struck 90

His insolence back into him — am I
So surely yours? — therefore, forever yours?

OTTIMA.

Love, to be wise (one counsel pays another),
Should we have — months ago, when first
we loved,

For instance that May morning we two stole
Under the green ascent of sycamores — 96
If we had come upon a thing like that
Suddenly —

SEBALD.

“A thing” — there again — “a thing!”

OTTIMA.

Then, Venus' body, had we come upon
 My husband Luca Gaddi's murdered corpse
 Within there, at his couch-foot, covered
 close — 101

Would you have pored upon it? Why per-
 sist

In poring now upon it? For 'tis here
 As much as there in the deserted house —
 You cannot rid your eyes of it. For me,
 Now he is dead I hate him worse; I hate —
 Dare you stay here? I would go back and
 hold

His two dead hands, and say, "I hate you
 worse,
 Luca, than —"

SEBALD.

Off, off — take your hands off mine!
 'Tis the hot evening — off! oh, morning, is
 it? 110

OTTIMA.

There's one thing must be done — you
know what thing.

Come in and help to carry. We may sleep
Anywhere in the whole wide house to-night.

SEBALD.

What would come, think you, if we let him
lie

Just as he is? Let him lie there until 115

The angels take him! He is turned by
this

Off from his face beside, as you will see.

OTTIMA.

This dusty pane might serve for looking-
glass.

Three, four — four gray hairs! Is it so you
said 119

A plait of hair should wave across my neck?
No — this way.

SEBALD.

Ottima, I would give your neck,
 Each splendid shoulder, both those breasts
 of yours,
 That this were undone! Killing! Kill the
 world
 So Luca lives again! — ay, lives to sputter
 His fulsome dotage on you — yes, and feign
 Surprise that I return at eve to sup, 126
 When all the morning I was loitering here —
 Bid me despatch my business and begone.
 I would —

OTTIMA.

See!

SEBALD.

No, I'll finish! Do you think
 I fear to speak the bare truth once for all?
 All we have talked of is, at bottom, fine 131
 To suffer; there's a recompense in guilt;

One must be venturous and fortunate :
What is one young for, else? In age we'll
 sigh
O'er the wild, reckless, wicked days flown
 over ; 135
Still we have lived : the vice was in its place.
But to have eaten Luca's bread, have worn
His clothes, have felt his money swell my
 purse —
Do lovers in romances sin that way?
Why, I was starving when I used to call 140
And teach you music, starving while you
 plucked me
These flowers to smell !

OTTIMA.

My poor lost friend !

SEBALD.

He gave me
Life, nothing less ; what if he did reproach
My perfidy, and threaten, and do more —

Had he no right? What was to wonder
at? 145

He sat by us at table quietly —

Why must you lean across till our cheeks
touch'd?

Could he do less than make pretence to
strike?

'Tis not the crime's sake — I'd commit ten
crimes

Greater, to have this crime wiped out, un-
done! 150

And you — O, how feel you? feel you for
me?

OTTIMA.

Well then, I love you better now than ever,
And best — look at me while I speak to
you —

Best for the crime; nor do I grieve, in truth,
This mask, this simulated ignorance, 155

This affectation of simplicity,
Falls off our crime; this naked crime of ours

May not, now, be looked over — look it
down!

Great? let it be great; but the joys it
brought,

Pay they or no its price? Come: they or it!
Speak not! The past, would you give up
the past 161

Such as it is, pleasure and crime together?
Give up that noon I owned my love for you?
The garden's silence! even the single bee
Persisting in his toil suddenly stopped, 165
And where he hid you only could surmise
By some campanula's chalice set a-swing.
Who stammered, "Yes, I love you?"
And when I ventured to receive you here,
Made you steal hither in the mornings — 170

SEBALD.

When

I used to look up 'neath the shrub-house here,
Till the red fire on its glazed windows spread
To a yellow haze?

OTTIMA.

Ah — my sign was, the sun
 Inflamed the sere side of yon chestnut-tree
 Nipped by the first frost.

SEBALD.

You would always laugh
 At my wet boots : I had to stride thro' grass
 Over my ankles.

OTTIMA.

Then our crowning night !

SEBALD.

The July night ?

OTTIMA.

The day of it too, Sebald !
 When heaven's pillars seemed o'erbow'd with
 heat,
 Its black-blue canopy suffered descend 180

Close on us both, to weigh down each to
each,
And smother up all life except our life.
So lay we till the storm came.

SEBALD.

How it came !

OTTIMA.

Buried in woods we lay, you recollect ;
Swift ran the searching tempest overhead ;¹⁸⁵
And ever and anon some bright white
shaft
Burned thro' the pine-tree roof — here burned
and there,
As if God's messenger thro' the close wood
screen
Plunged and replunged his weapon at a ven-
ture, 189
Feeling for guilty thee and me ; then broke
The thunder like a whole sea overhead —

SEBALD.

Slower, Ottima —

OTTIMA.

Sebald, as we lay,
 Who said, "Let death come now! 'tis right
 to die!
 Right to be punished! nought completes such
 bliss
 But woe!" Who said that?

SEBALD.

How did we ever rise?
 Was't that we slept? Why did it end?

OTTIMA.

I felt you,
 Fresh tapering to a point the ruffled ends 197
 Of my loose locks 'twixt both your humid
 lips —
 My hair is fallen now: knot it again!

SEBALD.

I kiss you now, dear Ottima, now, and now !
This way ? Will you forgive me — be once
more

201

My great queen ?

OTTIMA.

Bind it thrice about my brow ;
Crown me your queen, your spirit's arbitress,
Magnificent in sin. Say that !

SEBALD.

I crown you
My great white queen, my spirit's arbitress,
Magnificent —

206

(From without is heard the voice of PIPPA singing.)

The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn ;
Morning's at seven ;
The hillside's dew-pearled :

210

The lark's on the wing ;
 The snail's on the thorn ;
 God's in his heaven —
 All's right with the world !

(PIPPA *passes*.)

SEBALD.

God's in his heaven! Do you hear that?
 Who spoke? 215
 You, you spoke!

OTTIMA.

Oh — that little ragged girl!
 She must have rested on the step: we give
 them
 But this one holiday the whole year round.
 Did you ever see our silk-mills — their in-
 side?
 There are ten silk-mills now belong to you.
 She stoops to pick my double heart's-ease —
 Sh! 221
 She does not hear: call you out louder!

SEBALD.

Leave me!

Go, get your clothes on — dress those shoulders!

OTTIMA.

Sebald!

SEBALD.

Wipe off that paint! I hate you!

OTTIMA.

Miserable!

SEBALD.

My God! and she is emptied of it now! 225

Outright now! — how miraculously gone

All of the grace — had she not strange grace
once?

Why, the blank cheek hangs listless as it
likes,

No purpose holds the features up together,
 Only the cloven brow and puckered chin
 Stay in their places : and the very hair, 231
 That seemed to have a sort of life in it,
 Drops, a dead web ! —

OTTIMA.

Speak to me — not of me !

SEBALD.

That round great full-orbed face, where not
 an angle
 Broke the delicious indolence — all broken !

OTTIMA.

To me — not of me ! Ungrateful, perjured
 cheat ! 236
 A coward, too — but ingrate's worse than all !
 Beggar — my slave — a fawning, cringing
 lie !
 Leave me ! betray me ! I can see your drift !
 A lie that walks and eats and drinks ! 240

SEBALD.

My God!

Those morbid, olive, faultless shoulder -
blades —

I should have known there was no blood be-
neath!

OTTIMA.

You hate me, then? You hate me, then?

SEBALD.

To think

She would succeed in her absurd attempt,
And fascinate by sinning, show herself 245
Superior — guilt from its excess superior
To innocence. That little peasant's voice
Has righted all again. Though I be lost,
I know which is the better, never fear,
Of vice or virtue, purity or lust, 250
Nature or trick! I see what I have done,
Entirely now! Oh, I am proud to feel

Such torments — let the world take credit
thence —

I, having done my deed, pay too its price!

I hate, hate — curse you! God's in his
heaven! 255

OTTIMA.

Me!

Me! no, no, Sebald, not yourself — kill
me!

Mine is the whole crime. Do but kill me —
then

Yourself — then — presently — first hear me
speak!

I always meant to kill myself — wait,
you!

Lean on my breast — not as a breast; don't
love me 260

The more because you lean on me, my
own

Heart's Sebald! There, there, both deaths
presently!

SEBALD.

My brain is drowned now — quite drowned :
 all I feel
Is — is, at swift-recurring intervals,
A hurry-down within me, as of waters 265
Loosened to smother up some ghastly pit :
There they go — whirls from a black, fiery
 sea !

OTTIMA.

Not me — to him, O God, be merciful !

Talk by the way, while PIPPA is passing from the Hillside to Orcana. Foreign Students of Painting and Sculpture, from Venice, assembled opposite the House of JULES, a young French Statuary, at Possagno.

FIRST STUDENT.

Attention ! my own post is beneath this window, but the pomegranate clump yonder

will hide three or four of you with a little squeezing, and Schramm and his pipe must lie flat in the balcony. Four, five — who's a defaulter? We want everybody, for Jules must not be suffered to hurt his bride when the jest's found out. 8

SECOND STUDENT.

All here! Only our poet's away — never having much meant to be present, moon-strike him! The airs of that fellow, that Giovacchino! He was in violent love with himself, and had a fair prospect of thriving in his suit, so unmolested was it, — when suddenly a woman falls in love with him, too; and out of pure jealousy he takes himself off to Trieste, immortal poem and all — whereto is this prophetic epitaph appended already, as Bluphocks assures me — “*Here a mammoth-poem lies, Fouled to death by butterflies.*” His own fault, the simpleton! Instead of cramp couplets, each like a knife

in your entrails, he should write, says Bluphocks, both classically and intelligibly. *Æsculapius, an Epic. Catalogue of the drugs: Hebe's plaister — One strip Cools your lip. Phæbus' emulsion — One bottle Clears your throttle. Mercury's bolus — One box Cures —*

THIRD STUDENT.

Subside, my fine fellow! If the marriage was over by ten o'clock, Jules will certainly be here in a minute with his bride. 31

SECOND STUDENT.

Good! — Only, so should the poet's muse have been universally acceptable, says Bluphocks, *et canibus nostris* — and Delia not better known to our literary dogs than the boy Giovacchino! 36

FIRST STUDENT.

To the point, now. Where's Gottlieb, the newcomer? Oh, — listen, Gottlieb, to what

has called down this piece of friendly vengeance on Jules, of which we now assemble to witness the winding-up. We are all agreed, all in a tale, observe, when Jules shall burst out on us in a fury by and by, I am spokesman—the verses that are to undeceive Jules bear my name of Lutwyche—but each professes himself alike insulted by this strutting stone-squarer, who came alone from Paris to Munich, and thence with a crowd of us to Venice and Possagno here, but proceeds in a day or two alone again—oh, alone indubitably!—to Rome and Florence. He, forsooth, take up his portion with these dissolute, brutalized, heartless bunglers!—so he was heard to call us all: now, is Schramm brutalized, I should like to know? Am I heartless? 56

GOTTLIEB.

Why, somewhat heartless; for, suppose Jules a coxcomb as much as you choose,

still, for this mere coxcombry, you will have brushed off — what do folks style it? — the bloom of his life. Is it too late to alter? These love-letters, now, you call his — I can't laugh at them. 63

FOURTH STUDENT.

Because you never read the sham letters of our inditing which drew forth these. 65

GOTTLIEB.

His discovery of the truth will be frightful.

FOURTH STUDENT.

That's the joke. But you should have joined us at the beginning: there's no doubt he loves the girl — loves a model he might hire by the hour! 70

GOTTLIEB.

See here! "He has been accustomed," he writes, "to have Canova's women about

him in stone, and the world's women beside him in flesh; these being as much below, as those above, his soul's aspiration; but now he is to have the reality." — There you laugh again! I say, you wipe off the very dew of his youth. 78

FIRST STUDENT.

Schramm! (Take the pipe out of his mouth, somebody) — will Jules lose the bloom of his youth? 81

SCHRAMM.

Nothing worth keeping is ever lost in this world: look at a blossom — it drops presently, having done its service and lasted its time; but fruits succeed, and where would be the blossom's place could it continue? As well affirm that your eye is no longer in your body, because its earliest favorite, whatever it may have first loved to look on, is dead and done with — as that any affection

is lost to the soul when its first object, whatever happened first to satisfy it, is superseded in due course. Keep but ever looking, whether with the body's eye or the mind's, and you will soon find something to look on! Has a man done wondering at women? — there follow men, dead and alive, to wonder at. Has he done wondering at men? — there's God to wonder at: and the faculty of wonder may be, at the same time, old and tired enough with respect to its first object, and yet young and fresh sufficiently, so far as concerns its novel one. Thus — 103

FIRST STUDENT.

Put Schramm's pipe into his mouth again! There, you see! Well, this Jules — a wretched fribble — oh, I watched his disportings at Possagno, the other day! Canova's gallery — you know: there he marches first resolutely past great works by the dozen without vouchsafing an eye; all at once he

stops full at the *Psiche-fanciulla* — cannot pass that old acquaintance without a nod of encouragement — “In your new place, beauty? Then behave yourself as well here as at Munich — I see you!” Next he posts himself deliberately before the unfinished *Pietà* for half an hour without moving, till up he starts of a sudden, and thrusts his very nose into — I say, into — the group; by which gesture you are informed that precisely the sole point he had not fully mastered in Canova’s practice was a certain method of using the drill in the articulation of the knee-joint — and that, likewise, has he mastered at length! Good-by, therefore, to poor Canova — whose gallery no longer need detain his successor Jules, the predestinated novel thinker in marble!

128

FIFTH STUDENT.

Tell him about the women; go on to the women!

130

FIRST STUDENT.

Why, on that matter he could never be supercilious enough. How should we be other (he said) than the poor devils you see, with those debasing habits we cherish? He was not to wallow in that mire, at least; he would wait, and love only at the proper time, and meanwhile put up with the *Psiche-fanciulla*. Now I happened to hear of a young Greek — real Greek girl at Malacca; a true islander, do you see, with Alciphron's "hair like sea-moss" — Schramm knows! — white and quiet as an apparition, and fourteen years old at farthest, — a daughter of Natalia, so she swears — that hag Natalia, who helps us to models at three *lire* an hour. We selected this girl for the heroine of our jest. So, first, Jules received a scented letter — somebody had seen his Tydeus at the Academy, and my picture was nothing to it: a profound admirer bade him

persevere — would make herself known to him ere long. (Paolina, my little friend of the *Fenice*, transcribes divinely.) And in due time, the mysterious correspondent gave certain hints of her peculiar charms — the pale cheeks, the black hair — whatever, in short, had struck us in our Malamocco model; we retained her name, too — Phene, which is by interpretation sea-eagle. Now, think of Jules finding himself distinguished from the herd of us by such a creature! In his very first answer he proposed marrying his monitress: and fancy us over these letters, two, three times a day, to receive and despatch! I concocted the main of it: relations were in the way — secrecy must be observed — in fine, would he wed her on trust, and only speak to her when they were indissolubly united? St — st — Here they come! 169

SIXTH STUDENT.

Both of them! Heaven's love, speak
softly, speak within yourselves! 171

FIFTH STUDENT.

Look at the bridegroom! Half his hair in
storm, and half in calm, — patted down over
the left temple, — like a frothy cup one blows
on to cool it! and the same old blouse that
he murders the marble in! 176

SECOND STUDENT.

Not a rich vest like yours, Hannibal
Scratchy! — rich, that your face may the
better set it off!

SIXTH STUDENT.

And the bride! Yes, sure enough, our
Phene! Should you have known her in her
clothes? How magnificently pale! 182

GOTTLIEB.

She does not also take it for earnest, I hope?

FIRST STUDENT.

Oh, Natalia's concern, that is! We settle with Natalia. 186

SIXTH STUDENT.

She does not speak — has evidently let out no word. The only thing is, will she equally remember the rest of her lesson, and repeat correctly all those verses which are to break the secret to Jules? 191

GOTTLIEB.

How he gazes on her! Pity — pity!

FIRST STUDENT.

They go in : now, silence! You three, — not nearer the window, mind, than that

pomegranate — just where the little girl, who a few minutes ago passed us singing, is seated !

197

II. — NOON. *Over Orcana. The House of JULES, who crosses its threshold with PHENE: she is silent, on which JULES begins.*

Do not die, Phene ! I am yours now, you
Are mine now ; let Fate reach me how she
likes,

If you'll not die : so, never die ! Sit here —
My workroom's single seat : I over-lean
This length of hair and lustrous front ; they
turn 5

Like an entire flower upward : eyes, lips, last
Your chin — no, last your throat turns : 'tis
their scent

Pulls down my face upon you ! Nay, look
ever

This one way till I change, grow you — I
could

Change into you, beloved! 10

You by me,

And I by you ; this is your hand in mine,
 And side by side we sit : all's true. Thank
 God!

I have spoken : speak, you !

Oh, my life to come !

My Tydeus must be carved that's there in
 clay ;

Yet how be carved, with you about the
 room? 15

Where must I place you? When I think
 that once

This roomful of rough block-work seemed my
 heaven

Without you! Shall I ever work again,

Get fairly into my old ways again,

Bid each conception stand while, trait by
 trait, 20

My hand transfers its lineaments to stone?

Will my mere fancies live near you, their
 truth —

*“ You by me,
And I by you ; this is your hand in mine,
And side by side we sit ”*

Photogravure. From drawing by Louis Meynelle.



Lois Meynell



The live truth, passing and repassing me,
Sitting beside me ?

Now speak !

Only, first,

See, all your letters ! Was't not well con-
trived ? 25

Their hiding-place is Psyche's robe ; she keeps
Your letters next her skin : which drops out
foremost ?

Ah, — this that swam down like a first moon-
beam

Into my world !

Again those eyes complete

Their melancholy survey, sweet and slow, 30
Of all my room holds ; to return and rest
On me, with pity, yet some wonder too :
As if God bade some spirit plague a world,
And this were the one moment of surprise
And sorrow while she took her station, paus-
ing 35

O'er what she sees, finds good, and must
destroy !

What gaze you at? Those? Books, I told
you of;

Let your first word to me rejoice them, too:

This minion, a Coluthus, writ in red

Bistre and azure by Bessarion's scribe — 40

Read this line — no, shame — Homer's be
the Greek

First breathed me from the lips of my Greek
girl!

My Odyssey in coarse black vivid type

With faded yellow blossoms 'twixt page and
page,

To mark great places with due gratitude: 45

“He said, and on Antinous directed

A bitter shaft” — a flower blots out the rest!

Again upon your search? My statues,
then! —

Ah, do not mind that — better that will look

When cast in bronze — an Almain Kaiser,
that, 50

Swart-green and gold, with truncheon based
on hip.

This, rather, turn to! What, unrecognized?
I thought you would have seen that here you
sit

As I imagined you — Hippolyta,
Naked upon her bright Numidian horse. 55
Recall you this, then? “Carve in bold
relief” —

So you commanded — “carve, against I
come,

A Greek, in Athens, as our fashion was,
Feasting, bay-filleted and thunder-free,
Who rises 'neath the lifted myrtle-branch. 60
'Praise those who slew Hipparchus,' cry
the guests,

'While o'er thy head the singer's myrtle
waves

As erst above our champion: stand up,
all!'"

See, I have labored to express your thought.
Quite round, a cluster of mere hands and
arms 65

(Thrust in all senses, all ways, from all sides,

Only consenting at the branches' end
 They strain toward) serves for frame to a
 sole face,

The Praiser's, in the centre, who with eyes
 Sightless, so bend they back to light inside 70
 His brain where visionary forms throng up,
 Sings, minding not that palpitating arch
 Of hands and arms, nor the quick drip of
 wine

From the drenched leaves o'erhead, nor
 crowns cast off, 74

Violet and parsley crowns to trample on —
 Sings, pausing as the patron-ghosts approve,
 Devoutly their unconquerable hymn!
 But you must say a "well" to that — say,
 "well!"

Because you gaze — am I fantastic, sweet?
 Gaze like my very life's-stuff, marble — mar-
 bly 80

Even to the silence! why before I found
 The real flesh Phene, I inured myself
 To see, throughout all nature, varied stuff

For better nature's birth by means of art :
With me, each substance tended to one form
Of beauty — to the human archetype. 86

On every side occurred suggestive germs
Of that — the tree, the flower — or take the
fruit, —

Some rosy shape, continuing the peach,
Curved beewise o'er its bough ; as rosy limbs,
Depending, nestled in the leaves ; and just 91
From a cleft rose-peach the whole Dryad
sprang !

But of the stuffs one can be master of,
How I divined their capabilities !
From the soft-rinded smoothening facile chalk
That yields your outline to the air's em-
brace, 96

Half-softened by a halo's pearly gloom,
Down to the crisp imperious steel, so sure
To cut its one confided thought clean out
Of all the world. But marble ! — 'neath my
tools 100

More pliable than jelly — as it were

Some clear primordial creature dug from
depths

In the earth's heart, where itself breeds
itself,

And whence all baser substance may be
worked —

Refine it off to air you may, condense it 105
Down to the diamond ; — is not metal there,
When o'er the sudden specks my chisel
trips ?

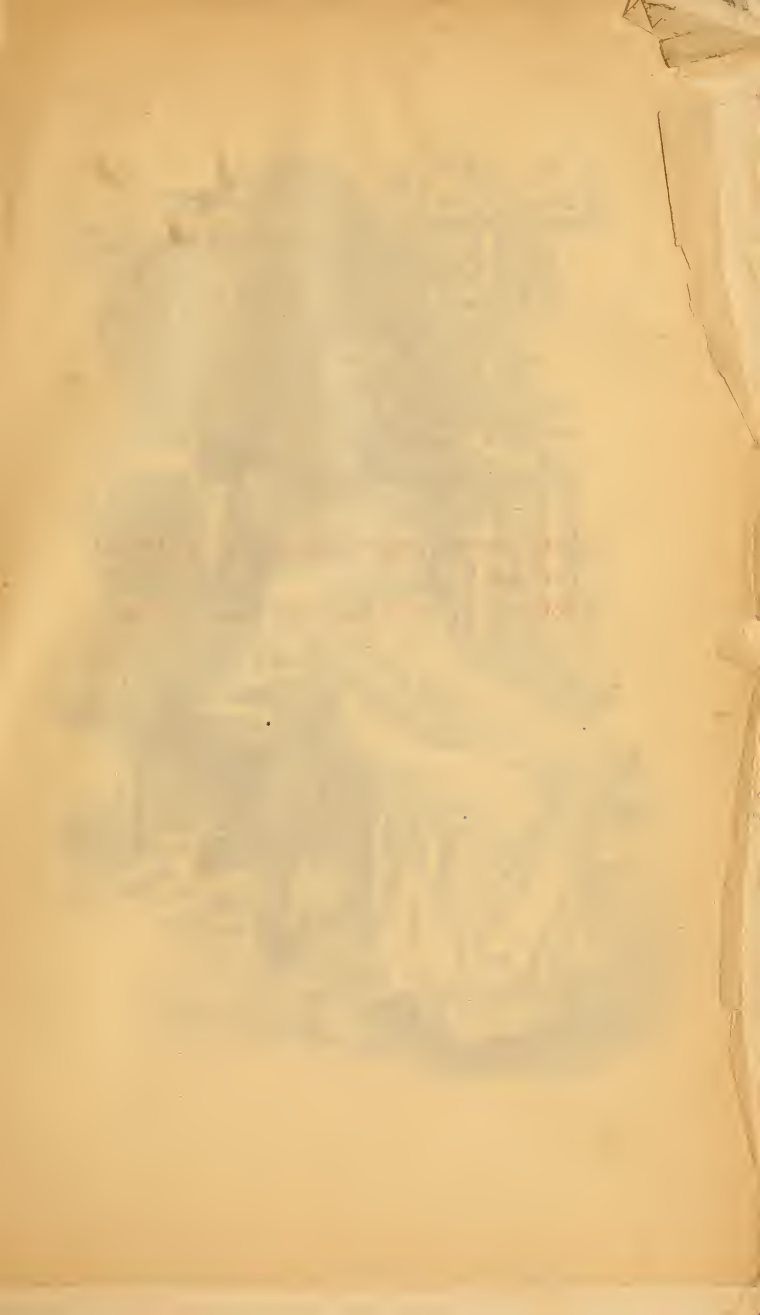
Not flesh, as flake off flake I scale, approach,
Lay bare those bluish veins of blood asleep ?
Lurks flame in no strange windings where,
surprised 110

By the swift implement sent home at once,
Flushes and glowings radiate and hover
About its track ? —

Phene ! what — why is this ?

That whitening cheek, those still-dilating
eyes !

Ah, you will die — I knew that you would
die ! 115



*"I kiss you now, dear Ottima, now, and now!
This way"*

Photogravure. From drawing by Louis Meynelle.



Louis Maymell



PHENE *begins, on his having long remained
silent.*

Now the end's coming ; to be sure, it must
Have ended sometime ! Tush, why need I
speak

Their foolish speech ? I cannot bring to
mind

One half of it, beside, and do not care
For old Natalia now, nor any of them. 120

Oh, you — what are you ? — if I do not try
To say the words Natalia made me learn,
To please your friends, — it is to keep myself
Where your voice lifted me, by letting that
Proceed ; but can it ? Even you, perhaps, 125
Cannot take up, now you have once let fall,
The music's life, and me along with that —
No, or you would ! We'll stay, then, as we
are —

Above the world.

You creature with the eyes !
If I could look forever up to them, 130

As now you let me, I believe, all sin,
 All memory of wrong done, suffering borne,
 Would drop down, low and lower, to the earth
 Whence all that's low comes, and there touch
 and stay —

Never to overtake the rest of me, 135
 All that, unspotted, reaches up to you,
 Drawn by those eyes! What rises is myself,
 Not me the shame and suffering; but they
 sink,
 Are left, I rise above them. Keep me so
 Above the world!

But you sink, for your eyes
 Are altering — altered! Stay — “I love you,
 love —” 141

I could prevent it if I understood
 More of your words to me — was't in the
 tone

Or the words, your power?

Or stay — I will repeat
 Their speech, if that contents you! Only,
 change 145

No more, and I shall find it presently
Far back here, in the brain yourself filled up.
Natalia threatened me that harm would follow
Unless I spoke their lesson to the end,
But harm to me, I thought she meant, not
you. 150

Your friends — Natalia said they were your
friends

And meant you well — because, I doubted it,
Observing (what was very strange to see)
On every face, so different in all else, 154
The same smile girls like me are used to bear,
But never men, men cannot stoop so low ;
Yet your friends, speaking of you, used that
smile,

That hateful smirk of boundless self-conceit
Which seems to take possession of the world
And make of God their tame confederate, 160
Purveyor to their appetites — you know !
But still Natalia said they were your friends,
And they assented though they smiled the
more,

And all came round me — that thin English-
man

With light, lank hair seemed leader of the
rest ; 165

He held a paper — “ What we want,” said he,
Ending some explanation to his friends,
“ Is something slow, involved, and mystical,
To hold Jules long in doubt, yet take his taste
And lure him on until at innermost 170

Where he seeks sweetness' soul, he may find
— this !

As in the apple's core the noisome fly ;
For insects on the rind are seen at once,
And brushed aside as soon, but this is found
Only when on the lips or loathing tongue.”
And so he read what I have got by heart :
I'll speak it, — “ Do not die, love ! I am
yours ” —

No — is not that, or like that, part of words
Yourself began by speaking ? Strange to lose
What cost much pains to learn ! Is this more
right ? 180

I am a painter who cannot paint ;
In my life, a devil rather than saint,
In my brain, as poor a creature too —
No end to all I cannot do !
Yet do one thing at least I can — 185
Love a man, or hate a man
Supremely : thus my lore began
Through the Valley of Love I went,
In its lovingest spot to abide,
And just on the verge where I pitched my
tent, 190
I found Hate dwelling beside.
(Let the Bridegroom ask what the painter
meant
Of his Bride, of the peerless Bride !)
And further, I traversed Hate's Grove,
In its hatefullest nook to dwell ; 195
But lo, where I flung myself prone,
couched Love
Where the shadow threefold fell !
(The meaning — those black bride's-eyes
above,
Not the painter's lip should tell !)

“And here!” said he, “Jules probably will
ask, 200

You have black eyes, love — you are, sure
enough,

My peerless bride, — then do you tell, indeed,
What needs some explanation — what means
this?” —

And I am to go on, without a word —

So I grew wise in Love and Hate, 205
From simple that I was of late.

Once, when I loved, I would enlace
Breast, eyelids, hands, feet, form, and face
Of her I loved, in one embrace — 209

As if by mere love I could love immensely!

And when I hated, I would plunge

My sword, and wipe with the first lunge

My foe's whole life out like a sponge —

As if by mere hate I could hate intensely!

But now I am wiser, know better the fashion

How passion seeks aid from its opposite

passion ; 216

And if I see cause to love more, or hate
more

Than ever man loved, ever hated, before —

And seek in the Valley of Love

The nest, or the nook in Hate's Grove, ²²⁰

Where my soul may surely reach

The essence, nought less, of each,

The Hate of all Hates, the Love

Of all Loves, in the Valley or Grove —

I find them the very warders ²²⁵

Each of the other's borders.

When I love most, Love is disguised

In Hate; and when Hate is surprised

In Love, then I hate most: ask

How Love smiles through Hate's iron

casque, ²³⁰

Hate grins through Love's rose-braided

mask, —

And how, having hated thee,

I sought long and painfully

To reach thy heart, nor prick

The skin, but pierce to the quick — ²³⁵

Ask this, my Jules, and be answered
straight

By thy bride — how the painter Lut-
wyche can hate!

JULES *interposes*.

Lutwyche! who else? But all of them, no
doubt,

Hated me: they at Venice — presently ²³⁹

Their turn, however! You I shall not meet:

If I dreamed, saying this would wake me!

Keep

What's here, the gold — we cannot meet
again,

Consider — and the money was but meant

For two years' travel, which is over now,

All chance or hope or care or need of it. ²⁴⁵

This — and what comes from selling these,
my casts

And books and medals, except — let them
go

Together, so the produce keeps you safe

Out of Natalia's clutches! — If by chance
(For all's chance here) I should survive the
gang 250

At Venice, root out all fifteen of them,
We might meet somewhere, since the world
is wide.

*(From without is heard the voice
of PIPPA, singing.)*

Give her but a least excuse to love me!
When — where —
How — can this arm establish her above
me, 255

If fortune fixed her as my lady there,
There already, to eternally reprove me?
("Hist!" said Kate the Queen;
But "Oh!" cried the maiden, binding
her tresses,
"'Tis only a page that carols unseen, 260
Crumbling your hounds their messes!")

Is she wronged? — To the rescue of her
honor,
My heart!

Is she poor?—What costs it to be
 styled a donor? 264

Merely an earth to cleave, a sea to part!
 But that fortune should have thrust all
 this upon her!

(“Nay, list!” bade Kate the Queen;
 And still cried the maiden, binding her
 tresses,

“’Tis only a page that carols unseen
 Fitting your hawks their jesses!”) 270

(PIPPA *passes*.)

JULES *resumes*.

What name was that the little girl sang
 forth?

Kate? The Cornaro, doubtless, who re-
 nounced

The crown of Cyprus to be lady here
 At Asolo, where still her memory stays,
 And peasants sing how once a certain
 page 275

Pined for the grace of her so far above

His power of doing good to "Kate the
Queen" —

"She never could be wronged, be poor," he
sighed,

"Need him to help her!"

Yes, a bitter thing

To see our lady above all need of us ; 280

Yet so we look ere we will love ; not I,

But the world looks so. If whoever loves

Must be, in some sort, god or worshipper,

The blessing or the blest one, queen or
page,

Why should we always choose the page's
part ? 285

Here is a woman with utter need of me, —

I find myself queen here, it seems !

How strange !

Look at the woman here with the new soul,

Like my own Psyche, — fresh upon her lips

Alit the visionary butterfly, 290

Waiting my word to enter and make bright,

Or flutter off and leave all blank as first.

This body had no soul before, but slept
 Or stirred, was beauteous or ungainly, free
 From taint or foul with stain, as outward
 things 295

Fastened their image on its passiveness ;
 Now, it will wake, feel, live — or die again !
 Shall to produce form out of unshaped stuff
 Be art — and, further, to evoke a soul
 From form be nothing ? This new soul is
 mine ! 300

Now, to kill Lutwyche, what would that
 do ? — save

A wretched dauber, men will hoot to death
 Without me, from their laughter ! — Oh, to
 hear

God's voice plain as I heard it first, before
 They broke in with their laughter ! I heard
 them 305

Henceforth, not God !

 To Ancona — Greece — some isle !
 I wanted silence only ! there is clay

Everywhere. One may do whate'er one
likes

In art ; the only thing is, to make sure
That one does like it — which takes pains to
know. 310

Scatter all this, my Phene — this mad
dream !

Who, what is Lutwyche, what Natalia's
friends,

What the whole world except our love — my
own,

Own Phene ? But I told you, did I not,
Ere night we travel for your land — some
isle 315

With the sea's silence on it ? Stand aside —
I do but break these paltry models up
To begin art afresh. Meet Lutwyche, I —
And save him from my statue meeting
him ?

Some unsuspected isle in the far seas ! 320
Like a god going thro' his world there stands
One mountain for a moment in the dusk,

Whole brotherhoods of cedars on its brow ;
 And you are ever by me while I gaze ---
 Are in my arms as now — as now — as now !
 Some unsuspected isle in the far seas ! 326
 Some unsuspected isle in far-off seas !

*Talk by the way, while PIPPA is passing from
 Orcana to the Turret. Two or three of the Aus-
 trian Police loitering with BLUPHOCKS, an Eng-
 lish vagabond, just in view of the Turret.*

BLUPHOCKS.¹

So that is your Pippa, the little girl who passed us singing? Well, your Bishop's Intendant's money shall be honestly earned: — now, don't make me that sour face because I bring the Bishop's name into the business: we know he can have nothing to do with such horrors; we know that he is a saint and all that a bishop should be, who

¹ "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

is a great man besides. Oh! were but every worm a maggot, Every fly a grig, Every bough a Christmas fagot, Every tune a jig! In fact, I have abjured all religions; but the last I inclined to was the Armenian: for I have travelled, do you see, and at Kœnigsberg, Prussia Improper (so styled because there's a sort of bleak hungry sun there), you might remark over a venerable house-porch a certain Chaldee inscription; and, brief as it is, a mere glance at it used absolutely to change the mood of every bearded passenger. In they turned, one and all; the young and lightsome, with no irreverent pause, the aged and decrepit, with a sensible alacrity — 'twas the Grand Rabbi's abode, in short. Struck with curiosity, I lost no time in learning Syriac (these are vowels, you dogs, — follow my stick's end in the mud, — *Celarent, Darii, Ferio!*), and one morning presented myself spelling-book in hand, a, b, c, — I picked it out letter by

letter, and what was the purport of this miraculous posy? Some cherished legend of the past you'll say — "How Moses hocus-pocussed Egypt's land with fly and locust," — or, "How to Jonah sounded harshish, Get thee up and go to Tarshish," — or, "How the angel meeting Balaam, Straight his ass returned a salaam." In no wise! "Shacka-brach — Boach — somebody or other — Isaach, Re-cei-ver, Pur-cha-ser, and Ex-changer of — Stolen Goods!" So talk to me of the religion of a bishop! I have renounced all bishops save Bishop Beveridge — mean to live so — and die — As some Greek dog-sage, dead and merry, Hellward bound in Charon's wherry — With food for both worlds, under and upper, Lupine-seed and Hecate's supper, And never an obolus — though, thanks to you, or this Intendant thro' you, or this Bishop thro' his Intendant, I possess a burning pocketful of *zwanzigers* — to pay the Stygian ferry!

FIRST POLICEMAN.

There is the girl, then ; go and deserve them the moment you have pointed out to us Signor Luigi and his mother. (*To the rest*) I have been noticing a house yonder this long while — not a shutter unclosed since morning! 58

SECOND POLICEMAN.

Old Luca Gaddi's, that owns the silk-mills here: he dozes by the hour, wakes up, sighs deeply, says he should like to be Prince Metternich, and then dozes again, after having bidden young Sebald, the foreigner, set his wife to playing draughts. Never molest such a household, they mean well. 65

BLUPHOCKS.

Only, cannot you tell me something of this little Pippa I must have to do with? One could make something of that name. Pippa

— that is, short for Felippa — rhyming to
 — Panurge consults Hertrippa — Believ'st
 thou, King Agrippa? Something might be
 done with that name. 72

SECOND POLICEMAN.

Put into rhyme that your head and a ripe
 muskmelon would not be dear at half a
zwanziger! Leave this fooling, and look
 out: the afternoon's over or nearly so. 76

THIRD POLICEMAN.

Where in this passport of Signor Luigi
 does our Principal instruct you to watch him
 so narrowly? There? what's there beside
 a simple signature? (That English fool's
 busy watching.) 81

SECOND POLICEMAN.

Flourish all round — “Put all possible ob-
 stacles in his way;” oblong dot at the end —
 “Detain him till further advices reach you;”

scratch at bottom — “Send him back on pretence of some informality in the above;” ink-spirt on right-hand side (which is the case here) — “Arrest him at once.” Why and wherefore, I don’t concern myself, but my instructions amount to this: if Signor Luigi leaves home to-night for Vienna, well and good — the passport deposed with us for our *visa* is really for his own use, they have misinformed the Office, and he means well; but let him stay over to-night — there has been the pretence we suspect, the accounts of his corresponding and holding intelligence with the Carbonari are correct, we arrest him at once, to-morrow comes Venice, and presently Spielberg. Bluphocks makes the signal sure enough! That is he, entering the turret with his mother, no doubt.

III. — EVENING. *Inside the Turret on the Hill above Asolo. LUIGI and his Mother entering.*

MOTHER.

If there blew wind, you'd hear a long sigh,
 easing
 The utmost heaviness of music's heart.

LUIGI.

Here in the archway?

MOTHER.

Oh no, no — in farther,
 Where the echo is made, on the ridge.

LUIGI.

Here surely, then.
 How plain the tap of my heel as I leaped
 up! 5
 Hark — "Lucius Junius!" The very ghost
 of a voice,

Whose body is caught and kept by — what
are those?

Mere withered wallflowers, waving over-
head?

They seem an elvish group with thin bleached
hair

That lean out of their topmost fortress —
look 10

And listen, mountain men, to what we say,
Hands under chin of each grave earthy
face.

Up and show faces all of you! — “All of
you!”

That’s the king’s dwarf with the scarlet
comb; old Franz,

Come down and meet your fate! Hark —
“Meet your fate!” 15

MOTHER.

Let him not meet it, my Luigi — do not
Go to his city! Putting crime aside,
Half of these ills of Italy are feigned;

MOTHER.

You, Luigi?

Ah, will you let me tell you what you are?

LUIGI.

Why not? Oh, the one thing you fear to
hint,

You may assure yourself I say and say
Ever to myself. At times — nay, even as now
We sit — I think my mind is touched, sus-
pect 35

All is not sound; but is not knowing that
What constitutes one sane or otherwise?

I know I am thus — so all is right again.

I laugh at myself as through the town I
walk,

And see men merry as if no Italy 40

Were suffering; then I ponder — “I am
rich,

Young, healthy; why should this fact trouble
me

More than it troubles these?" But it does
trouble.

No, trouble's a bad word ; for as I walk
There's springing and melody and giddi-
ness, 45

And old quaint turns and passages of my
youth,

Dreams long forgotten, little in themselves,
Return to me — whatever may amuse me,
And earth seems in a truce with me, and
heaven

Accords with me, all things suspend their
strife, 50

The very cicala laughs " There goes he, and
there !

Feast him, the time is short ; he is on his
way

For the world's sake : feast him this once,
our friend ! "

And in return for all this, I can trip
Cheerfully up the scaffold-steps. I go 55
This evening, mother !

MOTHER.

But mistrust yourself —
Mistrust the judgment you pronounce on
him!

LUIGI.

Oh, there I feel — am sure that I am right!

MOTHER.

Mistrust your judgment, then, of the mere
means
To this wild enterprise: say you are right, 60
How should one in your state e'er bring to
pass
What would require a cool head, a cold
heart,
And a calm hand? You never will escape.

LUIGI.

Escape? To even wish that would spoil all.
The dying is best part of it. Too much 65

Have I enjoyed these fifteen years of mine,
 To leave myself excuse for longer life :
 Was not life pressed down, running o'er with
 joy,

That I might finish with it ere my fellows
 Who, sparelier feasted, make a longer stay ?
 I was put at the board-head, helped to all 71
 At first ; I rise up happy and content.
 God must be glad one loves his world so
 much.

I can give news of earth to all the dead
 Who ask me : — last year's sunsets, and great
 stars 75

That had a right to come first and see ebb
 The crimson wave that drifts the sun away —
 Those crescent moons with notched and
 burning rims

That strengthened into sharp fire, and there
 stood,

Impatient of the azure — and that day 80
 In March, a double rainbow stopped the
 storm —

May's warm, slow, yellow moonlit summer
nights —

Gone are they, but I have them in my soul!

MOTHER.

(He will not go !)

LUIGI.

You smile at me? 'Tis true, —
Voluptuousness, grotesqueness, ghastliness,⁸⁵
Environ my devotedness as quaintly
As round about some antique altar wreath
The rose festoons, goats' horns, and oxen's
skulls.

MOTHER.

See now : you reach the city, you must cross
His threshold — how ?

LUIGI.

Oh, that's if we conspired !
Then would come pains in plenty, as you
guess —

But guess not how the qualities most fit
 For such an office, qualities I have,
 Would little stead me otherwise employed,
 Yet prove of rarest merit only here. 95

Every one knows for what his excellence
 Will serve, but no one ever will consider
 For what his worst defect might serve; and
 yet

Have you not seen me range our coppice
 yonder

In search of a distorted ash? I find 100
 The wry spoilt branch a natural perfect bow!
 Fancy the thrice-sage, thrice-precautioned
 man

Arriving at the palace on my errand!
 No, no! I have a handsome dress packed
 up —

White satin here, to set off my black hair, 105
 In I shall march — for you may watch your
 life out

Behind thick walls, make friends there to
 betray you;

More than one man spoils everything. March
straight —

Only no clumsy knife to fumble for !

Take the great gate, and walk (not saunter) on
Thro' guards and guards — I have rehearsed
it all 111

Inside the turret here a hundred times.

Don't ask the way of whom you meet, ob-
serve,

But where they cluster thickliest is the door
Of doors ; they'll let you pass — they'll never
blab 115

Each to the other, he knows not the favorite,
Whence he is bound and what's his business
now.

Walk in — straight up to him ; you have no
knife :

Be prompt, how should he scream ? Then,
out with you !

Italy, Italy, my Italy ! 120

You're free, you're free ! Oh, mother, I could
dream

They got about me — Andrea from his exile,
 Pier from his dungeon, Gaultier from his
 grave!

MOTHER.

Well, you shall go. Yet seems this patriotism
 The easiest virtue for a selfish man 125
 To acquire. He loves himself — and next,
 the world —

If he must love beyond — but nought be-
 tween :

As a short-sighted man sees nought midway
 His body and the sun above. But you
 Are my adored Luigi, ever obedient 130
 To my least wish, and running o'er with love ;
 I could not call you cruel or unkind.
 Once more, your ground for killing him ! —
 then go !

LUIGI.

Now do you try me, or make sport of me ?
 How first the Austrians got these provinces —

If that is all, I'll satisfy you soon — 136
Never by conquest but by cunning, for
That treaty whereby —

MOTHER.

Well?

LUIGI.

(Sure he's arrived,
The telltale cuckoo — Spring's his confidant,
And he lets out her April purposes!) 140
Or — better go at once to modern time —
He has — they have — in fact, I understand
But can't restate the matter; that's my
boast:

Others could reason it out to you, and prove
Things they have made me feel.

MOTHER.

Why go to-night?
Morn's for adventure. Jupiter is now 146
A morning-star. I cannot hear you, Luigi!

L. of G.

3
3 33
3 33
33 33

LUIGI.

“I am the bright and morning-star,” saith
God —

And, “to such an one I give the morning-
star!”

The gift of the morning-star! Have I God’s
gift 150

Of the morning-star?

MOTHER.

Chiara will love to see
That Jupiter an evening-star next June.

LUIGI.

True, mother. Well for those who live
through June!

Great noontides, thunder-storms, all glaring
pomps

Which triumph at the heels of June the God
Leading his revel thro’ our leafy world. 156

Yes, Chiara will be here —

MOTHER.

In June: remember,
Yourself appointed that month for her
coming.

LUIGI.

Was that low noise the echo?

MOTHER.

The night-wind.
She must be grown — with her blue eyes
upturned 160
As if life were one long and sweet surprise:
In June she comes.

LUIGI.

We were to see together
The Titian at Treviso. There, again!

(From without is heard the voice of PIPPA singing.)

A king lived long ago,
In the morning of the world, 165

When earth was nigher heaven than now ;
 And the king's locks curled,
 Disparting o'er a forehead full
 As the milk-white space 'twixt horn and
 horn

Of some sacrificial bull — 170
 Only calm as a babe new-born :
 For he was got to a sleepy mood,
 So safe from all decrepitude,
 Age with its bane, so sure gone by —
 The gods so loved him while he dreamed,¹⁷⁵
 That, having lived thus long, there seemed
 No need the king should ever die.

LUIGI.

No need that sort of king should ever die !

Among the rocks his city was :
 Before his palace, in the sun, 180
 He sat to see his people pass,
 And judge them every one
 From its threshold of smooth stone.

They haled him many a valley-thief
Caught in the sheep-pens, robber chief 185
Swarthy and shameless, beggar-cheat,
Spy-prowler, or rough pirate found
On the sea-sand left aground ;
And sometimes clung about his feet,
With bleeding lip and burning cheek, 190
A woman, bitterest wrong to speak
Of one with sullen thickset brows ;
And sometimes from the prison-house
The angry priests a pale wretch brought,
Who through some chink had pushed
and pressed, 195
On knees and elbows, belly and breast,
Worm-like into the temple, — caught
At last there by the very god,
Who ever in the darkness strode
Backward and forward, keeping watch 200
O'er his brazen bowls, such rogues to
catch !
These, all and every one,
The king judged, sitting in the sun.

LUIGI.

That king should still judge sitting in the sun !

His councillors, on left and right, 205

Looked anxious up, — but no surprise

Disturbed the king's old smiling eyes,

Where the very blue had turned to white.

'Tis said, a Python scared one day

The breathless city, till he came, 210

With forky tongue and eyes on flame,

Where the old king sat to judge alway ;

But when he saw the sweepy hair,

Girt with a crown of berries rare 214

Which the god will hardly give to wear

To the maiden who singeth, dancing bare

In the altar-smoke by the pine-torch lights,

At his wondrous forest rites —

Seeing this, he did not dare

Approach that threshold in the sun, 220

Assault the old king smiling there.

Such grace had kings when the world
 begun !

(PIPPA *passes*.)

LUIGI.

And such grace have they, now that the
world ends!

The Python at the city, on the throne,
And brave men, God would crown for slaying
him, 225

Lurk in by-corners lest they fall his prey.
Are crowns yet to be won, in this late time,
Which weakness makes me hesitate to reach?
'Tis God's voice calls, how could I stay?
Farewell!

*Talk by the way, while PIPPA is passing from the
Turret to the Bishop's brother's House, close to
the Duomo Santa Maria. Poor Girls sitting on
the steps.*

FIRST GIRL.

There goes a swallow to Venice — the stout
sea-farer!

Seeing those birds fly, makes one wish for
wings.

Let us all wish; you, wish first!

FIRST GIRL.

My turn.

Spring's come and summer's coming : I would
wear

A long loose gown — down to the feet and
hands, 15

With plaits here, close about the throat, all
day ;

And all night lie, the cool long nights, in
bed ;

And have new milk to drink, apples to eat,
Deuzans and junetings, leather-coats — ah,
I should say, 19

That is away in the fields — miles !

THIRD GIRL.

Say at once

You'd be at home — she'd always be at
home !

Now comes the story of the farm among
The cherry orchards, and how April snowed

White blossoms on her as she ran. Why, fool,
 They've rubbed the chalk-mark out, how tall
 you were, 25
 Twisted your starling's neck, broken his
 cage,
 Made a dunghill of your garden !

FIRST GIRL.

They destroy

My garden since I left them? well — per-
 haps !

I would have done so — so I hope they have !
 A fig-tree curled out of our cottage wall ; 30
 They called it mine, I have forgotten why,
 It must have been there long ere I was born :
Cric — cric — I think I hear the wasps o'er-
 head

Pricking the papers strung to flutter there
 And keep off birds in fruit-time — coarse
 long papers, 35
 And the wasps eat them, prick them through
 and through.

THIRD GIRL.

How her mouth twitches! Where was I?
— before

She broke in with her wishes and long gowns
And wasps — would I be such a fool? — Oh,
here! 39

See how that beetle burnishes in the path!
There sparkles he along the dust; and, there—
Your journey to that maize-tuft spoiled at
least!

FIRST GIRL.

When I was young, they said if you killed
one
Of those sunshiny beetles, that his friend
Up there would shine no more that day nor
next. 45

SECOND GIRL.

When you were young? Nor are you young,
that's true!
How your plump arms, that were, have
dropped away!

Why, I can span them ! Cecco beats you still ?
 No matter, so you keep your curious hair.
 I wish they'd find a way to dye our hair 50
 Your color — any lighter tint, indeed,
 Than black — the men say they are sick of
 black,
 Black eyes, black hair !

FOURTH GIRL.

Sick of yours, like enough !
 Do you pretend you ever tasted lampreys
 And ortolans ? Giovita, of the palace, 55
 Engaged (but there's no trusting him) to
 slice me
 Polenta with a knife that had cut up
 An ortolan.

SECOND GIRL.

Why, there ! is not that Pippa
 We are to talk to, under the window, —
 quick, — 59
 Where the lights are ?

FIRST GIRL.

That she? No, or she would sing.
For the Intendant said —

THIRD GIRL.

Oh, you sing first !
Then, if she listens and comes close — I'll
tell you,
Sing that song the young English noble made,
Who took you for the purest of the pure,
And meant to leave the world for you — what
fun ! 65

SECOND GIRL.

[*Sings.*]

You'll love me yet ! — and I can tarry
Your love's protracted growing :
June reared that bunch of flowers you carry
From seeds of April's sowing.
I plant a heartful now : some seed 70
At least is sure to strike

And yield — what you'll not pluck indeed,
Not love, but, may be, like.

You'll look at least on love's remains,
A grave's one violet : 75
Your look ? — that pays a thousand pains.
What's death ? — you'll love me yet !

THIRD. GIRL (*to Pippa, who approaches*).

Oh, you may come closer — we shall not
eat you ! Why, you seem the very person
that the great rich handsome Englishman has
fallen so violently in love with ! I'll tell you
all about it. 82

IV. — NIGHT. *The Palace by the Duomo.* MON-
SIGNOR, *dismissing his* Attendants.

MONSIGNOR.

Thanks, friends, many thanks. I chiefly
desire life now, that I may recompense every
one of you. Most I know something of al-

“Oh, you may come closer—we shall not eat you!”

Photogravure. From drawing by Louis Meynelle.



ready. What, a repast prepared? *Benedicto benedicatur* — ugh! — ugh! Where was I? Oh, as you were remarking, Ugo, the weather is mild, very unlike winter weather; but I am a Sicilian, you know, and shiver in your Julys here. To be sure, when 'twas full summer at Messina, as we priests used to cross in procession the great square on Assumption Day, you might see our thickest yellow tapers twist suddenly in two, each like a falling star, or sink down on themselves in a gore of wax. But go, my friends, but go! [*To the Intendant*] Not you, Ugo! [*The others leave the apartment.*] I have long wanted to converse with you, Ugo! 18

INTENDANT.

Uguccio —

MONSIGNOR.

—'Guccio Stefani, man! of Ascoli, Fermo, and Fossombruno; — what I do need in-

structing about are these accounts of your administration of my poor brother's affairs. Ugh! I shall never get through a third part of your accounts: take some of these dainties before we attempt it, however. Are you bashful to that degree? For me, a crust and water suffice.

INTENDANT.

Do you choose this especial night to question me? 30

MONSIGNOR.

This night, Ugo. You have managed my late brother's affairs since the death of our elder brother — fourteen years and a month, all but three days. On the 3d of December, I find him — 35

INTENDANT.

If you have so intimate an acquaintance with your brother's affairs, you will be tender

of turning so far back: they will hardly bear looking into, so far back. 39

MONSIGNOR.

Ay, ay, ugh, ugh, — nothing but disappointments here below! I remark a considerable payment made to yourself on this 3d of December. Talk of disappointments! There was a young fellow here, Jules, a foreign sculptor I did my utmost to advance, that the Church might be a gainer by us both: he was going on hopefully enough, and of a sudden he notifies to me some marvellous change that has happened in his notions of art. Here's his letter: "He never had a clearly conceived ideal within his brain till to-day. Yet since his hand could manage a chisel, he has practised expressing other men's ideals; and, in the very perfection he has attained to, he foresees an ultimate failure. His unconscious hand will pursue its prescribed course of old years,

and will reproduce with a fatal expertness the ancient types, let the novel one appear never so palpably to his spirit. There is but one method of escape; confiding the virgin type to as chaste a hand, he will turn painter instead of sculptor, and paint, not carve, its characteristics," — strike out, I dare say, a school like Correggio. How think you, Ugo?

66

INTENDANT.

Is Correggio a painter?

MONSIGNOR.

Foolish Jules! and yet, after all, why foolish? He may, probably will, fail egregiously; but if there should arise a new painter, will it not be in some such way by a poet now, or a musician — spirits who have conceived and perfected an ideal through some other channel — transferring it to this, and escaping our conventional roads by pure ignorance of

them ; eh, Ugo ? If you have no appetite,
talk at least, Ugo ! 77

INTENDANT.

Sir, I can submit no longer to this course of yours. First, you select the group of which I formed one ; next you thin it gradually, — always retaining me with your smile, — and so do you proceed till you have fairly got me alone with you between four stone walls. And now then ? Let this farce, this chatter, end now — what is it you want with me ? 86

MONSIGNOR.

Ugo !

INTENDANT.

From the instant you arrived, I felt your smile on me as you questioned me about this and the other article in those papers — why your brother should have given me this villa,

that *podere*, — and your nod at the end meant — what? 93

MONSIGNOR.

Possibly that I wished for no loud talk here. If once you set me coughing, Ugo! —

INTENDANT.

I have your brother's hand and seal to all I possess. Now ask me what for! what service I did him — ask me! 98

MONSIGNOR.

I would better not: I should rip up old disgraces, let out my poor brother's weaknesses. By the way, Maffeo of Forli — which, I forgot to observe, is your true name — was the interdict ever taken off you, for robbing that church at Cesena? 104

INTENDANT.

No, nor needs be; for when I murdered your brother's friend, Pasquale, for him —

MONSIGNOR.

Ah, he employed you in that business, did he? Well, I must let you keep, as you say, this villa and that *podere*, for fear the world should find out my relations were of so indifferent a stamp! Maffeo, my family is the oldest in Messina, and century after century have my progenitors gone on polluting themselves with every wickedness under heaven. My own father — rest his soul! — I have, I know, a chapel to support that it may rest; my dear two dead brothers were — what you know tolerably well; I, the youngest, might have rivalled them in vice, if not in wealth, but from my boyhood I came out from among them, and so am not partaker of their plagues. My glory springs from another source; or if from this, by contrast only, — for I, the bishop, am the brother of your employers, Ugo. I hope to repair some of their wrong, however: so far as my brother's ill-

gotten treasure reverts to me, I can stop the consequences of his crime ; and not one *soldo* shall escape me. Maffeo, the sword we quiet men spurn away, you shrewd knaves pick up and commit murders with ; what opportunities the virtuous forego, the villainous seize. Because, to pleasure myself, apart from other considerations, my food would be millet-cake, my dress sackcloth, and my couch straw, — am I therefore to let you, the offscouring of the earth, seduce the poor and ignorant, by appropriating a pomp these will be sure to think lessens the abominations so unaccountably and exclusively associated with it? Must I let villas and *poderi* go to you, a murderer and thief, that you may beget by means of them other murderers and thieves? No — if my cough would but allow me to speak!

145

INTENDANT.

What am I to expect? You are going to punish me?

MONSIGNOR.

Must punish you, Maffeo. I cannot afford to cast away a chance. I have whole centuries of sin to redeem, and only a month or two of life to do it in. How should I dare to say —

152

INTENDANT.

“Forgive us our trespasses?”

MONSIGNOR.

My friend, it is because I avow myself a very worm, sinful beyond measure, that I reject a line of conduct you would applaud, perhaps. Shall I proceed, as it were, a-pardoning? I, who have no symptom of reason to assume that aught less than my strenuous-est efforts will keep myself out of mortal sin, much less keep others out. No. I do trespass, but will not double that by allowing you to trespass.

163

INTENDANT.

And suppose the villas are not your brother's to give, nor yours to take? Oh, you are hasty enough just now!

166

MONSIGNOR.

One, two — No. 3! — ay, can you read the substance of a letter, No. 3, I have received from Rome? It is precisely on the ground there mentioned, of the suspicion I have that a certain child of my late elder brother, who would have succeeded to his estates, was murdered in infancy by you, Maffeo, at the instigation of my late brother — that the Pontiff enjoins on me not merely the bringing that Maffeo to condign punishment, but the taking all pains, as guardian of the infant's heritage for the Church, to recover it parcel by parcel, howsoever, whensoever, and wheresoever. While you are now gnawing those fingers, the police are engaged in seal-

ing up your papers, Maffeo, and the mere raising my voice brings my people from the next room to dispose of yourself. But I want you to confess quietly, and save me raising my voice. Why, man, do I not know the old story? The heir between the succeeding heir, and this heir's ruffianly instrument, and their complot's effect, and the life of fear and bribes and ominous smiling silence? Did you throttle or stab my brother's infant? Come, now! 192

INTENDANT.

So old a story, and tell it no better? When did such an instrument ever produce such an effect? Either the child smiles in his face, or, most likely, he is not fool enough to put himself in the employer's power so thoroughly; the child is always ready to produce — as you say — howsoever, wheresoever, and whensoever. 200

MONSIGNOR.

Liar!

INTENDANT.

Strike me? Ah, so might a father chastise! I shall sleep soundly to-night at least, though the gallows await me to-morrow; for what a life did I lead! Carlo of Cesena reminds me of his connivance, every time I pay his annuity — which happens commonly thrice a year. If I remonstrate, he will confess all to the good bishop — you! 209

MONSIGNOR.

I see thro' the trick, caitiff! I would you spoke truth for once. All shall be sifted, however — seven times sifted.

INTENDANT.

And how my absurd riches encumbered me! I dared not lay claim to above half my

possessions. Let me but once unbosom myself, glorify Heaven, and die! — Sir, you are no brutal, dastardly idiot like your brother I frightened to death: let us understand one another. Sir, I will make away with her for you — the girl — here close at hand; not the stupid obvious kind of killing; do not speak — know nothing of her or me! I see her every day — saw her this morning. Of course there is to be no killing; but at Rome the courtesans perish off every three years, and I can entice her thither — have, indeed, begun operations already. There's a certain lusty, blue-eyed, florid-complexioned English knave I and the police employ occasionally. You assent, I perceive — no, that's not it — assent I do not say — but you will let me convert my present havings and holdings into cash, and give me time to cross the Alps? 'Tis but a little black-eyed, pretty singing Felippa, gay silk-winding girl. I have kept her out of harm's way up to this present;

for I always intended to make your life a plague to you with her. 'Tis as well settled once and forever. Some women I have procured will pass Bluphocks, my handsome scoundrel, off for somebody; and once Pippa entangled! — you conceive? Through her singing? Is it a bargain? 243

(From without is heard the voice of PIPPA singing.)

Overhead the treetops meet,
 Flowers and grass spring 'neath one's feet;
 There was nought above me, nought below,
 My childhood had not learned to know;
 For what are the voices of birds —
 Ay, and of beasts — but words, our words,
 Only so much more sweet? 250
 The knowledge of that with my life begun.
 But I had so near made out the sun,
 And counted your stars, the seven and one,
 Like the fingers of my hand:
 Nay, I could all but understand 255



Wherefore through heaven the white moon
ranges ;

And just when out of her soft fifty changes

No unfamiliar face might overlook me —

Suddenly God took me ! 259

(PIPPA *passes.*)

MONSIGNOR.

[*Springing up.*] My people — one and all
— all — within there ! Gag this villain — tie
him hand and foot ! He dares — I know not
half he dares — but remove him — quick !
Miserere mei, Domine ! quick, I say ! 264

PIPPA'S Chamber again. *She enters it.*

The bee with his comb,

The mouse at her dray,

The grub in its tomb,

Wile winter away ;

But the firefly and hedge-shrew and lobworm,

I pray,

5

How fare they ?

Ha, ha, best thanks for your counsel, my
Zanze !

“ Feast upon lampreys, quaff the Breganze ” —

The summer of life so easy to spend, 10

And care for to-morrow so soon put away !

But winter hastens at summer’s end,

And firefly, hedge-shrew, lobworm, pray,

How fare they ?

No bidding me then to — what did she say ?

“ Pare your nails pearlwise, get your small

feet shoes 15

More like ” — what said she ? — “ and less

like canoes ! ”

How pert that girl was ! — would I be those

pert,

Impudent, staring women ? It had done me,

However, surely no such mighty hurt

To learn his name who passed that jest upon

me : 20

No foreigner, that I can recollect,

Came, as she says, a month since, to inspect

Our silk-mills — none with blue eyes and
thick rings

Of raw-silk-colored hair, at all events.

Well, if old Luca keep his good intents, 25

We shall do better, see what next year
brings !

I may buy shoes, my Zanze, not appear

More destitute than you perhaps next year !

Bluph— something ! I had caught the un-
couth name 29

But for Monsignor's people's sudden clatter

Above us — bound to spoil such idle chat-
ter

As ours ; it were, indeed, a serious matter

If silly talk like ours should put to shame

The pious man, the man devoid of blame,

The — ah, but — ah, but, all the same, 35

No mere mortal has a right

To carry that exalted air ;

Best people are not angels quite :

While — not the worst of people's doings
scare

The devil ; so there's that proud look to
 spare ! 40

Which is mere counsel to myself, mind ! for
 I have just been the holy Monsignor !
 And I was you too, Luigi's gentle mother,
 And you too, Luigi !—how that Luigi
 started

Out of the turret — doubtlessly departed 45
 On some good errand or another,
 For he passed just now in a traveller's trim,
 And the sullen company that prowled
 About his path, I noticed, scowled
 As if they had lost a prey in him. 50

And I was Jules the sculptor's bride,
 And I was Ottima beside,
 And now what am I ? — tired of fooling.
 Day for folly, night for schooling !
 New-Year's day is over and spent, 55
 Ill or well, I must be content !

Even my lily's asleep, I vow :
 Wake up — here's a friend I've plucked you !
 Call this flower a heart's-ease now !

Something rare, let me instruct you, 60
Is this, with petals triply swollen,
Three times spotted, thrice the pollen,
While the leaves and parts that witness
The old proportions and their fitness
Here remain unchanged, unmoved now — 65
Call this pampered thing improved now!
Suppose there's a king of the flowers,
And a girl-show held in his bowers —
“Look ye, buds, this growth of ours,”
Says he, “Zanze from the Brenta, 70
I have made her gorge polenta
Till both cheeks are near as bouncing
As her — name there's no pronouncing!
See this heightened color too,
For she swilled Breganze wine 75
Till her nose turned deep carmine —
'Twas but white when wild she grew.
And only by this Zanze's eyes,
Of which we could not change the size,
The magnitude of all achieved 80
Otherwise may be perceived!”

Oh, what a drear, dark close to my poor day!
 How could that red sun drop in that black
 cloud?

Ah, Pippa, morning's rule is moved away,
 Dispensed with, never more to be allowed!⁸⁵
 Day's turn is over — now arrives the night's.
 O lark, be day's apostle
 To mavis, merle, and throstle,
 Bid them their betters jostle
 From day and its delights! 90

But at night, brother howlet, over the woods,
 Toll the world to thy chantry;
 Sing to the bats' sleek sisterhoods
 Full complines with gallantry;
 Then, owls and bats, 95
 Cows and twats,
 Monks and nuns, in a cloister's moods,
 Adjourn to the oak-stump pantry!

[After she has begun to undress herself.

Now, one thing I should like to really know:
 How near I ever might approach all these
 I only fancied being, this long day — 101

Approach, I mean, so as to touch them, so
As to — in some way — move them — if you
please,

Do good or evil to them some slight way.

For instance, if I wind 105

Silk to-morrow, my silk may bind

[Sitting on the bedside.

And broider Ottima's cloak's hem.

Ah, me, and my important part with them,

This morning's hymn half promised when I
rose !

True in some sense or other, I suppose. 110

[As she lies down.

God bless me ! I can pray no more to-night.

No doubt, some way or other, hymns say
right.

All service ranks the same with God

With God, whose puppets, best and worst,

Are we : there is no last nor first. 115

[She sleeps.

THE END.

NOTES

PROLOGUE. — *Asolo*. A small fortified town in the province of Treviso, about thirty miles from Venice. It is situated on a hill commanding a fine prospect. Asolo was known to the ancients as Ascelum, and it still contains the ruins of a Roman aqueduct. Silk-growing is the leading industry. Browning was exceedingly fond of the town, both in his youth and old age. His last volume was named after it, "Asolando." Asolo is encircled by a massive wall, and has an old cathedral, beside other prominent buildings.

1. *Day*. The irregular, hurrying lines, gradually lengthening from the monosyllable of the first line to the twelve syllables of the twelfth, are admirably suggestive of the advancing dawn.

20. *Asolo*. The poet places the accent on the first syllable, although it properly falls on the second. He uses the same poetic license in ll. 42 and 64 below.

40. *Feel*. Feeling, as commonly in Middle English.

62. *Monsignor*. The Bishop, who has control of his brother's estates, as is subsequently made clear in

the course of the play. For the other leading characters, see Introduction.

88. *Martagon*. A species of lily (*Lilium martagon*), commonly known as "Turk's cap."

89. *Saint Agnes*. A virgin martyr of the fourth century; the Saint Agnes of Keats's famous poem. Pippa evidently has in mind some painting in the cathedral.

90. *Turk bird*. Turkey. The familiar domestic fowl is sometimes called Turk bird since it is supposed to come from Turkey.

100. *Weevil and chafer*. Insects of the beetle family; the latter is also called May-bug and cockchafer.

102. *Gibe*. Flout.

120. *Old Luca*. Ottima's hated husband.

131. *Possagno church*. Possagno, a village four miles from Asolo, was the birthplace of Canova, who designed its famous church. The latter is in the form of a circular temple, and contains an altar-piece by the great artist, as well as his tomb. It is singularly appropriate that the wedding of a sculptor should take place in this church.

166. *Our turret*. Evidently one of the towers of the old walls.

169. *Each to each*. The reference is to Luigi and his mother.

181. *The Palace by the Dome*. The Bishop's Palace, which adjoins the cathedral (*Duomo* or *Dome*.)

213. *Cicala*. Italian for *cicada*, or locust.

SCENE I. — 4. *Your Rhineland nights*. "There is an especial dramatic purpose in making Sebald a German. The Italian temperament would not be capable of so strong a reaction as he suffers." (Rolfe.)

28. *St. Mark's*. The cathedral at Venice. Although thirty miles distant, it can be seen from the hill of Asolo on a clear day.

29-30. *Vicenza, Padua*. Towns about twenty-five miles distant from Asolo. *Vicenza* is southwest of Asolo, and *Padua* directly south.

45. *His blood*. Note the effect of crime in compelling the mind to dwell upon certain words which haunt the imagination and constantly recall the dreadful memory. Compare "Macbeth" ii. 2. 31.

53. *Wittol*. A compliant or contented cuckold.

56. *Black?* The resemblance of the dark wine to blood repels him.

58. *Duomo*. Cathedral. Cf. Prologue, 181.

59. *Capuchin*. The Capuchin monks are a branch of the Franciscan order. They wear a brown habit.

76. *Proof-mark*. The sign which indicates that a print is among the first impressions from the plate.

80. *Coil*. Fuss, ado.

116. *He is turned.* It is a common superstition that the face of a murdered man looks skyward for vengeance.

119. *Four gray hairs.* Ottima is probably older than Sebald. Cf. 228 below.

167. *Campanula.* A genus of flowers having bell-shaped corollas, and known as harebell, or bell-flower. (Lat. *campanula*, little bell.)

185. *Swift ran*, etc. Cf. Browning's wonderful picture of a thunder-storm in "The Ring and the Book." ("The Pope," 2118, *et seq.*)

189. *Plunged and replunged his weapon at a venture.* A marvellous stroke of the imagination.

INTERLUDE I.—*Giovacchino.* The poet Giovacchino evidently resorted to the honorable expedient of flight in order to escape some unworthy passion. Cf. Biblical story of Joseph and the wife of Potiphar. It is also possible that the woman's love referred to is pure but unreciprocated and unwelcome, and that the flight is instigated by consideration for her happiness. In either case, any conduct indicating self-control or moral principle could win nothing but sneers from such fellows as those forming this group of speakers.

17. *Trieste.* A city of Austria-Hungary at the head of the gulf of the same name, at the northeastern extremity of the Adriatic. It is seventy-three miles northeast of Venice.

19. *Bluphocks*. This odd name means "Blue-Fox," and is said by Furnivall to be "a skit on the *Edinburgh Review*, which is bound in a cover of blue and fox." Rolfe calls Bluphocks "the only unredeemed villain whom Browning has created." See Interlude ii. 1.

24. *Æsculapius*. The god of medicine. Giovacchino is ridiculed for regarding love as a disease to be cured instead of a passion to be enjoyed, and it is maliciously suggested that his new epic take Æsculapius for its hero and that various drugs be called into requisition to cure the love-sick victim.

34. *Et canibus nostris*. And to our dogs. From Virgil, *Eclogues*, iii. 67: "Notior ut jam sit canibus non Delia nostris."

42. *In a tale*. Bound to tell the same story. Cf. Shakespeare, "Much Ado About Nothing," iv. 2. 28:

111. *Psiche-fanciulla*. One of the most faultless of Canova's works, representing Psyche (*Psiche*) as a maiden with a butterfly. *Fanciulla* is Italian for young girl. Canova's Psyche is in the gallery at Possagno.

117. *Pietà*. Shortly before his death, Canova produced this statue of the Virgin with the dead Christ in her arms, for the church at Possagno.

139. *Malamocco*. "The Lagoon, immediately opposite to Venice, is closed by a long shoaly island, Malamocco" (Murray). On this island, which forms

part of the boundary of the harbor of Venice, is a small town of the same name.

141. *Alciphron*. A Greek philosopher and epistolary writer of the age of Alexander the Great.

146. *Lire*. Plural of *lira*, an Italian coin equivalent to the French *franc*, or equal to about twenty cents of our money.

149. *Tydeus*. An Homeric hero who was a leader in the expedition against Thebes. He was a son of Æneus, King of Colydon. *Academy*. The Academy of Fine Arts, Venice.

153. *Fenice*. Phenix, the principal theatre in Venice.

177. *Hannibal Scratchy*. A burlesque spelling of the name of the celebrated Italian painter, Annibale Caracci.

SCENE II. — 26. *Psyche*. Psyche (*i.e.* the soul) was very beautiful, and was beloved by Cupid. Venus, however, hated and persecuted her. Cupid finally made her his wife, and Psyche gained immortality.

39. *Minion*, favorite. Cf. Shakespeare, "Cymbeline," ii. 3. 39: "The exile of her minion is too new." *Coluthus*. A Greek epic poet of the sixth century, whose "Rape of Helen," was discovered by Cardinal Bessarion, a Greek scholar (1395-1472), noted for his profound and varied learning; and his reverence for the literature and traditions of Greece. Jules

seems to have had an illuminated copy made by the cardinal's scribe.

40. *Bistre*. "A dark brown paint, made from the soot of wood."

46. *He said, and on Antinous*, etc. See *Odyssey*, xxii. 10. Antinous was the first among the suitors of Penelope to meet his fate at the hands of Ulysses. He fell, pierced in the neck by the "bitter shaft."

50. *Almaign Kaiser*. German emperor.

51. *Truncheon*. A short staff, emblematic of high office.

54. *Hippolyta*. Queen of the Amazons.

55. *Numidian*. Numidia was a country in the northern part of Africa, corresponding in the main with the modern Algeria.

59. *Thunder-free*. A crown of bay or laurel was thought by the ancients to be a protection against lightning.

61. *Hipparchus*. The son of Pisistratus, tyrant of Athens, who was slain (B. C. 514) by Harmodius and Aristogeiton. His tragic fate was a favorite subject for drinking songs. The daggers with which the despot was stabbed were concealed in the myrtle-branches carried by the assassins at the festival of the Panathenæa. Cf. "Childe Harold," iii. 20.

75. *Parsley crowns*. "The leaves of a species of parsley (*Apium graveolens*, our celery) were much

used by the ancients in garlands on account of their strong fragrance, especially in drinking-bouts." (Rolfe.)

92. *Dryad*. Wood nymph.

95. *Chalk*. Crayon.

98. *Steel*. Tool of the engraver.

108. *Flesh*. In the same construction as *metal*, l. 106.

181. *I am a painter*. These verses, designed to reveal the diabolical plot, are mystical and involved in manner, but plainly convey the meaning that Jules is to be wounded through his love, in conformity with the revengeful schemes of Lutwyche, whose jealous hatred takes this means of delivering the artist a mortal blow. Jules is furnished unmistakable evidence that the woman he has idealized possesses neither strength of mind nor purity of character.

257. *To eternally reprove*. The "split infinitive," usually avoided by careful prose writers, is sometimes made necessary in poetry by the exigencies of metre.

258. *Kate the Queen*. Caterina Cornaro, born c. 1454, a native of Venice and the last queen of Cyprus, was forced to resign her kingdom to the Venetians in 1489. Her abdication was attended with unusual ceremony, and her journey from Cyprus to Venice was a tour of triumph. On her arrival at Venice, she was received with distinguished honor by the

Doge and Senate, and was assigned for a place of residence the Château Fort of Asolo. In the latter town, Caterina formed a small court, and wielded her brief and very circumscribed authority with firmness and grace. She died in Venice in 1510.

270. *Jesses*. Straps of leather or silk, fitted to the legs of a hawk, to which the line held in the falconer's hand is attached. Cf. "Othello," iii. 3. 261.

272. *The Cornaro*. The castle at Asolo, built in the thirteenth century, which was the residence of Caterina Cornaro ("Kate the Queen"), after her abdication of the throne of Cyprus.

276. *Grace*. Favor.

290. *The visionary butterfly*. Symbol of the soul, and of immortality.

306. *Henceforth*. Thenceforth, from that time. *Ancona*. A city of Central Italy, on the coast of the Adriatic; capital of the province of the same name.

INTERLUDE II. — 1. *Bluphocks*. The foot-note which Browning adds seems to be a "half-apology for creating a character of so unmixed evil" (Rolfe), and a plea for the reader's tolerance toward the depraved scoundrel.

3. *Intendant*. The superintendent in charge of the estate just inherited by the Bishop from his brother. The "Intendant's money" refers to the bribe of

Maffeo, whose plot has for its end the doing away with Pippa, the real heiress of the estate.

10. *Grig*. Cricket. Cf. Tennyson, "The Brook," 54: "High-elbowed grigs that leap in summer grass."

13. *Armenian*. The Armenian Church divided from the Roman Catholic in 491. It has its own Pope ("Catholicos").

14. *Kænigsberg*. A fortified city of East Prussia, 338 miles northeast of Berlin, and ranking as the third city in the dominion. It is capital of the government of the same name.

15. *Prussia Improper*. Prussia Proper was the name applied to the arm of land bounded on the north by the Baltic and on the south by Poland, in order to distinguish it from the other provinces of the kingdom.

18. *Chaldee*. A Semitic dialect.

26. *Syriac*. Syriac was the common language in Western Asia from the third to the eighth century. It still exists as the ecclesiastical language in the Syrian churches. *Vowels*. The Syriac language has five vowels designated by the Greek vowels inverted.

28. *Celarent, Darii, Ferio*. Coined words employed in logic. They are in the first of "five mnemonic lines used by logicians to designate the nineteen valid forms of the syllogism."

32. *Posy*. Contraction of "poesy" — a verse, or motto. Cf. "Merchant of Venice," v. 1. 148:

" A paltry ring
That she did give me, whose posy was
For all the world like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife."

33. *Hocus-pocussed*. Juggled. *Fly and locust*. Cf. Exodus, viii. 20 and x. 4. *Tarshish*. Introduced arbitrarily for the sake of the rhyme. It was not to Tarshish but to Nineveh that God commanded Jonah to go. Cf. Jonah, i.

36. *How the angel*, etc. Cf. Numbers, xxii. 22, *et seq.*

43. *Bishop Beveridge*. A Calvinist theologian (1636-1707). The pun on the name is obvious.

45. *Charon's wherry*. Charon was the son of Erebus. It was his office to carry the shades of the dead in his boat across the River Styx. Cf. *Stygian ferry*, l. 51, below. In return for his service, Charon was paid with an *obolus* (a small silver Athenian coin), placed in the mouth of the corpse before burial.

47. *Lupine-seed*. A kind of pulse. "In plant-lore, 'lupine' means wolfish, and is suggestive of the Evil One" ("Flower-lore," Friend, p. 59). *Hecate*. A goddess of the underworld who was greatly feared,

and who was thought to be propitiated by frequent offerings of eggs, fish, onions, etc. These gifts of food were usually placed at cross-roads.

51. *Zwanzigers*. An Austrian coin worth twenty kreutzers, or about fifteen cents.

61. *Prince Metternich*. A famous Austrian statesman (1773-1859), whose policy was one of conservatism and repression. He was prime minister during the most eventful years of the reign of Napoleon. It is to him that the well-known saying is attributed: "Après moi, le deluge!"

70. *Panurge consults Hertrippa*. Panurge is a character in Rabelais's romance, "Gargantua and Pantagruel." He consults the magician Hertrippa in regard to his marriage.

71. *King Agrippa*. Cf. Acts xxvi. 27.

73. *Your head and a ripe muskmelon*. Cf. the old English proverb: "He that loseth his wife and sixpence hath lost a tester" (the *tester* being sixpence).

80. *That English fool's*, etc. There is no occasion for fear that the man whom they are watching will escape while they are talking.

92. *Deposed*. Deposited.

93. *Visa*. An endorsement made by the police upon a passport after they have inspected it and found it correct.

98. *Carbonari*. An Italian secret society, organized in 1820, which was endeavoring to free Italy from the grasp of Austria.

100. *Spielberg*. An Austrian prison.

101. *Makes the signal*. Points out Luigi to the police.

SCENE III.—6. *Lucius Junius*. Lucius Junius Brutus led the revolt which resulted in the expulsion of the Tarquins and the establishment of the Roman republic (509 B. C.). His name occurs naturally to Luigi, as the latter tries the echo, since the young patriot is contemplating a similar deed to that which won immortal renown for Brutus.

14. *Old Franz*. Francis I., Emperor of Austria.

19. *Pellicos*. Silvio Pellico (1788–1854), an Italian patriot and a member of the Carbonari. He was arrested and confined eleven years in the prisons of Santa Margherita in Milan, of I Piombi at Venice, and finally in the Spielberg. His celebrated book, “*Le Mie Prigioni*,” gives a history of his long imprisonment. Pellico was set at liberty in 1830, and devoted the remainder of his life to literary work.

30. *They visit night by night*. That is, in dreams.

55. *I go this evening*. See Interlude ii. 90 *et seq.* The police have been misinformed.

99. *Coppice*. A copse; wood of small growth.

122. *Andrea, Pier, Gualtier*. Former conspirators against the tyrannical Austrian government.

135. *How first the Austrians got these provinces*. Austria gained by conquest the greater part of Northern Italy in 1813. The Congress of Vienna afterward made repeated concessions, until by 1815 all the provinces fell under Austrian control.

138. *The treaty*. Made by the Congress of Vienna.

148. "*I am the bright and morning star.*" Cf. Revelation, xxii. 16.

150. *The gift of the morning star*. Cf. Revelation, ii. 28.

151. *Chiara*. Luigi's betrothed.

156. *Leading his revel*. It is unusual to find June personified as masculine.

163. *The Titian at Treviso*. An altar-piece by Titian in the Cathedral of San Pietro. Treviso is an Italian town, seventeen miles from Venice.

164. *A king lived long ago*. A song first published in 1835. Numerous alterations were made when it was incorporated in "Pippa Passes" in 1841.

168. *Disparting*. Intensive form of *parting*.

172. *Got*. Begotten.

174. *Age with its bane*. The edition of 1835 has: "Age with its pine."

184. *Haled*. Dragged, hauled. Cf. Luke xii. 58 :
 "Lest he *hale* thee to the judge."

189. *And sometimes clung*, etc. The following four lines were inserted in 1841. This verse then read :

"Sometimes there clung about his feet."

209. *Python*. The monster serpent slain by Apollo. He lived in the caves of Mt. Parnassus, and guarded the oracle of Delphi. Subsequently came to be used of any dragon, and finally of any violent, dangerous tyrant.

INTERLUDE III.—7. *Fig-peckers*. A species of bird that lives upon figs.

8. *Lampreys*. A kind of fish resembling an eel in shape, and having a circular suckorial mouth with teeth on its inner surface. It is still eaten commonly in many parts of Europe. *Breganze-wine*. Wine made at Breganza, an Italian village, twelve miles north of Vicenza.

19. *Deuzans*. A kind of apple. *Junetings*. A variety of early apple. *Leather-coat*. A tough-skinned apple. The name is frequently applied to the golden russet. Cf. "2 Henry IV." v. 3. 44 : "There's a dish of leather-coats for you."

55. *Ortolans*. An Old World bunting, a small singing bird found in Europe, considered a great

table-delicacy. Cf. Browning's Prologue to "Ferish-tah's Fancies":

" Pray, reader, have you eaten ortolans
Ever in Italy?" etc.

57. *Polenta*. A porridge made of corn meal. It forms the principal food of the poorer class of Italians.

SCENE IV. — 4. *Benedicto benedicatur*. A form of blessing.

10. *Messina*. A city and seaport of Sicily, having many fine buildings and one of the best harbors in the Mediterranean. Its climate, while excellent, is extremely hot in midsummer, as the Bishop intimates.

11. *Assumption Day*. A Church festival celebrated on the 15th of August to commemorate the miraculous ascent into heaven of the Virgin Mary.

20. *Ascoli, Fermo, and Fossombruno*. Towns of Central Italy which are important ecclesiastical centres.

44. *Jules, a foreign sculptor*. See Scene II. above.

54. *The very perfection*. One of Browning's favorite doctrines is to the effect that in attaining any form of perfection on earth, one encounters danger of ulti-

mate spiritual defeat. Aspiration, endless battles with apparent failure, are more to be desired than whatever kind of self-satisfied accomplishment. Cf. "Andrea del Sarto":

"A man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for? . . ."

65. *Correggio*. Antonio Allegri da Correggio (1494-1534), one of the most famous of Italian painters. His reputation rests chiefly on his frescoes in the church of San Giovanni and those on the dome of the cathedral at Parma.

92. *Podere*. A farm or small landed property; a manor.

101. *Forli*. A walled city of Central Italy at the foot of the Apennines, about forty miles southeast of Bologna.

104. *Cesena*. An episcopal city situated between Bologna and Ancona, and about twelve miles from Forli.

128. *Soldo*. The Italian "penny"; a copper coin equivalent in value to the French *sou*.

134. *Millet-cake*. A kind of cake made from a variety of small grain which grows in Italy. It is eaten almost wholly by the peasantry.

141. *Poderi*. Plural of *podere*. See l. 92, above.

226. *Begun operations already*. See Interlude ii.

253. *The seven and one.* "The Seven Stars" is a popular term for the Pleiades. Rolfe thinks the *one* may be "any 'bright particular star' in the heavens," but it is suggested in the notes to the Clarke and Porter edition that "the 'one' is probably Aldebaran (the follower), so called because it follows upon the Pleiades."

264. *Miserere mei, Domine.* "Have mercy on me, O Lord!"

EPILOGUE. — 2. *Dray.* Nest; usually that of the squirrel.

5. *Hedge-shrew.* Field-mouse. *Lob-worm.* Resembles an earth-worm, though somewhat larger. Lives in the sand of seashores, and is much used for bait. Spelled also *lug-worm.*

70. *Brenta.* A navigable river of North Italy, which rises in the Tyrol.

88. *Mavis, merle, and throstle.* The *mavis* is the English song-thrush; the *merle* is the English black-bird; the *throstle* belongs to the thrush family, and by the "Standard Dictionary" is also identified with the song-thrush (*turdus musicus*).

91. *Howlet.* Owlet.

92. *Chantry.* Private chapel.

94. *Full complines.* An ecclesiastical term: the last of the canonical hours, or the last service of common prayer for the day, following vespers. Plural of *complin* or *compline*.

96. *Cowls and twats*. The poet has explained (through Doctor Furnivall) that he obtained the word *twats*, referring to a part of a nun's attire, from the Royalist jingle called "Vanity of Vanities" inspired by the picture of Sir Harry Vane:

"'Tis said they will give him a cardinal's hat:
They sooner will give him an old nun's twat."

"The word struck me," said Browning, "as a distinctive part of a nun's attire that might fitly pair off with the cowl appropriated to a monk."

BROWNING'S LIFE AND WRITINGS

A CHRONOLOGY



1812.

Robert Browning born, May 7th, Parish of St. Giles, Camberwell, London.

Baptized, June 14th, in Congregational Chapel, Walworth.

1825.

Obtains Shelley's poems, which have a formative influence on his genius.

1826.

Leaves private school, where he has spent several years, and studies at home with a tutor.

1829-30.

Attends lectures at University College, London.

1833.

Pauline published.

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1833-34.

Travels in Russia and Italy.

Returns to Camberwell.

1835.

Paracelsus published.

The Browning family move from Camberwell to Hatcham.

Browning makes the acquaintance of Macready.

1835-36.

Contributes several poems to the *Monthly Repository*.

1837.

Strafford published.

Strafford produced at Covent Garden Theatre, May 1st.

1838.

First Italian journey.

1840.

Sordello published.

1841.

Publication of *Bells and Pomegranates* begun.

Pippa Passes published.

1842.

King Victor and King Charles published.

Dramatic Lyrics published.

Writes *Pied Piper of Hamelin* for Mr. Macready's young son, Willy.

1843.

The Return of the Druses published.

A Blot in the 'Scutcheon published.

A Blot in the 'Scutcheon produced at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, February 11th.

1844.

Visit to Italy.

Colombe's Birthday published.

1844-45.

Contributes six poems to *Hood's Magazine*.

1845.

Dramatic Romances and Lyrics published.

1846.

Luria published.

A Soul's Tragedy published.

Married Elizabeth Barrett, September 12th.

1847.

Moves to Italy, residing at Casa Guidi, Florence.

1849.

Poems (first collected edition) published in two volumes.

Birth of Robert Barrett Browning, March 9th.

Death of the poet's mother.

1850.

Christmas-Eve and Easter-Day published.

1851.

The Brownings visit England, and spend the following winter in Paris with Robert Browning, the elder.

1852.

Introductory essay to the [spurious] Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley published.

The Brownings pass the summer in London. Return to Florence the following winter.

1853.

Colombe's Birthday produced at the Haymarket Theatre by Miss Helen Faucit, April 25th.

1855.

Men and Women published.

1855-56.

Resides in London and Paris.

1858.

A trip to Normandy.

1861.

Death of Mrs. Browning at Casa Guidi, June 29th.

1863.

Poetical Works published in three volumes.

1864.

Three poems contributed to *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Dramatis Personæ published.

1866.

Death of Browning's father at Paris.

1867.

Receives degree of M. A. from Oxford, and is made honorary Fellow of Balliol College.

1868.

Poetical Works published in six volumes

1868-69.

The Ring and the Book published.

A tour in Scotland, and visit to Lady Ashburton at Loch Luichart Lodge.

1870.

Residence at St.-Aubin, France.

1871.

Balaustian's Adventure published in August.
Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau, Savior of Society,
published in December.

Hervé Riel published in *Cornhill Magazine*.

1872.

Fifine at the Fair published.

Publishes a volume of selections from his works.

1872-73.

Spends part of each year at St.-Aubin.

1873.

*Red Cotton Night-Cap Country; or, Turf and
Towers* published.

1874.

Visit to Antwerp.

1875.

Aristophanes' Apology published in April.

The Inn Album published in November.

Visit to Villers, on coast of Normandy.

Nominated to the office of Lord Rector of the
University of Glasgow.

1876.

Pacchiarotto and Other Poems published.

Visit to the Isle of Arran.

1877.

The Agamemnon of Æschylus published.

Spends the autumn with his sister at La Saisiaz, a villa among the mountains near Geneva.

Receives formal offer of the Lord-Rectorship of the University of St. Andrews.

1878.

La Saisiaz: The Two Poets of Croisic published.

Revisits Italy.

1879.

Dramatic Idyls published.

Elected President of the New Shakespeare Society.

Receives degree of LL. D. from Cambridge.

1880.

Dramatic Idyls, Second Series, published.

Publishes a second series of selections from his works.

1881.

London Browning Society holds its first meeting, October 25th.

1882.

Receives degree of D. C. L. from Oxford.

1883.

Jocoseria published.

1884.

Receives the degree of LL. D. from the University of Edinburgh.

Ferishtah's Fancies published.

Again declines to stand for the Lord-Rectorship of St. Andrews.

1885.

Purchases a residence in Venice, the *Palazzo Manzoni*, and returns to England.

1886.

Spends the autumn in Wales.

Accepts the post of foreign correspondent to the Royal Academy.

1887.

Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in Their Day published.

1888.

Returns to Italy.

1888-89.

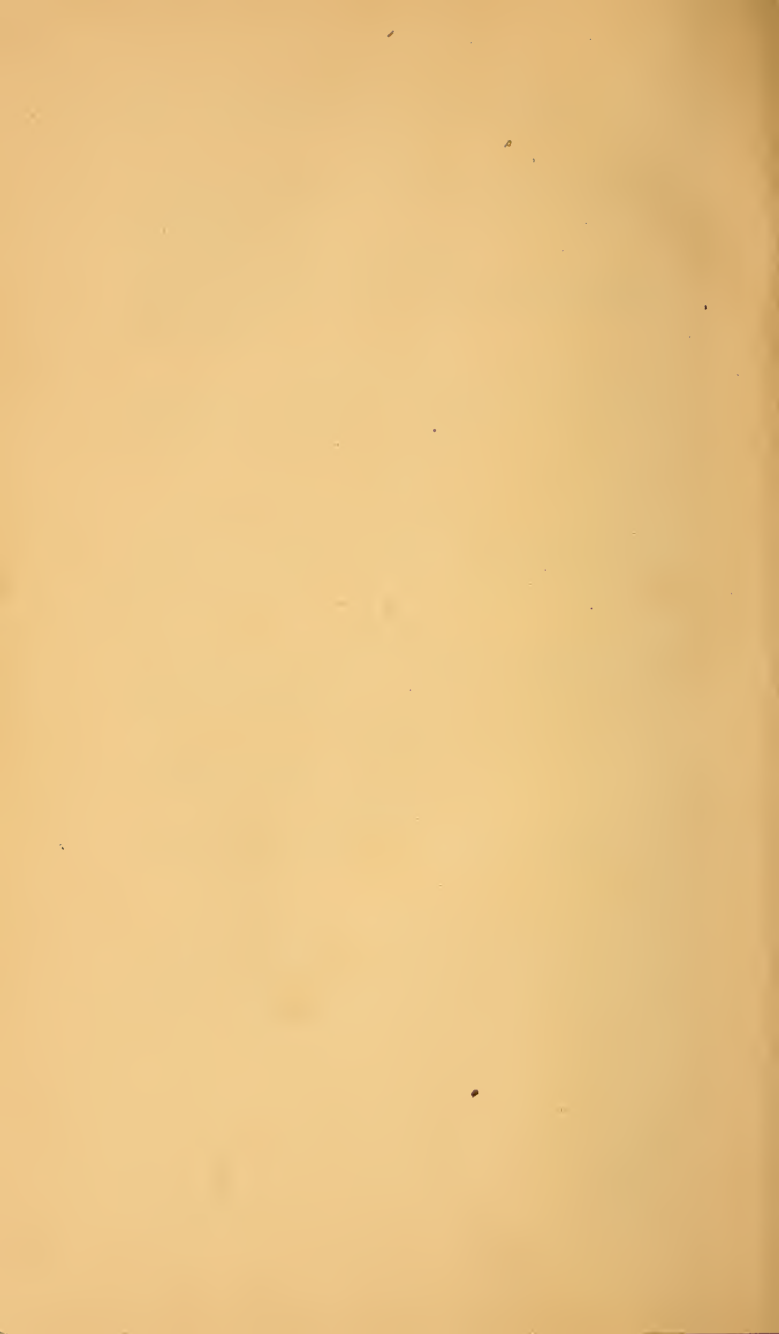
Poetical Works published in sixteen volumes.

1889.

Asolando: Fancies and Facts published.

Robert Browning died at Venice, December 12th; buried in Westminster Abbey, December 31st.





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