

# SOUTHERN WEEKLY POST.

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## SELECT POETRY.

### THE STEP DAUGHTER.

We have rarely read anything more touchingly than the following lines.

She is not mine, and to my heart  
Perhaps she is less dear  
Than those who of my life are part—  
This is the sin I fear:  
And ever in the dread to err,  
By loving those the best,  
More gentle have I been to her,  
Perhaps than all the rest.

Has any little fault occurred,  
That may rebuke demand  
Else I can speak a hasty word;  
Or lift a chiding hand,  
An angel's form comes flitting by,  
With look so sad and mild—  
A voice floats softly from the sky,  
"Wouldst harm my orphan child?"  
No—witness thou and all above,  
"I'll cherish her as mine,  
Or may I lose her father's love,  
A love that once was thine!

## SELECTED STORY.

### THE SURGEON'S ADVENTURE.

In the year 1836, as a young surgeon of Florida, called Alberto Riquetti, was returning at a hour to his own house, he stumbled over the body of a person who was lying near his door, and dying for help. Ever anxious to succor the distressed, Riquetti, with the assistance of his servant, lifted the stranger into his surgery, where he dressed several very dangerous wounds which he had about his person; and then, as the night too far advanced to carry him anywhere, he left.

The following morning he found the patient still, but he entertained very little hope of his recovery; and as to remove him would have been insipidly fatal, he allowed him to remain where he was. On the second day he was so bad that Riquetti doubted his surviving four-and-twenty hours longer; and having acquainted him with his situation, he proceeded to inquire his name and address, and sought to ascertain if he had any friends or relations whom he would desire to see, to whom, should his death ensue, he would wish to be communicated. The man answered, with respect to his name, he was called Gaspardo; but for the rest, he requested that a messenger might be sent for, to whom he would known whatever was necessary.

This desire was complied with, and what passed between the patient and priest of course remained unknown. But when the holy man came forth from the stranger's chamber, his whole demeanor shone awe and terror; his cheeks and lips were bluish; his hands trembled; and ever and anon he directed them up to heaven, as if praying for the soul of a great sinner. The only words he uttered were, to desire that, when the man he had known was dead, he should be immediately informed of the circumstance.

As the first day was to be devoted to the necropsy of Veii, after refreshing himself with a crust of bread and a glass of wine, he set forth on his expedition, having informed his host that, as he should be occupied all day in the sight-seeing, he wished a good supper to be provided against his return at night—a request which the worthy Boniface assured him should be strictly attended to.

"Indeed," he said, "he was generally in the habit of acting as cook himself, and he shone he might venture to promise his guest a ragout, the like of which he had never tasted—he was particularly fond of his ragouts; indeed," added he, "most travelers who eat them find them so good, that they are never inclined to taste another."

"Except of your making, I suppose?" said Riquetti, smiling.

"Of course—that's understood," answered the host.

To follow him, thought our traveler, as he followed his guide in the direction of Veii. The guide seemed to be of the same opinion, for he chuckled and laughed, and appeared greatly diverted with this explosion of the host's sole.

"I suppose you have a good many travelers here?" said Riquetti.

"Not in the winter," answered the man, "you are the first we have seen for this long time. You come from Florence?"

"Yes, I do," replied Riquetti. "How did you know that?"

"I happened to hear the postillion that drove you tell the innkeeper so, and that you were making a tour for your health!"

"That is true, too," said Riquetti, rather wondering how the postillion, whom he had never seen before, should have learned so much about him.

"It's dull traveling alone," continued the man; "particularly when a person's sick and out of health; but perhaps you are a bachelor, and have nobody to look much after you?"

"I am a bachelor, certainly," said Riquetti, rather amused at the curiosity the man was exhibiting. "Unsophisticated nature," thought he—"savages, and uncivilized people, are always inquisitive;" so, without taking offence at the interrogations, he answered as many as the guide chose to put to him.

In the meantime they advanced slowly on the road to Veii, stopping ever and anon to inspect the different points of view, and examining everything that appeared to present vestige of antiquity; when, in rounding a point of rock, they came suddenly upon a little hotel, before the door of which stood a man scraping and tying up in bundles the sticks which, at another period of the year, are used for training the vines. At the sound of the approaching footsteps the man lifted up his head, and as his eye fell upon the surgeon, he started visibly, and an expression of surprise passed over his countenance. He even parted his lips, as if upon the impulse of the moment, he was about to speak; but suddenly closing them again, after giving one look at the traveler, he stooped forward, and silently resumed his previous attitude and occupation; whilst Riquetti, who had cast but a passing glance at the man, and who attributed his surprise to the suddenness of their appearance, walked on, and thought no more of the matter.

It was drawing towards the afternoon, and our traveler had already spent some hours among the tombs, when, emerging from one of them, he observed the same man, sitting on the ground, near the entrance. He seemed to have wounded his foot, and was staining the blood with a handkerchief. The guide approached him, and asked him what was the matter.

"I hurt my foot yesterday," said he; "and being obliged to walk thus far to speak to old Giuseppe, the exercise has set it bleeding again," saying which he bound the handkerchief round his foot and arose.

As he spoke, there was something in the voice and the play of the features that struck Riquetti as familiar to him; and that this approach to recognition was legible in his own face, was evident, for the man instantly frowned, and turned away his head. He, however, seemed inclined to join the party, or at least his way lay in the same direction; for he kept near them, lingering rather behind, as his lameness impeded his activity. Presently, at a moment when the guide was a few yards in advance, and Riquetti between the two, he felt him

Having given this little sketch of one of the most interesting specimens of antiquity in Italy, we will now return to our hero.

It was on a fine morning of the early spring that Alberto Riquetti started on his expedition to the metropolis of the ancient city of Veii—a city, by the way, which it cost the Romans many a hard battle to win, and which, after holding out a siege of ten years, was at length taken by their famous general, Camillus, about four hundred years before the Christian era.

Veii, or rather the spot where Veii once stood, is situated about twelve miles from Rome, on one of the roads to Florence. For the first nine or ten miles the way lies along the high road, but, at a village called Fossa, it diverges, and for about two miles more leads across some fields, till it terminates at a place called the Isola Farnese, where there is an inn at which travelers put up, and where, although the site of Veii is two miles further still, they are obliged to leave their horses and carriages, as beyond this point there is no practical road.

The Isola Farnese is a quiet little hamlet, situated on a rising ground, surrounded by cliffs, and streams, and picturesque rocks, and murmuring waterfalls, adorned by the pretty inn and an ancient and venerable fortress. The inhabitants, who are all shepherds and vine-dressers, are extremely civil to travelers, and have an air of innocence and rural simplicity that, to a frequenter of cities like Alberto Riquetti, was quite irresistible.

"Here," thought he, "must the crimes, and vices, and miseries of a great city be unknown, and probably unsuspected. How few of the dwellers in this little Elegia have ever extended their travels as far as Rome! Their vines and their flocks are enough for them. Above want, and below ambition, their minds must be pure and their lives happy. It is quite a subject for a poet."

The inn-keeper, too, was the most civil and obsequious of inn-keepers—quite a pattern of an inn-keeper; and Alberto Riquetti was so charmed and fascinated by all he saw, that he resolved to make the Isola Farnese his head-quarters, and thence extended his excursions to the different objects of curiosity around.

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self slightly touched upon the back, and on looking round he beheld the wife dresser with the forefinger of one hand placed upon his lip, as if to enjoin silence, whilst in the other he held a piece of linen stained with blood, which he stretched out towards the traveler, shaking his head the while, and frowning in a manner that Riquetti was at a loss to understand, and which, as the injunction to silence was perfectly intelligible, he forbore to ask. His curiosity, however, being vividly awakened; and indeed his fears somewhat aroused, for he thought the gestures of the man seemed designed as a warning against some danger that awaited himself.

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