666

MARINO FALIERO,

A TRAGEDY.

THE PROPHECY OF DANTE,

A POEM.



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MARINO FALIERO,

DOGE OF VENICE.

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

WITH NOTES.

THE PROPHECY OF DANTE,

A POEM.

BY LORD BYRON.

LONDON:
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MARINO FALIERO.

" *Dux* inquieti turbidus Adriæ."

HORACE.



PREFACE.

THE conspiracy of the Doge Marino Faliero is one of the most remarkable events in the annals of the most singular government, city, and people of modern history. It occurred in the year 1355. Every thing about Venice is, or was, extraordinary—her aspect is like a dream, and her history is like a romance. The story of this Doge is to be found in all her Chronicles, and particularly detailed in the "Lives of the Doges," by Marin Sanuto, which is given in the Appendix. It is simply and clearly related, and is perhaps more dramatic in itself than any scenes which can be founded upon the subject.

Marino Faliero appears to have been a man of talents and of courage. I find him commander in chief of the land forces at the siege of Zara, where he beat the King of Hungary

and his army of 80,000 men, killing 8000 men, and keeping the besieged at the same time in check, an exploit to which I know none similar in history, except that of Cæsar at Alesia, and of Prince Eugene at Belgrade. He was afterwards commander of the fleet in the same war. He took Capo d'Istria. He was ambassador at Genoa and Rome, at which last he received the news of his election to the Dukedom; his absence being a proof that he sought it by no intrigue, since he was apprized of his predecessor's death and his own succession at the same moment. But he appears to have been of an ungovernable temper. A story is told by Sanuto, of his having, many years before, when podesta and captain at Treviso, boxed the ears of the bishop, who was somewhat tardy in bringing the Host. For this honest Sanuto "saddles him with a judgment," as Thwackum did Square; but he does not tell us whether he was punished or rebuked by the Senate for this outrage at the time of its commission. He seems, indeed, to have been afterwards at peace with the church, for we find him ambassador at Rome, and invested with the fief of Val di Marino, in the march of Treviso, and with the title of Count, by Lorenzo Count-Bishop of Ceneda. For these facts my authorities are,

Sanuto, Vettor Sandi, Andrea Navagero, and the account of the siege of Zara, first published by the indefatigable Abbate Morelli, in his "Monumenti Veneziani di varia letteratura," printed in 1796, all of which I have looked over in the original language. The moderns, Darú, Sismondi, and Laugier, nearly agree with the ancient chroniclers. Sismondi attributes the conspiracy to his *jealousy;* but I find this nowhere asserted by the national historians. Vettor Sandi, indeed, says, that "Altri scrissero che . . . . . dalla gelosa suspizion di esso Doge siasi fatto (Michel Steno) staccar con violenza," &c. &c.; but this appears to have been by no means the general opinion, nor is it alluded to by Sanuto or by Navagero, and Sandi himself adds a moment after, that "per altre Veneziane memorie traspiri, che non il *solo* desiderio di vendetta lo dispose alla congiura ma anche la innata abituale ambizion sua, per cui anelava a farsi principe independente." The first motive appears to have been excited by the gross affront of the words written by Michel Steno on the ducal chair, and by the light and inadequate sentence of the Forty on the offender, who was one of their "tre Capi." The attentions of Steno himself appear to have been directed towards one of her damsels, and

not to the "Dogaressa" herself, against whose fame not the slightest insinuation appears, while she is praised for her beauty, and remarked for her youth. Neither do I find it asserted (unless the hint of Sandi be an assertion) that the Doge was actuated by jealousy of his wife; but rather by respect for her, and for his own honour, warranted by his past services and present dignity.

I know not that the historical facts are alluded to in English, unless by Dr. Moore in his View of Italy. His account is false and flippant, full of stale jests about old men and young wives, and wondering at so great an effect from so slight a cause. How so acute and severe an observer of mankind as the author of Zeluco could wonder at this is inconceivable. He knew that a basin of water spilt on Mrs. Masham's gown deprived the Duke of Marlborough of his command, and led to the inglorious peace of Utrecht—that Louis XIV. was plunged into the most desolating wars because his minister was nettled at his finding fault with a window, and wished to give him another occupation—that Helen lost Troy—that Lucretia expelled the Tarquins from Rome—and that Cava brought the Moors

to Spain—that an insulted husband led the Gauls to Clusium, and thence to Rome—that a single verse of Frederick II. of Prussia on the Abbé de Bernis, and a jest on Madame de Pompadour, led to the battle of Rosbach—that the elopement of Dearbhorgil with Mac Murchad conducted the English to the slavery of Ireland—that a personal pique between Maria Antoinette and the Duke of Orleans precipitated the first expulsion of the Bourbons—and, not to multiply instances, that Commodus, Domitian, and Caligula fell victims not to their public tyranny, but to private vengeance—and that an order to make Cromwell disembark from the ship in which he would have sailed to America destroyed both king and commonwealth. After these instances, on the least reflection, it is indeed extraordinary in Dr. Moore to seem surprised that a man, used to command, who had served and swayed in the most important offices, should fiercely resent in a fierce age an unpunished affront, the grossest that can be offered to a man, be he prince or peasant. The age of Faliero is little to the purpose, unless to favour it.

> "The young man's wrath is like straw on fire,
> "*But like red hot steel is the old man's ire.*"

" Young men soon give and soon forget affronts,
" Old age is slow at both."

Laugier's reflections are more philosophical: —" Tale fù il fine ignominioso di un' uomo, che la sua nascità, la sua età, il suo carattere dovevano tener lontano dalle passioni produttrici di grandi delitti. I suoi *talenti* per lungo tempo esercitati ne' maggiori impieghi, la sua capacità sperimentata ne' governi e nelle ambasciate, gli avevano acquistato la stima e la fiducia de' cittadini, ed avevano uniti i suffragj per collocarlo alla testa della republica. Innalzato ad un grado che terminava gloriosamenta la sua vita, il risentimento di un' ingiuria leggiera insinuò nel suo cuore tal veleno che bastò a corrompere le antiche sue qualita, e a condurlo al termine dei scellerati; serio esempio, che prova *non esservi età, in cui la prudenza umana sia sicura, e che nell' uomo restano sempre passioni capaci a disonorarlo, quando non invigili sopra se stesso.*"—*Laugier, Italian translation*, vol. iv. page 30, 31.

Where did Dr. Moore find that Marino Faliero begged his life? I have searched the chroniclers, and find nothing of the kind; it is

true that he avowed all. He was conducted to the place of torture, but there is no mention made of any application for mercy on his part; and the very circumstance of their having taken him to the rack seems to argue any thing but his having shown a want of firmness, which would doubtless have been also mentioned by those minute historians who by no means favour him: such, indeed, would be contrary to his character as a soldier, to the age in which he lived, and *at* which he died, as it is to the truth of history. I know no justification at any distance of time for calumniating an historical character; surely truth belongs to the dead, and to the unfortunate, and they who have died upon a scaffold have generally had faults enough of their own, without attributing to them that which the very incurring of the perils which conducted them to their violent death renders, of all others, the most improbable. The black veil which is painted over the place of Marino Faliero amongst the doges, and the Giant's Staircase where he was crowned, and discrowned, and decapitated, struck forcibly upon my imagination, as did his fiery character and strange story. I went in 1819 in search of his tomb more than once to the church San Giovanni e San Paolo, and as I was standing before the

monument of another family, a priest came up to me and said, "I can show you finer monuments than that." I told him that I was in search of that of the Faliero family, and particularly of the Doge Marino's. "Oh," said he, "I will show it you;" and conducting me to the outside, pointed out a sarcophagus in the wall with an illegible inscription. He said that it had been in a convent adjoining, but was removed after the French came, and placed in its present situation; that he had seen the tomb opened at its removal; there were still some bones remaining, but no positive vestige of the decapitation. The equestrian statue of which I have made mention in the third act as before that church is not, however, of a Faliero, but of some other now obsolete warrior, although of a later date. There were two other Doges of this family prior to Marino: Ordelafo, who fell in battle at Zara in 1117 (where his descendant afterwards conquered the Huns), and Vital Faliero, who reigned in 1082. The family, originally from Fano, was of the most illustrious in blood and wealth in the city of once the most wealthy and still the most ancient families in Europe. The length I have gone into on this subject will show the interest I have taken in it. Whether I have succeeded or not in the

tragedy, I have at least transferred into our language an historical fact worthy of commemoration.

It is now four years that I have meditated this work, and before I had sufficiently examined the records, I was rather disposed to have made it turn on a jealousy in Faliero. But perceiving no foundation for this in historical truth, and aware that jealousy is an exhausted passion in the drama, I have given it a more historical form. I was besides well advised by the late Matthew Lewis on that point, in talking with him of my intention at Venice in 1817. "If "you make him jealous," said he, "recollect "that you have to contend with established "writers, to say nothing of Shakespeare, and "an exhausted subject;—stick to the old fiery "Doge's natural character, which will bear you "out, if properly drawn; and make your plot "as regular as you can." Sir William Drummond gave me nearly the same counsel. How far I have followed these instructions, or whether they have availed me, is not for me to decide. I have had no view to the stage; in its present state it is, perhaps, not a very exalted object of ambition; besides I have been too much behind the scenes to have thought it so

at any time. And I cannot conceive any man of irritable feeling putting himself at the mercies of an audience:——the sneering reader, and the loud critic, and the tart review, are scattered and distant calamities; but the trampling of an intelligent or of an ignorant audience on a production which, be it good or bad, has been a mental labour to the writer, is a palpable and immediate grievance, heightened by a man's doubt of their competency to judge, and his certainty of his own imprudence in electing them his judges. Were I capable of writing a play which could be deemed stage-worthy, success would give me no pleasure, and failure great pain. It is for this reason that even during the time of being one of the committee of one of the theatres, I never made the attempt, and never will*. But surely there

* While I was in the sub-committee of Drury Lane Theatre, I can vouch for my colleagues, and I hope for myself, that we did our best to bring back the legitimate drama. I tried what I could to get "De Montfort" revived, but in vain, and equally in vain in favour of Sotheby's "Ivan," which was thought an acting play; and I endeavoured also to wake Mr. Coleridge to write a tragedy. Those who are not in the secret will hardly believe that the "School for Scandal" is the play which has brought *least money*, averaging the number of times it has been acted since its production; so Manager Dibdin assured me. Of what has occurred since

is dramatic power somewhere, where Joanna Baillie, and Milman, and John Wilson exist. The "City of the Plague" and the "Fall of Jerusalem" are full of the best "*materiel*" for

Maturin's "Bertram," I am not aware; so that I may be traducing, through ignorance, some excellent new writers; if so, I beg their pardon. I have been absent from England nearly five years, and, till last year, I never read an English newspaper since my departure, and am now only aware of theatrical matters through the medium of the Parisian Gazette of Galignani, and only for the last twelve months. Let me then deprecate all offence to tragic or comic writers, to whom I wish well, and of whom I know nothing. The long complaints of the actual state of the drama arise, however, from no fault of the performers. I can conceive nothing better than Kemble, Cooke, and Kean, in their very different manners, or than Elliston in *gentleman's* comedy, and in some parts of tragedy. Miss O'Neill I never saw, having made and kept a determination to see nothing which should divide or disturb my recollection of Siddons. Siddons and Kemble were the *ideal* of tragic action; I never saw any thing at all resembling them even in *person:* for this reason, we shall never see again Coriolanus or Macbeth. When Kean is blamed for want of dignity, we should remember that it is a grace and not an art, and not to be attained by study. In all, *not* SUPERnatural parts, he is perfect; even his very defects belong, or seem to belong, to the parts themselves, and appear truer to nature. But of Kemble we may say, with reference to his acting, what the Cardinal de Retz said of the Marquis of Montrose, "that he was the "only man he ever saw who reminded him of the heroes of "Plutarch."

tragedy that has been seen since Horace Walpole, except passages of Ethwald and De Montfort. It is the fashion to underrate Horace Walpole; firstly, because he was a nobleman, and secondly, because he was a gentleman; but to say nothing of the composition of his incomparable letters, and of the Castle of Otranto, he is the "Ultimus Romanorum," the author of the Mysterious Mother, a tragedy of the highest order, and not a puling love-play. He is the father of the first romance, and of the last tragedy in our language, and surely worthy of a higher place than any living writer, be he who he may.

In speaking of the drama of Marino Faliero, I forgot to mention that the desire of preserving, though still too remote, a nearer approach to unity than the irregularity, which is the reproach of the English theatrical compositions, permits, has induced me to represent the conspiracy as already formed, and the Doge acceding to it, whereas in fact it was of his own preparation and that of Israel Bertuccio. The other characters (except that of the duchess), incidents, and almost the time, which was wonderfully short for such a design in real life, are strictly historical, except that all the con-

sultations took place in the palace. Had I followed this, the unity would have been better preserved; but I wished to produce the Doge in the full assembly of the conspirators, instead of monotonously placing him always in dialogue with the same individuals. For the real facts, I refer to the extracts given in the Appendix in Italian, with a translation.

MARINO FALIERO.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice.
Bertuccio Faliero, Nephew of the Doge.
Lioni, a Patrician and Senator.
Benintende, Chief of the Council of Ten.
Michel Steno, one of the three Capi of the Forty.
Israel Bertuccio, Chief of the Arsenal,
Philip Calendaro,
Dagolino,
Bertram,
} *Conspirators.*
Signor of the Night, { "*Signore di Notte,*" *one of the Officers belonging to the Republic.*
First Citizen.
Second Citizen.
Third Citizen.
Vincenzo,
Pietro,
Battista,
} *Officers belonging to the Ducal Palace.*
Secretary of the Council of Ten.
Guards, Conspirators, Citizens, The Council of Ten, The Giunta, &c. &c.

WOMEN.

Angiolina, Wife to the Doge.
Marianna, her Friend.
Female Attendants, &c.

Scene Venice—in the year 1355.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

MARINO FALIERO.

ACT I. SCENE I.

An Antechamber in the Ducal Palace.

PIETRO *speaks, in entering, to* BATTISTA.

PIETRO.

Is not the messenger return'd?

BATTISTA.

Not yet;
I have sent frequently, as you commanded,
But still the Signory is deep in council
And long debate on Steno's accusation.

PIETRO.

Too long—at least so thinks the Doge.

BATTISTA.

How bears he
These moments of suspense?

PIETRO.

With struggling patience,
Placed at the ducal table, cover'd o'er
With all the apparel of the state; petitions,

Despatches, judgments, acts, reprieves, reports,
He sits as rapt in duty; but whene'er
He hears the jarring of a distant door,
Or aught that intimates a coming step,
Or murmur of a voice, his quick eye wanders,
And he will start up from his chair, then pause,
And seat himself again, and fix his gaze
Upon some edict; but I have observed
For the last hour he has not turn'd a leaf.

BATTISTA.

'Tis said he is much moved, and doubtless 't was
Foul scorn in Steno to offend so grossly.

PIETRO.

Ay, if a poor man: Steno 's a patrician,
Young, galliard, gay, and haughty.

BATTISTA.

Then you think
He will not be judged hardly.

PIETRO.

'T were enough
He be judged justly; but 'tis not for us
To anticipate the sentence of the Forty.

BATTISTA.

And here it comes.—What news, Vincenzo?

Enter VINCENZO.

VINCENZO.

'Tis
Decided; but as yet his doom's unknown:
I saw the president in act to seal

The parchment which will bear the Forty's judgment
Unto the Doge, and hasten to inform him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Ducal Chamber.

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge; and his nephew* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

It cannot be but they will do you justice.

DOGE.

Ay, such as the Avogadori did,
Who sent up my appeal unto the Forty
To try him by his peers, his own tribunal.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

His peers will scarce protect him; such an act
Would bring contempt on all authority.

DOGE.

Know you not Venice? Know you not the Forty?
But we shall see anon.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO (*addressing* VINCENZO, *then entering.*)

How now—what tidings?

VINCENZO.

I am charged to tell his highness that the court
Has pass'd its resolution, and that, soon

As the due forms of judgment are gone through,
The sentence will be sent up to the Doge;
In the mean time the Forty doth salute
The Prince of the Republic, and entreat
His acceptation of their duty.

DOGE.

Yes—
They are wond'rous dutiful, and ever humble.
Sentence is past, you say?

VINCENZO.

It is, your highness:
The president was sealing it, when I
Was call'd in, that no moment might be lost
In forwarding the intimation due
Not only to the Chief of the Republic
But the complainant, both in one united.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Are you aware, from aught you have perceived,
Of their decision?

VINCENZO.

No, my lord; you know
The secret custom of the courts in Venice.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

True; but there still is something given to guess,
Which a shrewd gleaner and quick eye would catch at;
A whisper, or a murmur, or an air
More or less solemn spread o'er the tribunal.
The Forty are but men—most worthy men,
And wise, and just, and cautious—this I grant—
And secret as the grave to which they doom

The guilty; but with all this, in their aspects—
At least in some, the juniors of the number—
A searching eye, an eye like yours, Vincenzo,
Would read the sentence ere it was pronounced.

VINCENZO.

My lord, I came away upon the moment,
And had no leisure to take note of that
Which pass'd among the judges, even in seeming;
My station near the accused too, Michel Steno,
Made me——

DOGE (*abruptly.*)

And how look'd *he?* deliver that.

VINCENZO.

Calm, but not overcast, he stood resign'd
To the decree, whate'er it were;—but lo!
It comes, for the perusal of his highness.

Enter the SECRETARY *of the Forty.*

SECRETARY.

The high tribunal of the Forty sends
Health and respect to the Doge Faliero,
Chief magistrate of Venice, and requests
His highness to peruse and to approve
The sentence past on Michel Steno, born
Patrician, and arraign'd upon the charge
Contain'd, together with its penalty,
Within the rescript which I now present.

DOGE.

Retire, and wait without.—Take thou this paper:

[*Exeunt* SECRETARY *and* VINCENZO.

The misty letters vanish from my eyes;
I cannot fix them.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Patience, my dear uncle:
Why do you tremble thus?—nay, doubt not, all
Will be as could be wish'd.

DOGE.

Say on.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO (*reading.*)

"Decreed
"In council, without one dissenting voice,
"That Michel Steno, by his own confession,
"Guilty on the last night of Carnival
"Of having graven on the ducal throne
"The following words——"

DOGE.

Would'st thou repeat them?
Would'st *thou* repeat them—*thou*, a Faliero,
Harp on the deep dishonour of our house,
Dishonour'd in its chief—that chief the prince
Of Venice, first of cities?—To the sentence.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Forgive me, my good lord; I will obey—
(*Reads.*) "That Michel Steno be detain'd a month
"In close arrest."

DOGE.

Proceed.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

My lord, 'tis finish'd.

DOGE.

How, say you?—finish'd! Do I dream?—'tis false—

Give me the paper—(*Snatches the paper, and reads*)—
" 'Tis decreed in council
" That Michel Steno"——Nephew, thine arm!

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Nay,
Cheer up, be calm; this transport is uncall'd for—
Let me seek some assistance.

DOGE.

Stop, sir—Stir not—
'Tis past.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

I cannot but agree with you
The sentence is too slight for the offence—
It is not honourable in the Forty
To affix so slight a penalty to that
Which was a foul affront to you, and even
To them, as being your subjects; but 'tis not
Yet without remedy: you can appeal
To them once more, or to the Avogadori,
Who, seeing that true justice is withheld,
Will now take up the cause they once declined,
And do you right upon the bold delinquent.
Think you not thus, good uncle? why do you stand
So fix'd? You heed me not:—I pray you, hear me!

DOGE, (*dashing down the ducal bonnet, and offering to trample upon it, exclaims, as he is withheld by his nephew*)

Oh! that the Saracen were in Saint Mark's!
Thus would I do him homage.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

For the sake
Of Heaven and all its saints, my lord——

DOGE.

Away!

Oh, that the Genoese were in the port!
Oh, that the Huns whom I o'erthrew at Zara
Were ranged around the palace!

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

'Tis not well

In Venice' Duke to say so.

DOGE.

Venice' Duke!

Who now is Duke in Venice? let me see him,
That he may do me right.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

If you forget

Your office, and its dignity and duty,
Remember that of man, and curb this passion.
The Duke of Venice——

DOGE (*interrupting him.*)

There is no such thing—

It is a word—nay, worse—a worthless by-word:
The most despised, wrong'd, outraged, helpless wretch,
Who begs his bread, if 'tis refused by one,
May win it from another kinder heart;
But he, who is denied his right by those
Whose place it is to do no wrong, is poorer
Than the rejected beggar—he's a slave—
And that am I, and thou, and all our house,
Even from this hour; the meanest artisan
Will point the finger, and the haughty noble
May spit upon us:—where is our redress?

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

The law, my prince——

DOGE (*interrupting him.*)

You see what it has done—
I ask'd no remedy but from the law—
I sought no vengeance but redress by law—
I call'd no judges but those named by law—
As sovereign, I appeal'd unto my subjects,
The very subjects who had made me sovereign,
And gave me thus a double right to be so.
The rights of place and choice, of birth and service,
Honours and years, these scars, these hoary hairs,
The travel, toil, the perils, the fatigues,
The blood and sweat of almost eighty years,
Were weigh'd i' the balance, 'gainst the foulest stain,
The grossest insult, most contemptuous crime
Of a rank, rash patrician—and found wanting!
And this is to be borne?

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

I say not that:—
In case your fresh appeal should be rejected,
We will find other means to make all even.

DOGE.

Appeal again! art thou my brother's son?
A scion of the house of Faliero?
The nephew of a Doge? and of that blood
Which hath already given three dukes to Venice?
But thou say'st well—we must be humble now.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

My princely uncle! you are too much moved:—
I grant it was a gross offence, and grossly
Left without fitting punishment; but still

This fury doth exceed the provocation,
Or any provocation: if we are wrong'd,
We will ask justice; if it be denied,
We'll take it; but may do all this in calmness—
Deep Vengeance is the daughter of deep Silence.
I have yet scarce a third part of your years,
I love our house, I honour you, its chief,
The guardian of my youth, and its instructor—
But though I understand your grief, and enter
In part of your disdain, it doth appal me
To see your anger, like our Adrian waves,
O'ersweep all bounds, and foam itself to air.

DOGE.

I tell thee—*must* I tell thee—what thy father
Would have required no words to comprehend?
Hast thou no feeling save the external sense
Of torture from the touch? hast thou no soul—
No pride—no passion—no deep sense of honour?

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

'Tis the first time that honour has been doubted,
And were the last, from any other sceptic.

DOGE.

You know the full offence of this born villain,
This creeping, coward, rank, acquitted felon,
Who threw his sting into a poisonous libel,
And on the honour of—Oh God!—my wife,
The nearest, dearest part of all men's honour,
Left a base slur to pass from mouth to mouth
Of loose mechanics, with all coarse foul comments,
And villanous jests, and blasphemies obscene;

While sneering nobles, in more polish'd guise,
Whisper'd the tale, and smiled upon the lie
Which made me look like them—a courteous wittol,
Patient—ay, proud, it may be, of dishonour.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

But still it was a lie—you knew it false,
And so did all men.

DOGE.

Nephew, the high Roman
Said, "Cæsar's wife must not even be suspected,"
And put her from him.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

True—but in those days——

DOGE.

What is it that a Roman would not suffer,
That a Venetian prince must bear? Old Dandolo
Refused the diadem of all the Cæsars,
And wore the ducal cap I trample on,
Because 'tis now degraded.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

'Tis even so.

DOGE.

It is—it is:—I did not visit on
The innocent creature thus most vilely slander'd
Because she took an old man for her lord,
For that he had been long her father's friend
And patron of her house, as if there were
No love in woman's heart but lust of youth
And beardless faces;—I did not for this

Visit the villain's infamy on her,
But craved my country's justice on his head,
The justice due unto the humblest being
Who hath a wife whose faith is sweet to him,
Who hath a home whose hearth is dear to him,
Who hath a name whose honour 's all to him,
When these are tainted by the accursing breath
Of calumny and scorn.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

And what redress
Did you expect as his fit punishment?

DOGE.

Death! Was I not the sovereign of the state—
Insulted on his very throne, and made
A mockery to the men who should obey me?
Was I not injured as a husband? scorn'd
As man? reviled, degraded, as a prince?
Was not offence like his a complication
Of insult and of treason?—and he lives!
Had he instead of on the Doge's throne
Stampt the same brand upon a peasant's stool,
His blood had gilt the threshold; for the carle
Had stabb'd him on the instant.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Do not doubt it,
He shall not live till sunset—leave to me
The means, and calm yourself.

DOGE.

Hold, nephew: this

Would have sufficed but yesterday; at present
I have no further wrath against this man.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

What mean you? is not the offence redoubled
By this most rank—I will not say—acquittal;
For it is worse, being full acknowledgment
Of the offence, and leaving it unpunish'd?

DOGE.

It *is redoubled*, but not now by him:
The Forty hath decreed a month's arrest—
We must obey the Forty.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Obey *them!*
Who have forgot their duty to the sovereign?

DOGE.

Why, yes;—boy, you perceive it then at last:
Whether as fellow citizen who sues
For justice, or as sovereign who commands it,
They have defrauded me of both my rights
(For here the sovereign is a citizen);
But, notwithstanding, harm not thou a hair
Of Steno's head—he shall not wear it long.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Not twelve hours longer, had you left to me
The mode and means: if you had calmly heard me,
I never meant this miscreant should escape,
But wish'd you to repress such gusts of passion,
That we more surely might devise together
His taking off.

DOGE.

No, nephew, he must live;
At least, just now—a life so vile as his
Were nothing at this hour; in th' olden time
Some sacrifices ask'd a single victim,
Great expiations had a hecatomb.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Your wishes are my law; and yet I fain
Would prove to you how near unto my heart
The honour of our house must ever be.

DOGE.

Fear not; you shall have time and place of proof:
But be not thou too rash, as I have been.
I am ashamed of my own anger now;
I pray you, pardon me.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Why that's my uncle!
The leader, and the statesman, and the chief
Of commonwealths, and sovereign of himself!
I wonder'd to perceive you so forget
All prudence in your fury at these years,
Although the cause——

DOGE.

Ay, think upon the cause—
Forget it not:—When you lie down to rest,
Let it be black among your dreams; and when
The morn returns, so let it stand between
The sun and you, as an ill omen'd cloud
Upon a summer-day of festival:
So will it stand to me;—but speak not, stir not,—

Leave all to me;—we shall have much to do,
And you shall have a part.—But now retire,
'Tis fit I were alone.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO,

(taking up and placing the ducal bonnet on the table)

Ere I depart,
I pray you to resume what you have spurn'd,
Till you can change it haply for a crown.
And now I take my leave, imploring you
In all things to rely upon my duty
As doth become your near and faithful kinsman,
And not less loyal citizen and subject.

[*Exit* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

DOGE *(solus.)*

Adieu, my worthy nephew.—Hollow bauble!

[*Taking up the ducal cap.*

Beset with all the thorns that line a crown,
Without investing the insulted brow
With the all-swaying majesty of kings;
Thou idle, gilded, and degraded toy,
Let me resume thee as I would a vizor. [*Puts it on.*
How my brain aches beneath thee! and my temples
Throb feverish under thy dishonest weight.
Could I not turn thee to a diadem?
Could I not shatter the Briarean sceptre
Which in this hundred-handed senate rules,
Making the people nothing, and the prince
A pageant? In my life I have achieved
Tasks not less difficult—achieved for them,
Who thus repay me!—Can I not requite them?

Oh for one year! Oh! but for even a day
Of my full youth, while yet my body served
My soul as serves the generous steed his lord,
I would have dash'd amongst them, asking few
In aid to overthrow these swoln patricians;
But now I must look round for other hands
To serve this hoary head;—but it shall plan
In such a sort as will not leave the task
Herculean, though as yet 'tis but a chaos
Of darkly-brooding thoughts: my fancy is
In her first work, more nearly to the light
Holding the sleeping images of things
For the selection of the pausing judgment.—
The troops are few in——

Enter VINCENZO.

There is one without
Craves audience of your highness.

DOGE.

I'm unwell—
I can see no one, not even a patrician—
Let him refer his business to the council.

VINCENZO.

My lord, I will deliver your reply;
It cannot much import—he 's a plebeian,
The master of a galley, I believe.

DOGE.

How! did you say the patron of a galley?
That is—I mean—a servant of the state:
Admit him, he may be on public service.

[*Exit* VINCENZO.

DOGE *(solus.)*

This patron may be sounded; I will try him.
I know the people to be discontented;
They have cause, since Sapienza's adverse day,
When Genoa conquer'd: they have further cause
Since they are nothing in the state, and in
The city worse than nothing—mere machines,
To serve the nobles' most patrician pleasure.
The troops have long arrears of pay, oft promised,
And murmur deeply—any hope of change
Will draw them forward: they shall pay themselves
With plunder:—but the priests—I doubt the priesthood
Will not be with us; they have hated me
Since that rash hour, when, madden'd with the drone,
(1) I smote the tardy bishop at Treviso,
Quickening his holy march; yet, ne'ertheless,
They may be won, at least their chief at Rome,
By some well-timed concessions; but, above
All things, I must be speedy; at my hour
Of twilight little light of life remains.
Could I free Venice, and avenge my wrongs,
I had lived too long, and willingly would sleep
Next moment with my sires; and, wanting this,
Better that sixty of my fourscore years
Had been already where—how soon, I care not—
The whole must be extinguish'd;—better that
They ne'er had been, than drag me on to be
The thing these arch-oppressors fain would make me.
Let me consider—of efficient troops
There are three thousand posted at——

Enter VINCENZO *and* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

VINCENZO.

May it please
Your highness, the same patron whom I spake of
Is here to crave your patience.

DOGE.

Leave the chamber,
Vincenzo.—

[*Exit* VINCENZO.

Sir, you may advance—what would you?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Redress.

DOGE.

Of whom?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Of God and of the Doge.

DOGE.

Alas! my friend, you seek it of the twain
Of least respect and interest in Venice.
You must address the council.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

'Twere in vain;
For he who injured me is one of them.

DOGE.

There's blood upon thy face—how came it there?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

'Tis mine, and not the first I've shed for Venice,
But the first shed by a Venetian hand:
A noble smote me.

DOGE.

Doth he live?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Not long—
But for the hope I had and have, that you,
My prince, yourself a soldier, will redress
Him, whom the laws of discipline and Venice
Permit not to protect himself; if not—
I say no more.

DOGE.

But something you would do—
Is it not so?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I am a man, my lord.

DOGE.

Why so is he who smote you.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

He is called so;
Nay, more, a noble one—at least, in Venice:
But since he hath forgotten that I am one,
And treats me like a brute, the brute may turn—
'Tis said the worm will.

DOGE.

Say—his name and lineage?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Barbaro.

DOGE.

What was the cause? or the pretext?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I am the chief of the arsenal, employed
At present in repairing certain galleys
But roughly used by the Genoese last year.

This morning comes the noble Barbaro
Full of reproof, because our artisans
Had left some frivolous order of his house,
To execute the state's decree; I dared
To justify the men—he raised his hand;—
Behold my blood! the first time it e'er flow'd
Dishonourably.

DOGE.

Have you long time served?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

So long as to remember Zara's siege,
And fight beneath the chief who beat the Huns there,
Sometime my general, now the Doge Faliero.—

DOGE.

How! are we comrades?—the state's ducal robes
Sit newly on me, and you were appointed
Chief of the arsenal ere I came from Rome;
So that I recognised you not. Who placed you?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

The late Doge; keeping still my old command
As patron of a galley: my new office
Was given as the reward of certain scars
(So was your predecessor pleased to say):
I little thought his bounty would conduct me
To his successor as a helpless plaintiff;
At least, in such a cause.

DOGE.

Are you much hurt?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Irreparably in my self-esteem.

DOGE.

Speak out; fear nothing: being stung at heart,
What would you do to be revenged on this man?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

That which I dare not name, and yet will do.

DOGE.

Then wherefore came you here?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I come for justice,
Because my general is Doge, and will not
See his old soldier trampled on. Had any,
Save Faliero, fill'd the ducal throne,
This blood had been wash'd out in other blood.

DOGE.

You come to me for justice—unto *me!*
The Doge of Venice, and I cannot give it;
I cannot even obtain it—'twas denied
To me most solemnly an hour ago.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

How says your highness?

DOGE.

Steno is condemn'd
To a month's confinement.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

What! the same who dared
To stain the ducal throne with those foul words,
That have cried shame to every ear in Venice?

DOGE.

Ay, doubtless they have echo'd o'er the arsenal,
Keeping due time with every hammer's clink

As a good jest to jolly artisans;
Or making chorus to the creaking oar,
In the vile tune of every galley slave,
Who, as he sung the merry stave, exulted
He was not a shamed dotard like the Doge.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Is 't possible? a month's imprisonment!
No more for Steno?

DOGE.

You have heard the offence,
And now you know his punishment; and then
You ask redress of *me!* Go to the Forty,
Who pass'd the sentence upon Michel Steno;
They'll do as much by Barbaro, no doubt.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Ah! dared I speak my feelings!

DOGE.

Give them breath.
Mine have no further outrage to endure.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Then, in a word, it rests but on your word
To punish and avenge—I will not say
My petty wrong, for what is a mere blow,
However vile, to such a thing as I am?—
But the base insult done your state and person.

DOGE.

You overrate my power, which is a pageant.
This cap is not the monarch's crown; these robes
Might move compassion, like a beggar's rags;
Nay, more, a beggar's are his own, and these

But lent to the poor puppet, who must play
Its part with all its empire in this ermine.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Wouldst thou be king?

DOGE.

Yes—of a happy people.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Wouldst thou be sovereign lord of Venice?

DOGE.

Ay,
If that the people shared that sovereignty,
So that nor they nor I were further slaves
To this o'ergrown aristocratic Hydra,
The poisonous heads of whose envenom'd body
Have breathed a pestilence upon us all.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Yet, thou wast born and still hast lived patrician.

DOGE.

In evil hour was I so born; my birth
Hath made me Doge to be insulted: but
I lived and toil'd a soldier and a servant
Of Venice and her people, not the senate;
Their good and my own honour were my guerdon.
I have fought and bled; commanded, ay, and conquer'd;
Have made and marr'd peace oft in embassies,
As it might chance to be our country's 'vantage;
Have traversed land and sea in constant duty,
Through almost sixty years, and still for Venice,
My fathers' and my birthplace, whose dear spires,
Rising at distance o'er the blue Lagoon,

It was reward enough for me to view
Once more; but not for any knot of men,
Nor sect, nor faction, did I bleed or sweat!
But would you know why I have done all this?
Ask of the bleeding pelican why she
Hath ripp'd her bosom? Had the bird a voice,
She'd tell thee 'twas for *all* her little ones.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

And yet they made thee duke.

DOGE.

They made me so;
I sought it not, the flattering fetters met me
Returning from my Roman embassy,
And never having hitherto refused
Toil, charge, or duty for the state, I did not,
At these late years, decline what was the highest
Of all in seeming, but of all most base
In what we have to do and to endure:
Bear witness for me thou, my injured subject,
When I can neither right myself nor thee.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You shall do both, if you possess the will;
And many thousands more not less oppress'd,
Who wait but for a signal—will you give it?

DOGE.

You speak in riddles.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Which shall soon be read
At peril of my life; if you disdain not
To lend a patient ear.

DOGE.

Say on.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Not thou,
Nor I alone, are injured and abused,
Contemn'd, and trampled on; but the whole people
Groan with the strong conception of their wrongs:
The foreign soldiers in the senate's pay
Are discontented for their long arrears;
The native mariners, and civic troops,
Feel with their friends; for who is he amongst them
Whose brethren, parents, children, wives, or sisters,
Have not partook oppression, or pollution,
From the patricians? And the hopeless war
Against the Genoese, which is still maintain'd
With the plebeian blood, and treasure wrung
From their hard earnings, has inflamed them further:
Even now—but, I forget that speaking thus,
Perhaps I pass the sentence of my death!

DOGE.

And suffering what thou hast done—fear'st thou death?
Be silent then, and live on, to be beaten
By those for whom thou hast bled.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

No, I will speak
At every hazard; and if Venice' Doge
Should turn delator, be the shame on him,
And sorrow too; for he will lose far more
Than I.

DOGE.

From me fear nothing; out with it!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Know then, that there are met and sworn in secret
A band of brethren, valiant hearts and true;
Men who have proved all fortunes, and have long
Grieved over that of Venice, and have right
To do so; having served her in all climes,
And having rescued her from foreign foes,
Would do the same from those within her walls.
They are not numerous, nor yet too few
For their great purpose; they have arms, and means,
And hearts, and hopes, and faith, and patient courage.

DOGE.

For what then do they pause?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

An hour to strike.

DOGE *(aside.)*

Saint Mark's shall strike that hour!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I now have placed
My life, my honour, all my earthly hopes
Within thy power, but in the firm belief
That injuries like ours, sprung from one cause,
Will generate one vengeance: should it be so,
Be our chief now—our sovereign hereafter.

DOGE.

How many are ye?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I'll not answer that
Till I am answer'd.

DOGE.

How, Sir! do you menace?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

No; I affirm. I have betray'd myself;
But there 's no torture in the mystic wells
Which undermine your palace, nor in those
Not less appalling cells, the "leaden roofs,"
To force a single name from me of others.
The Pozzi and the Piombi were in vain;
They might wring blood from me, but treachery never.
And I would pass the fearful "Bridge of Sighs,"
Joyous that mine must be the last that e'er
Would echo o'er the Stygian wave which flows
Between the murderers and the murder'd, washing
The prison and the palace walls: there are
Those who would live to think on't, and avenge me.

DOGE.

If such your power and purpose, why come here
To sue for justice, being in the course
To do yourself due right?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Because the man,
Who claims protection from authority,
Showing his confidence and his submission
To that authority, can hardly be
Suspected of combining to destroy it.
Had I sate down too humbly with this blow,
A moody brow and mutter'd threats had made me
A mark'd man to the Forty's inquisition;
But loud complaint, however angrily
It shapes its phrase, is little to be fear'd,
And less distrusted. But, besides all this,
I had another reason.

DOGE.

What was that?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Some rumours that the Doge was greatly moved
By the reference of the Avogadori
Of Michel Steno's sentence to the Forty
Had reach'd me. I had served you, honour'd you,
And felt that you were dangerously insulted,
Being of an order of such spirits, as
Requite tenfold both good and evil: 'twas
My wish to prove and urge you to redress.
Now you know all; and that I speak the truth,
My peril be the proof.

DOGE.

You have deeply ventured;
But all must do so who would greatly win:
Thus far I'll answer you—your secret's safe.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

And is this all?

DOGE.

Unless with all entrusted,
What would you have me answer?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I would have you
Trust him who leaves his life in trust with you.

DOGE.

But I must know your plan, your names, and numbers;
The last may then be doubled, and the former
Matured and strengthen'd.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

We're enough already;
You are the sole ally we covet now.

DOGE.

But bring me to the knowledge of your chiefs.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

That shall be done upon your formal pledge
To keep the faith that we will pledge to you.

DOGE.

When? where?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

This night I'll bring to your apartment
Two of the principals; a greater number
Were hazardous.

DOGE.

Stay, I must think of this.
What if I were to trust myself amongst you,
And leave the palace?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You must come alone.

DOGE.

With but my nephew.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Not were he your son.

DOGE.

Wretch! darest thou name my son? He died in arm
At Sapienza for this faithless state.
Oh! that he were alive, and I in ashes!
Or that he were alive ere I be ashes!
I should not need the dubious aid of strangers.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Not one of all those strangers whom thou doubtest,
But will regard thee with a filial feeling,
So that thou keep'st a father's faith with them.

DOGE.

The die is cast. Where is the place of meeting?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

At midnight I will be alone and mask'd
Where'er your highness pleases to direct me,
To wait your coming, and conduct you where
You shall receive our homage, and pronounce
Upon our project.

DOGE.

At what hour arises
The moon?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Late, but the atmosphere is thick and dusky;
'Tis a sirocco.

DOGE.

At the midnight hour, then,
Near to the church where sleep my sires; the same,
Twin-named from the apostles John and Paul;
A gondola, (2) with one oar only, will
Lurk in the narrow channel which glides by.
Be there.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I will not fail.

DOGE.

And now retire——

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

In the full hope your highness will not falter

In your great purpose. Prince, I take my leave.

[*Exit* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

DOGE *(solus.)*

At midnight, by the church Saints John and Paul,
Where sleep my noble fathers, I repair—
To what? to hold a council in the dark
With common ruffians leagued to ruin states!
And will not my great sires leap from the vault,
Where lie two doges who preceded me,
And pluck me down amongst them? Would they could!
For I should rest in honour with the honour'd.
Alas! I must not think of them, but those
Who have made me thus unworthy of a name,
Noble and brave as aught of consular
On Roman marbles; but I will redeem it
Back to its antique lustre in our annals,
By sweet revenge on all that's base in Venice,
And freedom to the rest, or leave it black
To all the growing calumnies of time,
Which never spare the fame of him who fails,
But try the Cæsar, or the Catiline,
By the true touchstone of desert—success.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II. SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Ducal Palace.

ANGIOLINA *(wife of the Doge)* and MARIANNA.

ANGIOLINA.

What was the Doge's answer?

MARIANNA.

That he was
That moment summon'd to a conference;
But 'tis by this time ended. I perceived
Not long ago the senators embarking;
And the last gondola may now be seen
Gliding into the throng of barks which stud
The glittering waters.

ANGIOLINA.

Would he were return'd!
He has been much disquieted of late;
And Time, which has not tamed his fiery spirit,
Nor yet enfeebled even his mortal frame,
Which seems to be more nourish'd by a soul
So quick and restless that it would consume
Less hardy clay—Time has but little power
On his resentments or his griefs. Unlike
To other spirits of his order, who,
In the first burst of passion, pour away
Their wrath or sorrow, all things wear in him
An aspect of eternity: his thoughts,
His feelings, passions, good or evil, all

Have nothing of old age; and his bold brow
Bears but the scars of mind, the thoughts of years,
Not their decrepitude: and he of late
Has been more agitated than his wont.
Would he were come! for I alone have power
Upon his troubled spirit.

MARIANNA.

It is true,
His highness has of late been greatly moved
By the affront of Steno, and with cause;
But the offender doubtless even now
Is doom'd to expiate his rash insult with
Such chastisement as will enforce respect
To female virtue, and to noble blood.

ANGIOLINA.

'Twas a gross insult; but I heed it not
For the rash scorner's falsehood in itself,
But for the effect, the deadly deep impression
Which it has made upon Faliero's soul,
The proud, the fiery, the austere—austere
To all save me: I tremble when I think
To what it may conduct.

MARIANNA.

Assuredly
The Doge can not suspect you?

ANGIOLINA.

Suspect *me!*
Why Steno dared not: when he scrawl'd his lie,
Groveling by stealth in the moon's glimmering light,
His own still conscience smote him for the act,

And every shadow on the walls frown'd shame
Upon his coward calumny.

MARIANNA.

'T were fit
He should be punish'd grievously.

ANGIOLINA.

He is so.

MARIANNA.

What! is the sentence past? is he condemn'd?

ANGIOLINA.

I know not that, but he has been detected.

MARIANNA.

And deem you this enough for such foul scorn?

ANGIOLINA.

I would not be a judge in my own cause,
Nor do I know what sense of punishment
May reach the soul of ribalds such as Steno;
But if his insults sink no deeper in
The minds of the inquisitors than they
Have ruffled mine, he will, for all acquittance,
Be left to his own shamelessness or shame.

MARIANNA.

Some sacrifice is due to slander'd virtue.

ANGIOLINA.

Why, what is virtue if it needs a victim?
Or if it must depend upon men's words?
The dying Roman said, "'twas but a name:"
It were indeed no more, if human breath
Could make or mar it.

MARIANNA.

Yet full many a dame,

Stainless and faithful, would feel all the wrong
Of such a slander; and less rigid ladies,
Such as abound in Venice, would be loud
And all-inexorable in their cry
For justice.

ANGIOLINA.

This but proves it is the name
And not the quality they prize: the first
Have found it a hard task to hold their honour,
If they require it to be blazon'd forth;
And those who have not kept it, seek its seeming
As they would look out for an ornament
Of which they feel the want, but not because
They think it so; they live in others' thoughts,
And would seem honest as they must seem fair.

MARIANNA.

You have strange thoughts for a patrician dame.

ANGIOLINA.

And yet they were my father's; with his name,
The sole inheritance he left.

MARIANNA.

You want none;
Wife to a prince, the chief of the Republic.

ANGIOLINA.

I should have sought none though a peasant's bride,
But feel not less the love and gratitude
Due to my father, who bestow'd my hand
Upon his early, tried, and trusted friend,
The Count Val di Marino, now our Doge.

MARIANNA.

And with that hand did he bestow your heart?

ANGIOLINA.

He did so, or it had not been bestow'd.

MARIANNA.

Yet this strange disproportion in your years,
And, let me add, disparity of tempers,
Might make the world doubt whether such an union
Could make you wisely, permanently, happy.

ANGIOLINA.

The world will think with worldlings; but my heart
Has still been in my duties, which are many,
But never difficult.

MARIANNA.

And do you love him?

ANGIOLINA.

I love all noble qualities which merit
Love, and I loved my father, who first taught me
To single out what we should love in others,
And to subdue all tendency to lend
The best and purest feelings of our nature
To baser passions. He bestow'd my hand
Upon Faliero: he had known him noble,
Brave, generous, rich in all the qualities
Of soldier, citizen, and friend; in all
Such have I found him as my father said.
His faults are those that dwell in the high bosoms
Of men who have commanded; too much pride,
And the deep passions fiercely foster'd by
The uses of patricians, and a life
Spent in the storms of state and war; and also
From the quick sense of honour, which becomes
A duty to a certain sign, a vice

When overstrain'd, and this I fear in him.
And then he has been rash from his youth upwards,
Yet temper'd by redeeming nobleness
In such sort, that the wariest of republics
Has lavish'd all its chief employs upon him,
From his first fight to his last embassy,
From which on his return the dukedom met him.

MARIANNA.

But previous to this marriage, had your heart
Ne'er beat for any of the noble youth,
Such as in years had been more meet to match
Beauty like yours? or since have you ne'er seen
One, who, if your fair hand were still to give,
Might now pretend to Loredano's daughter?

ANGIOLINA.

I answer'd your first question when I said
I married.

MARIANNA.

And the second?

ANGIOLINA.

Needs no answer.

MARIANNA.

I pray you pardon, if I have offended.

ANGIOLINA.

I feel no wrath, but some surprise: I knew not
That wedded bosoms could permit themselves
To ponder upon what they *now* might choose,
Or aught save their past choice.

MARIANNA.

'Tis their past choice

That far too often makes them deem they would
Now choose more wisely, could they cancel it.

ANGIOLINA.

It may be so. I knew not of such thoughts.

MARIANNA.

Here comes the Doge—shall I retire?

ANGIOLINA.

It may
Be better you should quit me; he seems rapt
In thought.—How pensively he takes his way!

[*Exit* MARIANNA.

Enter the DOGE, *and* PIETRO.

DOGE *(musing.)*

There is a certain Philip Calendaro
Now in the Arsenal, who holds command
Of eighty men, and has great influence
Besides on all the spirits of his comrades;
This man, I hear, is bold and popular,
Sudden and daring, and yet secret; 't would
Be well that he were won: I needs must hope
That Israel Bertuccio has secured him,
But fain would be ——

PIETRO.

My lord, pray pardon me
For breaking in upon your meditation;
The Senator Bertuccio, your kinsman,
Charged me to follow and inquire your pleasure
To fix an hour when he may speak with you.

DOGE.

At sunset.—Stay a moment—let me see—
Say in the second hour of night. [*Exit* PIETRO.

ANGIOLINA.

My lord!

DOGE.

My dearest child, forgive me—why delay
So long approaching me?—I saw you not.

ANGIOLINA.

You were absorb'd in thought, and he who now
Has parted from you might have words of weight
To bear you from the senate.

DOGE.

From the senate?

ANGIOLINA.

I would not interrupt him in his duty
And theirs.

DOGE.

The senate's duty! you mistake;
'Tis we who owe all service to the senate.

ANGIOLINA.

I thought the Duke had held command in Venice.

DOGE.

He shall.—But let that pass.—We will be jocund.
How fares it with you? have you been abroad?
The day is overcast, but the calm wave
Favours the gondolier's light skimming oar;
Or have you held a levee of your friends?
Or has your music made you solitary?
Say—is there aught that you would will within
The little sway now left the Duke? or aught



Of fitting splendour, or of honest pleasure,
Social or lonely, that would glad your heart,
To compensate for many a dull hour, wasted
On an old man oft moved with many cares?
Speak, and 'tis done.

ANGIOLINA.

You're ever kind to me—
I have nothing to desire, or to request,
Except to see you oftener and calmer.

DOGE.

Calmer?

ANGIOLINA.

Ay, calmer, my good lord.—Ah, why
Do you still keep apart, and walk alone,
And let such strong emotions stamp your brow,
As not betraying their full import, yet
Disclose too much?

DOGE.

Disclose too much!—of what?
What is there to disclose?

ANGIOLINA.

A heart so ill
At ease.

DOGE.

'Tis nothing, child.—But in the state
You know what daily cares oppress all those
Who govern this precarious commonwealth;
Now suffering from the Genoese without,
And malcontents within—'tis this which makes me
More pensive and less tranquil than my wont.

ANGIOLINA.

Yet this existed long before, and never
Till in these late days did I see you thus.
Forgive me; there is something at your heart
More than the mere discharge of public duties,
Which long use and a talent like to yours
Have render'd light, nay, a necessity,
To keep your mind from stagnating. 'Tis not
In hostile states, nor perils, thus to shake you;
You, who have stood all storms and never sunk,
And climb'd up to the pinnacle of power
And never fainted by the way, and stand
Upon it, and can look down steadily
Along the depth beneath, and ne'er feel dizzy.
Were Genoa's galleys riding in the port,
Were civil fury raging in Saint Mark's,
You are not to be wrought on, but would fall,
As you have risen, with an unalter'd brow—
Your feelings now are of a different kind;
Something has stung your pride, not patriotism.

DOGE.

Pride! Angiolina? Alas! none is left me.

ANGIOLINA.

Yes—the same sin that overthrew the angels,
And of all sins most easily besets
Mortals the nearest to the angelic nature:
The vile are only vain; the great are proud.

DOGE.

I *had* the pride of honour, of *your* honour,
Deep at my heart——But let us change the theme.

ANGIOLINA.

Ah no!—As I have ever shared your kindness
In all things else, let me not be shut out
From your distress: were it of public import,
You know I never sought, would never seek
To win a word from you; but feeling now
Your grief is private, it belongs to me
To lighten or divide it. Since the day
When foolish Steno's ribaldry detected
Unfix'd your quiet, you are greatly changed,
And I would soothe you back to what you were.

DOGE.

To what I was!—Have you heard Steno's sentence?

ANGIOLINA.

No.

DOGE.

A month's arrest.

ANGIOLINA.

Is it not enough?

DOGE.

Enough!—Yes, for a drunken galley slave,
Who, stung by stripes, may murmur at his master;
But not for a deliberate, false, cool villain,
Who stains a lady's and a prince's honour
Even on the throne of his authority.

ANGIOLINA.

There seems to me enough in the conviction
Of a patrician guilty of a falsehood:
All other punishment were light unto
His loss of honour.

DOGE.

Such men have no honour;
They have but their vile lives—and these are spared.

ANGIOLINA.

You would not have him die for this offence?

DOGE.

Not *now*:—being still alive, I'd have him live
Long as *he* can; he has ceased to merit death;
The guilty saved hath damn'd his hundred judges,
And he is pure, for now his crime is theirs.

ANGIOLINA.

Oh! had this false and flippant libeller
Shed his young blood for his absurd lampoon,
Ne'er from that moment could this breast have known
A joyous hour, or dreamless slumber more.

DOGE.

Does not the law of Heaven say blood for blood?
And he who *taints* kills more than he who sheds it.
Is it the *pain* of blows, or *shame* of blows,
That make such deadly to the sense of man?
Do not the laws of man say blood for honour?
And less than honour for a little gold?
Say not the laws of nations blood for treason?
Is 't nothing to have fill'd these veins with poison
For their once healthful current? is it nothing
To have stain'd your name and mine—the noblest names?
Is 't nothing to have brought into contempt
A prince before his people? to have fail'd
In the respect accorded by mankind
To youth in woman, and old age in man?

To virtue in your sex, and dignity
In ours?—But let them look to it who have saved him.

ANGIOLINA.

Heaven bids us to forgive our enemies.

DOGE.

Doth Heaven forgive her own? Is Satan saved
From wrath eternal?

ANGIOLINA.

Do not speak thus wildly—
Heaven will alike forgive you and your foes.

DOGE.

Amen! May Heaven forgive them.

ANGIOLINA.

And will you?

DOGE.

Yes, when they are in Heaven!

ANGIOLINA.

And not till then?

DOGE.

What matters my forgiveness? an old man's,
Worn out, scorn'd, spurn'd, abused; what matters then
My pardon more than my resentment, both
Being weak and worthless? I have lived too long.—
But let us change the argument.—My child!
My injured wife, the child of Loredano,
The brave, the chivalrous, how little deem'd
Thy father, wedding thee unto his friend,
That he was linking thee to shame!—Alas!
Shame without sin, for thou art faultless. Hadst thou
But had a different husband, *any* husband

In Venice save the Doge, this blight, this brand,
This blasphemy had never fallen upon thee.
So young, so beautiful, so good, so pure,
To suffer this, and yet be unavenged!

ANGIOLINA.

I am too well avenged, for you still love me,
And trust, and honour me; and all men know
That you are just, and I am true: what more
Could I require, or you command?

DOGE.

'Tis well,
And may be better; but whate'er betide,
Be thou at least kind to my memory.

ANGIOLINA.

Why speak you thus?

DOGE.

It is no matter why;
But I would still, whatever others think,
Have your respect both now and in my grave.

ANGIOLINA.

Why should you doubt it? has it ever fail'd?

DOGE.

Come hither, child; I would a word with you.
Your father was my friend; unequal fortune
Made him my debtor for some courtesies
Which bind the good more firmly: when, oppress
With his last malady, he will'd our union,
It was not to repay me, long repaid
Before by his great loyalty in friendship;
His object was to place your orphan beauty

In honourable safety from the perils,
Which, in this scorpion nest of vice, assail
A lonely and undower'd maid. I did not
Think with him, but would not oppose the thought
Which soothed his death-bed.

ANGIOLINA.

I have not forgotten
The nobleness with which you bade me speak
If my young heart held any preference
Which would have made me happier; nor your offer
To make my dowry equal to the rank
Of aught in Venice, and forego all claim
My father's last injunction gave you.

DOGE.

Thus,
'Twas not a foolish dotard's vile caprice,
Nor the false edge of aged appetite,
Which made me covetous of girlish beauty,
And a young bride: for in my fieriest youth
I sway'd such passions; nor was this my age
Infected with that leprosy of lust
Which taints the hoariest years of vicious men,
Making them ransack to the very last
The dregs of pleasure for their vanish'd joys;
Or buy in selfish marriage some young victim,
Too helpless to refuse a state that 's honest,
Too feeling not to know herself a wretch.
Our wedlock was not of this sort; you had
Freedom from me to choose, and urged in answer
Your father's choice.

ANGIOLINA.

I did so; I would do so
In face of earth and heaven; for I have never
Repented for my sake; sometimes for yours,
In pondering o'er your late disquietudes.

DOGE.

I knew my heart would never treat you harshly;
I knew my days could not disturb you long;
And then the daughter of my earliest friend,
His worthy daughter, free to choose again,
Wealthier and wiser, in the ripest bloom
Of womanhood, more skilful to select
By passing these probationary years;
Inheriting a prince's name and riches,
Secured, by the short penance of enduring
An old man for some summers, against all
That law's chicane or envious kinsmen might
Have urged against her right; my best friend's child
Would choose more fitly in respect of years,
And not less truly in a faithful heart.

ANGIOLINA.

My lord, I look'd but to my father's wishes,
Hallow'd by his last words, and to my heart
For doing all its duties, and replying
With faith to him with whom I was affianced.
Ambitious hopes ne'er cross'd my dreams; and should
The hour you speak of come, it will be seen so.

DOGE.

I do believe you; and I know you true:
For love, romantic love, which in my youth

I knew to be illusion, and ne'er saw
Lasting, but often fatal, it had been
No lure for me, in my most passionate days,
And could not be so now, did such exist.
But such respect, and mildly paid regard
As a true feeling for your welfare, and
A free compliance with all honest wishes;
A kindness to your virtues, watchfulness
Not shown, but shadowing o'er such little failings
As youth is apt in, so as not to check
Rashly, but win you from them ere you knew
You had been won, but thought the change your choice;
A pride not in your beauty, but your conduct,—
A trust in you—a patriarchal love,
And not a doting homage—friendship, faith—
Such estimation in your eyes as these
Might claim, I hoped for.

ANGIOLINA.

And have ever had.

DOGE.

I think so. For the difference in our years
You knew it, choosing me, and chose: I trusted
Not to my qualities, nor would have faith
In such, nor outward ornaments of nature,
Were I still in my five and twentieth spring;
I trusted to the blood of Loredano
Pure in your veins; I trusted to the soul
God gave you—to the truths your father taught you—
To your belief in heaven—to your mild virtues—
To your own faith and honour, for my own.

ANGIOLINA.

You have done well.—I thank you for that trust,
Which I have never for one moment ceased
To honour you the more for.

DOGE.

Where is honour,
Innate and precept-strengthen'd, 'tis the rock
Of faith connubial; where it is not—where
Light thoughts are lurking, or the vanities
Of worldly pleasure rankle in the heart,
Or sensual throbs convulse it, well I know
'Twere hopeless for humanity to dream
Of honesty in such infected blood,
Although 'twere wed to him it covets most:
An incarnation of the poet's god
In all his marble-chisell'd beauty, or
The demi-deity, Alcides, in
His majesty of superhuman manhood,
Would not suffice to bind where virtue is not;
It is consistency which forms and proves it:
Vice cannot fix, and virtue cannot change.
The once fall'n woman must for ever fall;
For vice must have variety, while virtue
Stands like the sun, and all which rolls around
Drinks life, and light, and glory from her aspect.

ANGIOLINA.

And seeing, feeling thus this truth in others,
(I pray you pardon me;) but wherefore yield you
To the most fierce of fatal passions, and
Disquiet your great thoughts with restless hate
Of such a thing as Steno?

DOGE.

You mistake me.
It is not Steno who could move me thus;
Had it been so, he should——but let that pass.

ANGIOLINA.

What is 't you feel so deeply, then, even now?

DOGE.

The violated majesty of Venice,
At once insulted in her lord and laws.

ANGIOLINA.

Alas! why will you thus consider it?

DOGE.

I have thought on 't till——but let me lead you back
To what I urged; all these things being noted,
I wedded you; the world then did me justice
Upon the motive, and my conduct proved
They did me right, while yours was all to praise:
You had all freedom—all respect—all trust
From me and mine; and, born of those who made
Princes at home, and swept kings from their thrones
On foreign shores, in all things you appear'd
Worthy to be our first of native dames.

ANGIOLINA.

To what does this conduct?

DOGE.

To thus much—that
A miscreant's angry breath may blast it all—
A villain, whom for his unbridled bearing,
Even in the midst of our great festival,
I caused to be conducted forth, and taught
How to demean himself in ducal chambers;

A wretch like this may leave upon the wall
The blighting venom of his sweltering heart,
And this shall spread itself in general poison;
And woman's innocence, man's honour, pass
Into a by-word; and the doubly felon
(Who first insulted virgin modesty
By a gross affront to your attendant damsels
Amidst the noblest of our dames in public)
Requite himself for his most just expulsion
By blackening publicly his sovereign's consort,
And be absolved by his upright compeers.

ANGIOLINA.

But he has been condemn'd into captivity.

DOGE.

For such as him a dungeon were acquittal;
And his brief term of mock-arrest will pass
Within a palace. But I've done with him;
The rest must be with you.

ANGIOLINA.

With me, my lord?

DOGE.

Yes, Angiolina. Do not marvel; I
Have let this prey upon me till I feel
My life cannot be long; and fain would have you
Regard the injunctions you will find within
This scroll *(Giving her a paper)* ——Fear not; they are for your advantage:
Read them hereafter at the fitting hour.

ANGIOLINA.

My lord, in life, and after life, you shall

Be honour'd still by me: but may your days
Be many yet—and happier than the present!
This passion will give way, and you will be
Serene, and what you should be—what you were.

DOGE.

I will be what I should be, or be nothing;
But never more—oh! never, never more,
O'er the few days or hours which yet await
The blighted old age of Faliero, shall
Sweet Quiet shed her sunset! Never more
Those summer shadows rising from the past
Of a not ill-spent nor inglorious life,
Mellowing the last hours as the night approaches,
Shall soothe me to my moment of long rest.
I had but little more to ask, or hope,
Save the regards due to the blood and sweat,
And the soul's labour through which I had toil'd
To make my country honour'd. As her servant—
Her servant, though her chief—I would have gone
Down to my fathers with a name serene
And pure as theirs; but this has been denied me.—
Would I had died at Zara!

ANGIOLINA.

There you saved
The state; then live to save her still. A day,
Another day like that would be the best
Reproof to them, and sole revenge for you.

DOGE.

But one such day occurs within an age;
My life is little less than one, and 'tis

Enough for Fortune to have granted *once*,
That which scarce one more favour'd citizen
May win in many states and years. But why
Thus speak I? Venice has forgot that day—
Then why should I remember it?—Farewell,
Sweet Angiolina! I must to my cabinet;
There 's much for me to do—and the hour hastens.

ANGIOLINA.

Remember what you were.

DOGE.

It were in vain!
Joy's recollection is no longer joy,
While Sorrow's memory is a sorrow still.

ANGIOLINA.

At least, whate'er may urge, let me implore
That you will take some little pause of rest:
Your sleep for many nights has been so turbid,
That it had been relief to have awaked you,
Had I not hoped that Nature would o'erpower
At length the thoughts which shook your slumbers thus.
An hour of rest will give you to your toils
With fitter thoughts and freshen'd strength.

DOGE.

I cannot—
I must not, if I could; for never was
Such reason to be watchful: yet a few—
Yet a few days and dream-perturbed nights,
And I shall slumber well—but where?—no matter.
Adieu, my Angiolina.

ANGIOLINA.

Let me be

An instant—yet an instant your companion;
I cannot bear to leave you thus.

DOGE.

Come then,
My gentle child—forgive me; thou wert made
For better fortunes than to share in mine,
Now darkling in their close toward the deep vale
Where Death sits robed in his all-sweeping shadow.
When I am gone—it may be sooner than
Even these years warrant, for there is that stirring
Within—above—around, that in this city
Will make the cemeteries populous
As e'er they were by pestilence or war,—
When I *am* nothing, let that which I *was*
Be still sometimes a name on thy sweet lips,
A shadow in thy fancy, of a thing
Which would not have thee mourn it, but remember;—
Let us begone, my child—the time is pressing.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A retired Spot near the Arsenal.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and* PHILIP CALENDARO.

CALENDARO.

How sped you, Israel, in your late complaint?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Why, well.

CALENDARO.

Is 't possible! will he be punish'd?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Yes.

CALENDARO.

With what? a mulct or an arrest?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

With death?—

CALENDARO.

Now you rave, or must intend revenge,
Such as I counsell'd you, with your own hand.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Yes; and for one sole draught of hate, forego
The great redress we meditate for Venice,
And change a life of hope for one of exile;
Leaving one scorpion crush'd, and thousands stinging
My friends, my family, my countrymen!
No, Calendaro; these same drops of blood,
Shed shamefully, shall have the whole of his
For their requital——But not only his;
We will not strike for private wrongs alone:
Such are for selfish passions and rash men,
But are unworthy a tyrannicide.

CALENDARO.

You have more patience than I care to boast.
Had I been present when you bore this insult,
I must have slain him, or expired myself
In the vain effort to repress my wrath.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Thank Heaven, you were not—all had else been marr'd:
As 'tis, our cause looks prosperous still.

CALENDARO.

You saw
The Doge—what answer gave he?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

That there was
No punishment for such as Barbaro.

CALENDARO.

I told you so before, and that 'twas idle
To think of justice from such hands.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

At least,
It lull'd suspicion, showing confidence.
Had I been silent, not a Sbirro but
Had kept me in his eye, as meditating
A silent, solitary, deep revenge.

CALENDARO.

But wherefore not address you to the Council?
The Doge is a mere puppet, who can scarce
Obtain right for himself. Why speak to *him?*

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You shall know that hereafter.

CALENDARO.

Why not now?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Be patient but till midnight. Get your musters,
And bid our friends prepare their companies:—

Set all in readiness to strike the blow,
Perhaps in a few hours; we have long waited
For a fit time—that hour is on the dial,
It may be, of to-morrow's sun: delay
Beyond may breed us double danger. See
That all be punctual at our place of meeting,
And arm'd, excepting those of the Sixteen,
Who will remain among the troops to wait
The signal.

CALENDARO.

These brave words have breathed new life
Into my veins; I am sick of these protracted
And hesitating councils: day on day
Crawl'd on, and added but another link
To our long fetters, and some fresher wrong
Inflicted on our brethren or ourselves,
Helping to swell our tyrants' bloated strength.
Let us but deal upon them, and I care not
For the result, which must be death or freedom!
I'm weary to the heart of finding neither.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

We will be free in life or death! the grave
Is chainless. Have you all the musters ready?
And are the sixteen companies completed
To sixty?

CALENDARO.

All save two, in which there are
Twenty-five wanting to make up the number.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

No matter; we can do without. Whose are they?

CALENDARO.

Bertram's and old Soranzo's, both of whom
Appear less forward in the cause than we are.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Your fiery nature makes you deem all those
Who are not restless, cold: but there exists
Oft in concentred spirits, not less daring
Than in more loud avengers. Do not doubt them.

CALENDARO.

I do not doubt the elder; but in Bertram
There is a hesitating softness, fatal
To enterprise like ours: I've seen that man
Weep like an infant o'er the misery
Of others, heedless of his own, though greater;
And in a recent quarrel I beheld him
Turn sick at sight of blood, although a villain's.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

The truly brave are soft of heart and eyes,
And feel for what their duty bids them do.
I have known Bertram long; there doth not breathe
A soul more full of honour.

CALENDARO.

It may be so:
I apprehend less treachery than weakness;
Yet as he has no mistress, and no wife
To work upon his milkiness of spirit,
He may go through the ordeal; it is well
He is an orphan, friendless save in us:
A woman or a child had made him less
Than either in resolve.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Such ties are not
For those who are call'd to the high destinies
Which purify corrupted commonwealths;
We must forget all feelings save the *one*—
We must resign all passions save our purpose—
We must behold no object save our country—
And only look on death as beautiful,
So that the sacrifice ascend to heaven,
And draw down freedom on her evermore.

CALENDARO.

But if we fail.——

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

They never fail who die
In a great cause: the block may soak their gore;
Their heads may sodden in the sun; their limbs
Be strung to city gates and castle walls—
But still their spirit walks abroad. Though years
Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,
They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts
Which o'erpower all others, and conduct
The world at last to freedom: What were we,
If Brutus had not lived? He died in giving
Rome liberty, but left a deathless lesson—
A name which is a virtue, and a soul
Which multiplies itself throughout all time,
When wicked men wax mighty, and a state
Turns servile: he and his high friend were styled
"The last of Romans!" Let us be the first
Of true Venetians, sprung from Roman sires.

CALENDARO.

Our fathers did not fly from Attila
Into these isles, where palaces have sprung
On banks redeem'd from the rude ocean's ooze,
To own a thousand despots in his place.
Better bow down before the Hun, and call
A Tartar lord, than these swoln silkworms masters!
The first at least was man, and used his sword
As sceptre: these unmanly creeping things
Command our swords, and rule us with a word
As with a spell.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

It shall be broken soon.
You say that all things are in readiness;
To-day I have not been the usual round,
And why thou knowest; but thy vigilance
Will better have supplied my care: these orders
In recent council to redouble now
Our efforts to repair the galleys, have
Lent a fair colour to the introduction
Of many of our cause into the arsenal,
As new artificers for their equipment,
Or fresh recruits obtain'd in haste to man
The hoped-for fleet.—Are all supplied with arms?

CALENDARO.

All who were deem'd trustworthy: there are some
Whom it were well to keep in ignorance
Till it be time to strike, and then supply them;
When in the heat and hurry of the hour
They have no opportunity to pause,
But needs must on with those who will surround them.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You have said well.—Have you remark'd all such?

CALENDARO.

I've noted most; and caused the other chiefs
To use like caution in their companies.
As far as I have seen, we are enough
To make the enterprise secure, if 'tis
Commenced to-morrow; but, till 'tis begun,
Each hour is pregnant with a thousand perils.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Let the Sixteen meet at the wonted hour,
Except Soranzo, Nicoletto Blondo,
And Marco Giuda, who will keep their watch
Within the arsenal, and hold all ready,
Expectant of the signal we will fix on.

CALENDARO.

We will not fail.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Let all the rest be there;
I have a stranger to present to them.

CALENDARO.

A stranger! doth he know the secret?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Yes.

CALENDARO.

And have you dared to peril your friends' lives
On a rash confidence in one we know not?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I have risk'd no man's life except my own—
Of that be certain: he is one who may

Make our assurance doubly sure, according
His aid; and if reluctant, he no less
Is in our power: he comes alone with me,
And cannot 'scape us; but he will not swerve.

CALENDARO.

I cannot judge of this until I know him:
Is he one of our order?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Ay, in spirit,
Although a child of greatness; he is one
Who would become a throne, or overthrow one—
One who has done great deeds, and seen great changes;
No tyrant, though bred up to tyranny;
Valiant in war, and sage in council; noble
In nature, although haughty; quick, yet wary:
Yet for all this, so full of certain passions,
That if once stirr'd and baffled, as he has been
Upon the tenderest points, there is no Fury
In Grecian story like to that which wrings
His vitals with her burning hands, till he
Grows capable of all things for revenge;
And add too, that his mind is liberal,
He sees and feels the people are oppress'd,
And shares their sufferings. Take him all in all,
We have need of such, and such have need of us.

CALENDARO.

And what part would you have him take with us?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

It may be, that of chief.

CALENDARO.

What! and resign
Your own command as leader?

ISRAÆL BERTUCCIO.

Even so.
My object is to make your cause end well,
And not to push myself to power. Experience,
Some skill, and your own choice, had mark'd me out
To act in trust as your commander, till
Some worthier should appear: if I have found such
As you yourselves shall own more worthy, think you
That I would hesitate from selfishness,
And, covetous of brief authority,
Stake our deep interest on my single thoughts,
Rather than yield to one above me in
All leading qualities? No, Calendaro,
Know your friend better; but you all shall judge.—
Away! and let us meet at the fix'd hour.
Be vigilant, and all will yet go well.

CALENDARO.

Worthy Bertuccio, I have known you ever
Trusty and brave, with head and heart to plan
What I have still been prompt to execute.
For my own part, I seek no other chief;
What the rest will decide I know not, but
I am with YOU, as I have ever been,
In all our undertakings. Now farewell,
Until the hour of midnight sees us meet. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Scene, the Space between the Canal and the Church of San Giovanni e San Paolo. An equestrian Statue before it.—A Gondola lies in the Canal at some distance.

Enter the DOGE *alone, disguised.*

DOGE *(solus.)*

I am before the hour, the hour whose voice,
Pealing into the arch of night, might strike
These palaces with ominous tottering,
And rock their marbles to the corner-stone,
Waking the sleepers from some hideous dream
Of indistinct but awful augury
Of that which will befal them. Yes, proud city!
Thou must be cleansed of the black blood which makes thee
A lazar-house of tyranny: the task
Is forced upon me, I have sought it not;
And therefore was I punish'd, seeing this
Patrician pestilence spread on and on,
Until at length it smote me in my slumbers,
And I am tainted, and must wash away
The plague-spots in the healing wave. Tall fane!
Where sleep my fathers, whose dim statues shadow
The floor which doth divide us from the dead,
Where all the pregnant hearts of our bold blood,
Moulder'd into a mite of ashes, hold
In one shrunk heap what once made many heroes,

When what is now a handful shook the earth—
Fane of the tutelar saints who guard our house!
Vault where two Doges rest—my sires! who died
The one of toil, the other in the field,
With a long race of other lineal chiefs
And sages, whose great labours, wounds, and state
I have inherited,—let the graves gape,
Till all thine aisles be peopled with the dead,
And pour them from thy portals to gaze on me!
I call them up, and them and thee to witness
What it hath been which put me to this task—
Their pure high blood, their blazon-roll of glories,
Their mighty name dishonour'd all *in* me,
Not *by* me, but by the ungrateful nobles
We fought to make our equals, not our lords:—
And chiefly thou, Ordelafo the brave,
Who perish'd in the field, where I since conquer'd,
Battling at Zara, did the hecatombs
Of thine and Venice' foes, there offer'd up
By thy descendant, merit such acquittance?
Spirits! smile down upon me; for my cause
Is yours, in all life now can be of yours,—
Your fame, your name, all mingled up in mine,
And in the future fortunes of our race!
Let me but prosper, and I make this city
Free and immortal, and our house's name
Worthier of what you were, now and hereafter!

Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Who goes there?

DOGE.

A friend to Venice.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

'Tis he.
Welcome, my lord,—you are before the time.

DOGE.

I am ready to proceed to your assembly.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Have with you.—I am proud and pleased to see
Such confident alacrity. Your doubts
Since our last meeting, then, are all dispell'd?

DOGE.

Not so—but I have set my little left
Of life upon this cast: the die was thrown
When I first listen'd to your treason—Start not!
That is the word; I cannot shape my tongue
To syllable black deeds into smooth names,
Though I be wrought on to commit them. When
I heard you tempt your sovereign, and forbore
To have you dragg'd to prison, I became
Your guiltiest accomplice: now you may,
If it so please you, do as much by me.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Strange words, my lord, and most unmerited;
I am no spy, and neither are we traitors.

DOGE.

We—We!—no matter—you have earn'd the right,
To talk of *us*.—But to the point.—If this
Attempt succeeds, and Venice, render'd free
And flourishing, when we are in our graves,

Conducts her generations to our tombs,
And makes her children with their little hands
Strew flowers o'er her deliverers' ashes, then
The consequence will sanctify the deed,
And we shall be like the two Bruti in
The annals of hereafter; but if not,
If we should fail, employing bloody means
And secret plot, although to a good end,
Still we are traitors, honest Israel;—thou
No less than he who was thy sovereign
Six hours ago, and now thy brother rebel.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

'Tis not the moment to consider thus,
Else I could answer.—Let us to the meeting,
Or we may be observed in lingering here.

DOGE.

We *are* observed, and have been.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

We observed!
Let me discover—and this steel——

DOGE.

Put up;
Here are no human witnesses: look there—
What see you?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Only a tall warrior's statue
Bestriding a proud steed, in the dim light
Of the dull moon.

DOGE.

That warrior was the sire

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S

Of my sire's fathers, and that statue was
Decreed to him by the twice rescued city:—
Think you that he looks down on us, or no?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

My lord, these are mere phantasies; there are
No eyes in marble.

DOGE.

But there are in Death.
I tell thee, man, there is a spirit in
Such things that acts and sees, unseen, though felt;
And, if there be a spell to stir the dead,
'Tis in such deeds as we are now upon.
Deem'st thou the souls of such a race as mine
Can rest, when he, their last descendant chief,
Stands plotting on the brink of their pure graves
With stung plebeians?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

It had been as well
To have ponder'd this before,—ere you embark'd
In our great enterprize.—Do you repent?

DOGE.

No—but I *feel*, and shall do to the last.
I cannot quench a glorious life at once,
Nor dwindle to the thing I now must be,
And take men's lives by stealth, without some pause:
Yet doubt me not; it is this very feeling,
And knowing *what* has wrung me to be thus,
Which is your best security. There 's not
A roused mechanic in your busy plot
So wrong'd as I, so fallen, so loudly call'd

To his redress: the very means I am forced
By these fell tyrants to adopt is such,
That I abhor them doubly for the deeds
Which I must do to pay them back for theirs.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Let us away—hark—the hour strikes.

DOGE.

On—On—
It is our knell, or that of Venice.—On.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Say rather, 'tis her freedom's rising peal
Of triumph——This way—we are near the place.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The House where the Conspirators meet.

DAGOLINO, DORO, BERTRAM, FEDELE TREVISANO, CALENDARO, ANTONIO DELLE BENDE, &c. &c.

CALENDARO *(entering.)*

Are all here?

DAGOLINO.

All with you; except the three
On duty, and our leader Israel,
Who is expected momently.

CALENDARO.

Where's Bertram?

BERTRAM.

Here!

CALENDARO.

Have you not been able to complete
The number wanting in your company?

BERTRAM.

I had mark'd out some: but I have not dared
To trust them with the secret, till assured
That they were worthy faith.

CALENDARO.

There is no need
Of trusting to their faith: *who*, save ourselves
And our more chosen comrades, is aware
Fully of our intent? they think themselves (3)
Engaged in secret to the Signory,
To punish some more dissolute young nobles
Who have defied the law in their excesses;
But once drawn up, and their new swords well-flesh'd
In the rank hearts of the more odious senators,
They will not hesitate to follow up
Their blow upon the others, when they see
The example of their chiefs, and I for one
Will set them such, that they for very shame
And safety will not pause till all have perish'd.

BERTRAM.

How say you? *all!*

CALENDARO.

Whom wouldst thou spare?

BERTRAM.

I spare?
I have no power to spare. I only question'd,
Thinking that even amongst these wicked men

There might be some, whose age and qualities
Might mark them out for pity.

CALENDARO.

Yes, such pity
As when the viper hath been cut to pieces,
The separate fragments quivering in the sun
In the last energy of venomous life,
Deserve and have. Why, I should think as soon
Of pitying some particular fang which made
One in the jaw of the swoln serpent, as
Of saving one of these: they form but links
Of one long chain; one mass, one breath, one body;
They eat, and drink, and live, and breed together,
Revel, and lie, oppress, and kill in concert,—
So let them die as *one!*

DAGOLINO.

Should *one* survive,
He would be dangerous as the whole; it is not
Their number, be it tens or thousands, but
The spirit of this aristocracy
Which must be rooted out; and if there were
A single shoot of the old tree in life,
'T would fasten in the soil, and spring again
To gloomy verdure and to bitter fruit.
Bertram, we must be firm!

CALENDARO.

Look to it well,
Bertram; I have an eye upon thee.

BERTRAM.

Who
Distrusts me?

CALENDARO.

Not I; for if I did so,
Thou wouldst not now be there to talk of trust:
It is thy softness, not thy want of faith,
Which makes thee to be doubted.

BERTRAM.

You should know
Who hear me, who and what I am; a man
Roused like yourselves to overthrow oppression;
A kind man, I am apt to think, as some
Of you have found me; and if brave or no,
You, Calendaro, can pronounce, who have seen me
Put to the proof; or, if you should have doubts,
I'll clear them on your person!

CALENDARO.

You are welcome,
When once our enterprise is o'er, which must not
Be interrupted by a private brawl.

BERTRAM.

I am no brawler; but can bear myself
As far among the foe as any he
Who hears me; else why have I been selected
To be of your chief comrades? but no less
I own my natural weakness; I have not
Yet learn'd to think of indiscriminate murder
Without some sense of shuddering; and the sight
Of blood which spouts through hoary scalps is not
To me a thing of triumph, nor the death
Of men surprised a glory. Well—too well
I know that we must do such things on those

Whose acts have raised up such avengers; but
If there were some of these who could be saved
From out this sweeping fate, for our own sakes
And for our honour, to take off some stain
Of massacre, which else pollutes it wholly,
I had been glad; and see no cause in this
For sneer, nor for suspicion!

DAGOLINO.

Calm thee, Bertram;
For we suspect thee not, and take good heart.
It is the cause, and not our will, which asks
Such actions from our hands: we'll wash away
All stains in Freedom's fountain!

Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and the* DOGE, *disguised.*

DAGOLINO.

Welcome, Israel.

CONSPIRATORS.

Most welcome.—Brave Bertuccio, thou art late—
Who is this stranger?

CALENDARO.

It is time to name him.
Our comrades are even now prepared to greet him
In brotherhood, as I have made it known
That thou wouldst add a brother to our cause,
Approved by thee, and thus approved by all,
Such is our trust in all thine actions. Now
Let him unfold himself.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Stranger, step forth!

[*The* DOGE *discovers himself.*

CONSPIRATORS.

To arms!—we are betray'd—it is the Doge!
Down with them both! our traitorous captain, and
The tyrant he hath sold us to!

CALENDARO *(drawing his sword.)*

Hold! Hold!
Who moves a step against them dies. Hold! hear
Bertuccio—What! are you appall'd to see
A lone, unguarded, weaponless old man
Amongst you?—Israel, speak! what means this mystery?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Let them advance and strike at their own bosoms,
Ungrateful suicides! for on our lives
Depend their own, their fortunes, and their hopes.

DOGE.

Strike!—If I dreaded death, a death more fearful
Than any your rash weapons can inflict,
I should not now be here:—Oh, noble Courage!
The eldest born of Fear, which makes you brave
Against this solitary hoary head!
See the bold chiefs, who would reform a state
And shake down senates, mad with wrath and dread
At sight of one patrician.—Butcher me,
You can; I care not.—Israel, are these men
The mighty hearts you spoke of? look upon them!

CALENDARO.

Faith! he hath shamed us, and deservedly.
Was this your trust in your true Chief Bertuccio,
To turn your swords against him and his guest?
Sheathe them, and hear him.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I disdain to speak.
They might and must have known a heart like mine
Incapable of treachery; and the power
They gave me to adopt all fitting means
To further their design was ne'er abused.
They might be certain that whoe'er was brought
By me into this council, had been led
To take his choice—as brother, or as victim.

DOGE.

And which am I to be? your actions leave
Some cause to doubt the freedom of the choice.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

My lord, we would have perish'd here together,
Had these rash men proceeded; but, behold,
They are ashamed of that mad moment's impulse,
And droop their heads; believe me, they are such
As I described them—Speak to them.

CALENDARO.

Ay, speak;
We are all listening in wonder.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO,

Addressing the Conspirators.

You are safe,
Nay, more, almost triumphant—listen then,
And know my words for truth.

DOGE.

You see me here,
As one of you hath said, an old, unarm'd,
Defenceless man; and yesterday you saw me

Presiding in the hall of ducal state,
Apparent sovereign of our hundred isles,
Robed in official purple, dealing out
The edicts of a power which is not mine,
Nor yours, but of our masters—the patricians.
Why I was there you know, or think you know;
Why I am *here*, he who hath been most wrong'd,
He who among you hath been most insulted,
Outraged and trodden on, until he doubt
If he be worm or no, may answer for me,
Asking of his own heart what brought him here?
You know my recent story, all men know it,
And judge of it far differently from those
Who sate in judgment to heap scorn on scorn.
But spare me the recital—it is here,
Here at my heart the outrage—but my words,
Already spent in unavailing plaints,
Would only show my feebleness the more,
And I come here to strengthen even the strong,
And urge them on to deeds, and not to war
With woman's weapons; but I need not urge you.
Our private wrongs have sprung from public vices
In this—I cannot call it commonwealth
Nor kingdom, which hath neither prince nor people,
But all the sins of the old Spartan state
Without its virtues—temperance and valour.
The lords of Lacedemon were true soldiers,
But ours are Sybarites, while we are Helots,
Of whom I am the lowest, most enslaved,
Although drest out to head a pageant, as

The Greeks of yore made drunk their slaves to form
A pastime for their children. You are met
To overthrow this monster of a state,
This mockery of a government, this spectre,
Which must be exorcised with blood, and then
We will renew the times of truth and justice,
Condensing in a fair free commonwealth
Not rash equality but equal rights,
Proportion'd like the columns to the temple,
Giving and taking strength reciprocal,
And making firm the whole with grace and beauty,
So that no part could be removed without
Infringement of the general symmetry.
In operating this great change, I claim
To be one of you—if you trust in me;
If not, strike home,—my life is compromised,
And I would rather fall by freemen's hands
Than live another day to act the tyrant
As delegate of tyrants; such I am not,
And never have been—read it in our annals;
I can appeal to my past government
In many lands and cities; they can tell you
If I were an oppressor, or a man
Feeling and thinking for my fellow men.
Haply had I been what the senate sought,
A thing of robes and trinkets, dizen'd out
To sit in state as for a sovereign's picture;
A popular scourge, a ready sentence-signer,
A stickler for the Senate and "the Forty,"

A sceptic of all measures which had not
The sanction of "The Ten," a council-fawner,
A tool, a fool, a puppet,—they had ne'er
Foster'd the wretch who stung me. What I suffer
Has reach'd me through my pity for the people;
That many know, and they who know not yet
Will one day learn: meantime, I do devote,
Whate'er the issue, my last days of life—
My present power such as it is, not that
Of Doge, but of a man who has been great
Before he was degraded to a Doge,
And still has individual means and mind;
I stake my fame (and I had fame)—my breath—
(The least of all, for its last hours are nigh)
My heart—my hope—my soul—upon this cast!
Such as I am, I offer me to you
And to your chiefs, accept me or reject me,
A Prince who fain would be a citizen
Or nothing, and who has left his throne to be so.

CALENDARO.

Long live Faliero!—Venice shall be free!

CONSPIRATORS.

Long live Faliero!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Comrades! did I well?
Is not this man a host in such a cause?

DOGE.

This is no time for eulogies, nor place
For exultation. Am I one of you?

CALENDARO.

Ay, and the first amongst us, as thou hast been
Of Venice—be our general and chief.

DOGE.

Chief!—general!—I was general at Zara,
And chief in Rhodes and Cyprus, prince in Venice;
I cannot stoop——that is, I am not fit
To lead a band of——patriots: when I lay
Aside the dignities which I have borne,
'Tis not to put on others, but to be
Mate to my fellows—but now to the point:
Israel has stated to me your whole plan—
'Tis bold, but feasible if I assist it,
And must be set in motion instantly.

CALENDARO.

E'en when thou wilt—is it not so, my friends?
I have disposed all for a sudden blow;
When shall it be then?

DOGE.

At sunrise.

BERTRAM.

So soon?

DOGE.

So soon?—so late—each hour accumulates
Peril on peril, and the more so now
Since I have mingled with you; know you not
The Council, and "the Ten?" the spies, the eyes
Of the patricians dubious of their slaves,
And now more dubious of the prince they have made one?

I tell you you must strike, and suddenly,
Full to the Hydra's heart—its heads will follow.

CALENDARO.

With all my soul and sword I yield assent;
Our companies are ready, sixty each,
And all now under arms by Israel's order;
Each at their different place of rendezvous,
And vigilant, expectant of some blow;
Let each repair for action to his post!
And now, my lord, the signal?

DOGE.

When you hear
The great bell of Saint Mark's, which may not be
Struck without special order of the Doge,
(The last poor privilege they leave their prince),
March on Saint Mark's!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

And there?—

DOGE.

By different routes
Let your march be directed, every sixty
Entering a separate avenue, and still
Upon the way let your cry be of war
And of the Genoese fleet, by the first dawn
Discern'd before the port; form round the palace,
Within whose court will be drawn out in arms
My nephew and the clients of our house,
Many and martial; while the bell tolls on,
Shout ye, "Saint Mark!—the foe is on our waters!"

CALENDARO.

I see it now—but on, my noble lord.

DOGE.

All the patricians flocking to the Council,
(Which they dare not refuse, at the dread signal
Pealing from out their patron saint's proud tower)
Will then be gather'd in unto the harvest,
And we will reap them with the sword for sickle.
If some few should be tardy or absent them,
'Twill be but to be taken faint and single,
When the majority are put to rest.

CALENDARO.

Would that the hour were come! we will not scotch,
But kill.

BERTRAM.

Once more, sir, with your pardon, I
Would now repeat the question which I ask'd
Before Bertuccio added to our cause
This great ally who renders it more sure,
And therefore safer, and as such admits
Some dawn of mercy to a portion of
Our victims—must all perish in this slaughter?

CALENDARO.

All who encounter me and mine, be sure,
The mercy they have shown, I show.

CONSPIRATORS.

All! all!

Is this a time to talk of pity? when
Have they e'er shown, or felt, or feign'd it?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Bertram,
This false compassion is a folly, and
Injustice to thy comrades and thy cause!
Dost thou not see, that if we single out
Some for escape, they live but to avenge
The fallen? and how distinguish now the innocent
From out the guilty? all their acts are *one*—
A single emanation from one body,
Together knit for our oppression! 'Tis
Much that we let their children live; I doubt
If all of these even should be set apart:
The hunter may reserve some single cub
From out the tiger's litter, but who e'er
Would seek to save the spotted sire or dam,
Unless to perish by their fangs? however,
I will abide by Doge Faliero's counsel;
Let him decide if any should be saved.

DOGE.

Ask me not—tempt me not with such a question—
Decide yourselves.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You know their private virtues
Far better than we can, to whom alone
Their public vices, and most foul oppression,
Have made them deadly; if there be amongst them
One who deserves to be repeal'd, pronounce.

DOGE.

Dolfino's father was my friend, and Lando

Fought by my side, and Marc Cornaro shared
My Genoese embassy; I saved the life
Of Veniero—shall I save it twice?
Would that I could save them and Venice also!
All these men, or their fathers, were my friends
Till they became my subjects; then fell from me
As faithless leaves drop from the o'erblown flower,
And left me a lone blighted thorny stalk,
Which, in its solitude, can shelter nothing;
So, as they let me wither, let them perish!

CALENDARO.

They cannot co-exist with Venice' freedom!

DOGE.

Ye, though you know and feel our mutual mass
Of many wrongs, even ye are ignorant
What fatal poison to the springs of life,
To human ties, and all that's good and dear,
Lurks in the present institutes of Venice:
All these men were my friends; I loved them, they
Requited honourably my regards;
We served and fought; we smiled and wept in concert;
We revell'd or we sorrow'd side by side;
We made alliances of blood and marriage;
We grew in years and honours fairly, till
Their own desire, not my ambition, made
Them choose me for their prince, and then farewell!
Farewell all social memory! all thoughts
In common! and sweet bonds which link old friendships,
When the survivors of long years and actions,

Which now belong to history, soothe the days
Which yet remain by treasuring each other,
And never meet, but each beholds the mirror
Of half a century on his brother's brow,
And sees a hundred beings, now in earth,
Flit round them whispering of the days gone by,
And seeming not all dead, as long as two
Of the brave, joyous, reckless, glorious band,
Which once were one and many, still retain
A breath to sigh for them, a tongue to speak
Of deeds that else were silent, save on marble——
Oime! Oime!—and must I do this deed?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

My lord, you are much moved: it is not now
That such things must be dwelt upon.

DOGE.

Your patience
A moment—I recede not: mark with me
The gloomy vices of this government.
From the hour that made me Doge, the *Doge* THEY *made* me—
Farewell the past! I died to all that had been,
Or rather they to me: no friends, no kindness,
No privacy of life—all were cut off:
They came not near me, such approach gave umbrage;
They could not love me, such was not the law;
They thwarted me, 'twas the state's policy;
They baffled me, 'twas a patrician's duty;
They wrong'd me, for such was to right the state;

They could not right me, that would give suspicion;
So that I was a slave to my own subjects;
So that I was a foe to my own friends;
Begirt with spies for guards—with robes for power—
With pomp for freedom—gaolers for a council—
Inquisitors for friends—and hell for life!
I had one only fount of quiet left,
And *that* they poison'd! My pure household gods
Were shiver'd on my hearth, and o'er their shrine
Sate grinning Ribaldry and sneering Scorn.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You have been deeply wrong'd, and now shall be
Nobly avenged before another night.

DOGE.

I had borne all—it hurt me, but I bore it—
Till this last running over of the cup
Of bitterness—until this last loud insult,
Not only unredress'd, but sanction'd; then,
And thus, I cast all further feelings from me—
The feelings which they crush'd for me, long, long
Before, even in their oath of false allegiance!
Even in that very hour and vow, they abjured
Their friend and made a sovereign, as boys make
Playthings, to do their pleasure and be broken!
I from that hour have seen but senators
In dark suspicious conflict with the Doge,
Brooding with him in mutual hate and fear;
They dreading he should snatch the tyranny
From out their grasp, and he abhorring tyrants.

To me, then, these men have no *private* life,
Nor claim to ties they have cut off from others;
As senators for arbitrary acts
Amenable, I look on them—as such
Let them be dealt upon.

CALENDARO.

And now to action!
Hence, brethren, to our posts, and may this be
The last night of mere words: I 'd fain be doing!
Saint Mark's great bell at dawn shall find me wakeful!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Disperse then to your posts: be firm and vigilant;
Think on the wrongs we bear, the rights we claim.
This day and night shall be the last of peril!
Watch for the signal, and then march. I go
To join my band; let each be prompt to marshal
His separate charge: the Doge will now return
To the palace to prepare all for the blow.
We part to meet in freedom and in glory!

CALENDARO.

Doge, when I greet you next, my homage to you
Shall be the head of Steno on this sword!

DOGE.

No; let him be reserved unto the last,
Nor turn aside to strike at such a prey,
Till nobler game is quarried: his offence
Was a mere ebullition of the vice,
The general corruption generated
By the foul aristocracy; he could not—

He dared not in more honourable days
Have risk'd it! I have merged all private wrath
Against him, in the thought of our great purpose.
A slave insults me—I require his punishment
From his proud master's hands; if he refuse it,
The offence grows his, and let him answer it.

CALENDARO.

Yet, as the immediate cause of the alliance
Which consecrates our undertaking more,
I owe him such deep gratitude, that fain
I would repay him as he merits; may I?

DOGE.

You would but lop the hand, and I the head;
You would but smite the scholar, I the master;
You would but punish Steno, I the senate.
I cannot pause on individual hate,
In the absorbing, sweeping, whole revenge,
Which, like the sheeted fire from heaven, must blast
Without distinction, as it fell of yore,
Where the Dead Sea hath quench'd two cities' ashes.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Away, then, to your posts! I but remain
A moment to accompany the Doge
To our late place of tryst, to see no spies
Have been upon the scout, and thence I hasten
To where my allotted band is under arms.

CALENDARO.

Farewell, then, until dawn!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Success go with you!

CONSPIRATORS.

We will not fail—away! My lord, farewell!

[*The Conspirators salute the* DOGE *and* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, *and retire, headed by* PHILIP CALENDARO. *The* DOGE *and* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *remain.*

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

We have them in the toil—it cannot fail!
Now thou 'rt indeed a sovereign, and wilt make
A name immortal greater than the greatest:
Free citizens have struck at kings ere now;
Cæsars have fallen, and even patrician hands
Have crush'd dictators, as the popular steel
Has reach'd patricians; but until this hour,
What prince has plotted for his people's freedom?
Or risk'd a life to liberate his subjects?
For ever, and for ever, they conspire
Against the people, to abuse their hands
To chains, but laid aside to carry weapons
Against the fellow nations, so that yoke
On yoke, and slavery and death may whet,
Not glut, the never-gorged Leviathan!
Now, my lord, to our enterprise; 'tis great,
And greater the reward; why stand you rapt?
A moment back, and you were all impatience!

DOGE.

And is it then decided? must they die?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Who?

DOGE.

My own friends by blood and courtesy,
And many deeds and days—the senators?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You pass'd their sentence, and it is a just one.

DOGE.

Ay, so it seems, and so it is to *you*;
You are a patriot, plebeian Gracchus—
The rebel's oracle—the people's tribune—
I blame you not, you act in your vocation;
They smote you, and oppress'd you, and despised you;
So they have *me:* but *you* ne'er spake with them;
You never broke their bread, nor shared their salt;
You never had their wine-cup at your lips;
You grew not up with them, nor laugh'd, nor wept,
Nor held a revel in their company;
Ne'er smiled to see them smile, nor claim'd their smile
In social interchange for yours, nor trusted
Nor wore them in your heart of hearts, as I have:
These hairs of mine are grey, and so are theirs,
The elders of the council; I remember
When all our locks were like the raven's wing,
As we went forth to take our prey around
The isles wrung from the false Mahometan;
And can I see them dabbled o'er with blood?
Each stab to them will seem my suicide.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Doge! Doge! this vacillation is unworthy
A child; if you are not in second childhood,

Call back your nerves to your own purpose, nor
Thus shame yourself and me. By heavens! I'd rather
Forego even now, or fail in our intent,
Than see the man I venerate subside
From high resolves into such shallow weakness!
You have seen blood in battle, shed it, both
Your own and that of others; can you shrink then
From a few drops from veins of hoary vampires,
Who but give back what they have drain'd from millions?

DOGE.

Bear with me! Step by step, and blow on blow,
I will divide with you; think not I waver:
Ah! no; it is the *certainty* of all
Which I must do doth make me tremble thus.
But let these last and lingering thoughts have way,
To which you only and the Night are conscious,
And both regardless; when the hour arrives,
'Tis mine to sound the knell, and strike the blow,
Which shall unpeople many palaces,
And hew the highest genealogic trees
Down to the earth, strew'd with their bleeding fruit,
And crush their blossoms into barrenness:
This will I—must I—have I sworn to do,
Nor aught can turn me from my destiny;
But still I quiver to behold what I
Must be, and think what I have been! Bear with me.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Re-man your breast; I feel no such remorse,

I understand it not: why should you change?
You acted, and you act on your free will.

DOGE.

Ay, there it is—*you* feel not, nor do I,
Else I should stab thee on the spot, to save
A thousand lives, and, killing, do no murder;
You *feel* not—*you* go to this butcher-work
As if these high-born men were steers for shambles!
When all is over, you 'll be free and merry,
And calmly wash those hands incarnadine;
But I, outgoing thee and all thy fellows
In this surpassing massacre, shall be,
Shall see and feel—oh God! oh God! 'tis true,
And thou dost well to answer that it was
"My own free will and act," and yet you err,
For I *will* do this! Doubt not—fear not; I
Will be your most unmerciful accomplice!
And yet I act no more on my free will,
Nor my own feelings—both compel me back;
But there is *hell* within me and around,
And like the demon who believes and trembles
Must I abhor and do. Away! away!
Get thee unto thy fellows, I will hie me
To gather the retainers of our house.
Doubt not, Saint Mark's great bell shall wake all Venice,
Except her slaughter'd senate: ere the sun
Be broad upon the Adriatic there
Shall be a voice of weeping, which shall drown
The roar of waters in the cry of blood!
I am resolved—come on.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

With all my soul!
Keep a firm rein upon these bursts of passion;
Remember what these men have dealt to thee,
And that this sacrifice will be succeeded
By ages of prosperity and freedom
To this unshackled city: a true tyrant
Would have depopulated empires, nor
Have felt the strange compunction which hath wrung you
To punish a few traitors to the people!
Trust me, such were a pity more misplaced
Than the late mercy of the state to Steno.

DOGE.

Man, thou hast struck upon the chord which jars
All nature from my heart. Hence to our task!

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.—SCENE I.

Palazzo of the Patrician LIONI. LIONI *laying aside the mask and cloak which the Venetian Nobles wore in public, attended by a Domestic.*

LIONI.

I will to rest, right weary of this revel,
The gayest we have held for many moons,
And yet, I know not why, it cheer'd me not;
There came a heaviness across my heart,
Which, in the lightest movement of the dance,
Though eye to eye, and hand in hand united
Even with the lady of my love, oppress'd me,
And through my spirit chill'd my blood, until
A damp like death rose o'er my brow; I strove
To laugh the thought away, but 't would not be;
Through all the music ringing in my ears
A knell was sounding as distinct and clear,
Though low and far, as e'er the Adrian wave
Rose o'er the city's murmur in the night,
Dashing against the outward Lido's bulwark:
So that I left the festival before
It reach'd its zenith, and will woo my pillow
For thoughts more tranquil, or forgetfulness.

Antonio, take my mask and cloak, and light
The lamp within my chamber.

ANTONIO.

Yes, my lord:
Command you no refreshment?

LIONI.

Nought, save sleep,
Which will not be commanded. Let me hope it,
[*Exit* ANTONIO.
Though my breast feels too anxious; I will try
Whether the air will calm my spirits: 'tis
A goodly night; the cloudy wind which blew
From the Levant hath crept into its cave,
And the broad moon has brighten'd. What a stillness!
[*Goes to an open lattice.*
And what a contrast with the scene I left,
Where the tall torches' glare, and silver lamps'
More pallid gleam along the tapestried walls,
Spread over the reluctant gloom which haunts
Those vast and dimly-latticed galleries
A dazzling mass of artificial light,
Which show'd all things, but nothing as they were.
There Age essaying to recall the past,
After long striving for the hues of youth
At the sad labour of the toilet, and
Full many a glance at the too faithful mirror,
Prankt forth in all the pride of ornament,
Forgot itself, and trusting to the falsehood
Of the indulgent beams, which show, yet hide,

Believed itself forgotten, and was fool'd.
There Youth, which needed not, nor thought of such
Vain adjuncts, lavish'd its true bloom, and health,
And bridal beauty, in the unwholesome press
Of flush'd and crowded wassailers, and wasted
Its hours of rest in dreaming this was pleasure,
And so shall waste them till the sunrise streams
On sallow cheeks and sunken eyes, which should not
Have worn this aspect yet for many a year.
The music, and the banquet, and the wine—
The garlands, the rose odours, and the flowers—
The sparkling eyes and flashing ornaments—
The white arms and the raven hair—the braids
And bracelets; swanlike bosoms, and the necklace,
An India in itself, yet dazzling not
The eye like what it circled; the thin robes
Floating like light clouds 'twixt our gaze and heaven;
The many-twinkling feet so small and sylphlike,
Suggesting the more secret symmetry
Of the fair forms which terminate so well—
All the delusion of the dizzy scene,
Its false and true enchantments—art and nature,
Which swam before my giddy eyes, that drank
The sight of beauty as the parch'd pilgrim's
On Arab sands the false mirage, which offers
A lucid lake to his eluded thirst,
Are gone.—Around me are the stars and waters—
Worlds mirror'd in the ocean, goodlier sight
Than torches glared back by a gaudy glass;

And the great element, which is to space
What ocean is to earth, spreads its blue depths,
Soften'd with the first breathings of the spring;
The high moon sails upon her beauteous way,
Serenely smoothing o'er the lofty walls
Of those tall piles and sea-girt palaces,
Whose porphyry pillars, and whose costly fronts,
Fraught with the orient spoil of many marbles,
Like altars ranged along the broad canal,
Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed
Rear'd up from out the waters, scarce less strangely
Than those more massy and mysterious giants
Of architecture, those Titanian fabrics,
Which point in Egypt's plains to times that have
No other record. All is gentle: nought
Stirs rudely; but, congenial with the night,
Whatever walks is gliding like a spirit.
The tinklings of some vigilant guitars
Of sleepless lovers to a wakeful mistress,
And cautious opening of the casement, showing
That he is not unheard; while her young hand,
Fair as the moonlight of which it seems part,
So delicately white, it trembles in
The act of opening the forbidden lattice,
To let in love through music, makes his heart
Thrill like his lyre-strings at the sight;—the dash
Phosphoric of the oar, or rapid twinkle
Of the far lights of skimming gondolas,
And the responsive voices of the choir

Of boatmen answering back with verse for verse;
Some dusky shadow chequering the Rialto;
Some glimmering palace roof, or tapering spire,
Are all the sights and sounds which here pervade
The ocean-born and earth-commanding city—
How sweet and soothing is this hour of calm!
I thank thee, Night! for thou hast chased away
Those horrid bodements which, amidst the throng,
I could not dissipate: and with the blessing
Of thy benign and quiet influence,—
Now will I to my couch, although to rest
Is almost wronging such a night as this——

[*A knocking is heard from without.*

Hark! what is that? or who at such a moment?

Enter ANTONIO.

ANTONIO.

My lord, a man without, on urgent business,
Implores to be admitted.

LIONI.

Is he a stranger?

ANTONIO.

His face is muffled in his cloak, but both
His voice and gestures seem familiar to me;
I craved his name, but this he seem'd reluctant
To trust, save to yourself; most earnestly
He sues to be permitted to approach you.

LIONI.

'Tis a strange hour, and a suspicious bearing!
And yet there is slight peril: 'tis not in
Their houses noble men are struck at; still,
Although I know not that I have a foe
In Venice, 'twill be wise to use some caution.
Admit him, and retire; but call up quickly
Some of thy fellows, who may wait without.—
Who can this man be?——

[*Exit* ANTONIO, *and returns with* BERTRAM, *muffled.*

BERTRAM.

My good lord Lioni,
I have no time to lose, nor thou—dismiss
This menial hence; I would be private with you.

LIONI.

It seems the voice of Bertram—go, Antonio.

[*Exit* ANTONIO.

Now, stranger, what would you at such an hour?

BERTRAM (*discovering himself*).

A boon, my noble patron; you have granted
Many to your poor client, Bertram; add
This one, and make him happy.

LIONI.

Thou hast known me
From boyhood, ever ready to assist thee
In all fair objects of advancement, which
Beseem one of thy station; I would promise
Ere thy request was heard, but that the hour,
Thy bearing, and this strange and hurried mode

Of suing, gives me to suspect this visit
Hath some mysterious import—but say on—
What has occurred, some rash and sudden broil?—
A cup too much, a scuffle, and a stab?—.
Mere things of every day; so that thou hast not
Spilt noble blood, I guarantee thy safety;
But then thou must withdraw, for angry friends
And relatives, in the first burst of vengeance,
Are things in Venice deadlier than the laws.

BERTRAM.

My lord, I thank you; but——

LIONI.

But what? You have not
Raised a rash hand against one of our order?
If so, withdraw and fly, and own it not;
I would not slay—but then I must not save thee!
He who has shed patrician blood——

BERTRAM.

I come
To save patrician blood, and not to shed it!
And thereunto I must be speedy, for
Each minute lost may lose a life; since Time
Has changed his slow scythe for the two-edged sword,
And is about to take, instead of sand,
The dust from sepulchres to fill his hour-glass!—
Go not *thou* forth to-morrow!

LIONI.

Wherefore not?—
What means this menace?

BERTRAM.

Do not seek its meaning,
But do as I implore thee;—stir not forth,
Whate'er be stirring; though the roar of crowds—
The cry of women, and the shrieks of babes—
The groans of men—the clash of arms—the sound
Of rolling drum, shrill trump, and hollow bell,
Peal in one wide alarum!—Go not forth
Until the tocsin's silent, nor even then
Till I return!

LIONI.

Again, what does this mean?

BERTRAM.

Again, I tell thee, ask not; but by all
Thou holdest dear on earth or heaven—by all
The souls of thy great fathers, and thy hope
To emulate them, and to leave behind
Descendants worthy both of them and thee—
By all thou hast of blest in hope or memory—
By all thou hast to fear here or hereafter—
By all the good deeds thou hast done to me,
Good I would now repay with greater good,
Remain within—trust to thy household gods,
And to my word for safety, if thou dost
As I now counsel—but if not, thou art lost!

LIONI.

I am indeed already lost in wonder;
Surely thou ravest! what have *I* to dread?
Who are my foes? or if there be such, *why*

Art *thou* leagued with them?—*thou!* or if so leagued,
Why comest thou to tell me at this hour,
And not before?

BERTRAM.

I cannot answer this.
Wilt thou go forth despite of this true warning?

LIONI.

I was not born to shrink from idle threats,
The cause of which I know not: at the hour
Of council, be it soon or late, I shall not
Be found among the absent.

BERTRAM.

Say not so!
Once more, art thou determined to go forth?

LIONI.

I am. Nor is there aught which shall impede me!

BERTRAM.

Then Heaven have mercy on thy soul!—Farewell!

[*Going.*

LIONI.

Stay—there is more in this than my own safety
Which makes me call thee back; we must not part thus:
Bertram, I have known thee long.

BERTRAM.

From childhood, signor,
You have been my protector: in the days
Of reckless infancy, when rank forgets,
Or, rather, is not yet taught to remember
Its cold prerogative, we play'd together;

Our sports, our smiles, our tears, were mingled oft;
My father was your father's client, I
His son's scarce less than foster-brother; years
Saw us together—happy, heart-full hours!—
Oh God! the difference 'twixt those hours and this!

LIONI.

Bertram, 'tis thou who hast forgotten them.

BERTRAM.

Nor now, nor ever; whatsoe'er betide,
I would have saved you. When to manhood's growth
We sprung, and you, devoted to the state,
As suits your station, the more humble Bertram
Was left unto the labours of the humble,
Still you forsook me not; and if my fortunes
Have not been towering, 'twas no fault of him
Who oft-times rescued and supported me
When struggling with the tides of circumstance
Which bear away the weaker: noble blood
Ne'er mantled in a nobler heart than thine
Has proved to me, the poor plebeian Bertram.
Would that thy fellow senators were like thee!

LIONI.

Why, what hast thou to say against the senate?

BERTRAM.

Nothing.

LIONI.

I know that there are angry spirits
And turbulent mutterers of stifled treason
Who lurk in narrow places, and walk out

Muffled to whisper curses to the night;
Disbanded soldiers, discontented ruffians,
And desperate libertines who brawl in taverns;
Thou herdest not with such: 'tis true, of late
I have lost sight of thee, but thou wert wont
To lead a temperate life, and break thy bread
With honest mates, and bear a cheerful aspect.
What hath come to thee? in thy hollow eye
And hueless cheek, and thine unquiet motions,
Sorrow and shame and conscience seem at war
To waste thee?

BERTRAM.

Rather shame and sorrow light
On the accursed tyranny which rides
The very air in Venice, and makes men
Madden as in the last hours of the plague
Which sweeps the soul deliriously from life!

LIONI.

Some villains have been tampering with thee, Bertram;
This is not thy old language, nor own thoughts;
Some wretch has made thee drunk with disaffection;
But thou must not be lost so; thou *wert* good
And kind, and art not fit for such base acts
As vice and villany would put thee to:
Confess—confide in me—thou know'st my nature—
What is it thou and thine are bound to do,
Which should prevent thy friend, the only son
Of him who was a friend unto thy father,
So that our good-will is a heritage

We should bequeath to our posterity
Such as ourselves received it, or augmented;
I say, what is it thou must do, that I
Should deem thee dangerous, and keep the house
Like a sick girl?

BERTRAM.

Nay, question me no further:
I must be gone.——

LIONI.

And I be murder'd!—say,
Was it not thus thou said'st, my gentle Bertram?

BERTRAM.

Who talks of murder? what said I of murder?—
'Tis false! I did not utter such a word.

LIONI.

Thou didst not; but from out thy wolfish eye,
So changed from what I knew it, there glares forth
The gladiator. If *my* life 's thine object,
Take it—I am unarm'd,—and then away!
I would not hold my breath on such a tenure
As the capricious mercy of such things
As thou and those who have set thee to thy task-work.

BERTRAM.

Sooner than spill thy blood, I peril mine;
Sooner than harm a hair of thine, I place
In jeopardy a thousand heads, and some
As noble, nay, even nobler than thine own.

LIONI.

Ay, is it even so? Excuse me, Bertram;

I am not worthy to be singled out
From such exalted hecatombs—who are they
That *are* in danger, and that *make* the danger?

BERTRAM.

Venice, and all that she inherits, are
Divided like a house against itself,
And so will perish ere to-morrow's twilight!

LIONI.

More mysteries, and awful ones! But now,
Or thou, or I, or both, it may be, are
Upon the verge of ruin; speak once out,
And thou art safe and glorious; for 'tis more
Glorious to save than slay, and slay i' the dark too—
Fie, Bertram! that was not a craft for thee!
How would it look to see upon a spear
The head of him whose heart was open to thee,
Borne by thy hand before the shuddering people?
And such may be my doom; for here I swear,
Whate'er the peril or the penalty
Of thy denunciation, I go forth,
Unless thou dost detail the cause, and show
The consequence of all which led thee here!

BERTRAM.

Is there no way to save thee? minutes fly,
And thou art lost!—*thou!* my sole benefactor,
The only being who was constant to me
Through every change. Yet, make me not a traitor!
Let me save thee—but spare my honour!

LIONI.

Where

Can lie the honour in a league of murder?
And who are traitors save unto the state?

BERTRAM.

A league is still a compact, and more binding
In honest hearts when words must stand for law;
And in my mind, there is no traitor like
He whose domestic treason plants the poniard
Within the breast which trusted to his truth.

LIONI.

And *who* will strike the steel to mine?

BERTRAM.

Not I;
I could have wound my soul up to all things
Save this. *Thou* must not die! and think how dear
Thy life is, when I risk so many lives,
Nay, more, the life of lives, the liberty
Of future generations, *not* to be
The assassin thou miscall'st me;—once, once more
I do adjure thee, pass not o'er thy threshold!

LIONI.

It is in vain—this moment I go forth.

BERTRAM.

Then perish Venice rather than my friend!
I will disclose—ensnare—betray—destroy—
Oh, what a villain I become for thee!

LIONI.

Say, rather thy friend's saviour and the state's!—
Speak—pause not—all rewards, all pledges for
Thy safety and thy welfare; wealth such as
The state accords her worthiest servants; nay,

Nobility itself I guarantee thee,
So that thou art sincere and penitent.

BERTRAM.

I have thought again: it must not be—I love thee—
Thou knowest it—that I stand here is the proof,
Not least though last; but having done my duty
By thee, I now must do it by my country!
Farewell!—we meet no more in life!—farewell!

LIONI.

What, ho! Antonio—Pedro—to the door!
See that none pass—arrest this man!——

Enter ANTONIO *and other armed Domestics, who seize* BERTRAM.

LIONI *(continues)*.

Take care
He hath no harm; bring me my sword and cloak,
And man the gondola with four oars—quick—
[*Exit* ANTONIO.
We will unto Giovanni Gradenigo's,
And send for Marc Cornaro:—fear not, Bertram;
This needful violence is for thy safety,
No less than for the general weal.

BERTRAM.

Where wouldst thou
Bear me a prisoner?

LIONI.

Firstly to "the Ten;"
Next to the Doge.

BERTRAM.

To the Doge?

LIONI.

Assuredly:

Is he not chief of the state?

BERTRAM.

Perhaps at sunrise—

LIONI.

What mean you?—but we 'll know anon.

BERTRAM.

Art sure?

LIONI.

Sure as all gentle means can make; and if
They fail, you know "the Ten" and their tribunal,
And that Saint Mark's has dungeons, and the dungeons
A rack.

BERTRAM.

Apply it then before the dawn
Now hastening into heaven.—One more such word,
And you shall perish piecemeal, by the death
Ye think to doom to me.

Re-enter ANTONIO.

ANTONIO.

The bark is ready,
My lord, and all prepared.

LIONI.

Look to the prisoner.

Bertram, I 'll reason with thee as we go
To the Magnifico's, sage Gradenigo. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Ducal Palace—the Doge's Apartment.

The DOGE *and his nephew* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

DOGE.

Are all the people of our house in muster?

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

They are array'd, and eager for the signal,
Within our palace precincts at San Polo. (4)
I come for your last orders.

DOGE.

It had been
As well had there been time to have got together
From my own fief, Val di Marino, more
Of our retainers—but it is too late.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Methinks, my lord, 'tis better as it is;
A sudden swelling of our retinue
Had waked suspicion; and, though fierce and trusty,
The vassals of that district are too rude
And quick in quarrel to have long maintain'd
The secret discipline we need for such
A service, till our foes are dealt upon.

DOGE.

True; but when once the signal has been given,
These are the men for such an enterprise;
These city slaves have all their private bias,
Their prejudice *against* or *for* this noble,
Which may induce them to o'erdo or spare
Where mercy may be madness; the fierce peasants,
Serfs of my county of Val di Marino,
Would do the bidding of their lord without
Distinguishing for love or hate his foes;
Alike to them Marcello or Cornaro,
A Gradenigo or a Foscari;
They are not used to start at those vain names,
Nor bow the knee before a civic senate:
A chief in armour is their Suzerain,
And not a thing in robes.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

We are enough;
And for the dispositions of our clients
Against the senate I will answer.

DOGE.

Well,
The die is thrown; but for a warlike service,
Done in the field, commend me to my peasants;
They made the sun shine through the host of Huns
When sallow burghers slunk back to their tents,
And cower'd to hear their own victorious trumpet.
If there be small resistance, you will find
These citizens all lions, like their standard;

But if there 's much to do, you 'll wish, with me,
A band of iron rustics at our backs.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Thus thinking, I must marvel you resolved
To strike the blow so suddenly.

DOGE.

Such blows
Must be struck suddenly or never. When
I had o'ermaster'd the weak false remorse
Which yearn'd about my heart, too fondly yielding
A moment to the feelings of old days,
I was most fain to strike; and, firstly, that
I might not yield again to such emotions;
And, secondly, because of all these men,
Save Israel and Philip Calendaro,
I know not well the courage or the faith:
To-day might find 'mongst them a traitor to us,
As yesterday a thousand to the senate;
But once in, with their hilts hot in their hands,
They must *on* for their own sakes; one stroke struck,
And the mere instinct of the first-born Cain,
Which ever lurks somewhere in human hearts,
Though circumstance may keep it in abeyance,
Will urge the rest on like to wolves; the sight
Of blood to crowds begets the thirst of more,
As the first wine-cup leads to the long revel;
And you will find a harder task to quell
Than urge them when they *have* commenced, but *till*
That moment a mere voice, a straw, a shadow,

Are capable of turning them aside.—
How goes the night?

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Almost upon the dawn.

DOGE.

Then it is time to strike upon the bell.
Are the men posted?

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

By this time they are;
But they have orders not to strike, until
They have command from you through me in person.

DOGE.

'Tis well.—Will the morn never put to rest
These stars which twinkle yet o'er all the heavens?
I am settled and bound up, and being so,
The very effort which it cost me to
Resolve to cleanse this commonwealth with fire,
Now leaves my mind more steady. I have wept,
And trembled at the thought of this dread duty,
But now I have put down all idle passion,
And look the growing tempest in the face,
As doth the pilot of an admiral galley:
Yet (wouldst thou think it, kinsman?) it hath been
A greater struggle to me, than when nations
Beheld their fate merged in the approaching fight,
Where I was leader of a phalanx, where
Thousands were sure to perish—Yes, to spill
The rank polluted current from the veins
Of a few bloated despots needed more

To steel me to a purpose such as made
Timoleon immortal, than to face
The toils and dangers of a life of war.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

It gladdens me to see your former wisdom
Subdue the furies which so wrung you ere
You were decided.

DOGE.

It was ever thus
With me; the hour of agitation came
In the first glimmerings of a purpose, when
Passion had too much room to sway; but in
The hour of action I have stood as calm
As were the dead who lay around me: this
They knew who made me what I am, and trusted
To the subduing power which I preserved
Over my mood, when its first burst was spent.
But they were not aware that there are things
Which make revenge a virtue by reflection,
And not an impulse of mere anger; though
The laws sleep, justice wakes, and injured souls
Oft do a public right with private wrong,
And justify their deeds unto themselves.—
Methinks the day breaks—is it not so? look,
Thine eyes are clear with youth;—the air puts on
A morning freshness, and, at least to me,
The sea looks grayer through the lattice.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

True,
The morn is dappling in the sky.

DOGE.

Away then!
See that they strike without delay, and with
The first toll from St. Mark's, march on the palace
With all our house's strength; here I will meet you—
The Sixteen and their companies will move
In separate columns at the self-same moment—
Be sure you post yourself at the great gate,
I would not trust "the Ten" except to us—
The rest, the rabble of patricians, may
Glut the more careless swords of those leagued with us.
Remember that the cry is still "Saint Mark!
"The Genoese are come—ho! to the rescue!
"Saint Mark and liberty!"—Now—now to action!

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Farewell then, noble uncle! we will meet
In freedom and true sovereignty, or never!

DOGE.

Come hither, my Bertuccio—one embrace—
Speed, for the day grows broader—Send me soon
A messenger to tell me how all goes
When you rejoin our troops, and then sound—sound
The storm-bell from Saint Mark's!

[*Exit* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

DOGE (*solus*).

He is gone,
And on each footstep moves a life.—'Tis done.
Now the destroying Angel hovers o'er
Venice, and pauses ere he pours the vial,

Even as the eagle overlooks his prey,
And for a moment, poised in middle air,
Suspends the motion of his mighty wings,
Then swoops with his unerring beak.—Thou day!
That slowly walk'st the waters! march—march on—
I would not smite i' the dark, but rather see
That no stroke errs. And you, ye blue sea-waves!
I have seen you dyed ere now, and deeply too,
With Genoese, Saracen, and Hunnish gore,
While that of Venice flow'd too, but victorious:
Now thou must wear an unmix'd crimson; no
Barbaric blood can reconcile us now
Unto that horrible incarnadine,
But friend or foe will roll in civic slaughter.
And have I lived to fourscore years for this?
I, who was named Preserver of the City?
I, at whose name the million's caps were flung
Into the air, and cries from tens of thousands
Rose up, imploring Heaven to send me blessings,
And fame, and length of days—to see this day?
But this day, black within the calendar,
Shall be succeeded by a bright millennium.
Doge Dandolo survived to ninety summers
To vanquish empires, and refuse their crown;
I will resign a crown, and make the state
Renew its freedom—but oh! by what means?
The noble end must justify them—What
Are a few drops of human blood? 'tis false,
The blood of tyrants is not human; they,

Like to incarnate Molochs, feed on ours,
Until 'tis time to give them to the tombs
Which they have made so populous.—Oh world!
Oh men! what are ye, and our best designs,
That we must work by crime to punish crime?
And slay as if Death had but this one gate,
When a few years would make the sword superfluous?
And I, upon the verge of th' unknown realm,
Yet send so many heralds on before me?—
I must not ponder this.

[*A pause.*

Hark! was there not
A murmur as of distant voices, and
The tramp of feet in martial unison?
What phantoms even of sound our wishes raise!
It cannot be—the signal hath not rung—
Why pauses it? My nephew's messenger
Should be upon his way to me, and he
Himself perhaps even now draws grating back
Upon its ponderous hinge the steep tower portal,
Where swings the sullen huge oracular bell,
Which never knells but for a princely death,
Or for a state in peril, pealing forth
Tremendous bodements; let it do its office,
And be this peal its awfullest and last.
Sound till the strong tower rock!—What! silent still?
I would go forth, but that my post is here,
To be the centre of re-union to
The oft discordant elements which form

Leagues of this nature, and to keep compact
The wavering or the weak, in case of conflict;
For if they should do battle, 'twill be here,
Within the palace, that the strife will thicken;
Then here must be my station, as becomes
The master-mover.——Hark! he comes—he comes,
My nephew, brave Bertuccio's messenger.—
What tidings? Is he marching? hath he sped?—
They here!—all's lost—yet will I make an effort.

Enter a SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT(5), *with Guards, &c. &c.*

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

Doge, I arrest thee of high treason!

DOGE.

Me!
Thy prince, of treason?—Who are they that dare
Cloak their own treason under such an order?

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT (*showing his order.*)

Behold my order from the assembled Ten.

DOGE.

And *where* are they, and *why* assembled? no
Such council can be lawful, till the prince
Preside there, and that duty's mine: on thine
I charge thee, give me way, or marshal me
To the council chamber.

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

Duke! it may not be;
Nor are they in the wonted Hall of Council,
But sitting in the convent of Saint Saviour's.

DOGE.

You dare to disobey me then?

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

I serve
The state, and needs must serve it faithfully;
My warrant is the will of those who rule it.

DOGE.

And till that warrant has my signature
It is illegal, and, as *now* applied,
Rebellious—Hast thou weigh'd well thy life's worth,
That thus you dare assume a lawless function?

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

'Tis not my office to reply, but act—
I am placed here as guard upon thy person,
And not as judge to hear or to decide.

DOGE (*aside.*)

I must gain time—So that the storm-bell sound
All may be well yet.—Kinsman, speed—speed—speed!—
Our fate is trembling in the balance, and
Woe to the vanquish'd! be they prince and people,
Or slaves and senate—

[*The great bell of Saint Mark's tolls.*

Lo! it sounds—it tolls!

DOGE (*aloud.*)

Hark, Signor of the Night! and you, ye hirelings,
Who wield your mercenary staves in fear,
It is your knell—Swell on, thou lusty peal!
Now, knaves, what ransom for your lives?

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

Confusion!

Stand to your arms, and guard the door—all's lost
Unless that fearful bell be silenced soon.
The officer hath miss'd his path, or purpose,
Or met some unforeseen and hideous obstacle.
Anselmo, with thy company proceed
Straight to the tower; the rest remain with me.

[*Exit part of the Guard.*

DOGE.

Wretch! if thou wouldst have thy vile life, implore it;
It is not now a lease of sixty seconds.
Ay, send thy miserable ruffians forth;
They never shall return.

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

So let it be!
They die then in their duty, as will I.

DOGE.

Fool! the high eagle flies at nobler game
Than thou and thy base myrmidons,—live on,
So thou provok'st not peril by resistance,
And learn (if souls so much obscured can bear
To gaze upon the sunbeams) to be free.

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

And learn thou to be captive—It hath ceased,

[*The bell ceases to toll.*

The traitorous signal, which was to have set
The bloodhound mob on their patrician prey—
The knell hath rung, but it is not the senate's!

DOGE (*after a pause.*)

All's silent, and all's lost!

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

Now, Doge, denounce me
As rebel slave of a revolted council!
Have I not done my duty?

DOGE.

Peace, thou thing!
Thou hast done a worthy deed, and earn'd the price
Of blood, and they who use thee will reward thee.
But thou wert sent to watch, and not to prate,
As thou said'st even now—then do thine office,
But let it be in silence, as behoves thee,
Since, though thy prisoner, I am thy prince.

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

I did not mean to fail in the respect
Due to your rank: in this I shall obey you.

DOGE (*aside.*)

There now is nothing left me save to die;
And yet how near success! I would have fallen,
And proudly, in the hour of triumph, but
To miss it thus!——

Enter other SIGNORS OF THE NIGHT, *with* BERTUCCIO FALIERO *prisoner.*

SECOND SIGNOR.

We took him in the act
Of issuing from the tower, where, at his order,
As delegated from the Doge, the signal
Had thus begun to sound.

FIRST SIGNOR.

Are all the passes
Which lead up to the palace well secured?

SECOND SIGNOR.

They are—besides, it matters not; the chiefs
Are all in chains, and some even now on trial—
Their followers are dispersed, and many taken.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Uncle!

DOGE.

It is in vain to war with Fortune;
The Glory hath departed from our house.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Who would have deem'd it?—Ah! one moment sooner!

DOGE.

That moment would have changed the face of ages;
This gives us to eternity—We 'll meet it
As men whose triumph is not in success,
But who can make their own minds all in all,
Equal to every fortune. Droop not, 'tis
But a brief passage—I would go alone,
Yet if they send us, as 'tis like, together,
Let us go worthy of our sires and selves.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

I shall not shame you, uncle.

FIRST SIGNOR.

Lords, our orders
Are to keep guard on both in separate chambers,
Until the council call ye to your trial.

DOGE.

Our trial! will they keep their mockery up
Even to the last? but let them deal upon us,
As we had dealt on them, but with less pomp.
'Tis but a game of mutual homicides,
Who have cast lots for the first death, and they
Have won with false dice.—Who hath been our Judas?

FIRST SIGNOR.

I am not warranted to answer that.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

I'll answer for thee—'tis a certain Bertram,
Even now deposing to the secret giunta.

DOGE.

Bertram, the Bergamask! With what vile tools
We operate to slay or save! This creature,
Black with a double treason, now will earn
Rewards and honours, and be stamp'd in story
With the geese in the Capitol, which gabbled
Till Rome awoke, and had an annual triumph,
While Manlius, who hurl'd down the Gauls, was cast
From the Tarpeian.

FIRST SIGNOR.

He aspired to treason,
And sought to rule the state.

DOGE.

He saved the state,
And sought but to reform what he revived—
But this is idle——Come, sirs, do your work.

FIRST SIGNOR.

Noble Bertuccio, we must now remove you
Into an inner chamber.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Farewell, uncle!
If we shall meet again in life I know not,
But they perhaps will let our ashes mingle.

DOGE.

Yes, and our spirits, which shall yet go forth,
And do what our frail clay, thus clogg'd, hath fail'd in!
They cannot quench the memory of those
Who would have hurl'd them from their guilty thrones,
And such examples will find heirs, though distant.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.—SCENE I.

The Hall of the Council of Ten assembled with the additional Senators, who, on the Trials of the Conspirators for the Treason of MARINO FALIERO, *composed what was called the Giunta.—Guards, Officers, &c. &c.—* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and* PHILIP CALENDARO *as Prisoners.—*BERTRAM, LIONI, *and Witnesses, &c.*

The Chief of the Ten, BENINTENDE.

BENINTENDE.

There now rests, after such conviction of
Their manifold and manifest offences,
But to pronounce on these obdurate men
The sentence of the law: a grievous task
To those who hear, and these who speak. Alas!
That it should fall to me! and that my days
Of office should be stigmatised through all
The years of coming time, as bearing record
To this most foul and complicated treason
Against a just and free state, known to all
The earth as being the Christian bulwark 'gainst
The Saracen and the schismatic Greek,

The savage Hun, and not less barbarous Frank;
A city which has open'd India's wealth
To Europe; the last Roman refuge from
O'erwhelming Attila; the ocean's queen;
Proud Genoa's prouder rival! 'Tis to sap
The throne of such a city, these lost men
Have risk'd and forfeited their worthless lives—
So let them die the death.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

We are prepared;
Your racks have done that for us. Let us die.

BENINTENDE.

If ye have that to say which would obtain
Abatement of your punishment, the Giunta
Will hear you; if you have aught to confess,
Now is your time, perhaps it may avail ye.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

We stand to hear, and not to speak.

BENINTENDE.

Your crimes
Are fully proved by your accomplices,
And all which circumstance can add to aid them;
Yet we would hear from your own lips complete
Avowal of your treason: on the verge
Of that dread gulf which none repass, the truth
Alone can profit you on earth or heaven—
Say, then, what was your motive?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Justice!

BENINTENDE.

What
Your object?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Freedom!

BENINTENDE.

You are brief, sir.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

So my life grows: I
Was bred a soldier, not a senator.

BENINTENDE.

Perhaps you think by this blunt brevity
To brave your judges to postpone the sentence?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Do you be brief as I am, and believe me,
I shall prefer that mercy to your pardon.

BENINTENDE.

Is this your sole reply to the tribunal?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Go, ask your racks what they have wrung from us,
Or place us there again; we have still some blood left,
And some slight sense of pain in these wrench'd limbs:
But this ye dare not do; for if we die there—
And you have left us little life to spend
Upon your engines, gorged with pangs already—
Ye lose the public spectacle with which
You would appal your slaves to further slavery!
Groans are not words, nor agony assent,
Nor affirmation truth, if nature's sense

Should overcome the soul into a lie,
For a short respite—must we bear or die?

BENINTENDE.

Say, who were your accomplices?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

The Senate!

BENINTENDE.

What do you mean?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Ask of the suffering people,
Whom your patrician crimes have driven to crime.

BENINTENDE.

You know the Doge?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I served with him at Zara
In the field, when *you* were pleading here your way
To present office; we exposed our lives,
While you but hazarded the lives of others,
Alike by accusation or defence;
And, for the rest, all Venice knows her Doge,
Through his great actions, and the senate's insults!

BENINTENDE.

You have held conference with him?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I am weary—
Even wearier of your questions than your tortures:
I pray you pass to judgment.

BENINTENDE.

It is coming.—

And you, too, Philip Calendaro, what
Have you to say why you should not be doom'd?

CALENDARO.

I never was a man of many words,
And now have few left worth the utterance.

BENINTENDE.

A further application of yon engine
May change your tone.

CALENDARO.

Most true, it *will* do so;
A former application did so; but
It will not change my words, or, if it did——

BENINTENDE.

What then?

CALENDARO.

Will my avowal on yon rack
Stand good in law?

BENINTENDE.

Assuredly.

CALENDARO.

Whoe'er
The culprit be whom I accuse of treason?

BENINTENDE.

Without doubt, he will be brought up to trial.

CALENDARO.

And on this testimony would he perish?

BENINTENDE.

So your confession be detail'd and full,
He will stand here in peril of his life.

CALENDARO.

Then look well to thy proud self, President!
For by the eternity which yawns before me,
I swear that *thou*, and only thou, shalt be
The traitor I denounce upon that rack,
If I be stretch'd there for the second time.

ONE OF THE GIUNTA.

Lord President, 'twere best proceed to judgment;
There is no more to be drawn from these men.

BENINTENDE.

Unhappy men! prepare for instant death.
The nature of your crime—our law—and peril
The state now stands in, leave not an hour's respite—
Guards! lead them forth, and upon the balcony
Of the red columns, where, on festal Thursday (6),
The Doge stands to behold the chase of bulls,
Let them be justified: and leave exposed
Their wavering relics, in the place of judgment,
To the full view of the assembled people!—
And Heaven have mercy on their souls!

THE GIUNTA.

Amen!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Signors, farewell! we shall not all again
Meet in one place.

BENINTENDE.

And lest they should essay
To stir up the distracted multitude—
Guards! let their mouths be gagged (7), even in the act
Of execution.—Lead them hence!

CALENDARO.

What! must we
Not even say farewell to some fond friend,
Nor leave a last word with our confessor?

BENINTENDE.

A priest is waiting in the ante-chamber;
But, for your friends, such interviews would be
Painful to them, and useless all to you.

CALENDARO.

I knew that we were gagg'd in life; at least,
All those who had not heart to risk their lives
Upon their open thoughts; but still I deem'd
That, in the last few moments, the same idle
Freedom of speech accorded to the dying,
Would not now be denied to us; but since——

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Even let them have their way, brave Calendaro!
What matter a few syllables? let's die
Without the slightest show of favour from them;
So shall our blood more readily arise
To heaven against them, and more testify
To their atrocities, than could a volume
Spoken or written of our dying words!
They tremble at our voices—nay, they dread
Our very silence—let them live in fear!—
Leave them unto their thoughts, and let us now
Address our own above!—Lead on; we are ready.

CALENDARO.

Israel, hadst thou but hearken'd unto me,

It had not now been thus; and yon pale villain,
The coward Bertram, would——

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Peace, Calendaro!
What brooks it now to ponder upon this?

BERTRAM.

Alas! I fain you died in peace with me:
I did not seek this task; 'twas forced upon me:
Say, you forgive me, though I never can
Retrieve my own forgiveness—frown not thus!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I die and pardon thee!

CALENDARO (*spitting at him.*)

I die and scorn thee!

[*Exeunt* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and* PHILIP CALENDARO, *Guards, &c.*

BENINTENDE.

Now that these criminals have been disposed of,
'Tis time that we proceed to pass our sentence
Upon the greatest traitor upon record
In any annals, the Doge Faliero!
The proofs and process are complete; the time
And crime require a quick procedure: shall
He now be called in to receive the award?

THE GIUNTA.

Ay, ay.

BENINTENDE.

Avogadori, order that the Doge
Be brought before the council.

ONE OF THE GIUNTA.

And the rest,
When shall they be brought up?

BENINTENDE.

When all the chiefs
Have been disposed of. Some have fled to Chiozza;
But there are thousands in pursuit of them,
And such precaution ta'en on terra firma,
As well as in the islands, that we hope
None will escape to utter in strange lands
His libellous tale of treasons 'gainst the senate.

Enter the DOGE *as Prisoner, with Guards, &c. &c.*

BENINTENDE.

Doge—for such still you are, and by the law
Must be considered, till the hour shall come
When you must doff the ducal bonnet from
That head, which could not wear a crown more noble
Than empires can confer, in quiet honour,
But it must plot to overthrow your peers,
Who made you what you are, and quench in blood
A city's glory—we have laid already
Before you in your chamber at full length,
By the Avogadori, all the proofs
Which have appear'd against you; and more ample
Ne'er rear'd their sanguinary shadows to
Confront a traitor. What have you to say
In your defence?

DOGE.

What shall I say to ye,
Since my defence must be your condemnation?
You are at once offenders and accusers,
Judges and executioners!—Proceed
Upon your power.

BENINTENDE.

Your chief accomplices
Having confess'd, there is no hope for you.

DOGE.

And who be they?

BENINTENDE.

In number many; but
The first now stands before you in the court,
Bertram, of Bergamo,—would you question him?

DOGE (*looking at him contemptuously*).

No.

BENINTENDE.

And two others, Israel Bertuccio,
And Philip Calendaro, have admitted
Their fellowship in treason with the Doge!

DOGE.

And where are they?

BENINTENDE.

Gone to their place, and now
Answering to Heaven for what they did on earth.

DOGE.

Ah! the plebeian Brutus, is he gone?
And the quick Cassius of the arsenal?—
How did they meet their doom?

BENINTENDE.

Think of your own;
It is approaching. You decline to plead, then?

DOGE.

I cannot plead to my inferiors, nor
Can recognise your legal power to try me:
Show me the law!

BENINTENDE.

On great emergencies,
The law must be remodell'd or amended:
Our fathers had not fix'd the punishment
Of such a crime, as on the old Roman tables
The sentence against parricide was left
In pure forgetfulness; they could not render
That penal, which had neither name nor thought
In their great bosoms: who would have foreseen
That nature could be filed to such a crime
As sons 'gainst sires, and princes 'gainst their realms?
Your sin hath made us make a law which will
Become a precedent 'gainst such haught traitors,
As would with treason mount to tyranny;
Not even contented with a sceptre, till
They can convert it to a two-edged sword!
Was not the place of Doge sufficient for ye?
What's nobler than the signory of Venice?

DOGE.

The signory of Venice! You betray'd me—
You—you, who sit there, traitors as ye are!
From my equality with you in birth,

And my superiority in action,
You drew me from my honourable toils
In distant lands—on flood—in field—in cities—
You singled me out like a victim to
Stand crown'd, but bound and helpless, at the altar
Where you alone could minister. I knew not—
I sought not—wish'd not—dream'd not the election,
Which reach'd me first at Rome, and I obey'd;
But found on my arrival, that, besides
The jealous vigilance which always led you
To mock and mar your sovereign's best intents,
You had, even in the interregnum of
My journey to the capital, curtail'd
And mutilated the few privileges
Yet left the duke: all this I bore, and would
Have borne, until my very hearth was stain'd
By the pollution of your ribaldry,
And he, the ribald, whom I see amongst you—
Fit judge in such tribunal!——

BENINTENDE *(interrupting him)*.

Michel Steno
Is here in virtue of his office, as
One of the Forty; "the Ten" having craved
A Giunta of patricians from the senate
To aid our judgment in a trial arduous
And novel as the present: he was set
Free from the penalty pronounced upon him,
Because the Doge, who should protect the law,
Seeking to abrogate all law, can claim

No punishment of others by the statutes
Which he himself denies and violates!

DOGE.

His PUNISHMENT! I rather see him *there*,
Where he now sits, to glut him with my death,
Than in the mockery of castigation,
Which your foul, outward, juggling show of justice
Decreed as sentence! Base as was his crime,
'Twas purity compared with your protection.

BENINTENDE.

And can it be, that the great Doge of Venice,
With three parts of a century of years
And honours on his head, could thus allow
His fury, like an angry boy's, to master
All feeling, wisdom, faith, and fear, on such
A provocation as a young man's petulance?

DOGE.

A spark creates the flame; 'tis the last drop
Which makes the cup run o'er, and mine was full
Already: you oppress'd the prince and people;
I would have freed both, and have fail'd in both:
The price of such success would have been glory,
Vengeance, and victory, and such a name
As would have made Venetian history
Rival to that of Greece and Syracuse
When they were freed, and flourish'd ages after,
And mine to Gelon and to Thrasybulus:—
Failing, I know the penalty of failure
Is present infamy and death—the future

Will judge, when Venice is no more, or free;
Till then, the truth is in abeyance. Pause not;
I would have shown no mercy, and I seek none;
My life was staked upon a mighty hazard,
And being lost, take what I would have taken!
I would have stood alone amidst your tombs;
Now you may flock round mine, and trample on it,
As you have done upon my heart while living.

BENINTENDE.

You do confess then, and admit the justice
Of our tribunal?

DOGE.

I confess to have fail'd;
Fortune is female: from my youth her favours
Were not withheld, the fault was mine to hope
Her former smiles again at this late hour.

BENINTENDE.

You do not then in aught arraign our equity?

DOGE.

Noble Venetians! stir me not with questions.
I am resign'd to the worst; but in me still
Have something of the blood of brighter days,
And am not over-patient. Pray you, spare me
Further interrogation, which boots nothing,
Except to turn a trial to debate.
I shall but answer that which will offend you,
And please your enemies—a host already;
'Tis true, these sullen walls should yield no echo:

But walls have ears—nay, more, they have tongues; and if
There were no other way for truth to o'erleap them,
You who condemn me, you who fear and slay me,
Yet could not bear in silence to your graves
What you would hear from me of good or evil;
The secret were too mighty for your souls:
Then let it sleep in mine, unless you court
A danger which would double that you escape.
Such my defence would be, had I full scope
To make it famous; for true *words* are *things*,
And dying men's are things which long outlive,
And oftentimes avenge them; bury mine,
If ye would fain survive me: take this counsel,
And though too oft ye made me live in wrath,
Let me die calmly; you may grant me this;—
I deny nothing—defend nothing—nothing
I ask of you, but silence for myself,
And sentence from the court!

BENINTENDE.

This full admission
Spares us the harsh necessity of ordering
The torture to elicit the whole truth.

DOGE.

The torture! you have put me there already,
Daily since I was Doge; but if you will
Add the corporeal rack, you may: these limbs
Will yield with age to crushing iron; but
There's that within my heart shall strain your engines.

Enter an OFFICER.

OFFICER.

Noble Venetians! Duchess Faliero
Requests admission to the Giunta's presence.

BENINTENDE.

Say, conscript fathers (8), shall she be admitted?

ONE OF THE GIUNTA.

She may have revelations of importance
Unto the state, to justify compliance
With her request.

BENINTENDE.

Is this the general will?

ALL.

It is.

DOGE.

Oh, admirable laws of Venice!
Which would admit the wife, in the full hope
That she might testify against the husband.
What glory to the chaste Venetian dames!
But such blasphemers 'gainst all honour, as
Sit here, do well to act in their vocation.
Now, villain Steno! if this woman fail,
I'll pardon thee thy lie, and thy escape,
And my own violent death, and thy vile life.

The DUCHESS *enters.*

BENINTENDE.

Lady! this just tribunal has resolved,

Though the request be strange, to grant it, and
Whatever be its purport, to accord
A patient hearing with the due respect
Which fits your ancestry, your rank, and virtues:
But you turn pale—ho! there, look to the lady!
Place a chair instantly.

ANGIOLINA.

A moment's faintness—
'Tis past; I pray you pardon me, I sit not
In presence of my prince, and of my husband,
While he is on his feet.

BENINTENDE.

Your pleasure, lady?

ANGIOLINA.

Strange rumours, but most true, if all I hear
And see be sooth, have reach'd me, and I come
To know the worst, even at the worst; forgive
The abruptness of my entrance and my bearing.
Is it——I cannot speak—I cannot shape
The question—but you answer it ere spoken,
With eyes averted, and with gloomy brows—
Oh God! this is the silence of the grave!

BENINTENDE *(after a pause)*.

Spare us, and spare thyself the repetition
Of our most awful, but inexorable
Duty to heaven and man!

ANGIOLINA.

Yet speak; I cannot—
I cannot—no—even now believe these things.
Is *he* condemn'd?

BENINTENDE.

Alas!

ANGIOLINA.

And was he guilty?

BENINTENDE.

Lady! the natural distraction of
Thy thoughts at such a moment make the question
Merit forgiveness; else a doubt like this
Against a just and paramount tribunal
Were deep offence. But question even the Doge,
And if he can deny the proofs, believe him
Guiltless as thy own bosom.

ANGIOLINA.

Is it so?
My lord—my sovereign—my poor father's friend—
The mighty in the field, the sage in council;
Unsay the words of this man!—Thou art silent!

BENINTENDE.

He hath already own'd to his own guilt,
Nor, as thou seest, doth he deny it now.

ANGIOLINA.

Ay, but he must not die! Spare his few years,
Which grief and shame will soon cut down to days!
One day of baffled crime must not efface
Near sixteen lustres crowded with brave acts.

BENINTENDE.

His doom must be fulfill'd without remission
Of time or penalty—'tis a decree.

ANGIOLINA.

He hath been guilty, but there may be mercy.

BENINTENDE.

Not in this case with justice.

ANGIOLINA.

Alas! signor,
He who is only just is cruel; who
Upon the earth would live were all judged justly?

BENINTENDE.

His punishment is safety to the state.

ANGIOLINA.

He was a subject, and hath served the state;
He was your general, and hath saved the state;
He is your sovereign, and hath ruled the state.

ONE OF THE COUNCIL.

He is a traitor, and betray'd the state.

ANGIOLINA.

And, but for him, there now had been no state
To save or to destroy; and you who sit
There to pronounce the death of your deliverer,
Had now been groaning at a Moslem oar,
Or digging in the Hunnish mines in fetters!

ONE OF THE COUNCIL.

No, lady, there are others who would die
Rather than breathe in slavery!

ANGIOLINA.

If there are so
Within *these* walls, *thou* art not of the number:

The truly brave are generous to the fallen!—
Is there no hope?

BENINTENDE.

Lady, it cannot be.

ANGIOLINA (*turning to the* DOGE).

Then die, Faliero! since it must be so;
But with the spirit of my father's friend:
Thou hast been guilty of a great offence,
Half-cancell'd by the harshness of these men.
I would have sued to them—have pray'd to them—
Have begg'd as famish'd mendicants for bread—
Have wept as they will cry unto their God
For mercy, and be answer'd as they answer—
Had it been fitting for thy name or mine,
And if the cruelty in their cold eyes
Had not announced the heartless wrath within.
Then, as a prince, address thee to thy doom!

DOGE.

I have lived too long not to know how to die!
Thy suing to these men were but the bleating
Of the lamb to the butcher, or the cry
Of seamen to the surge: I would not take
A life eternal, granted at the hands
Of wretches, from whose monstrous villanies
I sought to free the groaning nations!

MICHEL STENO.

Doge,
A word with thee, and with this noble lady,
Whom I have grievously offended. Would

Sorrow, or shame, or penance on my part,
Could cancel the inexorable past!
But since that cannot be, as Christians let us
Say farewell, and in peace: with full contrition
I crave, not pardon, but compassion from you,
And give, however weak, my prayers for both.

ANGIOLINA.

Sage Benintende, now chief judge of Venice,
I speak to thee in answer to yon signor.
Inform the ribald Steno, that his words
Ne'er weigh'd in mind with Loredano's daughter
Further than to create a moment's pity
For such as he is: would that others had
Despised him as I pity! I prefer
My honour to a thousand lives, could such
Be multiplied in mine, but would not have
A single life of others lost for that
Which nothing human can impugn—the sense
Of virtue, looking not to what is called
A good name for reward, but to itself.
To me the scorner's words were as the wind
Unto the rock: but as there are—alas!
Spirits more sensitive, on which such things
Light as the whirlwind on the waters; souls
To whom dishonour's shadow is a substance
More terrible than death here and hereafter;
Men whose vice is to start at vice's scoffing,
And who, though proof against all blandishments
Of pleasure, and all pangs of pain, are feeble

When the proud name on which they pinnacled
Their hopes is breathed on, jealous as the eagle
Of her high aiery; let what we now
Behold, and feel, and suffer, be a lesson
To wretches how they tamper in their spleen
With beings of a higher order. Insects
Have made the lion mad ere now; a shaft
I' the heel o'erthrew the bravest of the brave;
A wife's dishonour was the bane of Troy;
A wife's dishonour unking'd Rome for ever;
An injured husband brought the Gauls to Clusium,
And thence to Rome, which perish'd for a time;
An obscene gesture cost Caligula
His life, while Earth yet bore his cruelties;
A virgin's wrong made Spain a Moorish province;
And Steno's lie, couch'd in two worthless lines,
Hath decimated Venice, put in peril
A senate which hath stood eight hundred years,
Discrown'd a prince, cut off his crownless head,
And forged new fetters for a groaning people!
Let the poor wretch, like to the courtesan
Who fired Persepolis, be proud of this,
If it so please him—'twere a pride fit for him!
But let him not insult the last hours of
Him, who, whate'er he now is, *was* a hero,
By the intrusion of his very prayers;
Nothing of good can come from such a source,
Nor would we aught with him, nor now, nor ever:
We leave him to himself, that lowest depth

Of human baseness. Pardon is for men,
And not for reptiles—we have none for Steno,
And no resentment; things like him must sting,
And higher beings suffer: 'tis the charter
Of life. The man who dies by the adder's fang
May have the crawler crush'd, but feels no anger:
'Twas the worm's nature; and some men are worms
In soul, more than the living things of tombs.

DOGE (*to* BENINTENDE).

Signor! complete that which you deem your duty.

BENINTENDE.

Before we can proceed upon that duty,
We would request the princess to withdraw;
'Twill move her too much to be witness to it.

ANGIOLINA.

I know it will, and yet I must endure it,
For 'tis a part of mine—I will not quit,
Except by force, my husband's side.—Proceed!
Nay, fear not either shriek, or sigh, or tear;
Though my heart burst, it shall be silent.—Speak!
I have that within which shall o'ermaster all.

BENINTENDE.

Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice,
Count of Val di Marino, Senator,
And some time General of the Fleet and Army,
Noble Venetian, many times and oft
Entrusted by the state with high employments,
Even to the highest, listen to the sentence.
Convict by many witnesses and proofs,

And by thine own confession, of the guilt
Of treachery and treason, yet unheard of
Until this trial—the decree is death.
Thy goods are confiscate unto the state,
Thy name is razed from out her records, save
Upon a public day of thanksgiving
For this our most miraculous deliverance,
When thou art noted in our calendars
With earthquakes, pestilence, and foreign foes,
And the great enemy of man, as subject
Of grateful masses for Heaven's grace in snatching
Our lives and country from thy wickedness.
The place wherein as Doge thou shouldst be painted,
With thine illustrious predecessors, is
To be left vacant, with a death-black veil
Flung over these dim words engraved beneath,—
" This place is of Marino Faliero,
" Decapitated for his crimes."

DOGE.

" His crimes!"
But let it be so :—it will be in vain.
The veil which blackens o'er this blighted name
And hides, or seems to hide, these lineaments,
Shall draw more gazers than the thousand portraits
Which glitter round it in their pictured trappings—
Your delegated slaves—the people's tyrants!
" Decapitated for his crimes!" *What* crimes?
Were it not better to record the facts,
So that the contemplator might approve,
Or at the least learn *whence* the crimes arose?

When the beholder knows a Doge conspired,
Let him be told the cause—it is your history.

BENINTENDE.

Time must reply to that; our sons will judge
Their fathers' judgment, which I now pronounce.
As Doge, clad in the ducal robes and cap,
Thou shalt be led hence to the Giant's Staircase,
Where thou and all our princes are invested;
And there, the ducal crown being first resumed
Upon the spot where it was first assumed,
Thy head shall be struck off; and Heaven have mercy
Upon thy soul!

DOGE.

Is this the Giunta's sentence?

BENINTENDE.

It is.

DOGE.

I can endure it.—And the time?

BENINTENDE.

Must be immediate.—Make thy peace with God;
Within an hour thou must be in his presence.

DOGE.

I am already; and my blood will rise
To Heaven before the souls of those who shed it.—
Are all my lands confiscated?

BENINTENDE.

They are;
And goods, and jewels, and all kind of treasure,
Except two thousand ducats—these dispose of.

DOGE.

That 's harsh.—I would have fain reserved the lands
Near to Treviso, which I hold by investment
From Laurence the Count-bishop of Ceneda,
In fief perpetual to myself and heirs,
To portion them (leaving my city spoil,
My palace and my treasures, to your forfeit)
Between my consort and my kinsmen.

BENINTENDE.

These
Lie under the state's ban; their chief, thy nephew,
In peril of his own life; but the council
Postpones his trial for the present. If
Thou will'st a state unto thy widow'd princess,
Fear not, for we will do her justice.

ANGIOLINA.

Signors,
I share not in your spoil! From henceforth, know
I am devoted unto God alone,
And take my refuge in the cloister.

DOGE.

Come!
The hour may be a hard one, but 'twill end.
Have I aught else to undergo save death?

BENINTENDE.

You have nought to do, except confess and die.
The priest is robed, the scimitar is bare,
And both await without.—But, above all,
Think not to speak unto the people; they
Are now by thousands swarming at the gates,

But these are closed: the Ten, the Avogadori,
The Giunta, and the chief men of the Forty,
Alone will be beholders of thy doom,
And they are ready to attend the Doge.

DOGE.

The Doge!

BENINTENDE.

Yes, Doge, thou hast lived and thou shalt die
A sovereign; till the moment which precedes
The separation of that head and trunk,
That ducal crown and head shall be united.
Thou hast forgot thy dignity in deigning
To plot with petty traitors; not so we,
Who in the very punishment acknowledge
The prince. Thy vile accomplices have died
The dog's death, and the wolf's; but thou shalt fall
As falls the lion by the hunters, girt
By those who feel a proud compassion for thee,
And mourn even the inevitable death
Provoked by thy wild wrath, and regal fierceness.
Now we remit thee to thy preparation:
Let it be brief, and we ourselves will be
Thy guides unto the place where first we were
United to thee as thy subjects, and
Thy senate; and must now be parted from thee
As such for ever, on the self-same spot.—
Guards! form the Doge's escort to his chamber.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Doge's Apartment.

The DOGE *as prisoner, and the* DUCHESS *attending him.*

DOGE.

Now that the priest is gone, 't were useless all
To linger out the miserable minutes;
But one pang more, the pang of parting from thee,
And I will leave the few last grains of sand,
Which yet remain of the accorded hour,
Still falling—I have done with Time.

ANGIOLINA.

Alas!
And I have been the cause, the unconscious cause;
And for this funeral marriage, this black union,
Which thou, compliant with my father's wish,
Didst promise at *his* death, thou hast seal'd thine own.

DOGE.

Not so: there was that in my spirit ever
Which shaped out for itself some great reverse;
The marvel is, it came not until now—
And yet it was foretold me.

ANGIOLINA.

How foretold you?

DOGE.

Long years ago—so long, they are a doubt
In memory, and yet they live in annals:
When I was in my youth, and served the senate
And signory as podesta and captain
Of the town of Treviso, on a day
Of festival, the sluggish bishop who
Convey'd the Host aroused my rash young anger,
By strange delay, and arrogant reply
To my reproof; I raised my hand and smote him,
Until he reel'd beneath his holy burthen;
And as he rose from earth again, he raised
His tremulous hands in pious wrath towards Heaven.
Thence pointing to the Host, which had fallen from him,
He turn'd to me, and said, "The hour will come
"When he thou hast o'erthrown shall overthrow thee:
"The glory shall depart from out thy house,
"The wisdom shall be shaken from thy soul,
"And in thy best maturity of mind
"A madness of the heart shall seize upon thee;
"Passion shall tear thee when all passions cease
"In other men, or mellow into virtues;
"And majesty, which decks all other heads,
"Shall crown to leave thee headless; honours shall
"But prove to thee the heralds of destruction,
"And hoary hairs of shame, and both of death,

"But not such death as fits an aged man."
Thus saying, he pass'd on.—That hour is come.

ANGIOLINA.

And with this warning couldst thou not have striven
To avert the fatal moment, and atone
By penitence for that which thou hadst done?

DOGE.

I own the words went to my heart, so much
That I remember'd them amid the maze
Of life, as if they form'd a spectral voice,
Which shook me in a supernatural dream;
And I repented; but 'twas not for me
To pull in resolution: what must be
I could not change, and would not fear.—Nay more,
Thou canst not have forgot, what all remember,
That on my day of landing here as Doge,
On my return from Rome, a mist of such
Unwonted density went on before
The bucentaur like the columnar cloud
Which usher'd Israel out of Egypt, till
The pilot was misled, and disembark'd us
Between the Pillars of Saint Mark's, where 'tis
The custom of the state to put to death
Its criminals, instead of touching at
The Riva della Paglia, as the wont is,—
So that all Venice shudder'd at the omen.

ANGIOLINA.

Ah! little boots it now to recollect
Such things.

DOGE.

And yet I find a comfort in
The thought that these things are the work of Fate;
For I would rather yield to gods than men,
Or cling to any creed of destiny,
Rather than deem these mortals, most of whom
I know to be as worthless as the dust,
And weak as worthless, more than instruments
Of an o'er-ruling power; they in themselves
Were all incapable—they could not be
Victors of him who oft had conquer'd for them!

ANGIOLINA.

Employ the minutes left in aspirations
Of a more healing nature, and in peace
Even with these wretches take thy flight to Heaven.

DOGE.

I *am* at peace: the peace of certainty
That a sure hour will come, when their sons' sons,
And this proud city, and these azure waters,
And all which makes them eminent and bright,
Shall be a desolation, and a curse,
A hissing and a scoff unto the nations,
A Carthage, and a Tyre, an Ocean-Babel!

ANGIOLINA.

Speak not thus now; the surge of passion still
Sweeps o'er thee to the last; thou dost deceive
Thyself, and canst not injure them—be calmer.

DOGE.

I stand within eternity, and see

Into eternity, and I behold—
Ay, palpable as I see thy sweet face
For the last time—the days which I denounce
Unto all time against these wave-girt walls,
And they who are indwellers.

GUARD (*coming forward*).

Doge of Venice,
The Ten are in attendance on your highness.

DOGE.

Then farewell, Angiolina!—one embrace—
Forgive the old man who hath been to thee
A fond but fatal husband—love my memory—
I would not ask so much for me still living,
But thou canst judge of me more kindly now,
Seeing my evil feelings are at rest.
Besides, of all the fruit of these long years,
Glory, and wealth, and power, and fame, and name,
Which generally leave some flowers to bloom
Even o'er the grave, I have nothing left, not even
A little love, or friendship, or esteem,
No, not enough to extract an epitaph
From ostentatious kinsmen; in one hour
I have uprooted all my former life,
And outlived every thing, except thy heart,
The pure, the good, the gentle, which will oft
With unimpair'd but not a clamorous grief
Still keep——Thou turn'st so pale—Alas! she faints,
She has no breath, no pulse!—Guards! lend your aid—
I cannot leave her thus, and yet 'tis better,

Since every lifeless moment spares a pang.
When she shakes off this temporary death,
I shall be with the Eternal.—Call her women—
One look!—how cold her hand! as cold as mine
Shall be ere she recovers.—Gently tend her,
And take my last thanks.——I am ready now.

[*The Attendants of* ANGIOLINA *enter and surround their mistress, who has fainted.—Exeunt the* DOGE, *Guards, &c. &c.*

SCENE III.

The Court of the Ducal Palace: the outer gates are shut against the people.—The DOGE *enters in his ducal robes, in procession with the Council of Ten and other Patricians, attended by the Guards till they arrive at the top of the "Giant's Staircase," (where the Doges took the oaths); the Executioner is stationed there with his sword.—On arriving, a Chief of the Ten takes off the ducal cap from the Doge's head.*

DOGE.

So now the Doge is nothing, and at last
I am again Marino Faliero:
'Tis well to be so, though but for a moment.

Here was I crown'd, and here, bear witness, Heaven!
With how much more contentment I resign
That shining mockery, the ducal bauble,
Than I received the fatal ornament.

ONE OF THE TEN.

Thou tremblest, Faliero!

DOGE.

'Tis with age, then (9).

BENINTENDE.

Faliero! hast thou aught further to commend,
Compatible with justice, to the senate?

DOGE.

I would commend my nephew to their mercy,
My consort to their justice; for methinks
My death, and such a death, might settle all
Between the state and me.

BENINTENDE.

They shall be cared for;
Even notwithstanding thine unheard-of crime.

DOGE.

Unheard-of! ay, there 's not a history
But shows a thousand crown'd conspirators
Against the people; but to set them free
One sovereign only died, and one is dying.

BENINTENDE.

And who were they who fell in such a cause?

DOGE.

The King of Sparta, and the Doge of Venice—
Agis and Faliero!



BENINTENDE.

Hast thou more
To utter or to do?

DOGE.

May I speak?

BENINTENDE.

Thou may'st;
But recollect the people are without,
Beyond the compass of the human voice.

DOGE.

I speak to Time and to Eternity,
Of which I grow a portion, not to man.
Ye elements! in which to be resolved
I hasten, let my voice be as a spirit
Upon you! Ye blue waves! which bore my banner,
Ye winds! which flutter'd o'er as if you loved it,
And fill'd my swelling sails as they were wafted
To many a triumph! Thou, my native earth,
Which I have bled for, and thou foreign earth,
Which drank this willing blood from many a wound!
Ye stones, in which my gore will not sink, but
Reek up to Heaven! Ye skies, which will receive it!
Thou sun! which shinest on these things, and Thou!
Who kindlest and who quenchest suns!—Attest!
I am not innocent—but are these guiltless?
I perish, but not unavenged; far ages
Float up from the abyss of time to be,
And show these eyes, before they close, the doom
Of this proud city, and I leave my curse

On her and hers for ever!——Yes, the hours
Are silently engendering of the day,
When she, who built 'gainst Attila a bulwark,
Shall yield, and bloodlessly and basely yield
Unto a bastard Attila, without
Shedding so much blood in her last defence
As these old veins, oft drain'd in shielding her,
Shall pour in sacrifice.—She shall be bought
And sold, and be an appanage to those
Who shall despise her!—She shall stoop to be
A province for an empire, petty town
In lieu of capital, with slaves for senates,
Beggars for nobles, pandars for a people (10)!
Then, when the Hebrew 's in thy palaces (11),
The Hun in thy high places, and the Greek
Walks o'er thy mart, and smiles on it for his;
When thy patricians beg their bitter bread
In narrow streets, and in their shameful need
Make their nobility a plea for pity;
Then, when the few who still retain a wreck
Of their great fathers' heritage shall fawn
Round a barbarian Vice of Kings' Vice-gerent,
Even in the palace where they sway'd as sovereigns,
Even in the palace where they slew their sovereign,
Proud of some name they have disgraced, or sprung
From an adulteress boastful of her guilt
With some large gondolier or foreign soldier,
Shall bear about their bastardy in triumph
To the third spurious generation;—when

Thy sons are in the lowest scale of being,
Slaves turn'd o'er to the vanquish'd by the victors,
Despised by cowards for greater cowardice,
And scorn'd even by the vicious for such vices
As in the monstrous grasp of their conception
Defy all codes to image or to name them;
Then, when of Cyprus, now thy subject kingdom,
All thine inheritance shall be her shame
Entail'd on thy less virtuous daughters, grown
A wider proverb for worse prostitution;—
When all the ills of conquer'd states shall cling thee,
Vice without splendour, sin without relief
Even from the gloss of love to smooth it o'er,
But in its stead coarse lusts of habitude,
Prurient yet passionless, cold studied lewdness,
Depraving nature's frailty to an art;—
When these and more are heavy on thee, when
Smiles without mirth, and pastimes without pleasure,
Youth without honour, age without respect,
Meanness and weakness, and a sense of woe
'Gainst which thou wilt not strive, and dar'st not murmur,
Have made thee last and worst of peopled deserts,
Then, in the last gasp of thine agony,
Amidst thy many murders, think of *mine!*
Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes(12)!
Gehenna of the waters! thou sea Sodom!
Thus I devote thee to the infernal gods!
Thee and thy serpent seed!

[*Here the* Doge *turns, and addresses the Executioner.*

Slave, do thine office!
Strike as I struck the foe! Strike as I would
Have struck those tyrants! Strike deep as my curse!
Strike—and but once!

[*The* DOGE *throws himself upon his knees, and as the Executioner raises his sword the scene closes.*

SCENE IV.

The Piazza and Piazzetta of Saint Mark's.—The People in crowds gathered round the grated gates of the Ducal Palace, which are shut.

FIRST CITIZEN.

I have gain'd the gate, and can discern the Ten,
Robed in their gowns of state, ranged round the Doge.

SECOND CITIZEN.

I cannot reach thee with mine utmost effort.
How is it? let us hear at least, since sight
Is thus prohibited unto the people,
Except the occupiers of those bars.

FIRST CITIZEN.

One has approach'd the Doge, and now they strip
The ducal bonnet from his head—and now

He raises his keen eyes to Heaven; I see
Them glitter, and his lips move—Hush! hush!—no,
'Twas but a murmur—Curse upon the distance!
His words are inarticulate, but the voice
Swells up like mutter'd thunder; would we could
But gather a sole sentence!

SECOND CITIZEN.

Hush! we perhaps may catch the sound.

FIRST CITIZEN.

'Tis vain,
I cannot hear him.—How his hoary hair
Streams on the wind like foam upon the wave!
Now—now—he kneels—and now they form a circle
Round him, and all is hidden—but I see
The lifted sword in air——Ah! Hark! it falls!

[*The People murmur.*

THIRD CITIZEN.

Then they have murder'd him who would have freed us.

FOURTH CITIZEN.

He was a kind man to the commons ever.

FIFTH CITIZEN.

Wisely they did to keep their portals barr'd.
Would we had known the work they were preparing
Ere we were summon'd here, we would have brought
Weapons, and forced them!

SIXTH CITIZEN.

Are you sure he's dead?

FIRST CITIZEN.

I saw the sword fall—Lo! what have we here?

Enter on the Balcony of the Palace which fronts Saint Mark's Place, a CHIEF OF THE TEN(13), *with a bloody sword. He waves it thrice before the People, and exclaims,*

"Justice hath dealt upon the mighty Traitor!"

[*The gates are opened; the populace rush in towards the "Giant's Staircase," where the execution has taken place. The foremost of them exclaims to those behind,*

The gory head rolls down the "Giant's Steps!"

[*The curtain falls.*

NOTES.

Note 1, page 21, line 15.

I smote the tardy bishop at Treviso.

An historical fact. See Marin Sanuto's Lives of the Doges.

Note 2, page 34, line 23.

A gondola with one oar only.

A gondola is not like a common boat, but is as easily rowed with one oar as with two (though of course not so swiftly), and often is so from motives of privacy; and (since the decay of Venice) of economy.

Note 3, page 74, lines 12 and 13.

They think themselves
Engaged in secret to the Signory.

An historical fact.

Note 4, page 113, line 10.

Within our palace precincts at San Polo.

The Doge's private family palace.

Note 5, page 121, line 10.

"Signor of the Night."

"I Signori di Notte" held an important charge in the old Republic.

Note 6, page 133, line 15.

Festal Thursday.

"Giovedi *Grasso*," "*fat* or greasy Thursday," which I cannot literally translate in the text, was the day.

Note 7, page 133, line 29.

Guards! let their mouths be gagg'd, even in the act.

Historical fact. See Sanuto, in the Appendix to this tragedy.

Note 8, page 143, line 6.

Say, conscript fathers, shall she be admitted?

The Venetian senate took the same title as the Roman, of "Conscript Fathers."

Note 9, page 161, line 8.

'Tis with age, then.

This was the actual reply of Bailli, maire of Paris, to a Frenchman who made him the same reproach on his way to execution, in the earliest part of their revolution. I find in reading over (since the completion of this tragedy), for the first time these six years, "Venice Preserved," a similar reply on a different occasion by Renault, and other coincidences arising from the subject. I need hardly remind the gentlest reader, that such coincidences must be accidental, from the very facility of their detection by reference to so popular a play on the stage and in the closet as Otway's chef d'œuvre.

Note 10, page 163, line 13.

Beggars for nobles, pandars for a people!

Should the dramatic picture seem harsh, let the reader look to the historical, of the period prophesied, or rather of the few years preceding that period. Voltaire calculated their "nostre bene merite Meretrici" at 12,000 of regulars, without including volunteers and local militia, on what authority I know not; but it is perhaps the only part of the population not decreased. Venice once contained 200,000 inhabitants, there are now about 90,000, and THESE!! few individuals can conceive, and none could describe the actual state into which the more than infernal tyranny of Austria has plunged this unhappy city.

Note 11, page 163, line 14.

Then, when the Hebrew's in thy palaces.

The chief palaces on the Brenta now belong to the Jews; who in the earlier times of the republic were only allowed to inhabit Mestri, and not to enter the city of Venice. The whole commerce is in the hands of the Jews and Greeks, and the Huns form the garrison.

Note 12, page 164, line 25.

Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes!

Of the first fifty Doges, *five* abdicated—*five* were banished with their eyes put out—*five* were MASSACRED—and *nine* deposed; so that *nineteen* out of fifty lost the throne by violence, besides two who fell in battle: this occurred long previous to the reign of Marino Faliero. One of his more immediate predecessors, Andrea Dandolo, died of vexation. Marino Faliero himself perished

as related. Amongst his successors, *Foscari*, after seeing his son repeatedly tortured and banished, was deposed, and died of breaking a blood-vessel, on hearing the bell of Saint Mark's toll for the election of his successor. Morosini was impeached for the loss of Candia; but this was previous to his dukedom, during which he conquered the Morea, and was styled the Peloponnesian. Faliero might truly say,

"Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes!"

Note 13, page 167, line 2.

Chief of the Ten.

"Un Capo de Dieci" are the words of Sanuto's Chronicle.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

I.

MCCCLIV.

MARINO FALIERO. DOGE XLIX.

"Fu eletto da' quarantuno Elettori, il quale era Cavaliere e conte di Valdemarino in Trivigiana, ed era ricco, e si trovava Ambasciadore a Roma. E a dì 9. di Settembre, dopo sepolto il suo predecessore, fu chiamato il gran Consiglio, e fu preso di fare il Doge giusta il solito. E furono fatti i cinque Correttori, Ser Bernardo Giustiniani Procuratore, Ser Paolo Loredano, Ser Filippo Aurio, Ser Pietro Trivisano, e Ser Tommaso Viadro. I quali a dì 10. misero queste correzioni alla promessione del Doge: che i Consiglieri non odano gli Oratori e Nunzi de' Signori, senza i Capi de' quaranta, nè possano rispondere ad alcuno, se non saranno quattro Consiglieri e due Capi de' Quaranta. E che osservino la forma del suo Capitolare. E che Messer lo Doge si metta nella miglior parte, quando i Giudici tra loro non fossero d'accordo. E ch' egli non possa far vendere i suoi imprestiti, salvo con legitima causa, e col voler di cinque Consiglieri, di due Capi de' Quaranta, e delle due parti del Consiglio de' Pregati. *Item*, che in luogo di tre mila pelli di Conigli, che debbon dare i Zaratini per regalia al Doge, non trovandosi tante pelli, gli diano Ducati ottanta l'anno. E poi a dì 11. detto, misero *etiam* altre correzioni, che se il Doge, che sarà eletto, fusse fuori di Venezia, i Savj possono provvedere del suo ritorno. E quando fosse il Doge ammalato, sia Vicedoge uno de' Consigliere, da essere eletto tra loro. E che il detto

sia nominato Viceluogotenente di Messer lo Doge, quando i Giudici faranno i suoi atti. E nota, perchè fu fatto Doge uno, ch'era assente, che fu Vicedoge Ser Marino Badoero più vecchio de' Consiglieri. *Item*, che'l governo del Ducato sia commesso a' Consiglieri, e a' Capi de' Quaranta, quando vacherà il Ducato, finchè sarà eletto l' altro Doge. E così a dì 11. di Settembre fu creato il prefato Marino Faliero Doge. E fu preso, che il governo del Ducato sia commesso a' Consiglieri e a' Capi di Quaranta. I quali stiano in Palazzo di continuo, fino che verrà il Doge. Sicchè di continuo stiano in Palazzo due Consiglieri e un Capo de' Quaranta. E subito furono spedite lettere al detto Doge, il quale era a Roma Oratore al Legato di Papa Innocenzo VI. ch'era in Avignone. Fu preso nel gran Consiglio d'eleggere dodici Ambasciadori incontro a Marino Faliero Doge il quale veniva da Roma. E giunto a Chioggia, il Podestà mandò Taddeo Giustiniani suo figliuolo incontro, con quindici Ganzaruoli. E poi venuto a S. Clemente nel Bucintoro, venne un gran caligo, *adeo* che il Bucintoro non si potè levare. Laonde il Doge co' Gentiluomini nelle piatte vennero di lungo in questa Terra a' 5. d'Ottobre del 1354. E dovendo smontare alla riva della Paglia per lo caligo andarono ad ismontare alla riva della Piazza in mezzo alle due Colonne dove si fà la Giustizia, che fu un malissimo augurio. E a' 6. la mattina venne alla Chiesa di San Marco alla laudazione di quello. Era in questo tempo Cancellier Grande Messer Benintende. I quarantuno Elettori furono, Ser Giovanni Contarini, Ser Andrea Giustiniani, Ser Michele Morosini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Pietro Lando, Ser Marino Gradenigo, Ser Marco Dolfino, Ser Nicolò Faliero, Ser Giovanni Quirini, Ser Lorenzo Soranzo, Ser Marco Bembo, Sere Stefano Belegno, Ser Francesco Loredano, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, Ser Andrea Barbaro, Ser Lorenzo Barbarigo, Ser Bettino da Molino, Ser' Andrea Erizzo Procuratore, Ser Marco Celsi, Ser Paolo Donato, Ser Bertucci Grimani, Ser Pietro Steno, Ser Luca Duodo, Ser' Andrea Pisani, Ser

Francesco Caravello, Ser Jacopo Trivisano, Sere Schiavo Marcello, Ser Maffeo Aimo, Ser Marco Capello, Ser Pancrazio Giorgio, Ser Giovanni Foscarini, Ser Tommaso Viadro, Sere Schiava Polani, Ser Marco Polo, Ser Marino Sagredo, Sere Stefano Mariani, Ser Francesco Suriano, Ser Orio Pasqualigo, Ser Andrea Gritti, Ser Buono da Mosto.

* * * *

" Trattato di Messer Marino Faliero Doge, tratto da una Cronica antica. Essendo venuto il Giovedì della Caccia, fù fatta giusta il solito la Caccia. E a' que' tempi dopo fatta la Caccia s' andava in Palazzo del Doge in una di quelle Sale, e con donne facevasi una festicciuola, dove si ballava fino alla prima Campana, e veniva una Colazione; la quale spesa faceva Messer lo Doge, quando v' era la Dogaressa. E poscia tutti andavano a casa sua. Sopra la qual festa, pare, che Ser Michele Steno, molto giovane e povero Gentiluomo, ma ardito e astuto, il qual' era innamorato in certa donzella della Dogaressa, essendo sul Solajo appresso le Donne, facesse cert' atto non conveniente, *adeo* che il Doge comandò ch'e' fosse buttato giù dal Solajo. E così quegli Scudieri del Doge lo spinsero giù di quel Solajo. Laonde a Ser Michele parve, che fossegli stata fatta troppo grande ignominia. E non considerando altramente il fine, ma sopra quella passione fornita la Festa, e andati tutti via, quella notte egli andò, e sulla cadrega, dove sedeva il Doge nella Sala dell' Udienza (perchè allora i Dogi non tenevano panno di seta sopra la cadrega, ma sedevano in una cadrega di legno) scrisse alcune parole disoneste del Doge e della Dogaressa, cioè: *Marin Faliero dalla bella moglie: Altri la gode, ed egli la mantien.* E la mattina furono vedute tali parole scritte. E parve una brutta cosa. E per la Signoria fu commessa la cosa agli Avvogadori del Comune con grande efficacia. I qual Avvogadori subito diedero taglia grande per venire in chiaro della verità di chi avea scritto tal lettera. E tandem si seppe, che Michele Steno aveale scritte. E fu

per la Quarantia preso di ritenerlo; e ritenuto confessò, che in quella passione d' essere stato spinto giù dal Solajo, presente la sua amante, egli aveale scritte. Onde poi fu placitato nel detto Consiglio, e parve al Consiglio sì per rispetto all' età, come per la caldezza d'amore, di condannarlo a compiere due mesi in prigione serrato, e poi ch' e' fusse bandito di Venezia e dal distretto per un'anno. Per la qual condennagione tanto piccola il Doge ne prese grande sdegno, parendogli che non fosse stata fatta quella estimazione della cosa, che ricercava la sua dignità del Ducato. E diceva, ch' eglino doveano averlo fatto appiccare per la gola, o *saltem* bandirlo in perpetuo da Venezia. E perchè (quando dee succedere un' effetto è necessario che vi concorra la cagione a fare tal' effetto) era destinato, che a Messer Marino Doge fosse tagliata la testa, perciò occorse, che entrata la Quaresima il giorno dopo che fu condannato il detto Ser Michele Steno, un Gentiluomo da Cà Barbaro, di natura colerico, andasse all' Arsenale, domandasse certe cose ai Padroni, ed era alla presenza de' Signori l'Amiraglio dell' Arsenale. Il quale intesa la domanda, disse, che non si poteva fare. Quel Gentiluomo venne a parole coll' Amiraglio, e diedegli un pugno su un'occhio. E perchè avea un'anello in deto, coll' anello gli ruppe la pelle, e fece sangue. E l'Amiraglio così battuto e insanguinato andò al Doge a lamentarsi, acciocchè il Doge facesse fare gran punizione contra il detto da Cà Barbarò. Il Doge disse: *Che vuoi che ti faccia? Guarda le ignominiose parole scritte di me, e il modo ch'è stato punito quel ribaldo di Michele Steno, che le scrisse. E quale stima hanno i Quaranta fatto della persona nostra.* Laonde l'Amiraglio gli disse: *Messer lo Doge, se voi volete farvi Signore, e fare tagliare tutti questi becchi Gentiluomini a pezzi, mi basta l'animo, dandomi voi ajuto, di farvi Signore di questa Terra. E allora voi potrete castigare tutti costoro.* Intese queste, il Doge disse, *Come si puo fare una simile cosa?* E così entrarono in ragionamento.

" Il Doge mandò a chiamare Ser Bertucci Faliero suo nipote, il quale stava con lui in Palazzo, & entrarono in questa machinazione. Nè si partirono di lì, che mandarono per Filippo Calendaro, uomo maritimo e di gran seguito, e per Bertucci Israello, ingegnere e uomo astutissimo. E consigliatisi insieme diede ordine di chiamare alcuni altri. E così per alcuni giorni la notte si riducevano insieme in Palazzo in casa del Doge. E chiamarono a parte a parte altri, *videlicet* Niccolò Fagiuolo, Giovanni da Corfù, Stefano Fagiano, Niccolò dalle Bende, Niccolò Biondo, e Stefano Trivisano. E ordinò di fare sedici o diciasette Capi in diversi luoghi della Terra, i quali avessero cadaun di loro quarant'uomini provvigionati preparati, non dicendo a' detti suoi quaranta quello, che volessero fare. Ma che il giorno stabilito si mostrasse di far quistione tra loro in diversi luoghi, acciochè il Doge facesse sonare a San Marco le Campane, le quali non si possono suonare, s' egli nol comanda. E al suono delle Campane questi sedici o diciasette co' suoi uomini venissero a San Marco alle strade, che buttano in Piazza. E così i nobili e primarj Cittadini, che venissero in Piazza, per sapere del romore ciò ch'era, li tagliassero a pezzi. E seguito questo, che fosse chiamato per Signore Messer Marino Faliero Doge. E fermate le cose tra loro, stabilito fu, che questo dovess' essere a' 15. d'Aprile del 1355. in giorno di Mercoledì. La quale machinazione trattata fu tra loro tanto segretamente, che mai nè pure se ne sospettò, non che se ne sapesse cos' alcuna. Ma il Signor' Iddio, che ha sempre ajutato questa gloriosissima Città, e che per le santimonie e giustizie sue mai non l'ha abbandonata, ispirò a un Beltramo Bergamasco, il quale fu messo Capo di quarant' uomini per uno de' detti congiurati (il quale intese qualche parola, sicchè comprese l' effetto, che doveva succedere, e il qual era di casa di Ser Niccolò Lioni de Santo Stefano) di andare a dì . . . . . d'Aprile a Casa del detto Ser Niccolò Lioni. E gli disse ogni cosa dell' ordin dato. Il quale intese le cose, rimase come morto; e intese

molte particolarità, il detto Beltramo il pregò che lo tenesse segreto, e glielo disse, acciocchè il detto Ser Niccolò non si partisse di casa a dì 15. acciochè egli non fosse morto. Et egli volendo partirsi, il fece ritenere a' suoi di casa, e serrarlo in una camera. Et esso andò a casa di M. Giovanni Gradenigo Nasone, il quale fu poi Doge, che stava anch' egli a Santo Stefano; e dissegli la cosa. La quale parendogli, com'era, d'una grandissima importanza, tutti e due andarono a casa di Ser Marco Cornaro, che stava a San Felice. E dettogli il tutto, tutti e tre deliberarono di venire a casa del detto Ser Niccolò Lioni, ed esaminare il detto Beltramo. E quello esaminato, intese le cose, il fecero stare serrato. E andarono tutti e tre a San Salvatore in Sacristia, e mandarono i loro famigli a chiamare i Consiglieri, gli Avvogadori, i Capi de' Dieci, e que' del Consiglio. E ridotti insieme dissero loro le cose. I quali rimasero morti. E deliberarono di mandare pel detto Beltramo, e fattolo venire cautamente, ed esaminatolo, e verificate le cose, ancorchè ne sentissero gran passione, pure pensarono la provisione. E mandarono pe' Capi de' Quaranta, pe' Signori di notte, pe' Capi de' Sestieri, e pe' Cinque della Pace. E ordinato, ch' eglino co' loro uomini trovassero degli altri buoni uomini, e mandassero a casa de' Capi de' congiurati, *ut supra* mettessero loro le mani addosso. E tolsero i detti le Maestrerie dell' Arsenale, acciocchè i provvisionati de' congiurati non potessero offenderli. E si ridussero in Palazzo verso la sera. Dove ridotti fecero serrare le porte della corte del Palazzo. E mandarono a ordinare al Campanaro, che non sonasse le Campane. E così fu eseguito, e messe le mani addosso a tutti i nominati di sopra, furono que' condotti al Palazzo. E vedendo il Consiglio de' Dieci, che il Doge era nella cospirazione, presero di eleggere venti de' primarj della Terra, di giunta al detto Consiglio a consigliare, non però chè potessero mettere pallotta.

"I Consiglieri furono questi: Ser Giovanni Mocenigo del

Sestiero di San Marco; Ser Almorò Veniero da Santa Marina del Sestiero di Castello; Ser Tommaso Viadro del Sestiero di Caneregio; Ser Giovanni Sanudo del Sestiero di Santa Croce; Ser Pietro Trivisano del Sestiero di San Paolo; Ser Pantalione Barbo il Grando del Sestiero d' Ossoduro. Gli Avogadori del Comune furono Ser Zufredo Morosini, e Ser Orio Pasqualigo, e questi non ballottarono. Que' del Consiglio de' Dieci; furono Ser Giovanni Marcello, Ser Tommaso Sanudo, e Ser Michelento Dolfino, Capi del detto Consiglio de' Dieci; Ser Luca da Legge, e Ser Pietro da Mosto, Inquisitori del detto Consiglio; Ser Marco Polani, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Lando Lombardo, Ser Nicoletto Trivisano da Sant' Angiolo. Questi elessero tra loro una Giunta, nella notte ridotti quasi sul romper del giorno, di venti Nobili di Venezia de' migliori, de' più Savj, e de' più antichi, per consultare, non però che mettessero pallottola. E non vi vollero alcuno da Cà Faliero. E cacciarono fuori del Consiglio Niccolò Faliero, e un' altro Niccollò Faliero da San Tommaso, per essere della Casata del Doge. E questa provigione di chiamare i venti della Giunta fu molto commendata per tutta la Terra. Questi furono i venti della Giunta, Ser Marco Giustiniani Procuratore, Ser' Andrea Erizzo Procuratore, Ser Lionardo Giustiniani Procuratore, Ser' Andrea Contarini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Niccolò Volpe, Ser Giovanni Loredano, Ser Marco Diedo, Ser Giovanni Gradenigo, Ser' Andrea Cornaro Cavaliere, Ser Marco Soranzo, Ser Rinieri da Mosto, Ser Gazano Marcello, Ser Marino Morosino, Sere Stefano Belegno, Ser Niccolò Lioni, Ser Filippo Orio, Ser Marco Trivisano, Ser Jacopo Bragadino, Ser Giovanni Foscarini. E chiamati questi venti nel Consiglio de' Dieci, fu mandato per Messer Marino Faliero Doge, il quale andava pel Palazzo con gran gente, gentiluomini, e altra buona gente, che non sapeano ancora come il fatto stava. In questo tempo fu condotto, preso, e ligato, Bertucci Israello, uno de' Capi del trattato per que' di Santa

Croce, e ancora fu preso Zanello del Brn, Nicoletto, di Rosa e Nicoletto Alberto, il Guardiaga, e altri uomini da mare, e d' altre condizioni. I quali furono esaminati, e trovata la verità del tradimento. A dì 16. d' Aprile fu sentenziato pel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, che Filippo Calandario, e Bertucci Israello fossero appicati alle Colonne rosse del balconate del Palazzo, nelle quali sta a vedere il Doge la festa della Caccia. E così furono appiccati con spranghe in bocca. E nel giorno seguente questi furono condannati, Niccolò Zuccuolo, Nicoletto Blondo, Nicoletto Doro, Marco Giuda, Jacomello Dagolino, Nicoletto Fedele figliuolo di Filippo Calendaro, Marco Torello detto Israello, Stefano Trivisano Cambiatore di Santa Margherita, Antonio dalle Bende. Furono tutti presi a Chioggia, che fuggivano, e dipoi in diversi giorni a due a due, e a uno a uno, per sentenza fatta nel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, furono appicati per la gola alle Colonne, continuando dalle rosse del Palazzo, seguendo fin verso il Canale. E altri presi furono lasciati, perchè sentirono il fatto, ma non vi furono, tal che fu dato loro ad intendere per questi capi, che venissero coll' arme, per prendere alcuni malfattori in servigio della Signoria, nè altro sapeano. Fu ancora liberato Nicoletto Alberto, il Guardiaga, e Bartolommeo Ciriuola, e suo figliuolo, e molti altri, che non erano in colpa.

" E a dì 16. d' Aprile, giorno di Venerdì, fu sentenziato nel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, di tagliare la testa a Messer Marino Faliero Doge sul pato della Scala di pierra, dove i Dogi giurano il primo sagramento, quando montano prima in Palazzo. E così serrato il Palazzo, la mattina seguente a ora di Terza, fu tagliata la testa al detto Doge a dì 17. d'Aprile. E prima la beretta fu tolta di testa al detto Doge, avanti che venisse giù dalla Scala. E compiuta la giustizia, pare che un Capo de' Dieci andassa alle Colonne del Palazzo sopra la Piazza, e mostrasse la spada insanguinata a tutti, dicendo: *E stata fatta la gran giustizia del Traditore.* E

aperta la Porta tutti entrarono dentro con gran furia a vedere il Doge, ch' era stato giustiziato. E' da sapere, che a fare la detta giustizia non fu Ser Giovanni Sanudo il Consigliere, perchè era andato a casa per difetto della persona, sicchè furono quatordici soli, che ballottarono, cioè cinque Consiglieri, e nove del Consiglio de' Dieci. E fu preso, che tutti i beni del Doge fossero confiscati nel Comune, e così degli altri traditori. E fu conceduto al detto Doge pel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, ch' egli potesse ordinare del suo per Ducati du' mila. Ancora fu preso, che tutti i Consiglieri, e Avogadori del Comune, que' del Consiglio de' Dieci, e della Giunta, ch' erano stati a fare la detta sentenza del Doge, e d' altri, avessero licenza di portar' arme di dì e di notte in Venezia e da Grado fino a Cavarzere, ch' è sotto il Dogato, con due fanti in vita loro, stando i fanti con essi in casa al suo pane e al suo vino. E chi non avesse fanti, potesse dar tal licenza a' suoi figliuoli ovvero fratelli, due però e non più. Eziandio fu data licenza dell' arme a quattro Notaj della Cancelleria, cioè della Corte Maggiore, che furono a prendere le deposizioni e inquisizioni, in perpetuo a loro soli, i quali furono Amadio, Nicoletto di Loreno, Steffanello, e Pietro de' Compostelli, Scrivani de' Signori di notte. Et essendo stati impiccati i traditori, e tagliata la testa al Doge, rimase la Terra in gran riposo, e quiete. E come in una Cronica ho trovato, fu portato il Corpo del Doge in una barca con otto doppieri a seppelire nella sua arca a San Giovanni e Paolo, la quale al presente è in quell' andito per mezzo la Chiesuola di Santa Maria della Pace, fatta fare pel Vescovo Gabriello di Bergomo, e un Cassone di pietra con queste lettere: *Heic jacet Dominus Marinus Faletro Dux.* E nel gran Consiglio non gli è stato fatto alcun Brieve, ma il luogo vacuo con lettere, che dicono così: *Hic est locus Marini Faletro, decapitati pro criminibus.* E pare, che la sua casa fosse data alla Chiesa di Sant' Apostolo, la qual era quella grande sul Ponte. *Tamen* vedo il contrario,

che è pure di Cà Faliero, o che i Falieri la ricuperassero con danari dalla Chiesa. Nè voglio restar di scrivere alcuni, che volevano, che fosse messo nel suo breve, cioè: *Marinus Faletro Dux. Temeritas me cepit. Poenas lui, decapitatus pro criminibus.* Altri vi fecero un Distico assai degno al suo merito, il quale è questo, da essere posto su la sua sepultura:

Dux Venetum jacet heic, patriam qui prodere tentans,
Sceptra, Decus, Censum, perdidit, atque Caput."

* * * *

" Non voglio restar di scrivere quello che ho letto in una Cronica, cioè, che Marino Faliero trovandosi Podestà e Capitano a Treviso, e dovendosi fare una Processione, il Vescovo stette troppo a far venire il Corpo di Cristo. Il detto Faliero era di tanta superbia e arroganza, che diede un buffetto al prefato Vescovo, per modo ch' egli quasi cadde in terra. Però fù permesso, che il Faliero perdette l' inteletto, e fece la mala morte, come ho scritto di sopra."

* * * *

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II.

MCCCLIV.

MARINO FALIERO, DOGE XLIX.

On the eleventh day of September, in the year of our Lord 1354, Marino Faliero was elected and chosen to be the Duke of the Commonwealth of Venice. He was Count of Valdemarino, in the Marches of Treviso, and a Knight, and a wealthy man to boot. As soon as the election was completed, it was resolved in the Great Council, that a deputation of twelve should be despatched to Marino Faliero the Duke, who was then on his way from Rome; for when he was chosen, he was Embassador at the court of the Holy Father, at Rome,—the Holy Father himself held his court at Avignon. When Messer Marino Faliero the Duke was about to land in this city, on the fifth day of October, 1354, a thick haze came on, and darkened the air; and he was enforced to land on the place of Saint Mark, between the two columns, on the spot where evil doers are put to death; and all thought that this was the worst of tokens.—Nor must I forget to write that which I have read in a chronicle.—When Messer Marino Faliero was Podesta and Captain of Treviso, the Bishop delayed coming in with the holy sacrament, on a day when a procession was to take place. Now the said Marino Faliero was so very proud and wrathful, that he buffeted the Bishop, and almost struck him to the ground. And, therefore, Heaven allowed Marino Faliero to go out of his right senses, in order that he might bring himself to an evil death.

When this Duke had held the Dukedom during nine months and six days, he, being wicked and ambitious, sought to make himself lord of Venice, in the manner which I have read in an ancient chronicle. When the Thursday arrived upon which they were wont to hunt the Bull, the Bull hunt took place as usual; and according to the usage of those times, after the Bull hunt had ended, they all proceeded unto the palace of the Duke, and assembled together in one of his halls; and they disported themselves with the women. And until the first bell tolled they danced, and then a banquet was served up. My Lord the Duke paid the expenses thereof, provided he had a Duchess, and after the banquet they all returned to their homes.

Now to this feast there came a certain Ser Michele Steno, a gentleman of poor estate and very young, but crafty and daring, and who loved one of the damsels of the Duchess. Ser Michele stood amongst the women upon the solajo; and he behaved indiscreetly, so that my Lord the Duke ordered that he should be kicked off the solajo; and the Esquires of the Duke flung him down from the solajo accordingly. Ser Michele thought that such an affront was beyond all bearing; and when the feast was over, and all other persons had left the palace, he, continuing heated with anger, went to the hall of audience, and wrote certain unseemly words relating to the Duke and the Duchess, upon the chair in which the Duke was used to sit; for in those days the Duke did not cover his chair with cloth of sendal, but he sat in a chair of wood. Ser Michele wrote thereon:—"*Marin Falier, the husband of the fair wife; others kiss her, but he keeps her.*" In the morning the words were seen, and the matter was considered to be very scandalous; and the Senate commanded the Avogadori of the Commonwealth to proceed therein with the greatest diligence. A largesse of great amount was immediately proffered by the Avogadori, in order to discover who had written these words. And at length

it was known that Michele Steno had written them. It was resolved in the Council of Forty that he should be arrested; and he then confessed, that in the fit of vexation and spite, occasioned by his being thrust off the solajo in the presence of his mistress, he had written the words. Therefore the Council debated thereon. And the Council took his youth into consideration, and that he was a lover, and therefore they adjudged that he should be kept in close confinement during two months, and that afterwards he should be banished from Venice and the state during one year. In consequence of this merciful sentence the Duke became exceedingly wroth, it appearing to him that the Council had not acted in such a manner as was required by the respect due to his ducal dignity; and he said that they ought to have condemned Sir Michele to be hanged by the neck, or at least to be banished for life.

Now it was fated that My Lord Duke Marino was to have his head cut off. And as it is necessary when any effect is to be brought about, that the cause of such effect must happen, it therefore came to pass, that on the very day after sentence had been pronounced on Ser Michele Steno, being the first day of Lent, a Gentleman of the house of Barbaro, a choleric Gentleman, went to the arsenal and required certain things of the masters of the galleys. This he did in the presence of the Admiral of the arsenal, and he, hearing the request, answered,—No, it cannot be done.—High words arose between the Gentleman and the Admiral, and the Gentleman struck him with his fist just above the eye; and as he happened to have a ring on his finger, the ring cut the Admiral and drew blood. The Admiral, all bruised and bloody, ran straight to the Duke to complain, and with the intent of praying him to inflict some heavy punishment upon the Gentleman of Ca Barbaro.—"What wouldst thou have me do for thee?" answered the Duke;—"think upon the "shameful gibe which hath been written concerning me;

" and think on the manner in which they have punished that " ribald Michele Steno, who wrote it; and see how the " Council of Forty respect our person."—Upon this the Admiral answered;—" My Lord Duke, if you would wish to " make yourself a Prince, and to cut all those cuckoldy gen- " tlemen to pieces, I have the heart, if you do but help me, " to make you Prince of all this state; and then you may " punish them all."—Hearing this, the Duke said;—" How " can such a matter be brought about?"—and so they dis- coursed thereon.

The Duke called for his nephew Ser Bertuccio Faliero, who lived with him in the palace, and they communed about this plot. And without leaving the place, they sent for Philip Calendaro, a seaman of great repute, and for Bertucci Isra- ello, who was exceedingly wily and cunning. Then taking counsel amongst themselves, they agreed to call in some others; and so, for several nights successively, they met with the Duke at home in his palace. And the following men were called in singly; to wit:—Niccolo Fagiuolo, Giovanni da Corfu, Stefano Fagiano, Niccolo dalle Bende, Niccolo Biondo, and Stefano Trivisiano.—It was concerted that six- teen or seventeen leaders should be stationed in various parts of the City, each being at the head of forty men, armed and prepared; but the followers were not to know their de- stination. On the appointed day they were to make affrays amongst themselves here and there, in order that the Duke might have a pretence for tolling the bells of San Marco; these bells are never rung but by the order of the Duke. And at the sound of the bells, these sixteen or seventeen, with their followers, were to come to San Marco, through the streets which open upon the Piazza. And when the noble and leading citizens should come into the Piazza, to know the cause of the riot, then the conspirators were to cut them in pieces; and this work being finished, My Lord Marino Faliero the Duke was to be proclaimed the Lord of

Venice. Things having been thus settled, they agreed to fulfil their intent on Wednesday, the fifteenth day of April, in the year 1355. So covertly did they plot, that no one ever dreamt of their machinations.

But the Lord, who hath always helped this most glorious City, and who, loving its righteousness and holiness, hath never forsaken it, inspired one Beltramo Bergamasco to be the cause of bringing the plot to light in the following manner. This Beltramo, who belonged to Ser Niccolo Lioni of Santo Stefano, had heard a word or two of what was to take place; and so, in the before-mentioned month of April, he went to the house of the aforesaid Ser Niccolo Lioni, and told him all the particulars of the plot. Ser Niccolo, when he heard all these things, was struck dead, as it were, with affright. He heard all the particulars; and Beltramo prayed him to keep it all secret; and, if he told Ser Niccolo, it was in order that Ser Niccolo might stop at home on the fifteenth of April, and thus save his life. Beltramo was going, but Ser Niccolo ordered his servants to lay hands upon him, and lock him up. Ser Niccolo then went to the house of Messer Giovanni Gradenigo Nasoni, who afterwards became Duke, and who also lived at Santo Stefano, and told him all. The matter seemed to him to be of the very greatest importance, as indeed it was; and they two went to the house of Ser Marco Cornaro, who lived at San Felice; and, having spoken with him, they all three then determined to go back to the house of Ser Niccolo Lioni, to examine the said Beltramo: and having questioned him, and heard all that he had to say, they left him in confinement. And then they all three went into the sacristy of San Salvatore, and sent their men to summon the Counsellors, the Avogadori, the Capi de' Dieci, and those of the Great Council.

When all were assembled, the whole story was told to them. They were struck dead, as it were, with affright. They determined to send for Beltramo. He was brought in

before them. They examined him, and ascertained that the matter was true; and, although they were exceedingly troubled, yet they determined upon their measures. And they sent for the Capi de' Quaranta, the Signori di Notte, the Capi de' Sestieri, and the Cinque della Pace; and they were ordered to associate to their men, other good men and true, who were to proceed to the houses of the ringleaders of the conspiracy, and secure them. And they secured the foremen of the arsenal, in order that the conspirators might not do mischief. Towards nightfall they assembled in the palace. When they were assembled in the palace, they caused the gates of the quadrangle of the palace to be shut. And they sent to the keeper of the Bell-tower, and forbade the tolling of the bells. All this was carried into effect. The before-mentioned conspirators were secured, and they were brought to the palace; and, as the Council of Ten saw that the Duke was in the plot, they resolved that twenty of the leading men of the state should be associated to them, for the purpose of consultation and deliberation, but that they should not be allowed to ballot.

The counsellors were the following: Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, of the Sestiero of San Marco; Ser Almoro Veniero da Santa Marina, of the Sestiero of Castello; Ser Tomaso Viadro, of the Sestiero of Canaregio; Ser Giovanni Sanudo, of the Sestiero of Santa Croce; Ser Pietro Trivisano, of the Sestiero of San Paolo; Ser Pantalione Barbo il Grando, of the Sestiero of Ossoduro. The Avogadori of the Commonwealth were Zufredo Morosini, and Ser Orio Pasqualigo; and these did not ballot. Those of the Council of Ten were Ser Giovanni Marcello, Ser Tommaso Sanudo, and Ser Micheletto Dolfino, the heads of the aforesaid Council of Ten. Ser Luca da Legge, and Ser Pietro da Mosto, inquisitors of the aforesaid Council. And Ser Marco Polani, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Lando Lombardo, and Ser Nicoletto Trivisano, of Sant' Angelo.

Late in the night, just before the dawning, they chose a junta of twenty noblemen of Venice from amongst the wisest and the worthiest, and the oldest. They were to give counsel, but not to ballot. And they would not admit any one of Cà Faliero. And Niccolo Faliero, and another Niccolo Faliero, of San Tomaso, were expelled from the Council, because they belonged to the family of the Doge. And this resolution of creating the junta of twenty was much praised throughout the state. The following were the members of the junta of twenty:—Ser Marco Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser Andrea Erizzo, Procuratore, Ser Lionardo Giustinianai Procuratore, Ser Andrea Contarini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Nicolo Volpe, Ser Giovanni Loredano, Ser Marco Diedo, Ser Giovanni Gradenigo, Ser Andrea Cornaro, Cavaliere, Ser Marco Soranzo, Ser Rinieri du Mosto, Ser Gazano Marcello, Ser Marino Morosini, Ser Stefano Belegno, Ser Nicolo Lioni, Ser Filippo Orio, Ser Marco Trivisano, Ser Jacopo Bragadino, Ser Giovanni Foscarini.

These twenty were accordingly called in to the Council of Ten; and they sent for My Lord Marino Faliero the Duke: and My Lord Marino was then consorting in the palace with people of great estate, gentlemen, and other good men, none of whom knew yet how the fact stood.

At the same time Bertucci Israello, who, as one of the ringleaders, was to head the conspirators in Santa Croce, was arrested and bound, and brought before the Council. Zanello del Brin, Nicoletto di Rosa, Nicoletto Alberto, and the Guardiaga, were also taken, together with several seamen, and people of various ranks. These were examined, and the truth of the plot was ascertained.

On the sixteenth of April judgment was given in the Council of Ten, that Filippo Calendario and Bertucci Israello should be hanged upon the red pillars of the balcony of the palace, from which the Duke is wont to look at the Bull hunt: and they were hanged with gags in their mouths.

The next day the following were condemned:—Niccolo Zuccuolo, Niccoletto Blondo, Nicoletto Doro, Marco Giuda, Jacomello Dagolino, Nicoletto Fidele, the son of Filippo Calendaro, Marco Torello, called Israello, Stefano Trivisano, the money changer of Santa Margherita, and Antonio dalle Bende. These were all taken at Chiozza, for they were endeavouring to escape. Afterwards, by virtue of the sentence which was passed upon them in the Council of Ten, they were hanged on successive days, some singly and some in couples, upon the columns of the palace, beginning from the red columns, and so going onwards towards the canal. And other prisoners were discharged, because, although they had been involved in the conspiracy, yet they had not assisted in it: for they were given to understand by some of the heads of the plot, that they were to come armed and prepared for the service of the state, and in order to secure certain criminals, and they knew nothing else. Nicoletto Alberto, the Guardiaga, and Bartolommeo Ciricolo and his son, and several others, who were not guilty, were discharged.

On Friday, the sixteenth day of April, judgment was also given, in the aforesaid Council of Ten, that My Lord Marino Faliero, the Duke, should have his head cut off, and that the execution should be done on the landing-place of the stone staircase, where the Dukes take their oath when they first enter the palace. On the following day, the seventeenth of April, the doors of the palace being shut, the Duke had his head cut off, about the hour of noon. And the cap of estate was taken from the Duke's head before he came down stairs. When the execution was over, it is said that one of the Council of Ten went to the columns of the palace over against the place of St. Mark, and that he showed the bloody sword unto the people, crying out with a loud voice—"The terrible doom hath fallen upon the traitor!"—and the doors were opened, and the people all rushed in, to see the corpse of the Duke, who had been beheaded.

It must be known, that Sèr Giovanni Sanudo, the councillor, was not present when the aforesaid sentence was pronounced; because he was unwell and remained at home. So that only fourteen balloted; that is to say, five councillors, and nine of the Council of Ten. And it was adjudged, that all the lands and chattels of the Duke, as well as of the other traitors, should be forfeited to the state. And as a grace to the Duke, it was resolved in the Council of Ten, that he should be allowed to dispose of two thousand ducats out of his own property. And it was resolved, that all the counsellors and all the Avogadori of the commonwealth, those of the Council of Ten, and the members of the junta who had assisted in passing sentence on the Duke and the other traitors, should have the privilege of carrying arms both by day and by night in Venice, and from Grado to Cavazere. And they were also to be allowed two footmen carrying arms, the aforesaid footmen living and boarding with them in their own houses. And he who did not keep two footmen might transfer the privilege to his sons or his brothers; but only to two. Permission of carrying arms was also granted to the four Notaries of the Chancery, that is to say, of the Supreme Court, who took the depositions; and they were, Amedio, Nicoletto di Lorino, Steffanello, and Pietro de Compostelli, the secretaries of the Signori di Notte.

After the traitors had been hanged, and the Duke had had his head cut off, the state remained in great tranquillity and peace. And, as I have read in a Chronicle, the corpse of the Duke was removed in a barge, with eight torches, to his tomb in the church of San Giovanni e Paolo, where it was buried. The tomb is now in that aisle in the middle of the little church of Santa Maria della Pace, which was built by Bishop Gabriel of Bergamo. It is a coffin of stone, with these words engraven thereon: "*Heic Jacet Dominus Marinus Faletro Dux.*"—And they did not paint his portrait in the hall of the Great Council:—but in the place where it ought

to have been, you see these words:—"*Hïc est locus Marini Feletro decapitati pro criminibus.*"—And it is thought that his house was granted to the church of Sant' Apostolo; it was that great one near the bridge. Yet this could not be the case, or else the family bought it back from the church; for it still belongs to Cà Faliero. I must not refrain from noting, that some wished to write the following words in the place where his portrait ought to have been, as aforesaid:—"*Marinus Faletro Dux, temeritas me cepit, dœnas lui, de-*
"*capitatus pro criminibus.*"—Others, also, indited a couplet, worthy of being inscribed upon his tomb.

"*Dux Venetum jacet heic, patriam qui prodere tentans*
"*Sceptra, decus, censum, perdidit, atque caput.*"

* * * * * *

[I am obliged for this excellent translation of the old Chronicle to Mr. F. Cohen, to whom the reader will find himself indebted for a version that I could not myself (though after many years' intercourse with Italian) have given by any means so purely and so faithfully.]

III.

"Al giovane Doge Andrea Dandolo succedette un vecchio, il quale tardi si pose al timone della repubblica, ma sempre prima di quel, che facea d' uopo a lui, ed alla patria: egli è Marino Faliero, personaggio a me noto per antica dimestichezza. Falsa era l' opinione intorno a lui, giacchè egli si mostrò fornito più di corraggio, che di senno. Non pago della prima dignità, entrò con sinistro piede nel pubblico Palazzo: imperciocche questo Doge dei Veneti, magistrato sacro in tutti i secoli, che dagli antichi fù sempre venerato qual nume in quella città, l' altr' jeri fù decollato nel vestibolo dell' istesso Palazzo. Discorrerei fin dal principio le cause di un tale evvento, e cosi vario, ed ambiguo non ne fosse il grido. Nessuno però lo scusa, tutti affermano, che egli abbia voluto cangiar qualche cosa nell' ordine della repubblica a lui tramandato dai maggiori. Che desiderava egli di più? Io son d' avviso, che egli abbia ottenuto ciò, che non si concedette a nessun altro: mentre adempiva gli ufficj di legato presso il Pontefice, e sulle rive del Rodano trattava la pace, che io prima di lui avevo indarno tentato di conchiudere, gli fù conferito l' onore del Ducato, che ne chiedeva, ne s' aspettava. Tornato in patria, pensò a quello, cui nessuno non pose mente giammai, e soffrì quello, che a niuno accadde mai di soffrire: giacchè in quel luogo celeberrimo, e chiarissimo, e bellissimo infra tutti quelli, che

io vidi, ove i suoi antenati avevano ricevuti grandissimi onori in mezzo alle pompe trionfali, ivi egli fù trascinato in modo servile, e spogliato delle insegne ducali, perdette la testa, e macchiò col proprio sangue le soglie del tempio, l' atrio del Palazzo, e le scale marmoree rendute spesse volte illustri o dalle solenni festività, o dalle ostili spoglie. Hò notato il luogo, ora noto il tempo: è l' anno del Natale di Cristo 1355, fù il giorno 18 d'Aprile. Si alto è il grido sparso, che se alcuno esaminerà la disciplina, e le costumanze di quella città, e quanto mutamento di cose venga minacciato dalla morte di un sol uomo (quantunque molti altri, come narrano, essendo complici, o subirono l' istesso supplicio, o lo aspettano) si accorgerà, che nulla di più grande avvenne ai nostri tempi nella Italia. Tu forse qui attendi il mio giudizio: assolvo il popolo, se credere alla fama, benchè abbia potuto e castigare più mitemente, e con maggior dolcezza vendicare il suo dolore: ma non cosi facilmente, si modera un' ira giusta insieme, e grande in un numeroso popolo principalmente, nel quale il precipitoso, ed instabile volgo aguzza gli stimoli dell' irracondia con rapidi, e sconsigliati clamori. Compatisco, e nell' istesso tempo mi adiro con quell' infelice uomo, il quale adorno di un' insolito onore, non so, che cosa si volesse negli estremi anni della sua vita: la calamità di lui diviene sempre più grave, perchè dalla sentenza contra di esso promulgata aperirà, che egli fù non solo misero, ma insano, e demente, e che con vane arti si usurpo per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza. Ammonisco i Dogi, i quali gli succederano, che questo e un' esempio posto inanzi ai loro occhj, quale specchio, nel quale veggano d' essere non Signori, ma Duci, anzi nemmeno Duci, ma onorati servi della Repubblica. Tu sta sano; e giacchè fluttuano le pubbliche cose, sforsiamoci di governar modestissimamente i privati nostri affari."

Levati. Viaggi di Petrarca, vol. iv. p. 323.

The above Italian translation from the Latin epistles of Petrarch proves—

1stly, That Marino Faliero was a personal friend of Petrarch's, "antica dimestichezza," old intimacy, is the phrase of the poet.

2dly, That Petrarch thought that he had more courage than conduct, "più di *corraggio* che di senno."

3dly, That there was some jealousy on the part of Petrarch; for he says that Marino Faliero was treating of the peace which he himself had "vainly attempted to conclude."

4thly, That the honour of the Dukedom was conferred upon him, which he neither sought nor expected, "che nè chiedeva nè aspettava," and which had never been granted to any other in like circumstances, "ciò che non si concedette a nessun altro," a proof of the high esteem in which he must have been held.

5thly, That he *had* a reputation for *wisdom*, *only* forfeited by the last enterprise of his life, "si usurpò per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza."—"He had usurped for so many years a false fame of wisdom," rather a difficult task I should think. People are generally found out before eighty years of age, at least in a republic.

From these, and the other historical notes which I have collected, it may be inferred, that Marino Faliero possessed many of the qualities, but not the success of a hero; and that his passions were too violent. The paltry and ignorant account of Dr. Moore falls to the ground. Petrarch says, "that there had been no greater event in his times" (*our times* literally) "nostri tempi," in Italy. He also differs from the historian in saying that Faliero was "on the banks of the *Rhone*," instead of at Rome, when elected; the other accounts say, that the deputation of the Venetian senate met him at Ravenna. How this may have been, it is not for me to decide, and is of no great importance. Had the man succeeded, he would have changed the face of Venice, and perhaps of Italy. As it is, what *are* they both?

IV.

Extrait de L'Ouvrage Histoire de la République de Venise, par P. Daru de l'Académie Française, tom. v. livre xxxv. p. 95. &c. Edition de Paris MDCCCXIX.

" A CES attaques si fréquentes que le gouvernement dirigeait contre le clergé, à ces luttes établies entre les différens corps constitués, à ces entreprises de la masse de la noblesse contre les dépositaires du pouvoir, à toutes ces propositions d'innovation qui se terminaient toujours par des coups d'état; il faut ajouter une autre cause non moins propre à propager le mépris des anciennes doctrines, *c'était l'excès de la corruption.*

" Cette liberté de mœurs, qu'on avait longtemps vantée comme le charme principal de la societé de Venise, état devenue un désordre scandaleux; le lien du mariage était moins sacré dans ce pays catholique que dans ceux où les lois civiles et religieuses permettent de le dissoudre. Faute de pouvoir rompre le contrat, on supposait qu'il n'avait jamais existé, et les moyens de nullité, allégués avec impudeur par les époux, étaient admis avec la même facilité par des magistrats et par des prêtres également corrompus. Ces divorces colorés d'un autre nom devinrent si fréquents, que l'acte le plus important de la societé civile se trouva de la compétence d'un tribunal d'exception, et que ce fut à la police de réprimer le scandale. Le conseil des dix ordonna, en 1782, que toute femme, qui intenterait une demande en

dissolution de mariage, serait obligée d'en attendre le jugement dans un couvent que le tribunal désignerait *. Bientôt après il évoqua devant lui toutes les causes de cette nature †. Cet empiétement sur la jurisdiction ecclésiastique, ayant occasionné des réclamations de la part de la cour de Rome, le conseil se réserva le droit de débouter les époux de leur demande; et consentit à la renvoyer devant l'officialité, toutes les fois qu'il ne l'aurait pas rejetée ‡.

" Il y eut un moment, où sans doute le renversement des fortunes, la perte des jeunes gens, les discordes domestiques, déterminèrent le gouvernement à s'écarter de maximes qu'il s'était faites sur la liberté de mœurs qu'il permettait à ses sujets: on chassa de Venise toutes les courtisanes. Mais leur absence ne suffisait pas pour ramener aux bonnes mœurs toute une population élevée dans la plus honteuse licence. Le désordre pénétra dans l'intérieur des familles, dans les cloîtres; et l'on se crut obligé de rappeler, d'indemniser § même des femmes, qui surprenaient quelquefois d'importants secrets, et qu'on pouvait employer utilement à ruiner des hommes que leur fortune aurait pu rendre dangereux. Depuis, la licence est toujours allée croissant, et l'on a vu non-seulement des mères trafiquer de la virginité de leurs filles, mais la vendre par un contrat, dont l'authenticité était garantie par la signature d'un officier public, et l'exécution mise sous la protection des lois ||.

* Correspondance de M. Schlick, chargé d'affaires de France, dépêche du 24 Aout 1782.

† *Ibid.* Dépêche du 31 Aout.

‡ *Ibid.* Dépêche du 3 Septembre 1785.

§ Le décret de rappel les désignait sous le nom de *nostre benemerite meretrici.* On leur assigna un fonds et des maisons appelées, *Case rampane,* d'ou vient la denomination injurieuse de *Carampane.*

|| Mayer *Description de Venise,* tom. 2. et M. Archenholz *Tableau de l'Italie,* tom. 1. chap. 2.

" Les parloirs des couvents où étaient renfermées les filles nobles, les maisons des courtisanes, quoique la police y entretînt soigneusement un grand nombre de surveillants, étaient les seuls points de réunion de la societé de Venise, et dans ces deux endroits si divers on était également libre. La musique, les collations, la galanterie, n'étaient pas plus interdites dans les parloirs que dans les casins. Il y avait un grand nombre de casins destinés aux réunions publiques, où le jeu était la principale occupation de la société. C'était un singulier spectacle de voir autour d'une table des personnes des deux sexes en masque, et de graves personnages en robe de magistrature, implorant le hasard, passant des angoisses du désespoir aux illusions de l'espérance, et cela sans proférer une parole.

" Les riches avaient des casins particuliers; mais ils y vivaient avec mystère; leurs femmes délaissées trouvaient un dédommagement dans la liberté dont elles jouissaient. La corruption des mœurs les avait privées de tout leur empire; on vient de parcourir toute l'histoire de Venise, en on ne les a pas vues une seule fois exercer la moindre influence."

V.

Extract from the History of the Republic of Venice, by P. Daru, Member of the French Academy, vol. v. b. xxxiv. p. 95. &c. Paris Edit. 1819.

" To these attacks so frequently pointed by the government against the clergy,—to the continual struggles between the different constituted bodies,—to these enterprises carried on by the mass of the nobles against the depositaries of power,—to all those projects of innovation, which always ended by a stroke of state policy; we must add a cause not less fitted to spread contempt for ancient doctrines; *this was the excess of corruption.*

" That freedom of manners, which had been long boasted of as the principal charm of Venetian society, had degenerated into scandalous licentiousness; the tie of marriage was less sacred in that Catholic country, than among those nations where the laws and religion admit of its being dissolved. Because they could not break the contract, they feigned that it had not existed; and the ground of nullity, immodestly alleged by the married pair, was admitted with equal facility by priests and magistrates, alike corrupt. These divorces, veiled under another name, became so frequent, that the most important act of civil society was discovered to be amenable to a tribunal of exceptions; and to restrain the open scandal of such proceedings became the

office of the police. In 1782 the council of ten decreed, that every woman who should sue for a dissolution of her marriage should be compelled to await the decision of the judges in some convent, to be named by the court *. Soon afterwards the same council summoned all causes of that nature before itself †. This infringement on ecclesiastical jurisdiction having occasioned some remonstrance from Rome, the council retained only the right of rejecting the petition of the married persons, and consented to refer such causes to the holy office as it should not previously have rejected ‡.

"There was a moment in which, doubtless, the destruction of private fortunes, the ruin of youth, the domestic discord occasioned by these abuses, determined the government to depart from its established maxims concerning the freedom of manners allowed the subject. All the courtisans were banished from Venice; but their absence was not enough to reclaim and bring back good morals to a whole people brought up in the most scandalous licentiousness. Depravity reached the very bosoms of private families, and even into the cloister; and they found themselves obliged to recal, and even to indemnify § women who sometimes gained possession of important secrets, and who might be usefully employed in the ruin of men whose fortunes might have rendered them dangerous. Since that time licentiousness has gone on increasing, and we have seen mothers, not only selling the innocence of their daughters, but selling it by a contract, authenticated by the signature of a public officer, and the

* Correspondence of M. Schlick, French charge d'affaires. Despatch of 24th August 1782.

† *Ibid.* Despatch, 31st August.

‡ *Ibid.* Despatch, 3d September 1785.

§ The decree for their recal designates them as *nostre benemerite meretrici.* A fund and some houses called *Case rampane* were assigned to them; hence the opprobrious appellation of *Carampane.*

performance of which was secured by the protection of the laws *.

"The parlours of the convents of noble ladies, and the houses of the courtisans, though the police carefully kept up a number of spies about them, were the only assemblies for society in Venice; and in these two places, so different from each other, there was equal freedom. Music, collations, gallantry, were not more forbidden in the parlours than at the casinos. There were a number of casinos for the purpose of public assemblies, where gaming was the principal pursuit of the company. It was a strange sight to see persons of either sex masked, or grave in their magisterial robes, round a table, invoking chance, and giving way at one instant to the agonies of despair, at the next to the illusions of hope, and that without uttering a single word.

"The rich had private casinos, but they lived *incognito* in them; and the wives whom they abandoned found compensation in the liberty they enjoyed. The corruption of morals had deprived them of their empire. We have just reviewed the whole history of Venice, and we have not once seen them exercise the slightest influence."

* Mayer, *Description of Venice*, vol. ii. and M. Archenholtz, *Picture of Italy*, vol. i. ch. 2.

From the present decay and degeneracy of Venice under the Barbarians, there are some honourable individual exceptions. There is Pasqualigo, the last, and, alas! *posthumous* son of the marriage of the Doges with the Adriatic, who fought his frigate with far greater gallantry than any of his French coadjutors in the memorable action off Lissa. I

came home in the squadron with the prizes in 1811, and recollect to have heard Sir William Hoste, and the other officers engaged in that glorious conflict, speak in the highest terms of Pasqualigo's behaviour. There is the Abbate Morelli. There is Alvise Querini, who, after a long and honourable diplomatic career, finds some consolation for the wrongs of his country, in the pursuits of literature with his nephew, Vittor Benzon, the son of the celebrated beauty, the heroine of "La Biondina in Gondoletta." There are the patrician poet Morosini, and the poet Lamberti, the author of the "Biondina," &c. and many other estimable productions; and, not least in an Englishman's estimation, Madame Michelli, the translator of Shakspeare. There are the young Dandolo and the improvvisatore Carrer, and Giuseppe Albrizzi, the accomplished son of an accomplished mother. There is Aglietti, and were there nothing else, there is the immortality of Canova. Cicognara, Mustoxithi, Bucati, &c. &c. I do not reckon, because the one is a Greek, and the others were born at least a hundred miles off, which, throughout Italy, constitutes, if not a *foreigner*, *at least* a *stranger (forestiere)*.

VI.

Extrait de L'Ouvrage Histoire Littéraire d'Italie, par P. L. Ginguené, Tom. ix. Chap. xxxvi. p. 144. Edition de Paris MDCCCXIX.

"Il y en a une fort singulière sur Venise: 'Si tu ne changes pas,' dit-il à cette république altière, 'ta liberté qui déjà s' enfuit, ne comptera pas un siècle après la millième année.'

"En faisant remonter l'époque de la liberté Vénitienne jusqu'à l'établissement du gouvernement sous le quel la république a fleuri, on trouvera que l'élection du premier Doge date de 697, et si l'on y ajoute un siècle après mille, c'est à dire onze cents ans, on trouvera encore que le sens de la prédiction est littéralement celui-ci: 'Ta liberté ne comptera pas jusqu'à l'an 1797.' Rappelez-vous maintenant que Venise a cessé d' être libre en l'an cinq de la république Française, ou en 1796; vous verrez qu'il n'y eut jamais de prédiction plus précise et plus ponctuellement suivie de l'effet. Vous noterez donc comme très-remarquables ces trois vers de l'Alamanni, adressés à Venise, que personne pourtant n'a remarqués:

'*Se non cangi pensier, l'un secol solo*
Non conterà sopra 'l millesimo anno
Tua libertà, che va fuggendo a volo.'

Bien des prophéties ont passé pour telles, et bien des gens ont été appelés prophètes à meilleur marché."

VII.

Extract from the Literary History of Italy, by P. L. Ginguené, vol. ix. p. 144. Paris Edit. 1819.

"THERE is one very singular prophecy concerning Venice: 'If thou dost not change,' it says to that proud republic, 'thy liberty, which is already on the wing, will not reckon a century more than the thousandth year.'

"If we carry back the epocha of Venetian freedom to the establishment of the government under which the republic flourished, we shall find that the date of the election of the first Doge is 697; and if we add one century to a thousand, that is, eleven hundred years, we shall find the sense of the prediction to be literally this: 'Thy liberty will not last till 1797.' Recollect that Venice ceased to be free in the year 1796, the fifth year of the French republic; and you will perceive, that there never was prediction more pointed, or more exactly followed by the event. You will, therefore, note as very remarkable the three lines of Alamanni, addressed to Venice, which, however, no one has pointed out:

'Se non cangi pensier, l'un secol solo
Non conterà sopra 'l millesimo anno
Tua libertà, chi va fuggendo a volo.'

Many prophecies have passed for such, and many men have been called prophets for much less."

If the Doge's prophecy seem remarkable, look to the above, made by Alamanni two hundred and seventy years ago.

THE author of "Sketches Descriptive of Italy," &c. one of the hundred tours lately published, is extremely anxious to disclaim a possible charge of plagiarism from "Childe Harold" and "Beppo." See p. 159, vol. iv. He adds, that still less could this presumed coincidence arise from "my conversation," as he had "*repeatedly declined an introduction to me while in Italy.*"

Who this person may be I know not; but he must have been deceived by all or any of those who "repeatedly offered to introduce" him, as I have invariably refused to receive any English with whom I was not previously acquainted, even when they had letters from England. If the whole assertion is not an invention, I request this person not to sit down with the notion that he COULD have been introduced, since there has been nothing I have so carefully avoided as any kind of intercourse with his countrymen,—excepting the very few who were a considerable time resident in Venice, or had been of my previous acquaintance. Whoever made him any such offer was possessed of impudence equal to that of making such an assertion without having had it. The fact is, that I hold in utter abhorrence any contact with the travelling English, as my friend the Consul General Hoppner, and the Countess Benzoni, (in whose house the Conversazione mostly frequented by them is held), could amply testify, were it worth while. I was persecuted by these tourists even to my riding ground at Lido, and reduced to the most disagreeable circuits to avoid them. At Madame Benzoni's I repeatedly refused to be introduced to them;—of a thousand such presentations pressed upon me, I accepted two, and both were to Irish women.

I should hardly have descended to speak of such trifles publicly, if the impudence of this "sketcher" had not forced me to a refutation of a disingenuous and gratuitously impertinent assertion;—so meant to be, for what could it im-

port to the reader to be told that the author "had repeatedly declined an introduction," even had it been true, which, for the reasons I have above given, is scarcely possible. Except Lords Lansdowne, Jersey, and Lauderdale; Messrs. Scott, Hammond, Sir Humphrey Davy, the late M. Lewis, W. Bankes, Mr. Hoppner, Thomas Moore, Lord Kinnaird, his brother, Mr. Joy, and Mr. Hobhouse, I do not recollect to have exchanged a word with another Englishman since I left their country; and almost all these I had known before. The others,—and God knows there were some hundreds, who bored me with letters or visits, I refused to have any communication with, and shall be proud and happy when that wish becomes mutual.

THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

" 'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
" And coming events cast their shadows before."

CAMPBELL.

DEDICATION.

LADY! if for the cold and cloudy clime
Where I was born, but where I would not die,
Of the great Poet-Sire of Italy
I dare to build the imitative rhyme,
Harsh Runic copy of the South's sublime,
Thou art the cause; and howsoever I
Fall short of his immortal harmony,
Thy gentle heart will pardon me the crime.
Thou, in the pride of Beauty and of Youth,
Spak'st; and for thee to speak and be obey'd
Are one; but only in the sunny South
Such sounds are utter'd, and such charms display'd,
So sweet a language from so fair a mouth—
Ah! to what effort would it not persuade?

Ravenna, June 21, 1819.



PREFACE.

In the course of a visit to the city of Ravenna in the summer of 1819, it was suggested to the author that having composed something on the subject of Tasso's confinement, he should do the same on Dante's exile —the tomb of the poet forming one of the principal objects of interest in that city, both to the native and to the stranger.

"On this hint I spake," and the result has been the following four cantos, in terza rima, now offered to the reader. If they are understood and approved, it is my purpose to continue the poem in various other cantos to its natural conclusion in the present age. The reader is requested to suppose that Dante addresses him in the interval between the conclusion of the Divina Commedia and his death, and shortly before the latter event, foretelling the fortunes of Italy in general in the ensuing centuries. In adopting this

plan I have had in my mind the Cassandra of Lycophron, and the Prophecy of Nereus by Horace, as well as the Prophecies of Holy Writ. The measure adopted is the terza rima of Dante, which I am not aware to have seen hitherto tried in our language, except it may be by Mr. Hayley, of whose translation I never saw but one extract, quoted in the notes to Caliph Vathek; so that—if I do not err—this poem may be considered as a metrical experiment. The cantos are short, and about the same length of those of the poet whose name I have borrowed, and most probably taken in vain.

Amongst the inconveniences of authors in the present day, it is difficult for any who have a name, good or bad, to escape translation. I have had the fortune to see the fourth canto of Childe Harold translated into Italian versi sciolti—that is, a poem written in the *Spenserean stanza* into *blank verse*, without regard to the natural divisions of the stanza, or of the sense. If the present poem, being on a national topic, should chance to undergo the same fate, I would request the Italian reader to remember that when I have failed in the imitation of his great "Padre Alighier," I have

failed in imitating that which all study and few understand, since to this very day it is not yet settled what was the meaning of the allegory in the first canto of the Inferno, unless Count Marchetti's ingenious and probable conjecture may be considered as having decided the question.

He may also pardon my failure the more, as I am not quite sure that he would be pleased with my success, since the Italians, with a pardonable nationality, are particularly jealous of all that is left them as a nation—their literature; and in the present bitterness of the classic and romantic war, are but ill disposed to permit a foreigner even to approve or imitate them without finding some fault with his ultramontane presumption. I can easily enter into all this, knowing what would be thought in England of an Italian imitator of Milton, or if a translation of Monti, or Pindemonte, or Arici, should be held up to the rising generation as a model for their future poetical essays. But I perceive that I am deviating into an address to the Italian reader, when my business is with the English one, and be they few or many, I must take my leave of both.

THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO I.

ONCE more in man's frail world! which I had left
So long that 'twas forgotten; and I feel
The weight of clay again,—too soon bereft
Of the immortal vision which could heal
My earthly sorrows, and to God's own skies
Lift me from that deep gulf without repeal,
Where late my ears rung with the damned cries
Of souls in hopeless bale; and from that place
Of lesser torment, whence men may arise
Pure from the fire to join the angelic race;
Midst whom my own bright Beatricē bless'd (1)
My spirit with her light; and to the base

Of the Eternal Triad! first, last, best,
Mysterious, three, sole, infinite, great God!
Soul universal! led the mortal guest,
Unblasted by the glory, though he trod
From star to star to reach the almighty throne.
Oh Beatrice! whose sweet limbs the sod
So long hath prest, and the cold marble stone,
Thou sole pure seraph of my earliest love,
Love so ineffable, and so alone,
That nought on earth could more my bosom move,
And meeting thee in heaven was but to meet
That without which my soul, like the arkless dove,
Had wander'd still in search of, nor her feet
Relieved her wing till found; without thy light
My Paradise had still been incomplete. (2)
Since my tenth sun gave summer to my sight
Thou wert my life, the essence of my thought,
Loved ere I knew the name of love, and bright
Still in these dim old eyes, now overwrought
With the world's war, and years, and banishment,

And tears for thee, by other woes untaught;
For mine is not a nature to be bent
By tyrannous faction, and the brawling crowd;
And though the long, long conflict hath been spent
In vain, and never more, save when the cloud
Which overhangs the Apennine, my mind's eye
Pierces to fancy Florence, once so proud
Of me, can I return, though but to die,
Unto my native soil, they have not yet
Quench'd the old exile's spirit, stern and high.
But the sun, though not overcast, must set,
And the night cometh; I am old in days,
And deeds, and contemplation, and have met
Destruction face to face in all his ways.
The world hath left me, what it found me, pure,
And if I have not gather'd yet its praise,
I sought it not by any baser lure;
Man wrongs, and Time avenges, and my name
May form a monument not all obscure,
Though such was not my ambition's end or aim,

To add to the vain-glorious list of those
Who dabble in the pettiness of fame,
And make men's fickle breath the wind that blows
Their sail, and deem it glory to be class'd
With conquerors, and virtue's other foes,
In bloody chronicles of ages past.
I would have had my Florence great and free: (3)
Oh Florence! Florence! unto me thou wast
Like that Jerusalem which the Almighty He
Wept over, "but thou wouldst not;" as the bird
Gathers its young, I would have gather'd thee
Beneath a parent pinion, hadst thou heard
My voice; but as the adder, deaf and fierce,
Against the breast that cherish'd thee was stirr'd
Thy venom, and my state thou didst amerce,
And doom this body forfeit to the fire.
Alas! how bitter is his country's curse
To him who *for* that country would expire,
But did not merit to expire *by* her,
And loves her, loves her even in her ire.

The day may come when she will cease to err,
The day may come she would be proud to have
The dust she dooms to scatter, and transfer (4)
Of him, whom she denied a home, the grave.
But this shall not be granted; let my dust
Lie where it falls; nor shall the soil which gave
Me breath, but in her sudden fury thrust
Me forth to breathe elsewhere, so reassume
My indignant bones, because her angry gust
Forsooth is over, and repeal'd her doom;
No,—she denied me what was mine—my roof,
And shall not have what is not hers—my tomb.
Too long her armed wrath hath kept aloof
The breast which would have bled for her, the heart
That beat, the mind that was temptation proof,
The man who fought, toil'd, travell'd, and each part
Of a true citizen fulfill'd, and saw
For his reward the Guelf's ascendant art
Pass his destruction even into a law.
These things are not made for forgetfulness,

Florence shall be forgotten first; too raw
The wound, too deep the wrong, and the distress
Of such endurance too prolong'd to make
My pardon greater, her injustice less,
Though late repented; yet—yet for her sake
I feel some fonder yearnings, and for thine,
My own Beatrice, I would hardly take
Vengeance upon the land which once was mine,
And still is hallow'd by thy dust's return,
Which would protect the murderess like a shrine,
And save ten thousand foes by thy sole urn.
Though, like old Marius from Minturnæ's marsh
And Carthage ruins, my lone breast may burn
At times with evil feelings hot and harsh,
And sometimes the last pangs of a vile foe
Writhe in a dream before me, and o'erarch
My brow with hopes of triumph,—let them go!
Such are the last infirmities of those
Who long have suffer'd more than mortal woe,
And yet being mortal still, have no repose

But on the pillow of Revenge—Revenge,
Who sleeps to dream of blood, and waking glows
With the oft baffled, slakeless thirst of change,
When we shall mount again, and they that trod
Be trampled on, while Death and Até range
O'er humbled heads and sever'd necks——Great God!
Take these thoughts from me—to thy hands I yield
My many wrongs, and thine almighty rod
Will fall on those who smote me,—be my shield!
As thou hast been in peril, and in pain,
In turbulent cities, and the tented field—
In toil, and many troubles borne in vain
For Florence.—I appeal from her to Thee!
Thee, whom I late saw in thy loftiest reign,
Even in that glorious vision, which to see
And live was never granted until now,
And yet thou hast permitted this to me.
Alas! with what a weight upon my brow
The sense of earth and earthly things come back,
Corrosive passions, feelings dull and low,

The heart's quick throb upon the mental rack,
Long day, and dreary night; the retrospect
Of half a century bloody and black,
And the frail few years I may yet expect
Hoary and hopeless, but less hard to bear,
For I have been too long and deeply wreck'd
On the lone rock of desolate Despair
To lift my eyes more to the passing sail
Which shuns that reef so horrible and bare;
Nor raise my voice—for who would heed my wail?
I am not of this people, nor this age,
And yet my harpings will unfold a tale.
Which shall preserve these times when not a page
Of their perturbed annals could attract
An eye to gaze upon their civil rage
Did not my verse embalm full many an act
Worthless as they who wrought it: 'tis the doom
Of spirits of my order to be rack'd
In life, to wear their hearts out, and consume
Their days in endless strife, and die alone;

Then future thousands crowd around their tomb,
And pilgrims come from climes where they have known
The name of him—who now is but a name,
And wasting homage o'er the sullen stone,
Spread his—by him unheard, unheeded—fame;
And mine at least hath cost me dear: to die
Is nothing; but to wither thus—to tame
My mind down from its own infinity—
To live in narrow ways with little men,
A common sight to every common eye,
A wanderer, while even wolves can find a den,
Ripp'd from all kindred, from all home, all things
That make communion sweet, and soften pain—
To feel me in the solitude of kings
Without the power that makes them bear a crown—
To envy every dove his nest and wings
Which waft him where the Apennine looks down
On Arno, till he perches, it may be,
Within my all inexorable town,
Where yet my boys are, and that fatal she, (5)

Their mother, the cold partner who hath brought
Destruction for a dowry—this to see
And feel, and know without repair, hath taught
A bitter lesson; but it leaves me free:
I have not vilely found, nor basely sought,
They made an Exile—not a slave of me.

THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO II.

THE Spirit of the fervent days of Old,
When words were things that came to pass, and thought
Flash'd o'er the future, bidding men behold
Their children's children's doom already brought
Forth from the abyss of time which is to be,
The chaos of events, where lie half-wrought
Shapes that must undergo mortality;
What the great Seers of Israel wore within,
That spirit was on them, and is on me,
And if, Cassandra-like, amidst the din
Of conflict none will hear, or hearing heed
This voice from out the Wilderness, the sin

Be theirs, and my own feelings be my meed,
The only guerdon I have ever known.
Hast thou not bled? and hast thou still to bleed,
Italia? Ah! to me such things, foreshown
With dim sepulchral light, bid me forget
In thine irreparable wrongs my own;
We can have but one country, and even yet
Thou'rt mine—my bor s shall be within thy breast,
My soul within thy language, which once set
With our old Roman sway in the wide West;
But I will make another tongue arise
As lofty and more sweet, in which exprest
The hero's ardour, or the lover's sighs,
Shall find alike such sounds for every theme
That every word, as brilliant as thy skies,
Shall realize a poet's proudest dream,
And make thee Europe's nightingale of song;
So that all present speech to thine shall seem
The note of meaner birds, and every tongue
Confess its barbarism when compared with thine.

This shalt thou owe to him thou didst so wrong,
Thy Tuscan Bard, the banish'd Ghibelline.
Woe! woe! the veil of coming centuries
Is rent,—a thousand years which yet supine
Lie like the ocean waves ere winds arise,
Heaving in dark and sullen undulation,
Float from eternity into these eyes;
The storms yet sleep, the clouds still keep their station,
The unborn earthquake yet is in the womb,
The bloody chaos yet expects creation,
But all things are disposing for thy doom;
The elements await but for the word,
"Let there be darkness!" and thou grow'st a tomb!
Yes! thou, so beautiful, shalt feel the sword,
Thou, Italy! so fair that Paradise,
Revived in thee, blooms forth to man restored:
Ah! must the sons of Adam lose it twice?
Thou, Italy! whose ever golden fields,
Plough'd by the sunbeams solely, would suffice
For the world's granary; thou, whose sky heaven gilds

With brighter stars, and robes with deeper blue;
Thou, in whose pleasant places Summer builds
Her palace, in whose cradle Empire grew,
And form'd the Eternal City's ornaments
From spoils of kings whom freemen overthrew;
Birthplace of heroes, sanctuary of saints,
Where earthly first, then heavenly glory made
Her home; thou, all which fondest fancy paints,
And finds her prior vision but portray'd
In feeble colours, when the eye—from the Alp
Of horrid snow, and rock, and shaggy shade
Of desert-loving pine, whose emerald scalp
Nods to the storm—dilates and dotes o'er thee,
And wistfully implores, as 'twere, for help
To see thy sunny fields, my Italy,
Nearer and nearer yet, and dearer still
The more approach'd, and dearest were they free,
Thou—Thou must wither to each tyrant's will:
The Goth hath been,—the German, Frank, and Hun
Are yet to come,—and on the imperial hill

Ruin, already proud of the deeds done
By the old barbarians, there awaits the new,
Throned on the Palatine, while lost and won
Rome at her feet lies bleeding; and the hue
Of human sacrifice and Roman slaughter
Troubles the clotted air, of late so blue,
And deepens into red the saffron water
Of Tiber, thick with dead; the helpless priest,
And still more helpless nor less holy daughter,
Vow'd to their God, have shrieking fled, and ceased
Their ministry: the nations take their prey,
Iberian, Almain, Lombard, and the beast
And bird, wolf, vulture, more humane than they
Are; these but gorge the flesh and lap the gore
Of the departed, and then go their way;
But those, the human savages, explore
All paths of torture, and insatiate yet,
With Ugolino hunger prowl for more.
Nine moons shall rise o'er scenes like this and set; (6)
The chiefless army of the dead, which late

Beneath the traitor Prince's banner met,
Hath left its leader's ashes at the gate;
Had but the royal Rebel lived, perchance
Thou hadst been spared, but his involved thy fate.
Oh! Rome, the spoiler or the spoil of France,
From Brennus to the Bourbon, never, never
Shall foreign standard to thy walls advance
But Tiber shall become a mournful river.
Oh! when the strangers pass the Alps and Po,
Crush them, ye rocks! floods, whelm them, and for ever!
Why sleep the idle avalanches so,
To topple on the lonely pilgrim's head?
Why doth Eridanus but overflow
The peasant's harvest from his turbid bed?
Were not each barbarous horde a nobler prey?
Over Cambyses' host the desert spread
Her sandy ocean, and the sea waves' sway
Roll'd over Pharaoh and his thousands,—why,
Mountains and waters, do ye not as they?
And you, ye men! Romans, who dare not die,

Sons of the conquerors who overthrew
Those who overthrew proud Xerxes, where yet lie
The dead whose tomb Oblivion never knew,
Are the Alps weaker than Thermopylæ?
Their passes more alluring to the view
Of an invader? is it they, or ye,
That to each host the mountain-gate unbar,
And leave the march in peace, the passage free?
Why, Nature's self detains the victor's car
And makes your land impregnable, if earth
Could be so; but alone she will not war,
Yet aids the warrior worthy of his birth
In a soil where the mothers bring forth men:
Not so with those whose souls are little worth;
For them no fortress can avail,—the den
Of the poor reptile which preserves its sting
Is more secure than walls of adamant, when
The hearts of those within are quivering.
Are ye not brave? Yes, yet the Ausonian soil
Hath hearts, and hands, and arms, and hosts to bring

Against Oppression; but how vain the toil,
While still Division sows the seeds of woe
And weakness, till the stranger reaps the spoil.
Oh! my own beauteous land! so long laid low,
So long the grave of thy own children's hopes,
When there is but required a single blow
To break the chain, yet—yet the Avenger stops,
And Doubt and Discord step 'twixt thine and thee,
And join their strength to that which with thee copes;
What is there wanting then to set thee free,
And show thy beauty in its fullest light?
To make the Alps impassable; and we,
Her sons, may do this with *one* deed——Unite!

THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO III.

From out the mass of never dying ill,
  The Plague, the Prince, the Stranger, and the Sword,
  Vials of wrath but emptied to refill
And flow again, I cannot all record
  That crowds on my prophetic eye: the earth
  And ocean written o'er would not afford
Space for the annal, yet it shall go forth;
  Yes, all, though not by human pen, is graven,
  There where the farthest suns and stars have birth.
Spread like a banner at the gate of heaven,

The bloody scroll of our millennial wrongs
Waves, and the echo of our groans is driven
Athwart the sound of archangelic songs,
And Italy, the martyr'd nation's gore,
Will not in vain arise to where belongs
Omnipotence and mercy evermore:
Like to a harpstring stricken by the wind,
The sound of her lament shall, rising o'er
The seraph voices, touch the Almighty Mind.
Meantime I, humblest of thy sons, and of
Earth's dust by immortality refined
To sense and suffering, though the vain may scoff,
And tyrants threat, and meeker victims bow
Before the storm because its breath is rough,
To thee, my country! whom before, as now,
I loved and love, devote the mournful lyre
And melancholy gift high powers allow
To read the future; and if now my fire
Is not as once it shone o'er thee, forgive!

I but foretell thy fortunes—then expire;
Think not that I would look on them and live.
A spirit forces me to see and speak,
And for my guerdon grants *not* to survive;
My heart shall be pour'd over thee and break:
Yet for a moment, ere I must resume
Thy sable web of sorrow, let me take
Over the gleams that flash athwart thy gloom
A softer glimpse; some stars shine through thy night,
And many meteors, and above thy tomb
Leans sculptured Beauty, which Death cannot blight;
And from thine ashes boundless spirits rise
To give thee honour, and the earth delight;
Thy soil shall still be pregnant with the wise,
The gay, the learn'd, the generous, and the brave,
Native to thee as summer to thy skies,
Conquerors on foreign shores, and the far wave, (7)
Discoverers of new worlds, which take their name; (8)
For *thee* alone they have no arm to save,

And all thy recompense is in their fame,
A noble one to them, but not to thee—
Shall they be glorious, and thou still the same?
Oh! more than these illustrious far shall be
The being—and even yet he may be born—
The mortal saviour who shall set thee free,
And see thy diadem, so changed and worn
By fresh barbarians, on thy brow replaced;
And the sweet sun replenishing thy morn,
Thy moral morn, too long with clouds defaced
And noxious vapours from Avernus risen,
Such as all they must breathe who are debased
By servitude, and have the mind in prison.
Yet through this centuried eclipse of woe
Some voices shall be heard, and earth shall listen;
Poets shall follow in the path I show,
And make it broader; the same brilliant sky
Which cheers the birds to song shall bid them glow,
And raise their notes as natural and high;

Tuneful shall be their numbers: they shall sing
Many of love, and some of liberty,
But few shall soar upon that eagle's wing,
And look in the sun's face with eagle's gaze
All free and fearless as the feather'd king,
But fly more near the earth; how many a phrase
Sublime shall lavish'd be on some small prince
In all the prodigality of praise!
And language, eloquently false, evince
The harlotry of genius, which, like beauty,
Too oft forgets its own self-reverence,
And looks on prostitution as a duty.
(9) He who once enters in a tyrant's hall
As guest is slave, his thoughts become a booty,
And the first day which sees the chain enthral
A captive, sees his half of manhood gone— (10)
The soul's emasculation saddens all
His spirit; thus the Bard too near the throne
Quails from his inspiration, bound to *please*,—
How servile is the task to please alone!

To smooth the verse to suit his sovereign's ease
And royal leisure, nor too much prolong
Aught save his eulogy, and find, and seize,
Or force, or forge fit argument of song!
Thus trammell'd, thus condemn'd to Flattery's trebles,
He toils through all, still trembling to be wrong:
For fear some noble thoughts, like heavenly rebels,
Should rise up in high treason to his brain,
He sings, as the Athenian spoke, with pebbles
In 's mouth, lest truth should stammer through his strain.
But out of the long file of sonneteers
There shall be some who will not sing in vain,
And he, their prince, shall rank among my peers, (11)
And love shall be his torment; but his grief
Shall make an immortality of tears,
And Italy shall hail him as the Chief
Of Poet-lovers, and his higher song
Of Freedom wreathe him with as green a leaf.
But in a farther age shall rise along
The banks of Po, two greater still than he;

The world which smiled on him shall do them wrong
Till they are ashes, and repose with me.
The first will make an epoch with his lyre,
And fill the earth with feats of chivalry:
His fancy like a rainbow, and his fire,
Like that of heaven, immortal, and his thought
Borne onward with a wing that cannot tire;
Pleasure shall, like a butterfly new caught,
Flutter her lovely pinions o'er his theme,
And Art itself seem into Nature wrought
By the transparency of his bright dream.—
The second, of a tenderer, sadder mood,
Shall pour his soul out o'er Jerusalem;
He, too, shall sing of arms, and christian blood
Shed where Christ bled for man; and his high harp
Shall, by the willow over Jordan's flood,
Revive a song of Sion, and the sharp
Conflict, and final triumph of the brave
And pious, and the strife of hell to warp
Their hearts from their great purpose, until wave

The red-cross banners where the first red Cross
Was crimson'd from his veins who died to save,
Shall be his sacred argument; the loss
Of years, of favour, freedom, even of fame
Contested for a time, while the smooth gloss
Of courts would slide o'er his forgotten name,
And call captivity a kindness, meant
To shield him from insanity or shame,
Such shall be his meet guerdon! who was sent
To be Christ's Laureate—they reward him well!
Florence dooms me but death or banishment,
Ferrara him a pittance and a cell,
Harder to bear and less deserved, for I
Had stung the factions which I strove to quell;
But this meek man, who with a lover's eye
Will look on earth and heaven, and who will deign
To embalm with his celestial flattery
As poor a thing as e'er was spawn'd to reign,
What will *he* do to merit such a doom?
Perhaps he'll *love*,—and is not love in vain

Torture enough without a living tomb?
Yet it will be so—he and his compeer,
The Bard of Chivalry, will both consume
In penury and pain too many a year,
And, dying in despondency, bequeath
To the kind world, which scarce will yield a tear,
A heritage enriching all who breathe
With the wealth of a genuine poet's soul,
And to their country a redoubled wreath,
Unmatch'd by time; not Hellas can unroll
Through her olympiads two such names, though one
Of hers be mighty;—and is this the whole
Of such men's destiny beneath the sun?
Must all the finer thoughts, the thrilling sense,
The electric blood with which their arteries run,
Their body's self turn'd soul with the intense
Feeling of that which is, and fancy of
That which should be, to such a recompense
Conduct? shall their bright plumage on the rough
Storm be still scatter'd? Yes, and it must be,

For, form'd of far too penetrable stuff,
These birds of Paradise but long to flee
Back to their native mansion, soon they find
Earth's mist with their pure pinions not agree,
And die or are degraded, for the mind
Succumbs to long infection, and despair,
And vulture passions flying close behind,
Await the moment to assail and tear;
And when at length the winged wanderers stoop,
Then is the prey-bird's triumph, then they share
The spoil, o'erpower'd at length by one fell swoop.
Yet some have been untouch'd, who learn'd to bear,
Some whom no power could ever force to droop,
Who could resist themselves even, hardest care!
And task most hopeless; but some such have been,
And if my name amongst the number were,
That destiny austere, and yet serene,
Were prouder than more dazzling fame unblest;
The Alp's snow summit nearer heaven is seen
Than the volcano's fierce eruptive crest,

Whose splendour from the black abyss is flung,
While the scorch'd mountain, from whose burning breast
A temporary torturing flame is wrung,
Shines for a night of terror, then repels
Its fire back to the hell from whence it sprung,
The hell which in its entrails ever dwells.

THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO IV.

Many are poets who have never penn'd
Their inspiration, and perchance the best:
They felt, and loved, and died, but would not lend
Their thoughts to meaner beings; they compress'd
The god within them, and rejoin'd the stars
Unlaurell'd upon earth, but far more blest
Than those who are degraded by the jars
Of passion, and their frailties link'd to fame,
Conquerors of high renown, but full of scars.
Many are poets but without the name,

For what is poesy but to create
From overfeeling good or ill; and aim
At an external life beyond our fate,
And be the new Prometheus of new men,
Bestowing fire from heaven, and then, too late,
Finding the pleasure given repaid with pain,
And vultures to the heart of the bestower,
Who, having lavish'd his high gift in vain,
Lies chain'd to his lone rock by the sea-shore?
So be it: we can bear.—But thus all they,
Whose intellect is an o'ermastering power
Which still recoils from its encumbering clay
Or lightens it to spirit, whatsoe'er
The form which their creations may essay,
Are bards; the kindled marble's bust may wear
More poesy upon its speaking brow
Than aught less than the Homeric page may bear;
One noble stroke with a whole life may glow,
Or deify the canvas till it shine

With beauty so surpassing all below,
That they who kneel to idols so divine
Break no commandment, for high heaven is there
Transfused, transfigurated: and the line
Of poesy, which peoples but the air
With thought and beings of our thought reflected,
Can do no more: then let the artist share
The palm, he shares the peril, and dejected
Faints o'er the labour unapproved—Alas!
Despair and Genius are too oft connected.
Within the ages which before me pass
Art shall resume and equal even the sway
Which with Apelles and old Phidias
She held in Hellas' unforgotten day.
Ye shall be taught by Ruin to revive
The Grecian forms at least from their decay,
And Roman souls at last again shall live
In Roman works wrought by Italian hands,
And temples, loftier than the old temples, give

New wonders to the world; and while still stands
The austere Pantheon, into heaven shall soar
A dome, (12) its image, while the base expands
Into a fane surpassing all before,
Such as all flesh shall flock to kneel in: ne'er
Such sight hath been unfolded by a door
As this, to which all nations shall repair
And lay their sins at this huge gate of heaven.
And the bold Architect unto whose care
The daring charge to raise it shall be given,
Whom all arts shall acknowledge as their lord,
Whether into the marble chaos driven
His chisel bid the Hebrew, (13) at whose word
Israel left Egypt, stop the waves in stone,
Or hues of hell be by his pencil pour'd
Over the damn'd before the Judgment throne, (14)
Such as I saw them, such as all shall see,
Or fanes be built of grandeur yet unknown,
The stream of his great thoughts shall spring from me, (15)

The Ghibelline, who traversed the three realms
Which form the empire of eternity.
Amidst the clash of swords, and clang of helms,
The age which I anticipate, no less
Shall be the Age of Beauty, and while whelms
Calamity the nations with distress,
The genius of my country shall arise,
A Cedar towering o'er the Wilderness,
Lovely in all its branches to all eyes,
Fragrant as fair, and recognized afar,
Wafting its native incense through the skies.
Sovereigns shall pause amidst their sport of war,
Wean'd for an hour from blood, to turn and gaze
On canvas or on stone; and they who mar
All beauty upon earth, compell'd to praise,
Shall feel the power of that which they destroy;
And Art's mistaken gratitude shall raise
To tyrants who but take her for a toy
Emblems and monuments, and prostitute
Her charms to pontiffs proud, (16) who but employ

The man of genius as the meanest brute
To bear a burthen, and to serve a need,
To sell his labours, and his soul to boot:
Who toils for nations may be poor indeed
But free; who sweats for monarchs is no more
Than the gilt chamberlain, who, clothed and fee'd,
Stands sleek and slavish, bowing at his door.
Oh, Power that rulest and inspirest! how
Is it that they on earth, whose earthly power
Is likest thine in heaven in outward show,
Least like to thee in attributes divine,
Tread on the universal necks that bow,
And then assure us that their rights are thine?
And how is it that they, the sons of fame,
Whose inspiration seems to them to shine
From high, they whom the nations oftest name,
Must pass their days in penury or pain,
Or step to grandeur through the paths of shame,
And wear a deeper brand, and gaudier chain?
Or if their destiny be born aloof

From lowliness, or tempted thence in vain,
In their own souls sustain a harder proof,
The inner war of passions deep and fierce?
Florence! when thy harsh sentence razed my roof,
I loved thee; but the vengeance of my verse,
The hate of injuries which every year
Makes greater, and accumulates my curse,
Shall live, outliving all thou holdest dear,
Thy pride, thy wealth, thy freedom, and even *that*,
The most infernal of all evils here,
The sway of petty tyrants in a state;
For such sway is not limited to kings,
And demagogues yield to them but in date
As swept off sooner; in all deadly things
Which make men hate themselves, and one another,
In discord, cowardice, cruelty, all that springs
From Death the Sin-born's incest with his mother,
In rank oppression in its rudest shape,
The faction Chief is but the Sultan's brother,
And the worst despot's far less human ape:

Florence! when this lone spirit, which so long
Yearn'd, as the captive toiling at escape,
To fly back to thee in despite of wrong,
An exile, saddest of all prisoners,
Who has the whole world for a dungeon strong,
Seas, mountains, and the horizon's verge for bars,
Which shut him from the sole small spot of earth
Where—whatsoe'er his fate—he still were hers,
His country's, and might die where he had birth—
Florence! when this lone spirit shall return
To kindred spirits, thou wilt feel my worth,
And seek to honour with an empty urn
The ashes thou shalt ne'er obtain—Alas!
"What have I done to thee, my people?" (17) Stern
Are all thy dealings, but in this they pass
The limits of man's common malice, for
All that a citizen could be I was;
Raised by thy will, all thine in peace or war,
And for this thou hast warr'd with me.—'Tis done:
I may not overleap the eternal bar

Built up between us, and will die alone,
Beholding, with the dark eye of a seer,
The evil days to gifted souls foreshown,
Foretelling them to those who will not hear,
As in the old time, till the hour be come
When Truth shall strike their eyes through many a tear,
And make them own the Prophet in his tomb.

NOTES

TO THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

Note 1, page 217, line 11.

Midst whom my own bright Beatricē bless'd.

The reader is requested to adopt the Italian pronunciation of Beatricē, sounding all the syllables.

Note 2, page 218, line 15.

My Paradise had still been incomplete.

" Che sol per le belle opre
" Che fanno in Cielo il sole e l' altre stelle
" Dentro di lui *si crede il Paradiso,*
" Così se guardi fiso
" Pensar ben dèi ch' ogni terren' piacere.

Canzone, in which Dante describes the person of Beatrice, Strophe third.

Note 3, page 220, line 7.

I would have had my Florence great and free.

" L' Esilio che m' è dato onor mi tegno.
* * * * *
" Cader tra' buoni è pur di lode degno."

Sonnet of Dante,

in which he represents Right, Generosity, and Temperance as banished from among men, and seeking refuge from Love, who inhabits his bosom.

Note 4, page 221, line 3.

The dust she dooms to scatter.

"Ut si quis predictorum ullo tempore in fortiam dicti communis pervenerit, *talis perveniens igne comburatur, sic quod moriatur.*"

Second sentence of Florence against Dante, and the fourteen accused with him.—The Latin is worthy of the sentence.

Note 5, page 225, last line.

Where yet my boys are, and that fatal she.

This lady, whose name was *Gemma*, sprung from one of the most powerful Guelf families, named Donati. Corso Donati was the principal adversary of the Ghibellines. She is described as being "*Admodum morosa, ut de Xantippe Socratis philosophi conjuge scriptum esse legimus,*" according to Giannozzo Manetti. But Lionardo Aretino is scandalized with Boccace, in his life of Dante, for saying that literary men should not marry. "Qui il Boccaccio non ha pazienza, e dice, le mogli esser contrarie agli studj; e non si ricorda che Socrate il più nobile filosofo che mai fusse ebbe moglie, e figliuoli e uffici della Repubblica mella sua Citta; e Aristotele che, &c. &c. ebbe due mogli in varj tempi, ed ebbe figliuoli, e ricchezze assai.—E Marco Tullio—e Catone—e Varrone, e Seneca—ebbero moglie," &c. &c. It is odd that honest Lionardo's examples, with the exception of Seneca, and, for any thing I know, of Aristotle, are not the most felicitous. Tully's Terentia, and Socrates' Xantippe, by no means contributed to their husbands' happiness, whatever they might do to their philosophy—Cato gave away his wife—of Varro's we know nothing—and of Seneca's, only that she was disposed to die with him, but recovered, and lived

several years afterwards. But, says Leonardo, "L' uomo è *animale civile*, secondo piace a tutti i filosofi." And thence concludes that the greatest proof of the *animal's civism* is "la prima congiunzione, dalla quale multiplicata nasce la Città."

Note 6, page 231, line 19.

Nine moons shall rise o'er scenes like this and set.

See "Sacco di Roma," generally attributed to Guicciardini. There is another written by a Jacopo *Buonaparte*, Gentiluomo Sanminiatese che vi si trovò presente.

Note 7, page 237, line 17.

Conquerors on foreign shores, and the far wave.

Alexander of Parma, Spinola, Pescara, Eugene of Savoy, Montecucco.

Note 8, page 237, line 18.

Discoverers of new worlds, which take their name.

Columbus, Americus Vespusius, Sebastian Cabot.

Note 9, page 239, line 13.

He who once enters in a tyrant's hall, &c.

A verse from the Greek tragedians, with which Pompey took leave of Cornelia on entering the boat in which he was slain.

Note 10, page 239, line 16.

And the first day which sees the chain enthral, &c.

The verse and sentiment are taken from Homer.

Note 11, page 240, line 13.

And he, their prince, shall rank among my peers.

Petrarch.

Note 12, page 250, line 3.

A dome, its image.

The cupola of St. Peter's.

Note 13, page 250, line 13.

His chisel bid the Hebrew.

The statue of Moses on the monument of Julius II.

SONETTO.

Di Giovanni Battista Zappi.

Chi è costui, che in dura pietra scolto,
Siede gigante; e le più illustre, e conte
Prove dell' arte avvanza, e ha vive, e pronte
Le labbia sì, che le parole ascolto?
Quest' è Mosè; ben me'l diceva il folto
Onor del mento, e' l doppio raggio in fronte,
Quest' è Mose, quando scendea del monte,
E gran parte del Nume avea nel volto.
Tal era allor, che le sonanti, e vaste
Acque ei sospese a sè d' intorno, e tale
Quando il mar chiuse, e ne fè tomba altrui.
E voi sue turbe un rio vitello alzate?
Alzata aveste imago a questa eguale!
Ch' era men fallo l' adorar costui.

Note 14, page 250, line 16.

Over the damn'd before the Judgment throne.

The Last Judgment in the Sistine chapel.

Note 15, page 250, last line.

The stream of his great thoughts shall spring from me.

I have read somewhere (if I do not err, for I cannot recollect where) that Dante was so great a favourite of Michel Angiolo's, that he had designed the whole of the Divina Commedia; but that the volume containing these studies was lost by sea.

Note 16, page 251, last line.

Her charms to pontiffs proud, who but employ, &c.

See the treatment of Michel Angiolo by Julius II., and his neglect by Leo X.

Note 17, page 254, line 14.

" What have I done to thee, my people?"

" E scrisse più volte non solamente a particulari cittadin del reggimento, ma ancora al popolo, e intra l' altre un Epistola assai lunga che comincia:—' *Populo mi, quid feci tibi?*' "

Vita di Dante scritta da Lionardo Aretino.

THE END.

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