

flooded the garden, and her light played among the grey-green olive boughs. The flowers rolled up their leaves, folded their petals inwards and sought slumber; the monotonous sleepy nodding of the trees above singing their lullaby. All was hushed and still, all save the Lily were at rest. She alone of all that number was awake and restless; she could not forget what had passed within the day just dead; sorrow would not permit her to slumber; and when at last, after the moon had sunk and the East was beginning to shadow forth a new era of light, sleep fell upon her eyelids, her rest was disturbed and broken. Several dreams coursed through her brain.

Light dawned once more; the sun glowed again in golden splendour over the garden;

the flowers awoke and bloomed in new invigorated beauty. But the Lily showed the same in a different sight than when he had last beamed down upon her. She still stood shame-coloured and tearful, her imperial crown bowed earthward, and never again from that day forth did she lift pure silver bells heavenward.

As for her children, the dark red blush has not left their flowers; the tears of repentance well ever new within their eyes; they bear about them unforgotten the stigma and remembrance of their ancestor's wicked rebellion and pride. They have inherited her title of Empress too; but they bear it lowly, and no plant more beautiful and proud in shape, more humble in mien, adorns our gardens than the Imperial Lily.

HELEN ZIMMERN.

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## GIACOMO AND PALLIDINA; OR, THE ITALIAN BEGGARS.

BY COUNTESS MARIE MONTEMERLI.

### I.

THE son of a beggar, I first saw the light at Pisa.

In Italy there are beggars of every description. There are shamming beggars, threatening beggars, beggars halt and maimed, musical beggars, poetical beggars, beggars who are rich, and beggars who are poor, blaspheming beggars and praying beggars, reprobates and saints. They encumber the streets, the roads, the approaches to hotels, churches, and public buildings of every kind. But the cleverest of them all, and those who carry on business most profitably, are the intimidating and the devout. My father has belonged to both these classes. At the time of my birth he was known as *Il Stregone*,<sup>1</sup> now he is spoken of as The Saint.

The earliest years of my life were chiefly spent in my mother's arms. I was a sickly child, and she, dying of decline. The first words she taught me were—"Charity, please." In summer I sat by her on the burning flags at church doors, or played with other little beggars; in winter, shivering on the marble pavements, I wept with cold,

<sup>1</sup> The Sorcerer.

which excited the pity of passers-by, but did not distress my mother, who often said to me, "Cry louder, Giacomo, louder; the ladies who pass us by don't hear thee."

At nightfall we went back to our lodging, two tolerably clean rooms in the suburbs.

None of our neighbours had any idea that we were beggars. My mother strictly forbade me to tell it, and always pretended to return from her day's work. My father would habitually come in with his spade on his shoulder; and, indeed, he was employed in a garden for several days in the week. But early in the morning and late in the evening, on Sundays, festivals, and market days, my father, too, begged.

At night, when the door was shut, he sat beside my mother, and the two counted up their money, putting the silver apart into a bag, that they kept hidden in their straw bed.

"What gate were you at this morning, Bastiano?" my mother would ask.

"Porte al Prato. And didn't I send curses after those peasants who passed me by without an alms? They would stand quite dumb-founded, then turn back to give me all they could."