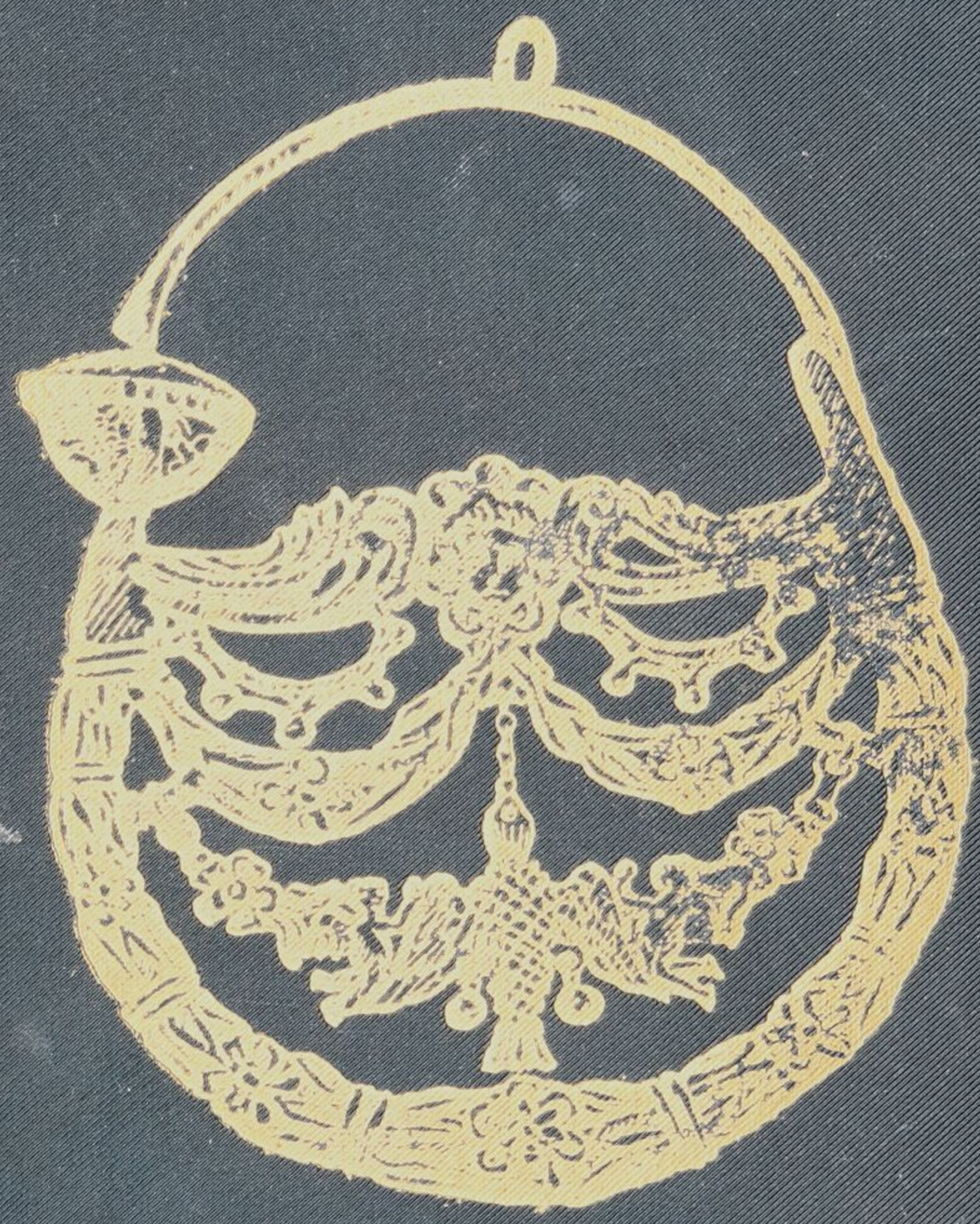

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THROUGH THE APENNINES AND THE LANDS OF THE ABRUZZI

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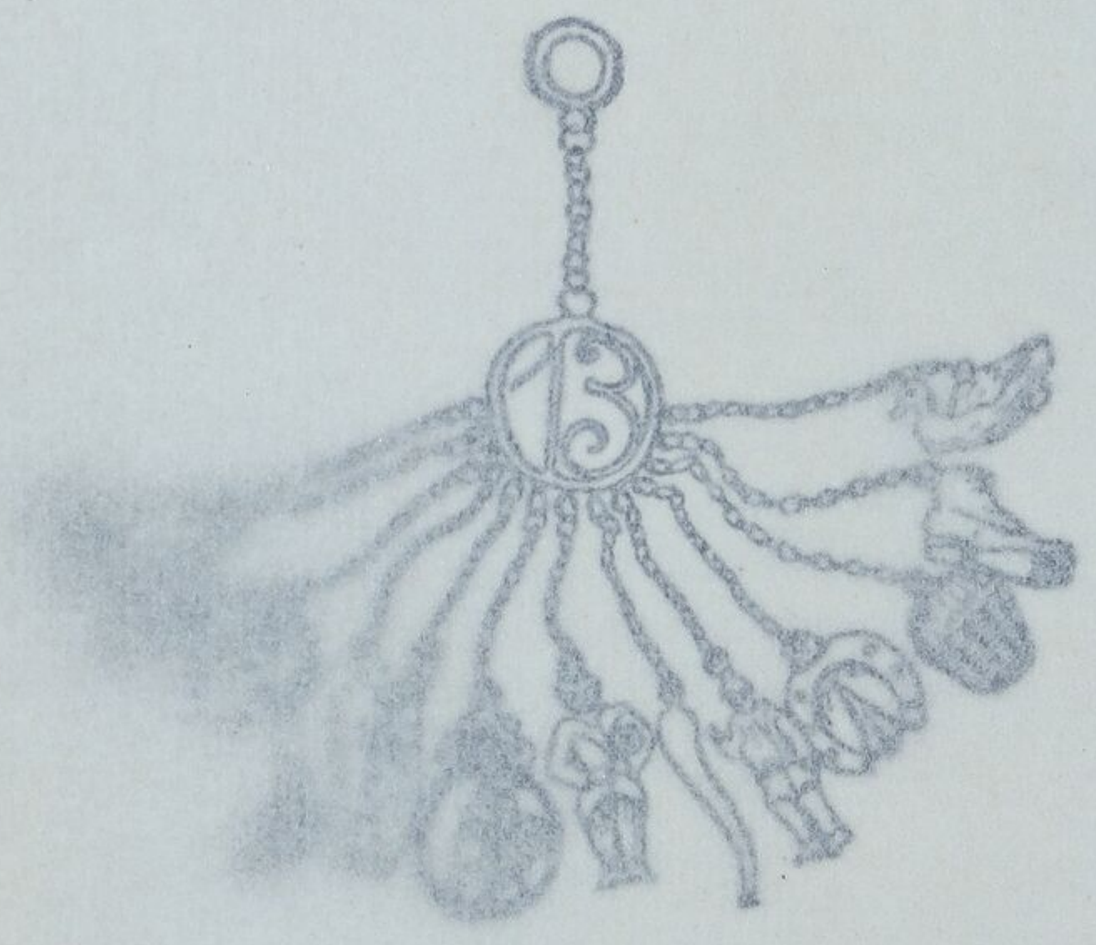
Through *the* Apennines *and the* *Mountains of the* Abruzzi

Landscape and Peasant Life

DESCRIBED AND DRAWN BY

ISABELLA CANZIANI

Author of Piedmont; Costumes, Traditions, and Songs of Savoy; etc.



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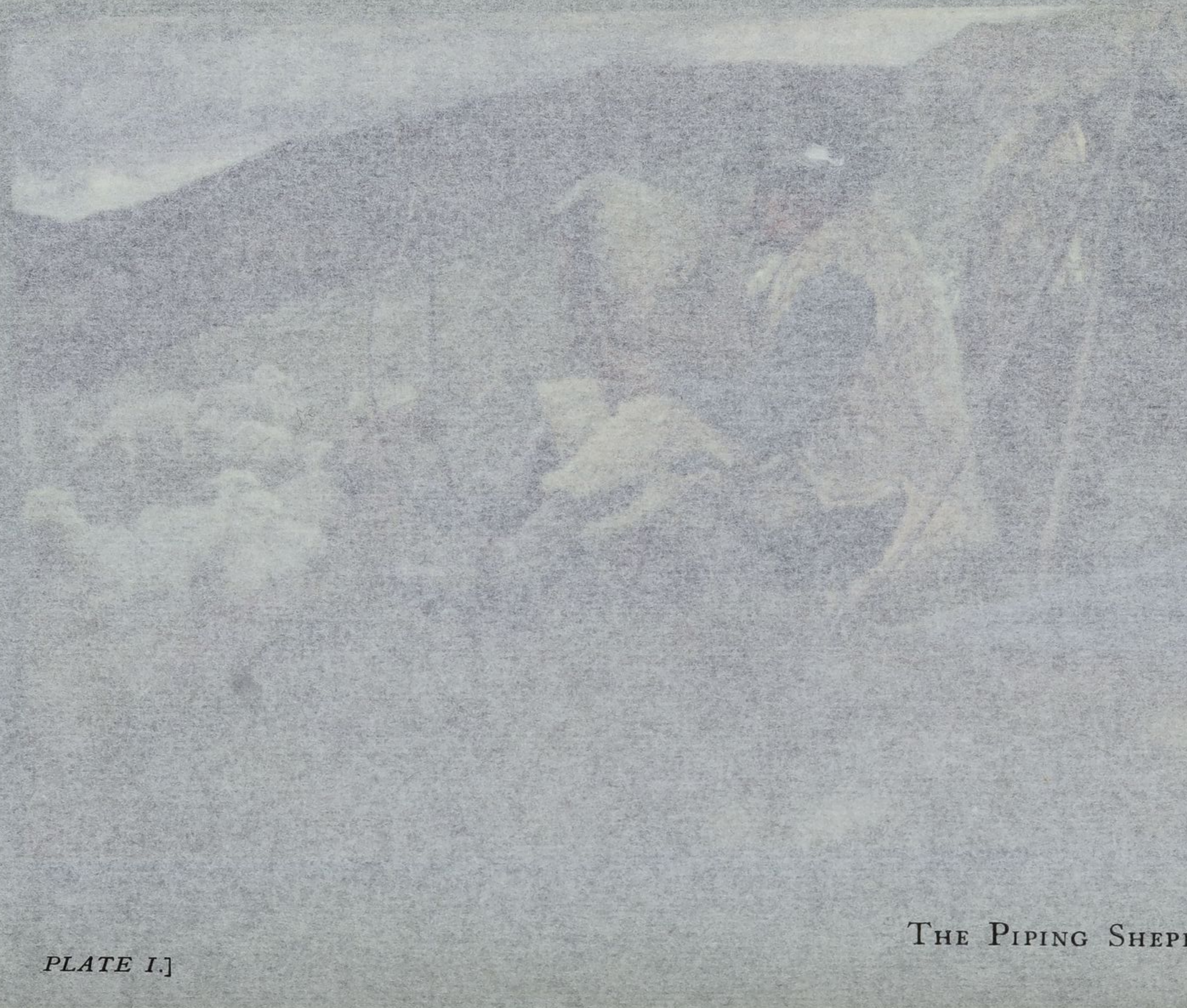


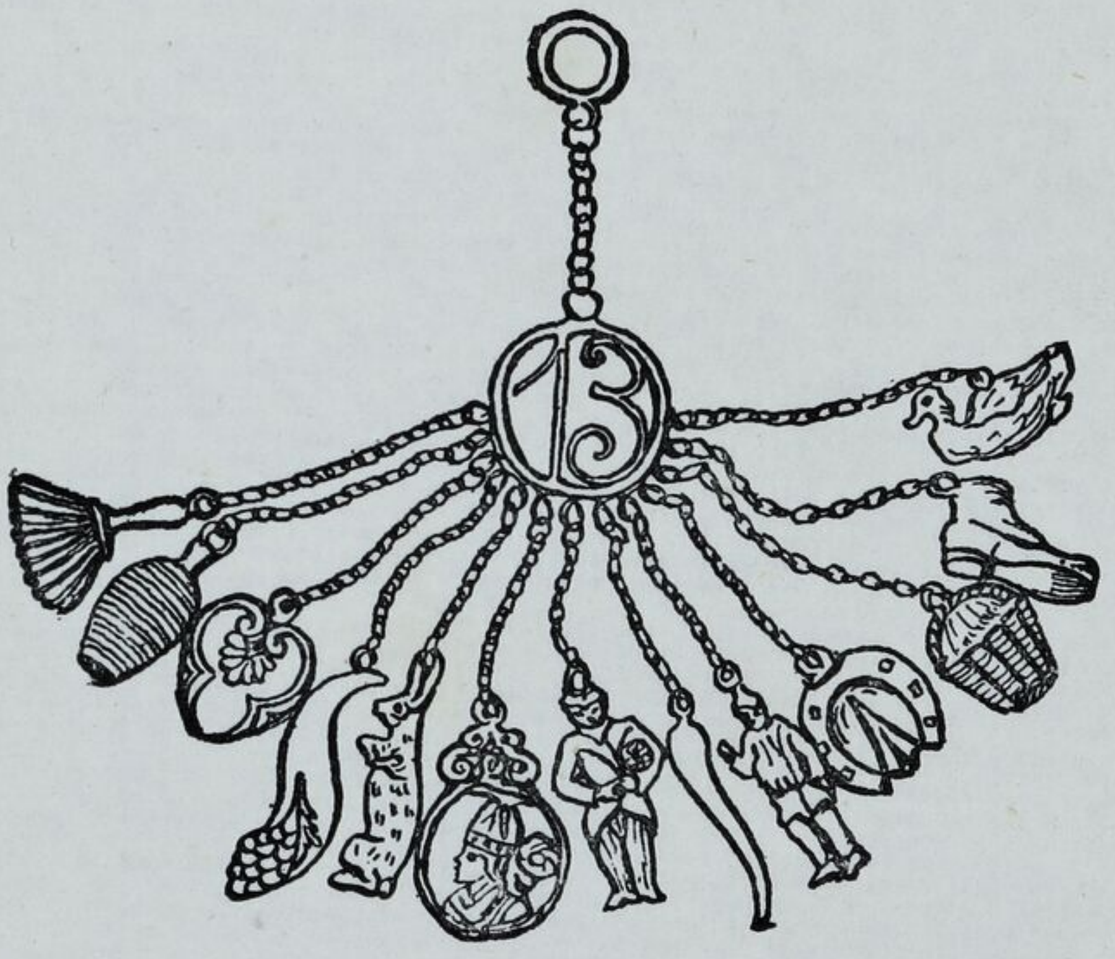
PLATE I.]

THE PIPING SHEPHERD, MASCIONE.

Through *the* Apennines
and the
Lands *of the* Abruzzi

Landscape and Peasant Life

DESCRIBED AND DRAWN BY
ESTELLA CANZIANI
Author of *Piedmont; Costumes, Traditions, and Songs of Savoy; etc.*



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Preface.

THIS book is more particularly a description, with black and white drawings and twenty-four paintings, of the country and of the life of the peasants in the little-known Italian provinces of the Abruzzi in the Central Apennines, as they were immediately before the War. I have tried to give an account, as faithful as possible, of the life and landscape as a setting for the popular customs and beliefs and something of the past local history. Few travellers go to the Abruzzi, for they are wild in every sense of the word. Before setting out in company with my father I was warned that it was "not safe," and those who, as I found afterwards, did not know the district, assured me that it was "all brigands," but I hope that the contents of my book will show that, however primitive and at times emotional the peasants may be, true kindliness, and not seldom unusual courtesy, are shown to sympathetic strangers. Priests and peasants alike did all that they could to make us both comfortable, and went out of their way constantly to find for us those who could tell us the local traditions and practices. When we visited a village, perhaps only for a few hours, it was our practice to see first of all the priest, who would generally show and tell us everything which he could think of as likely to interest us. Foreigners are almost unknown to the peasants, especially in the mountains, and anyone painting local scenes and people, and really anxious to learn all they could about them, aroused great interest and received a hearty welcome.

I should like to take this opportunity of thanking all those who are preserving the ancient monuments and traditions in what is one of the most beautiful countries of the world, and are at the same time making easier the path of the ordinary traveller.

I have spelt and accented Italian words to show as clearly as I could the peculiarities of the local dialect, and I have made the translations of songs and stories as literal as possible. I have often found it difficult to follow the original exactly, and yet be intelligible, and the English rendering may, therefore, seem a little crude, but I think that its literalness will give a true impression of the atmosphere and naïveté of the original. Changes following everywhere the War of 1914–1918 are affecting the Abruzzi also, so that I hope that there is some value in a faithful record with pen and brush of the survivals in this region of much of picturesque mediæval Italy, and even of a more remote and glorious Roman past. Such survivals cannot but have absorbing interest both for the historian, the simple lover of the past, and the scientific student of folklore, besides every Italian.

I have many friends in Italy to thank. Owing to the War it has been impossible to keep in touch with them, or to get more of the material which they promised. Some were killed, others died of disease, and others again lost their lives in the great earthquake of 1915. During that year I received letters describing the peasants as homeless and out in thousands on the mountain side. They were going on pilgrimage to Cocullo, (in a later shock Cocullo itself was partially destroyed), and as they could not write themselves they got letters written to me asking how they could get to England, as a refuge.

Amongst many of my friends I should especially like

to thank Signori Bruni, Merve, Morica, "the young tailor," "the shepherd poet," "the little old woman," and others far too many to enumerate, who are mentioned in chapters of the book. Very little has yet been published about the Abruzzi, and practically nothing in English. I am indebted for some legends to the "Rivista Abruzzese," and to the works of Finamore and the poems of Petrilli. I am also very grateful to Dr. F. C. Burkitt and Dr. Moses Gaster for their kind advice.

I dedicate this book to my father, who was untiring in his search everywhere for anything and everything which was of value for my purpose.

ESTELLA CANZIANI.

January, 1928.

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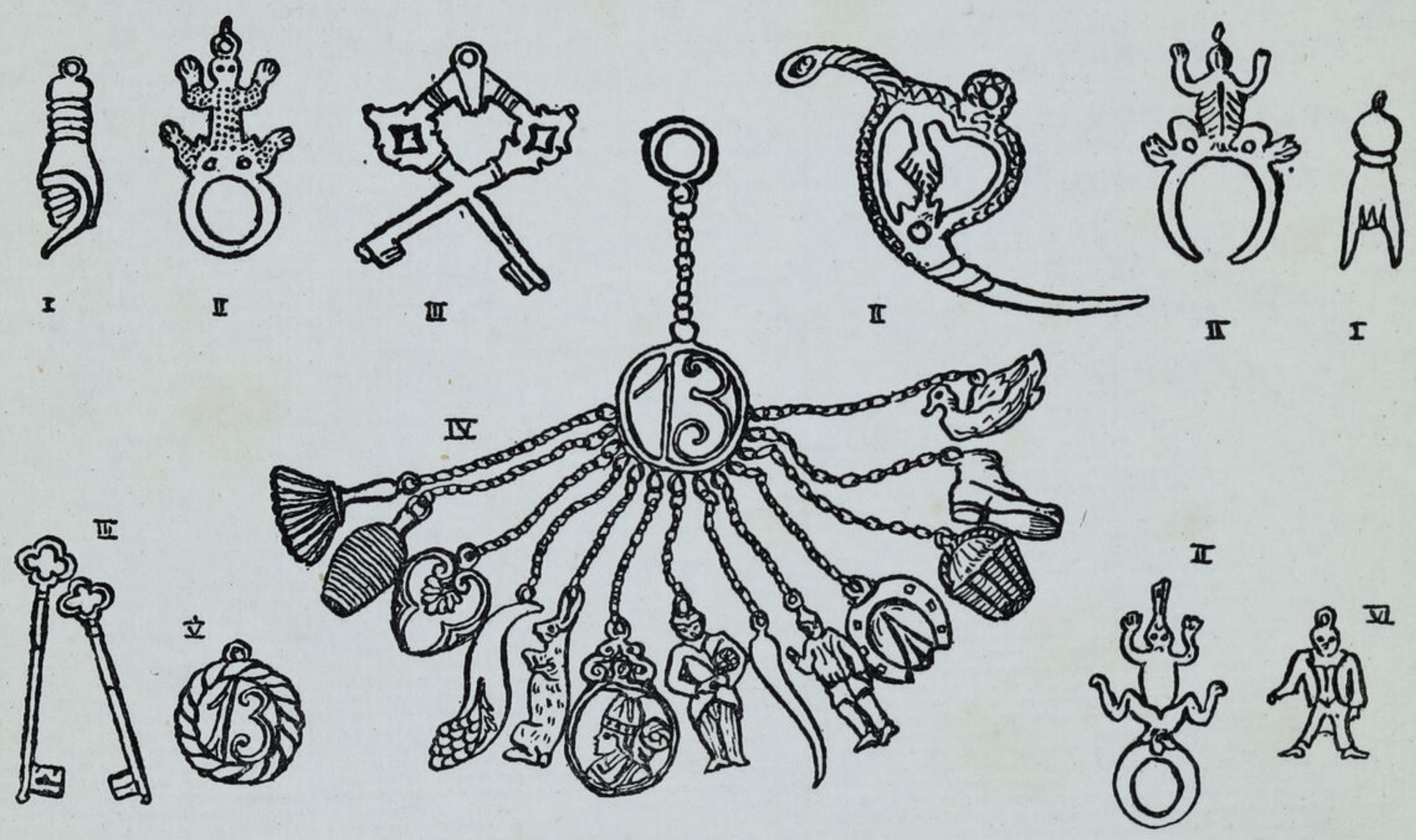
Evil Eye Amulets.



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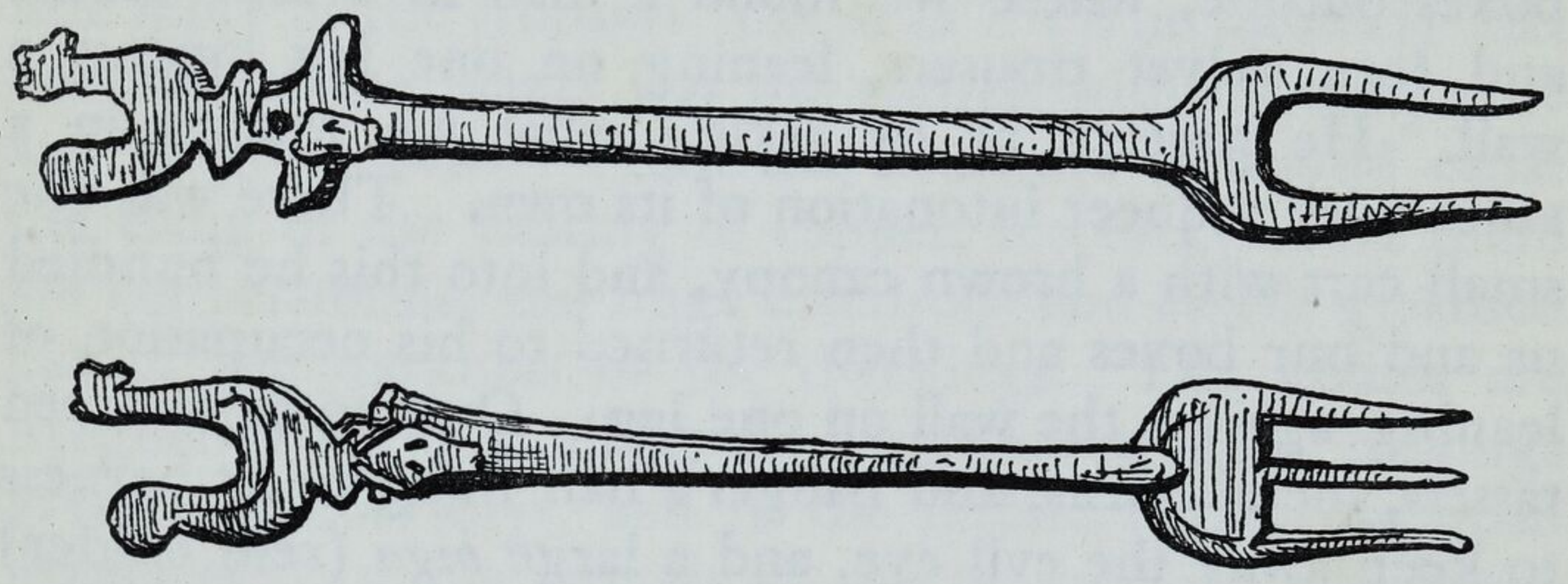
Chapter I.

First Days in the Abruzzi.



Cooking Forks (about 2 feet long).

L' Angeli hanno fatto lo cantare :
Quando se canto, non se pensa male.

[Angels gave the gift of song :
And while one sings one thinks no wrong.]
—*Local Saying.*

IN the autumn before the Great War, our train wound its way up amongst the Apennines, the slopes of which were covered with olives, almond trees, and vines. It was a strange country through which we went, and now and then we caught sight of a sallow-coloured peasant woman with a bright petticoat and a red kerchief over her mass of black hair, piling ripe tomatoes into her basket, and then we would see slow dreamy oxen, with immense horns, ploughing or wandering at will over the pasture, or feeding, or standing in the stream to cool themselves after the intense heat of the day. Everywhere was light and sun, the sky of a transparent blue, the mountains pale and shimmering in the light, and the pasture land dried and burnt up. Although it was about

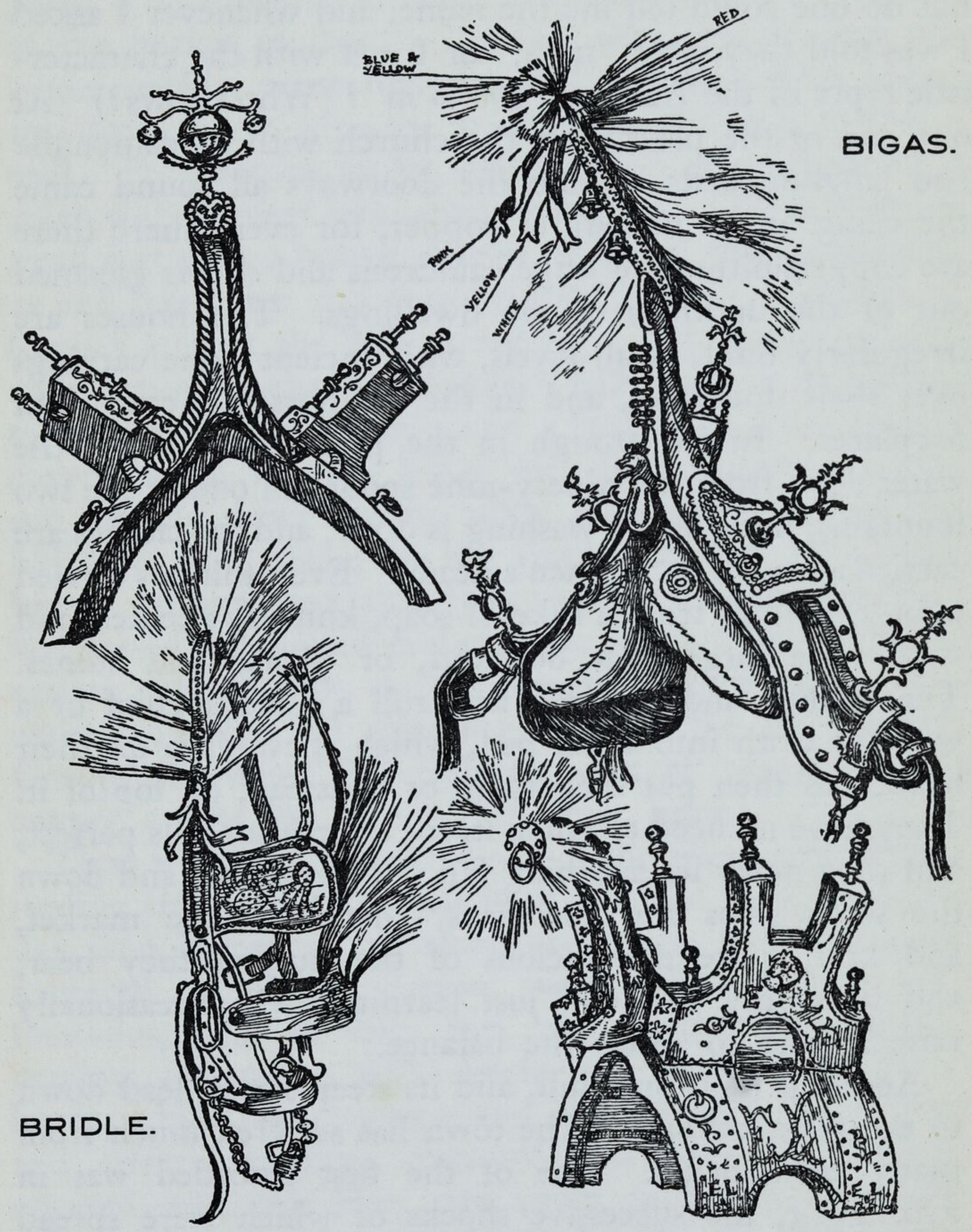
four in the afternoon, both animals and peasants still sought the shade of straw shelters, whenever they could pause a moment from their labours. When we arrived at the station of Aquila, we had ourselves to drag our boxes outside, where we found a man in a blue blouse and torn velvet trousers, leaning on one leg against a wall. He greeted us by asking what we wanted in a voice with a queer intonation of its own. There was one small cart with a brown canopy, and into this he bundled us and our boxes and then returned to his occupation of leaning against the wall on one leg. Our horse had red tassels, metal horns, and badger's hair hung to its harness to keep away the evil eye, and a large *biga* (rein holder) covered with tin and hung with bells glittered in the sun beating down on the white road which led up the hill from the station to the town. We sat under the brown canopy, and the driver under a blue umbrella. We passed an almond orchard, the delicate green foliage casting soft shadows on the browny yellow earth, and white walls beyond gleaming between the tree trunks. Groups of women and children went by carrying large copper *conche* (water-pots) on their heads.

Then we came into the shade of the plane-tree avenue leading straight into Aquila itself. It had been a market day, and baskets of tomatoes, capsicums, and fruit were scattered round the narrow piazza. There were two fountains, one at each end, and women continually coming and going with *conche* full of water on their heads, whilst other women and children with large gold and enamel earrings chattered and bargained. Carts covered with red, blue, and white designs all over the sides, and also with painted wheels, came creaking over the stones, drawn by the huge cream-coloured oxen one

sees everywhere. The piazza was surrounded with small trees just coming into flower, which looked like *spiræa*, but no one could tell me the name, and whenever I asked I was told they were "trees," or I met with the characteristic reply of the Abruzzi "*Chi lo sa*"? (Who knows?) At one end of the piazza was the church with its campanile and jangling bells. From the doorways all round came the clang of the beating of copper, for everywhere there are coppersmiths, and huge cauldrons and *conche* gleamed out of the darkness of the dwellings. The houses are irregularly built, at all levels, with ancient stone carvings over their doorways, and in the interiors immense open fireplaces. In the trough in the piazza into which the water flows from the ninety-nine spouts on one of the two fountains, most of the washing is done, and the clothes are carried away on the women's heads. Everything is carried upon the head, from a cake of soap, knitting needles, and wool to a large iron bedstead, or planks and stones. The women and children first roll a handkerchief or a piece of cloth into a flat pad, which they place on their head, and then put their soap, or bedstead, on top of it. They have no need to touch it, for their balance is perfect, and they never let anything fall. They go up and down the steep steps and roadways, chatter in the market, and knit, quite unconscious of the burden they bear, and it is only children, just learning, who occasionally raise a hand to adjust the balance.

Aquila is built on a hill, and its steep streets lead down to the plain beyond. The town has suffered much from many earthquakes. One of the first recorded was in A.D. 1315, the successive shocks of which were spread over a month. The inhabitants who camped in the piazza attributed their misfortunes to their sins, and in

penitence erected the church of S. Tommaso for prayers to be offered for ever by the nuns for the safety of the town.



BIGAS.

BRIDLE.

Tradition says that ninety-nine surrounding villages helped to rebuild Aquila, ninety-nine being consequently

since regarded as a lucky number. For this reason, according to local story, the clock of the palazzo of Margherita d' Austria, daughter of the Emperor Charles V, struck ninety-nine times three hours after sunset, ninety-nine churches were built, ninety-nine piazzas, and, when the curious fountain Della Riviera was constructed in the main piazza, the water was distributed through ninety-nine spouts, each with a carved head and still existing. Some of the churches are now used as barns and storehouses. In front of them the white oxen are drawn up with their cart-loads of grain, and inside in the dimness men pile up the sacks against the walls. In the heat of the day one is thankful every now and then to get away from the glare, down some dark alley where it is possible to see without smoked glasses, or into the refreshing coolness of some church and look at the beautiful stone carvings.

The chief recorded earthquakes in Aquila took place in the years 1315, 1349, 1456, 1462, 1616, 1703, and 1915. In that of 1703, 2000 people perished, and the greater part of the church of Collemagio was destroyed,—the façade alone remaining. The carnival now takes place after the *candelora* (i.e. Candlemas, 2nd February), for fear of earthquakes, because earthquakes are supposed to occur generally during January. There is a saying that "when the cold is at its greatest, the earthquake is at its strongest." Besides earthquakes, Aquila has suffered from many wars. It was during a fight between Aquila and Rieti that the Rietini succeeded in carrying away from Aquila a bell and a marble lion. This bell was placed on a tower and called the *aquilanella* (small eagle) as a joke against the people of Aquila. Later the people of Aquila recaptured the bell and put it again on their own palace tower, calling it the *rietinella* (small Rieti).

The coat of arms of Aquila is a black eagle on a silver field, and in the year 1566 eagles were reared and kept by the authorities in honour of the town.

In the shops round the piazza were for sale vegetables, stuffs, jewellery, cheese, cane and wooden baskets and utensils, and long *corone*, Plate II (chains of coloured sugar balls, bound together with coloured red and green silk and tinsel with a sugar ball cross, and tinsel flowers at the end). These *corone* are given on birthdays, *festas*, and any other occasion as presents to bring good luck, and they are blessed by the priest and preserved as a *devozione*, and in some places hung on grave stones and crosses, being either left there permanently or after a few days taken away and preserved. When they are hung on grave-stones and the sugar dissolves, it is said that the dead are eating them; the belief is stronger in Scanno than in Aquila. These *corone* are to be had in all sizes, from about twelve inches in circumference to three or four feet.

Everyone works in the open doorways of the buildings, and when the laden mules and donkeys brush past and go down the street, their owners nearly always stop and chatter, waving their arms about and shouting in what appears to be a terrible rage, but it all means nothing and is only the ordinary way of saying "Good morning," and conducting the business of the day, and goes on to the everlasting clangour of beating copper.

In nearly every house, either over one of the doors, or on a shelf, or above the large, open fireplace, there are the horns of oxen,—(black ones are the best),—or the half-decayed body of a falcon or owl, to keep away the evil eye. When we picked up the charms of coral hanging on the children and asked what they were for, we either



I. Corona.

II. Lent doll. Isernia.

III. Harness decoration and horsehair switch to keep away both flies and the evil eye (*see page* 166).

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I. Corona.
II. Lent doll. Isernia.
III. Harness decoration and horsehair switch to keep away both flies and the evil eye (see page 166).

[Plate II.]

II

I

III

got the answer "*Chi lo sa, li portiamo tutti*" (Who knows, we all wear them), or we were told that they also were against the evil eye (*malocchio*). Children wear badgers' hair and a little bunch of tin or silver charms all hanging from a circle with the number thirteen in it. The most common charms are a cornucopia, a horn, a frog, a Pope's head with mitre and crozier, a closed hand with the fore-finger extended, a horseshoe, a boot, a duck, cross-keys, a hunchback (*gobbetto*), a frog and horns combined, a heart, a broom, a bottle, the two horns, and a basket. Later, when we gained the confidence of the people, we were told other means of keeping off the evil eye.

In the narrow streets we saw men and boys making the *bigas* and covering them with shining tin, red woollen tassels, horns, bells, crescents, little hunchbacks, or numerous horses and metal flags to turn in the wind and glisten in the sunlight, to keep away the evil eye from the horses; or they would beat an indented design of the Virgin and Child, flowers, and horses' heads for the sides of the *bigas*, and fix brass heart ornaments to the harness. Bunches of badgers' hair or horns are fixed in the place of blinkers, and horns also fastened to the buckle which ornaments the harness under the chest. The oxen are shod,—I think in two pieces,—so that the cloven hoof is bridged by a piece of iron, and such pieces and the shoes of mules and donkeys are hung up over the doors or in the houses against the evil eye.

We looked into one of the many jewellers' shop windows, and, seeing foreigners, the jeweller came out to talk to us. He invited us in to see the charms and amulets which he sold. We entered, and found ourselves plunged at once into the mediæval atmosphere of the Abruzzi, with its numerous traces of ancient customs and beliefs. We

asked if we might see his charms, and he showed us the medals of S. Benedetto which he sold for a protection against hail, lightning, and thieves. He explained that to effect this the medal is put on the top of buildings, under the eaves, on the *campanile* (belfry), or on the boundaries of fields. The medal of S. Antonio is believed to be a protection to cattle and horses, and should it be lost, the peasants fear the death of their animals. Red coral is one of the commonest charms, and nearly everyone wears it in some form or other. Coral horns are especially good against the evil eye, but he told us they must not be worked with iron, in which case they lose their virtue, (as they do if broken.) He also sold small iron keys which are hung round a baby's neck to prevent epilepsy, and brass or silver keys to prevent convulsions. Silver keys, on account of their colour, I was told are symbolic both of the Holy Ghost and of the Trinity. Pieces of stag's horns mounted in silver are also used, and all charms are generally blessed by the priest.

He drew our attention to the many pictures of the Madonna and Child which have a coral necklace on the Babe, and then I remembered also to have seen thirteen forks used as a decorative design down the sides of a picture of the Madonna. We bought some of the charms, and asked for more information. We learnt that, if it is thought that an animal has been affected by the evil eye, a piece of cloth taken secretly from the suspected person and put on the animal will cure it, "unless the disease be the will of God!" The first bearskin leggings that a child wears will cure an animal of tummy-ache. (Bears are found in the mountains, and there are curious beliefs about them.) Rue, mint, elder, and ferns are all thought to be powerful against witches, and one herb, "*sierpe*,"

which I could not identify, is said to have a queer power of attraction for both men and beasts; once a goat was found in front of this herb, but on examination only the skin remained, all else having been absorbed.

Cat bites are supposed to be poisonous, and the hair from the cat which has bitten one, mixed with powdered garlic, will effect a cure; the same cure applies to serpent bites. (A really good cat, by the way, must have been stolen, and not bought.) Black hens have mysterious powers, and their fat is good for irritation; no one kills a black hen, for fear of seven years' misfortune, and its beak will restore a suffocated child when put in its ear. The hen which crows like a cock should be at once killed, as otherwise the head of the house will die. If a hen crows towards the mountains, it is a good sign, but if towards the sea it is bad. It is believed that oblong eggs will produce cocks, and round ones hens, and to obtain a good clutch a nail is put in the middle of the eggs. If the nest is placed in a man's hat, then cocks are hatched.

When we left our jeweller the streets were crowded with people who had taken refuge there in search of comparative coolness. The sunset sky was a brilliant crimson, and the mountains a deep purple against it. The sunset seemed to echo the passionate character of the people. Shouts and music and laughter were everywhere, and continued long into the night; above all was a cloudless summer sky and the brilliant stars.

Next day we went to see the big square fortress outside the town, built in 1534 by Don Pedro of Toledo, but it was hot, and when we came to the glaring white road, in full sunshine, we sat under the shade of an almond tree to rest. After the excited atmosphere of the town it was soothing. We looked down a steep scorched bank

to where some almond and olive orchards covered the hillside, and into the distance where the low ranges of the blue mountains apparently stretched endlessly away. Up to the left were the barren rocks of the Gran Sasso, the highest mountain of this portion of the Apennines, and then away and beyond there was the intense blue of sky and mountain shimmering in the heat and light. The carts drawn by white oxen passed us with a rhythmic creaking of wheels; their drivers shouted "Ah! Ah!" and the animals moved to the sound of their voices. Mules and donkeys were driven past by bare-legged women and children, sometimes riding or walking under blue umbrellas, along the glaring white road; they turned the corner at the hillside, and appeared again higher up on the hill in the distance. A lost dog came to make friends with us, and amused himself trying to catch toads, and now and then vipers, in the burnt-up grass, but they always managed to escape underneath a plant which was like a yellow succory with prickles. The dog only got his nose pricked, and came to lie down at our side. The drowsy but excitable people continually passing us on their way into the blue hills, and the sun glittering on the harness, brought to me dreams of the past from which I was awakened by the dog pushing a prickly plant against my foot.



THE GRANDMOTHER. MASCIONE.

PLATE III.]

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PLATE III.]

THE GRANDMOTHER. MASCIONE.



Chapter II.

From Aquila to Mascione.



Market at Aquila.

Il cane e gatto son fatti per mordesi, ma se si accordano fuggi più presto possibile. (*Sulmona.*)

[Cat and dog are made to bite each other, but if they agree, fly as soon as possible.]

OUR friends in Aquila told us that about thirty miles away in the mountains there were interesting and primitive little villages, of the kind which we wished to explore. We were driven therefore down the valley for several miles, along the almond orchards and the fields of maize and ploughed earth. At first there were peasants' houses and barns, with stone carvings over the doors and windows, and we saw peasants and oxen going slowly along the road. Then we left behind all trace of human life. Everywhere were barren tracts of stone with burnt grass, and barren range behind barren range stretched away as far as we could see. There were immense ravines of chalk with the intense glare of the sun upon them, only broken by the blue-grey shadows that the different ridges cast upon each other. Higher up there were caves in amongst the rocks, and our driver told us that

those were the caves where the brigands had lived, and that we were in the midst of their country. Far beneath in the distance we could see a village, and hear the guns firing and the church bells ringing as a long procession of black and white specks, looking as small as ants, wound its way along a white road to the church. This village, our driver told us, was near where the famous brigand, Caruso, had lived, and his memory still terrorised the inhabitants. The driver said that the village which was our destination was full of brigands, but that he was not afraid of them, even if he travelled by night, as he had no money, but, he added, he was always careful of the wolves and preferred to travel with a revolver. Then he pointed to an almond tree near by, and said that the shepherd who stayed out nearby with his sheep generally slept in that tree to be safe from the wolves. His dog had a large iron collar studded with nails, with points outwards, and he protected the sheep, but very often the wolves managed to carry off a prey.

The driver told us that certain people are bound by their evil star to become *lupi minari* (*lupomanaro*, werwolf), and he said that they know this, and before their destined hours of transformation they take precautions not to injure their own cattle, by carefully shutting the stable door with the watch-dog inside, and putting the key in a safe place. The unfortunate werwolf then spills some water in the dust on the ground and rolls himself in it, and becomes a *lupo minaro*, howling so furiously that he even makes his own cattle's hair stand on end. This brings all the neighbouring wolves out in search of prey. Finally he retires to the threshold of his stable, and again rolls in the dust and resumes his human form.

One night two friends were guarding some threshed

corn. At midnight, one said to his companion in a mysterious way,—"Dear friend, we are all born under the influence of our own star, often good, often bad; my evil destiny is to be a *lupo minaro* and the hour is at hand, but do not fear! Go and remain on the top of the straw rick until I return to my human form, and, when all is safe, I will call you down." His companion, very frightened, climbed up upon the straw, saw his friend pour water on the dust, and then roll himself thrice in it. He then became a *lupo minaro*. Lifting his head and revealing two bloodshot eyes and gaping jaws, he uttered a terrible howl. His yell echoed all around, and from every direction wolves appeared and formed a circle round the rick, sniffing the air and looking up at the terrified man. At last the wolves ran away, but one wolf returned, carrying half a sheep, and, peering to make sure that the man on the stack did not see him, he rolled three times in the wet dust, and resumed his human form. Then he called to his companion,—"Come down, all is over." His companion descended, and the two friends prepared and cooked the half sheep, but the *lupo minaro* ate very little, for he was more than satisfied with the raw meat he had already eaten.

Our driver added that once a certain person offended another and struck him. The following night a pack of werwolves (*lupi minari*) killed about two hundred of his sheep without the sheep dog barking or the shepherd hearing anything of it. The sheep were only bled to death, because the wolves preferred to suck the warm blood. This could be done because the dogs and the shepherds were *ligati* (bound, i.e. paralysed) by the *lupi minari*, their senses being made dormant (stunned), and their eyelids weighted with sleep. Similarly the

owners of olive trees may be *ligati* by thieves who know the proper *ligazioni* (incantations).

We could imagine the feelings of the lonely shepherd climbing into the almond tree on a bright moonlight night, when every shadow would take a queer form and even the mica in the rocks would catch the moonlight and glitter like fierce wolves' eyes watching their prey. This idea was still more creepy when we learnt that on Christmas Eve the *lupo minaro* (male) and *lupa mannora* (female) are said to wander round *ululando* (howling), disturbing the Christmas peace, and that, to prevent this, at the crossing of the ways (*cape croce*) small white crosses from the procession on Ascension Day are fixed. The *lupo minaro* may be detected by his having hair and nails like a wolf, and at night he howls like a wolf. If he meets anyone he eats him up, but, if the one he meets has the courage to prick him and make his blood spurt out, the *lupo minaro* recovers from his disorder and resumes his human shape.

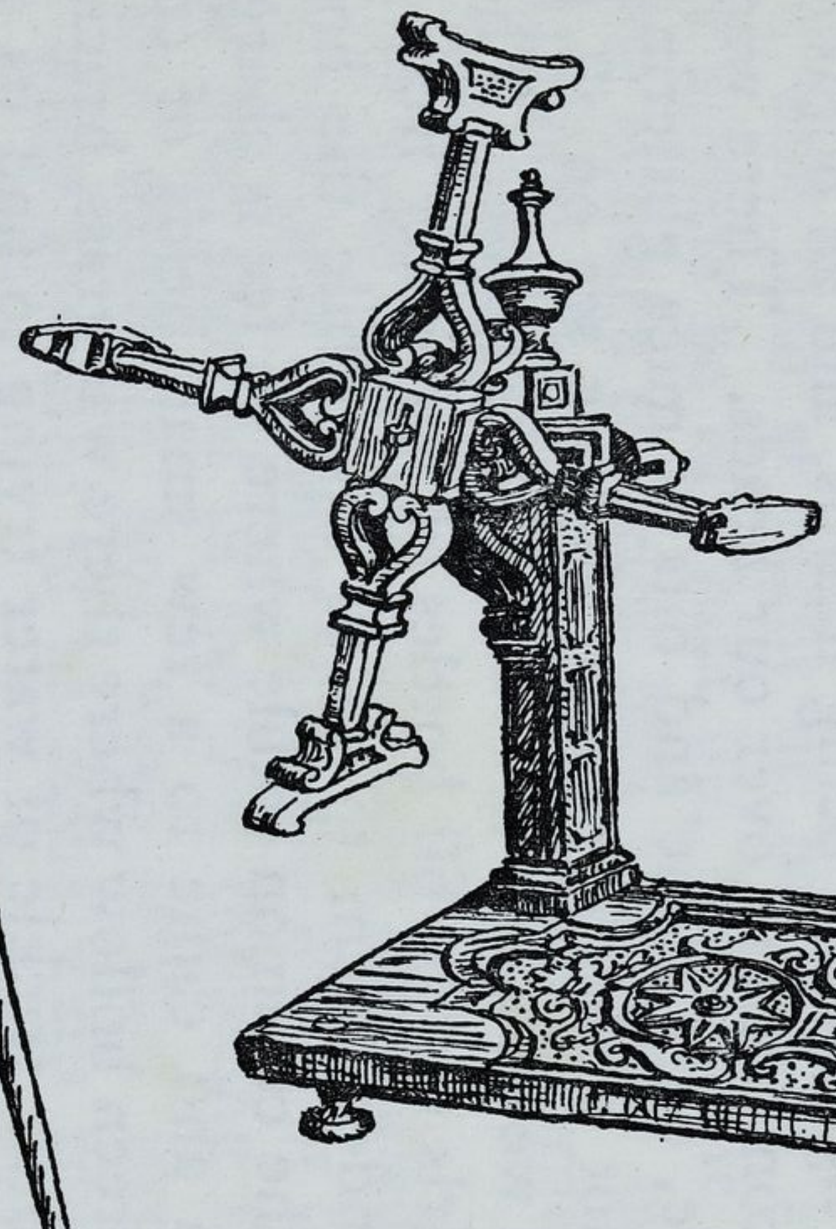
After these wild stories we bore more gladly the glaring sun in the clear summer sky, and we went on until a turn in the road showed us the first threshing floor. On the opposite mountain side were several irregular circles, with what appeared to be stone walls round the edges of them. These stones had been cleared to make an open space (*aja*) for the threshing. It was not until I had explored the *aje* several times that I understood what a lengthy though simple process the threshing really is. A little further on we came to a hill covered with olives and cypresses. Wending his way in amongst the trees down its stony sides was a monk in sandals and brown robes. He carried a pouch, and our driver said he came from the monastery on top of the olive-covered hill, and

that he was going to the village we had seen far beneath us, to beg for a sack of corn, or bread. He divided his time between begging, praying, and gardening. We went on again, our driver remarking that we should not see anyone else until we came to the house of the *cantoniere* (roadmender), which was about half way to our destination, and that there we could get water. We rode on through the barren hills, passing here and there large golden bunches of flowering broom with blossoms larger than any I have ever seen, and looking like bright yellow jewels against the blue and purple mountains and barren stones. There were also thistles, blue succory, and a spiky yellow flower not known to me, and a little dried-up grass, the only sign of life being lizards, and an occasional snake, or a falcon poising over our heads. There was no water anywhere, only stone and bits of mica glittering in the sun, and not a single peasant did we see on all that long road until we came to the *cantoniere's* house. There, two swarthy girls ran to fill bottles of icy water from the spring and handed them to us to sip, while the horses were put into the common stable where no fee is charged.

We went on and came to a few small fields of corn, and then to a green hollow where there was grass, bracken, bushes, and a little trickle of water trying to find its way over the grass. Our driver turned to us and said,—"It is here that the twelve cows,—the only cows in the whole country,—are kept, and they are Swiss and were bought and kept here for their milk." Here and there amongst the bushes were the cows, and one or two straw shelters for the boy who looked after them. He was not then under a shelter, but had put up his large blue umbrella against a stone, and lay asleep under it. One of the cradle-shaped shelters is illustrated in Plate I, and there

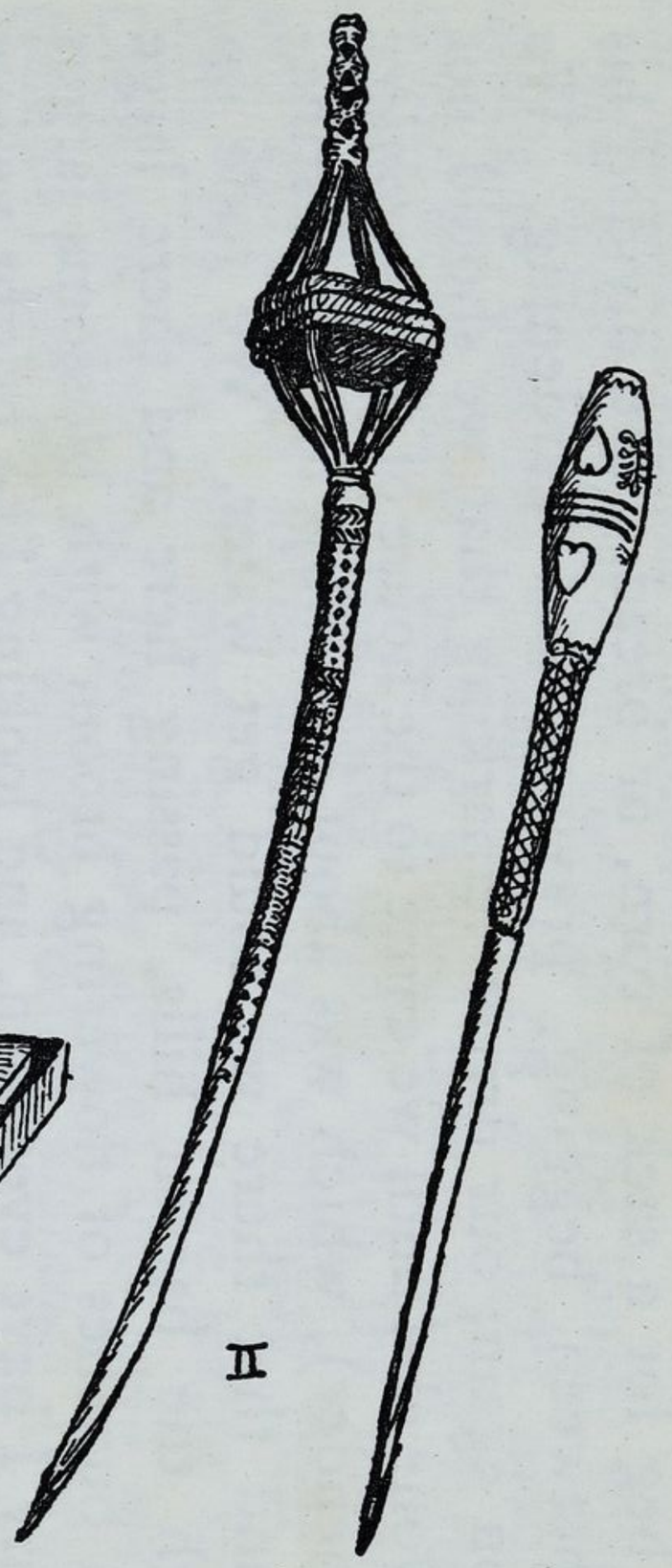


II



I

III



II

I. Spinning Wheel. II. Distaffs. III. Platters for Coloured Bands.

was also one with the flat straw roof supported on long poles, under which the cows could rest from the heat. We went by the boy and the green hollow and were again amongst the stones. There were more caves visible in the rocks, and the driver told us again that they had been the dwelling places of brigands, and that, although they were no longer there,—who knows?—we might have encounters with them in the village where we were going. After several hours of silence he pointed his whip to the left and said,—"There is Campotosto. Are you going to stop here or go on to Mascione?" "You say the people are better, and wear better costumes at Mascione?" "Yes," he answered, "and there is food there, bread and oil, and the petticoats of the women are brighter colours." "Then we will go there," we said. We came to some long-shaped fields of corn, rye, and grass, and the wind as it swept over the surface made them rise and fall in waves like the sea. Women and children in gaily striped petticoats were working in the corn, and others were followed by mules and goats as they went along the pathways. Beyond was a strip of brilliant green and burnt-sienna coloured swampy land, some low hills, and then Campotosto piled up on a hill, behind which were higher hills. We came to a narrow road, along which our driver went as far as he could, and then he stopped and said,—"You must walk the rest. The road goes no farther." The village of Mascione was away over more swampy ground, and like Campotosto it had been piled up on the top of a hill. We asked how far it was. "Who knows?" he replied, "an hour or more. I must be back before nightfall," and with that he put the baggage on to the road and drove away. There was a little hut near by, and a woman came out of it; we

told her we were going to leave our things with her while we went on to the village. She helped us to take them in, and then we asked her if we could sleep at the village. "Who knows?" she replied, shrugging her shoulders. "If we cannot, can we sleep here?" "No," she said, "for my husband and sons, who are draining the land, sleep here; we have only this one chair and some planks, and there is not room for more." She told us to follow the track to which she pointed, and we set out. Part of the way was dry, and part was thick mud into which we went above our ankles, and all the peasants, horses, and mules we passed stared at us. The animals had magnificent manes and tails, which are never ruined by docking, and all animals, except the foals, had their fore feet roped together "*al pasquatore*" (for pasturing). This we afterwards learnt was to prevent them from going far away into the mountains, and it is customary everywhere in this region. With their hind feet they walked, but with their fore feet they jumped, so that they looked as if they were hopping over the grass like kangaroos. The foals have all their legs free, but they do not stray, as they never leave the older animals. In towns and mountains alike, one sees foals trotting after their mothers. At Campotosto the animals are freed after work and when not wanted. Mules and donkeys are far more intelligent than horses in the mountains, especially donkeys, and they can go all day without food and only eat half as much as a horse.

Then we came to the stony bed of the stream. There was only a little water, and we went up along it, amongst the stones. Above us we could see a track a few inches wide, and it looked as if it led to the village. So we climbed up a bank and followed the track through a cornfield, and walked along on top of a loose stone wall.

Heads and faces appeared peeping at us from behind the corn and stones, and we asked the way to the village. We jumped off the wall on to a stony footpath, which was steep, and it led us out at last to the back of the church, which overhung the edge of the bank.

The peasants followed, and told us where the priest lived. We knocked at the door, and an ancient woman, all brown and dried up, with towsly black hair, and looking exactly like a witch, opened it a few inches and peeped from behind the opening. She said the priest was asleep and could not see us, and when we asked how long he would be, she replied,—"Who knows? He may wake in an hour or not,—*c'e tempo* (there is time),—what do you want?" We said we wanted rooms, and she said in that case it was useless, as the priest only had his own room, but, if it were our will, we could return when he woke. She tried to open the door, but said the pig and the copper pot were in the way, but that when the priest woke she would open it! We set out to find the *municipio* (village hall), and were directed to a tiny stone house on the outskirts of the village. A woman saying "Go up there inside," we pushed open a large wooden door with heavy iron hinges. The place was vaulted, and looked almost like a small cellar with a flight of stone steps just inside the doorway. Hearing voices, we knocked at the door at the top of the stairs. "Enter," said a voice, and as we went in there was a silent pause, and then, from a large old wooden table round which they were seated, five or six men rose simultaneously, bowed solemnly in silence, and took off their hats. One man with a large floppy black hat, his chin resting on the table and his arms stretched out, went on sleeping. First the men folk looked at my hat, for it was evident they had never seen

a woman's hat before. They glanced at the sleeping man, and then with equal solemnity they sat down. The mayor again rose when we asked if there were any rooms in the place. This broke the ice, and my father told them "to remain covered," and they put on their hats again, in evident relief, and the mayor told one of them to get us two chairs. The man went to hunt for them, and when they were brought we sat down and the mayor also seated himself, saying he would think over the matter. I looked from one man to the other, finding it difficult to be serious. They were all alike and yet different from each other, and although all had on rough peasants' clothes, even the clothes were also all quite different, so that it might have been an assemblage of gnomes, or enchanted fir cones who had once been human beings. My eye fell on the sleeper, and thereupon the secretary who sat next the mayor lifted up the flap of his hat, peered into his face, and, seeing that he was still sleeping, put the flap carefully down again. We asked if we could have two clean rooms, and the mayor said he would send someone to see. A tall man, with baggy corduroy trousers and a long pipe, rose without a word and left the room, and after a prolonged silence the mayor asked if he might continue the meeting. We nodded, and the secretary began to read out some notes about peasant disputes, then he stopped, looked at the sleeping man, again raised the flap of his hat, peered underneath, shook his head, looked at the ink-pot, and put the flap down again. It all reminded me of the dormouse and the teapot in *Alice in Wonderland*, or of a parody of a Quaker meeting. Then the tall man came back, saying there were no rooms. After more silence the mayor remarked that he would move out of the room upstairs, that there was an

empty room next it, and that we could have both. We thanked him very much, but said we did not like to disturb him. He insisted on our having the rooms, but added helplessly that he could give us no food, as there was none in the place. We said we had biscuits and chocolate enough to last us a week. He told us a woman should lend us two glasses, get the water, and make the beds, and might he be permitted to continue the meeting? We got up to leave and thanked him, and thereupon everyone rose and bowed silently and solemnly, and a man took us up some steps to the two rooms above.

They were of fair size, with blue plaster walls, red brick floors, and two unmade beds. We opened the windows and leant out to look at the view of the mountains on the other side of the swampy stretch of the country. We heard steps, and turned to see a peasant woman (Maria) with a deep coffee-colour complexion and brilliant black eyes, a white lace-bordered *tovagliola* (local head covering) on her head, a blue gown, and strings of bright red coral, and carrying two glasses, with some sheets and towels. With mountain folk, perhaps more than with any others, one feels strongly the curious quick intuition of mutual sympathy, and we immediately became friends, and when I had helped her to make the beds I asked if she knew of anyone with mules who would go and fetch our boxes. She called a man, and he said he would get his mule. We told him he had better have someone to help him. He shouted to the group of women in gaily striped petticoats, corals, and handkerchiefs who were feeding the pigs or spinning and chatting in the doorways opposite us. They all laughed and refused to come. He then shouted to a young man with a mass of black curls, who agreed to come. We set out a shorter way down a very steep

and stony path, and the young man began to ask what we were going to fetch, whether it was bread, or peaches, and if it was in a basket or paper, whether it weighed a pound or four pounds, for he said if our things weighed more than two pounds he was not going to carry them! We told him that if they only weighed two pounds we should carry them ourselves and that he had better stay behind, and this he did.

The older man then took the mule alongside a loose stone wall, and told me to mount. There was only a sack and a wooden pointed arrangement for fastening on our boxes, but if one rides astride it is not uncomfortable. The usual bridle for a mule or horse is a noose of rope round the nose and a bit of rope to hold, and furnished with this we set out. In places we had to cross deep mud, the mule sinking far into it, whilst the man picked his way over ruts where it had dried a little, and then we went over steep little mounds and ridges with a kind of shuffling jump. Finally we arrived, and fixed our baggage on to the mule, with the provisions in the middle. One side weighed down more heavily than the other, but, instead of re-adjusting it, the man picked up a large stone and put it under the cord which tied on the things, for he said that made the balance complete, that it was what was always done, and the mule had an unusually light weight to carry. After another hour's tramp we got back. By this time it had gone round that two strangers had come, and that one of them (myself) wore a strange white hat, and the whole village came to inspect us, saying nothing like my panama hat had ever been seen before. While our things were being carried up, they felt me all over, both my skirt and clothes and hat, and then they picked up the pencil, knife, and scissors

which hung on a chain from my belt, and wished to know if I were a tailor. Next they wanted to see my hair, so to satisfy them I took off my hat, and to their amazement they found it was not black like theirs, and that my cheeks were not nearly so brown. They tried to pull down my hair, because they were surprised to see that it was not all worn away by tight nets and head-dresses, but I escaped by saying "*Un'altra volta.*" They promptly said that I must come from a very long way to be so different, that I should certainly be ill in their barren and rough ugly mountains, for there was no beautiful food. I told them I thought it was a beautiful place, and to escape from the crowd I talked to one mother who was suckling her babe. We wandered down a steep sandy path together. I seemed to have quite gained her confidence, for she chattered to me and told me many things. I wondered if this friendliness was because I was careful to look beyond her child and not at it. I knew that if anyone has a baby and meets a suspected person, and this person kisses the baby, she is a witch. To gain the woman's confidence I walked at her side, or behind her, because—"Always sit at the side of a person and not in front of him; he who sits in front is a *jettatore* (owner of the evil eye)." By degrees I got the following songs, and she took great trouble to repeat them clearly. She also told me the remedy for eating too much and for tummy-ache !—

Dietro a quell'altare	[Behind that altar
C'erano tre campane,	There were three bells,
Tre campane, tre carrafine!	Three bells, three bowls.
S'è partorita la Madonna	The Madonna was delivered
Ed ha fatto un bel Bambino	Of a beautiful Babe
Che si chiama Salvatore.	Who is called Saviour.

Salvatore gira per la casa,
Arriva la madre
E gli da un bacio.

The Saviour goes about the house,
The mother arrives,
And gives him a kiss.

"Madre, madre, ho fame."
"Figlio, figlio, non c'è pane,
Vattene al scuola,
Che ci troverai Santa Nicola
Che ti darà un tornesino
E ci comprerai un panellino."

"Mamma, mamma, I am hungry."
"Child, child, there is no bread,
Go to school,
You will find Santa Nicola,
She will give you a copper coin,*
And you will buy a small roll."]

* *Tornesino*, small coin, value less than a farthing.

NASCITA DI GESÙ CRISTO.

Gesù Cristo, picirillo,
Bianco, ruscio, e tinirello,
Aveva na vesta tricanella.
Dio mio, quant'era bella!
Ri dintucci so' di cristallo,
Ri labrucci so' di curallu,
Ri capilucci so'fila d'oro.
Chi ri vede? Concetta d'amore,
La Madonna ri teneva in braccio,
San Giuseppe faceva la fascia,
Ri cuglieva ri belli scuiri,
Ri faceva ri fasciaturi;
Ri cuglieva le belle stelle,
Ri faceva le cuppurelle.

[THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST.

Jesus Christ, little one,
White, pink, and tender,
Had a pale blue robe.
Good God, how beautiful he is!
His teeth are of crystal,
His lips are of coral,
His hair is threads of gold.
Who sees Him? The Madonna of Love,
The Madonna held Him in her arms,
St. Joseph made the swaddling clothes,
He gathered the beautiful flowers,
He made the bindings;
He gathered the beautiful stars,
He made the cap.]

She said that in cases of babies' tummy ache shaking the chimney chain is good, and the sign of the cross is made on the navel and these words are said :—

Muglicolò, muglicolà,
Pan di segale,
Pan di grà,
Guarito il muglicolà.

[Tummy ache, tummy ache,
(Here is) bread of rye,
(Here is) bread of wheat,
(And) cured is the tummy ache!]

To cure indigestion, a cross is made on the stomach with the thumb and, looking towards the sky, these words are repeated :—

Dimonio cala,
Col corno mancino
Sbucciale ecco

[Demon come down,
With the left horn
Pierce her.]

Then, pointing to the navel, say :—

I maccheroni buttali di quà,
Il baccalà di là,
E isso spediaccialo.

[Throw the macaroni this side,
The cod fish the other side,
Reduce it to pieces.]

"A knot made with a strip of a dead dog's skin kept in thy pocket is a protection from dog bites," said my friend, "and thou shouldst also repeat :—

Cane, Canetto
Quando nascesti tu
Non c'era Cristo,
Cristo nato,
Cane legato.

[Dog, little dog,
When thou wast born
Christ was not,
Now Christ is born
The dog is bound.]

All this should be done three times, and the dog will remain paralysed until the knots are undone, and the words each time repeated backwards."

Healing words vary for every complaint. The healer is a special person, who learns the words on Christmas Eve, Anyone hearing them acquires the healing power, but

if the words are taught on other nights this power is lost. Throughout the Abruzzi the peasants always said that words of enchantment must only be taught on Christmas Eve.

We came to the end of the sandy path, and the woman now seemed anxious to get away; possibly she did not like to be seen talking so freely to strangers, especially when I had only just arrived and had talked about local beliefs. I therefore said "Good-night" and escaped to our rooms.

The last rays of an orange sun streamed into the room while we washed up the two thick bowl-shaped plates and the glasses Maria had lent us. We went to the window to watch the moon rise, and queer strange sounds came to us from the village. We heard the chatter and songs of the women as they passed beneath the window with the large copper *conche* of water on their heads, whilst the pigs, who, during the day, lay in the sand basking in the sun beside every peasant's house, whined and grunted for their evening meal. Some of them followed their owners about, others pushed at the doors of the houses and grunted until either they were opened or the owner came out and sat on the doorstep and fed them from wooden pails. The pigs grunted with contentment as they thrust their snouts into the food, children laughed and petted the pigs as if they were dogs, and the women sat and chattered or sang over these wooden pails. Maria afterwards told us that the words of one of the songs were:—

"*Quanne te vede a la finestra stare,*	[When I see thee at the window,
Un angelo me sembra de vedere;	It seems to me I see an angel;
Subitamente te vede rrentrare.	Suddenly I see thou art withdrawing,

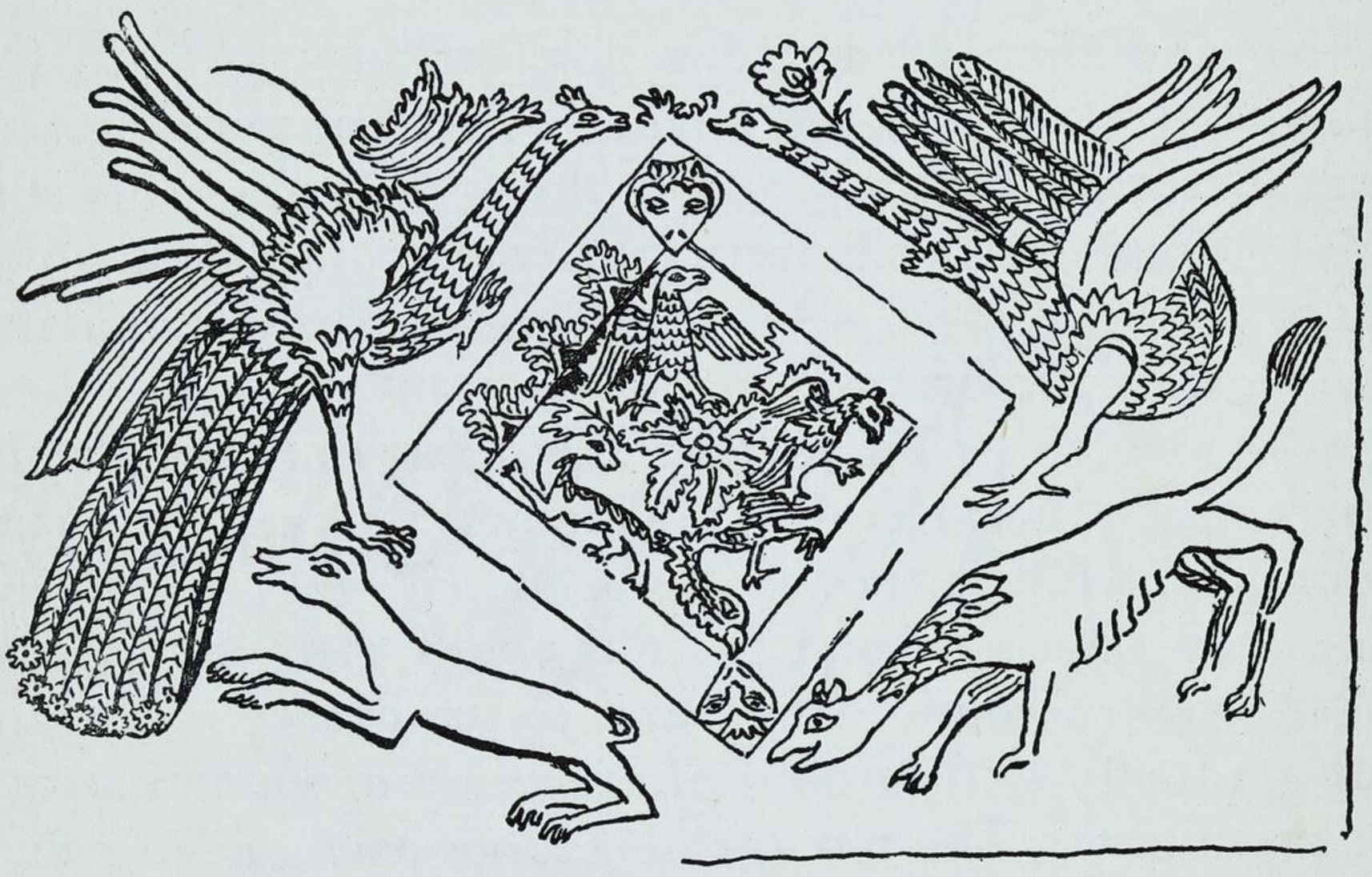
Bellina, chi t'e fatto dispiacere?
Ritorna, o bella, a la finestra stare,
Non me fa vive 'n tanto dispiacere!"

My darling, what has displeased thee?
Return, my beauty, to stay at the window,
Do not let me live in such despair.]

Now and then we heard a dog barking down in the valley, and next there was a faint mysterious sound, something between a tramp and a thud, and gradually the various flocks of sheep were gathered to the small open spaces of the village. After pasturing in the mountains all day, they are brought in for the night to protect them from the wolves. There were about forty of them in the square space in front of our windows, and a great many more on the hill in the middle of the village. For a long time they ba-a-a-ed and the dogs with their iron spiked collars walked round and round to see if they were safe, and gradually both groups of sheep lay down and settled for the night. The moon rose a large pale golden ball, a falling star raced across the sky, and then the white walls of the houses shone out in the moonlight, throwing into deeper shadow the dark gloomy passages in between the buildings. The church bells struck the hour, and only from one or two of the windows came the flicker of a small oil lamp, for the village was asleep. I sat watching the sheep sleeping in the moonlight. Sometimes one of them moved and bleated, or a dog barked, perhaps at the scent of the wolves, wafted from afar on the hot night air.

Chapter III.

Round Mascione; the witch, the Fata, and death superstitions.



Carved Stone Ornament.

Terre e anemali chiù r'assiste e chià ce acquiste. [The more you care for land and animals the better results you get.]

AT six o'clock next morning the sheep had gone off to the mountains, the pigs were already basking in the sun, and all the women were carrying water on their heads, or cleaning their copper pots with sand, outside their doors. Although we had finished our breakfast, Maria, our attendant, told us we were very late. I promised, therefore, to get up at five o'clock the next day, for she said she could not make the beds, do the room, and sit for me also, if we were not earlier! Before painting her there was only time to go as far as the village

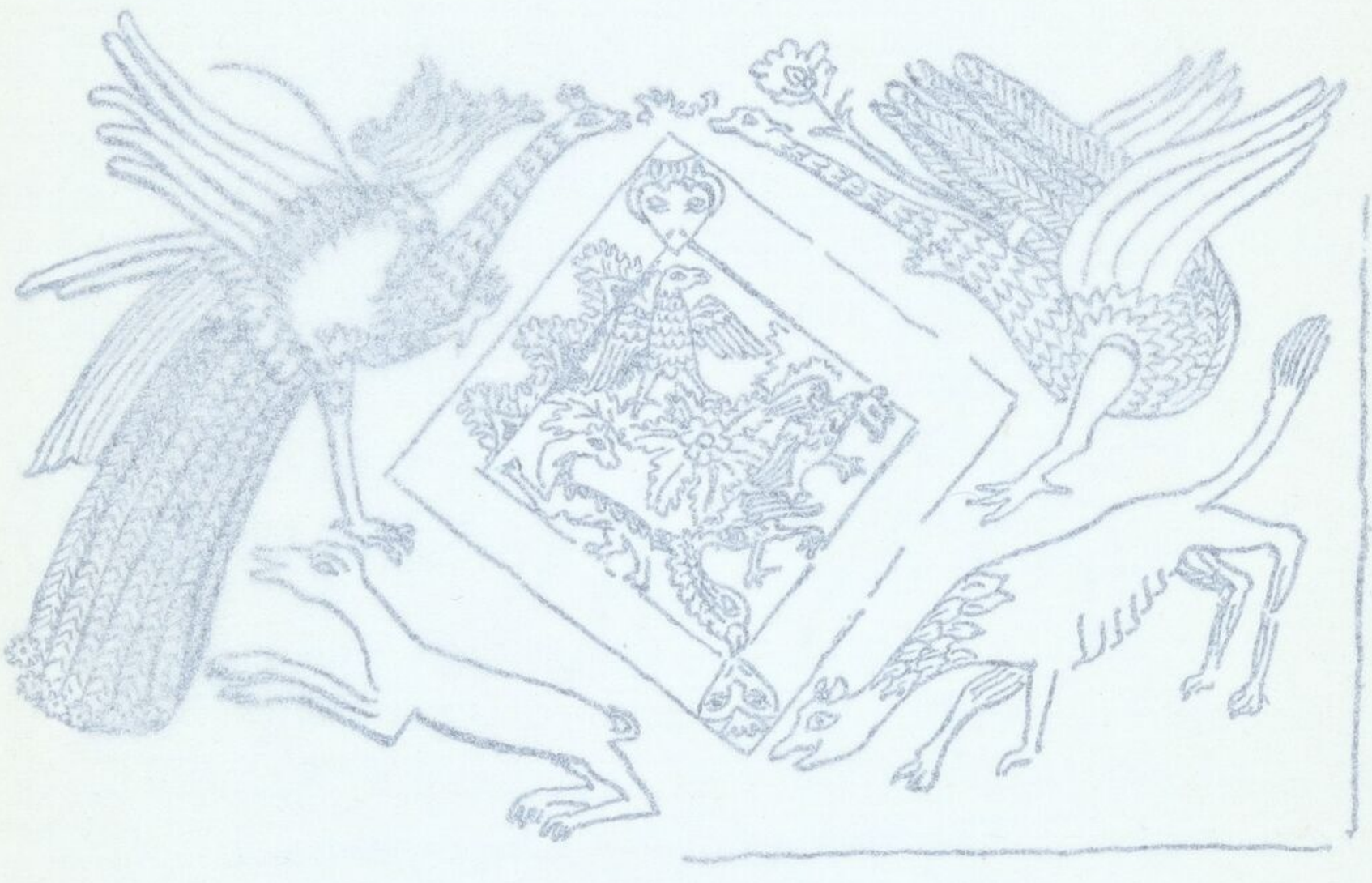


MARIA.

PLATE IV.]

Chapter III.

Round Mascione; the witch, the Fata, and death superstitions.



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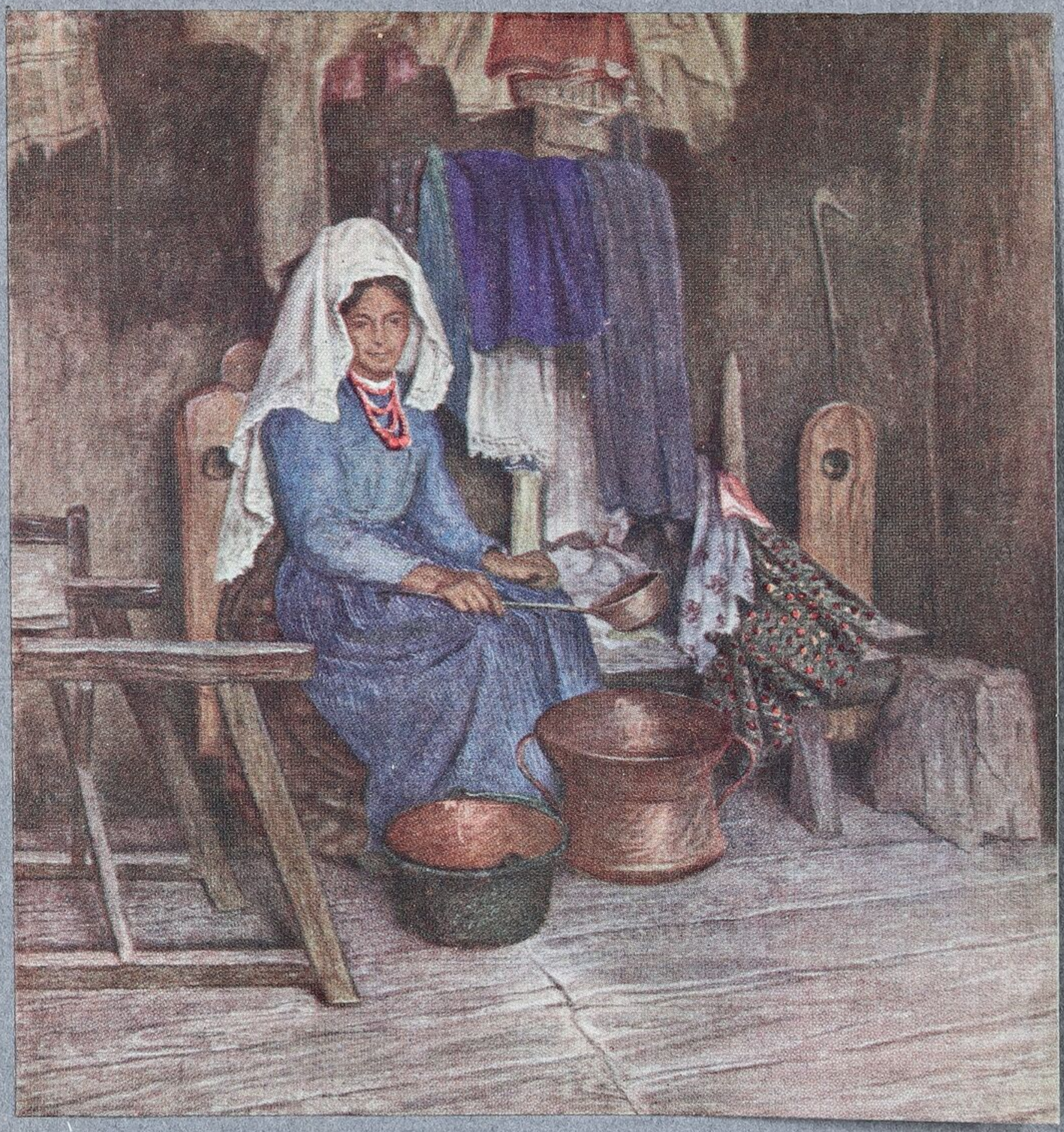
MARIA.

[PLATE IV.]



fountain and see the peasants water the animals preparatory to getting on their backs and going off into the mountains. When we returned, Maria asked us to come and see her house. We went up five or six steps into a low square wooden room with a large hearth at one end on which were the remains of a wood fire. There was a rough bench and table, and a few thick bowl-shaped plates and copper utensils on shelves to the left of the fireplace. The window was small, and there was a hole in the ceiling, to the side of which was fixed a rickety ladder leading to the room above. A low narrow doorway opened into another little room, and there were spread about a loom which was not just then in use, a kind of trestle table for making bread, and a wooden box in which bread and different odds and ends were kept. Some copper utensils and the numerous family clothes hung over the loom and along a line stretched from wall to wall. The woman ladled water from the *conca* to the cheese-making pot, and I decided to paint her with her background of various clothes. She provided me with a chair, and I set to work, and every now and then the villagers and chickens came to inspect me. After an hour or so, Maria said she had not had time to eat, and would I permit her to get something, and to feed her children. I told her I would go on with the background. She fetched a plate in which she poured rancid oil, and cut up slices of half-ripe tomatoes, and then put in stale, sour bread which was a month old (for it is only made once a month and a special tool is used for breaking it). She invited me to have some, but I said I would eat later. She called her children, whose ages varied from seven to seventeen, and they helped themselves with their fingers to oily bits of bread and tomatoes, and sat on the doorstep or table to eat. As

our supplies were limited, I asked whether she could get me anything, and she said she could only get some bread, cheese made from sheep's milk, rancid oil, and sausage, and that there was no other food to be had. Provided with money she went to buy what she could. There was no milk or butter, but she returned with a chunk of bread, cheese, and two sausages dangling from bits of string. They smelt rather strongly, and when I remarked that they were covered with mildew, Maria said that that was their great beauty, for they had been hung in the cellar to grow mouldy and tasty. We lived on our own provisions as long as possible, but one day when I heard a hen cackling I knew there must be an egg, and finding that no one in particular seemed to want it I insisted on having not only that egg but several others also. Another time we persuaded them to let us have a chicken. It was an unheard of thing, but the chicken, which was about the size of a blackbird, duly arrived, and, as I did not wish to waste my time cooking, Maria said she would do it for me. I think she must just have put it in the cinders, for when she brought it to us, wrapped up in a torn bit of blue paper with a burnt onion, it was black and hard like charcoal, but we were desperately hungry and ate it ravenously, and afterwards the bones with an onion, sour bread, and some scanty bits of thyme from the mountains made quite a good soup! At first I used to put away any remains of food on a plate outside the room for Maria to take, but I found that she always threw it out of the window. I thought I might as well do the same, and get rid of it at once. The result was that the pigs soon knew all about it, and caught it as it fell, and I shall never forget that once, when my father was clearing up, he threw a large piece of bread out by mistake. I rushed

to the window to save the precious bread, but only saw it disappear down the snout of a pig! The whole village was full of pigs, all beautifully clean. They bask in the sun and sand, and there is no such thing as a pig-sty. They wait by the doors to be fed from wooden pails, and whine like dogs to be let in, and they sleep downstairs.

After my day's painting we used to go for a tramp through the village and into the country. Over one house there was the large stone carving of which there is a drawing on page 41. In many places in Italy it is a common practice to put a *charduse* (a large thistle which grows close to the ground and generally has only one blossom) over the door to keep away witches. Here, however, the whole thing was carved in stone with the addition of a face in the disc. In Aquila I had noticed many houses which had the carving of the disc and rays over the doorways; some also had the eyes, nose, and mouth, others were simply a circle, and others again had the Christian I.H.S. in the middle, but this was the only one with the suggestion of the thistle leaves as well. No one could or would tell me what it meant, whether it was the symbol of the sun, or why it was there, and they all smiled when I asked. None of the other houses had anything of the kind. I suspected that it was to keep witches from entering the house, for in North Italy the *charduse* is believed to do so and is put over the door.

The peasants told me that at Castel del Sangro (Chap. xvi) witches, who are both male and female, come into the houses through the keyholes to suck the babies' blood, after greasing themselves all over. When once within the house the witch eats a piece of bread, and this enables the witch to materialise, but valerian is put in the keyholes, a knife fixed in the floor, or a broom, saws, and scythes put

behind the door, and then the witch has first to count the twigs of the broom, or the teeth of the saws and scythes. This takes so long that dawn breaks. The witch can be caught, recognised, beaten, and turned out, and is only set free after imploring pardon. Sometimes witches take the form of cats and dogs, and are placed in a sack and beaten for punishment, after which they have to pass through a ring of the fireplace chain. Then they can only become free by begging for pity in the name of S. Giovanni, and the woman who undoes the spell is reverenced. On Christmas Eve pigs' blood can be used to discover witches.

These queer beings terrify the peasants. Even in church they do not feel safe from them. To prevent their escape, three pins are put in the Holy Water (*Atri ; Ortona*), or a knife is planted in the ground (*Roccaraso*). The witch can then only leave the church by saluting and giving both hands to the man whom he has harmed, calling him *compare* (partner) and promising to do him no more harm for seven generations.

From all I was told it seemed to be clear that witches are not born, but become so, and anyone with a bad will goes to sit on the Sacred Stone behind the altar on Christmas Eve, and thence goes out of the church by a separate door. He gathers *la fece* (fern), a plant in the form of a hand and called "the herb of accord or discord." The fingers of this herb are joined or disconnected when the witch wishes to affect the soul of a victim.

The character of the country beyond the village was ridges of barren earth and stones, with here and there a slope of dried-up burnt grass, or a small cornfield, behind which showed the higher mountain peaks. Far away in the distance were tracts of burnt-up pasture, and the

atmosphere was so clear that we saw the flocks of sheep with their shepherds quite distinctly. The shepherds all have straw shelters like the one on Plate I, in which they sleep to protect themselves from the wolves. About 3000 sheep were in the pasture of Pian d'Emparatore; at night the rams, ewes, and lambs are separated, each with their own net round them. When they stand, they nearly always remain in more or less circular groups, with their heads together almost touching the ground. When they lie down, they are generally in one large group.

Some of the shepherds are their own masters, but others are sent from the Roman Campagna by their owners during the summer, and only go down to the plains in the winter months. Their masters give the shepherds rye or rice, oil, and a share of the sheep's cheese and milk produced. Each shepherd has a certain number of sheep and dogs, with large iron collars studded with spikes, to protect them from wolves. Before the sheep are shorn they are thrown into a small square pond and shaken, to wash them. They have big bells. When fine the shepherds wear their leather coats with a sheep-skin lining inside, but when wet the wool is put outwards.

Inside the shelters are one or two scraps of blanket, a bag of rice, and oil. The two latter, with cheese made from sheep's milk, and the milk itself, are the usual food of the shepherds. Outside the shelters there is generally a copper cauldron like a preserving pan, and it is in this that the cheese is made, and there are also wooden pails with one side higher for milking. Generally there is also a large blue umbrella and a cover to throw over the shelter should it rain very heavily. This cover is made in an ingenious way, of old rags, otherwise useless, twisted

round and round into thick strings looking like macaroni, and these long twists are sewn firmly together with string to make a good thick covering. They are not without design, for different colours are kept together and made into stripes or simple patterns. Near the shelters there is usually also a coarse string net which is supported by sticks thrust into the ground, and this serves as a fold for the sheep at night, whilst the dogs remain outside to guard them.

We wandered over the ridges of barren earth which reflected every change of colour in the sky. One moment they were a harmony of greys, blues, and purples, and then they changed to pinks, dull oranges, and browns with delicate grey shadows, and they were always most lovely. Some of the ridges were steep, others gentle slopes, and every now and then peasants came riding over them. For an instant they were beneath one, then came to where one was standing, saluting as they passed, and the next moment they would be outlined against the sky on the edge of the next ridge. Both men and women rode astride either donkeys or mules or horses with beautiful tails. Often they were armed, but they generally carried only a long stick and agricultural tools. Children rode with them, babies wrapped in their mothers' shawls, and little boys and girls seated behind, clinging to their mothers and fathers. All the women wore white head-dresses, and many of them had a green piece of cloth also covering them. They looked just as if they were Madonnas flying into Egypt. We also met men who had come from the nearest village, which was at several hours' distance. They were returning home after having been away for a day, and they looked very ferocious with their dark tanned skins, masses of thick black hair, and gleaming

eyes, with unusually prominent whites. They had long poles for guiding the cattle, their hats had wide brims, and long rough cloaks were wrapped round their shoulders. Some rode barebacked, and others balanced on top of the pointed saddle, which is used for carrying things, with their legs up and their heels on each side of the animal's neck. We wondered if the tale was true that every one slept armed.

We went over a ploughed field and round a cornfield, and then we saw beneath us the dry bed of a torrent with only a trickle of water in the middle. We clambered down, and went along its course to the village. It was very wild, and had a strange feeling about it. A bend brought us to a stretch of sand from which we could see the church and village above, and on the left was a little green pasture and two poplars. Some of the thin long-limbed sheep came to drink, and we followed them up the bank to the shepherd. He was lying on the grass with his pipes by his side. He was willing to sit for me, and I arranged with him to come next day. (Plate I.)

It was getting late, and we went on by the river bed till we came to the cemetery. The gates were closed, but I looked through them and saw the whole place was a mass of succory and cow parsley, smothering the little iron crosses. As I turned to go a dusky woman, who was sitting with a still more dusky child in the last rays of the setting sun, said,—"Good evening. Why do you go to the field of the dead? It is getting late, and at night they walk." "Have you seen them?" I asked. "No," she replied laughing, "We do not go there at night, we are afraid. We are only waiting for the sheep, and then we are going away." I still stood looking at the cemetery, knowing that if I remained silent the peasant woman

would be more likely to talk to me. I could see she was afraid of the unknown. A silent companion often gives confidence, and I asked no question. "Have they no fear of the dead in thy country?" she suddenly said. "Some have, and some have not," I answered. "Do thou tell me more. Thine is a beautiful land." She shuddered, and rose to go to the village, followed by her sheep. I walked along with her in silence, and then she told me that on All Saints' Eve the dead return to their former homes, and candles are planted on their graves for them to see their way and food is put for them in their homes. This food is afterwards given to the poor. The returning spirits form a procession to visit the churches, and oil, *minestra* (Italian form of saffron-flavoured porridge with vegetables etc.), and macaroni are placed on the window sills of the house for them when they pass. The children bore holes in pumpkins for eyes on that night, lighting them with tapers inside to personify the heads of their grandfathers and grandmothers. Anyone wishing to see the procession hides behind the baptismal font, with their chin on a fork and a black cat in the hand, but this is risky, because the spectator would die of fright on beholding a bad spirit. The wandering souls are allowed to remain in their houses until Epiphany, and from this comes the Roccaraso saying, "*Tutte le feste vade vije ; ne vvénga naje là Pifanije*". (All feasts come and go; Epiphany tarries.)

Anyone making the sign of the cross on entering a church leaves all sins behind, but they would be retaken if it were repeated on leaving the church. It is unlucky to hear a clock strike and a bell toll at the same time, for it means a second death on that day, but the ringing of bells is lucky, and this I learnt when we heard the clock strike

seven, for my peasant friend stopped talking and said,—"It is the voice of God who answers." She then told me that during the falling of a star a soul would be delivered from Purgatory if a *Pater* were said, and that baptism upon the same day as birth will also set a soul free.

I asked to be told more about the cemetery and the spirits, but it was in vain, and we began to talk of the *fata* (*pl. fate*), who, although beautiful, good, generous, and playful at times, becomes terrible in revenge for slights. The woman told me how once a little boy of ten was alone, playing outside the village. For some reason the *fate* carried him off into the wood *Calvario*, where for three days they fed him on coagulated blood and struck him morning and evening with a live serpent, which wound itself round his body. Giorgio Solimbeni, a good and simple boy, often played his bagpipes, and then the *fate* came, and he learnt their song. When alone and wanting to see them, he had only to play their dance and they circled round him, but remained invisible to everyone else. One evening he was with friends who got drunk, and he played his pipes. As usual the *fate* came, visible to him only, but instead of their accustomed gaiety they were in a rage. Giorgio's legs gave way, and he fell, paralysed all over. His friends carried him home to bed, and there he would have remained all his life, but one day he asked his mother for his pipes. He played the *fate's* dance, and they appeared all in white with wreaths of roses round their fair hair. Hand in hand they danced, but when he stopped playing they vanished, and to his mother's astonishment he put the pipes aside and got out of bed healed.

I asked if there were any means by which the goodwill of the *fate* could be assured. This may be done on the

third night after the birth of a baby by covering the table in the room of the mother and child with a white cloth, fresh from the wash, and putting on it a glass of water and a slice of white bread. At midnight, when the *fate* arrive, they look at the table. If all is to their liking they drink the water and eat a little bread. They dance round it in an invisible circle, and then go and look at the baby and assign its fate. To a very poor baby they may say,—"*Signorino*, *cavaliere*, *baroncino*" (gentleman, knight, little baron), while to a rich one it may be, "*Poverino*" (poor little one). In the morning the mother looks at her baby's cheeks, to see if there is a lucky kiss-mark. If there is this mark, a family feast is given, but should the child's nose be a little pinched the child will die, and a coffin is prepared. Sometimes the *fate* take the baby and throw it either into the middle of the room or into a corner, and this means that it will grow up stupid or unlucky.

It does not do to laugh when preparing the cloth on the table. Once a half-drunk father laughed, and when everyone was asleep he ate all the bread and drank the water, thinking what a joke it was to have "done" the *fate*. At midnight the baby cried loudly, waking its mother; the cries came from outside the room. The mother, terrified, awoke her husband. The cries stopped, he rushed to the fireplace and blew up the brands, and the parents looked everywhere for their child; they again heard cries, this time from under the oven, and there they found the baby with three little pigs. They washed it and put it back to bed, making up the fire to keep the room light. But they had barely fallen asleep when the cries again woke them, and this time they found the child in the trough. Next morning there was no mark

on the baby's nose, and it was known that he would live, but when he ate solid food he always re-chewed it like ruminants, and, when he was grown up, on being asked his name he could only repeat—"Plumb, plumb, plumb." If he were asked his age, to the end of his life he answered, —"Three and a half months."

I could not persuade the peasant woman to tell me any more: I think she was afraid she had talked too much. Later I asked the priest, and he told me of the customs relating to burial. The way to the cemetery is so steep that it would be impossible to carry the body down in an ordinary coffin; a light open coffin is therefore made, which is the "common coffin," and this is taken down the mountain track on the shoulders of four men. In some cases it is carried on the head of a woman. New boots are put on the dead person, and a coin in the pocket to pay the passage over the Jordan river or "Josaphat valley." A godchild is the guide across this river or valley, and, if the child dies before its godfather, it waits to lead him across. Should the godfather die first, the child's guardian angel will guide the godfather. If the dead man is unmarried, flowers are put in his mouth. The coffin is followed by menfolk wrapped in mantles, and then come the women folk, crying and reciting *stornelli* (rhymes or verses).

When anyone is ill, if the lamp flame in the church burns steadily all will be well, but if it flickers death may be expected. The souls of dead relations appear before anyone dying, in the form of butterflies, calling "Friend." They are generally white, and those flying round a light are pitied because they have come from Purgatory. It is a good omen for them to alight on anyone.

It is believed that the souls of the dying can penetrate

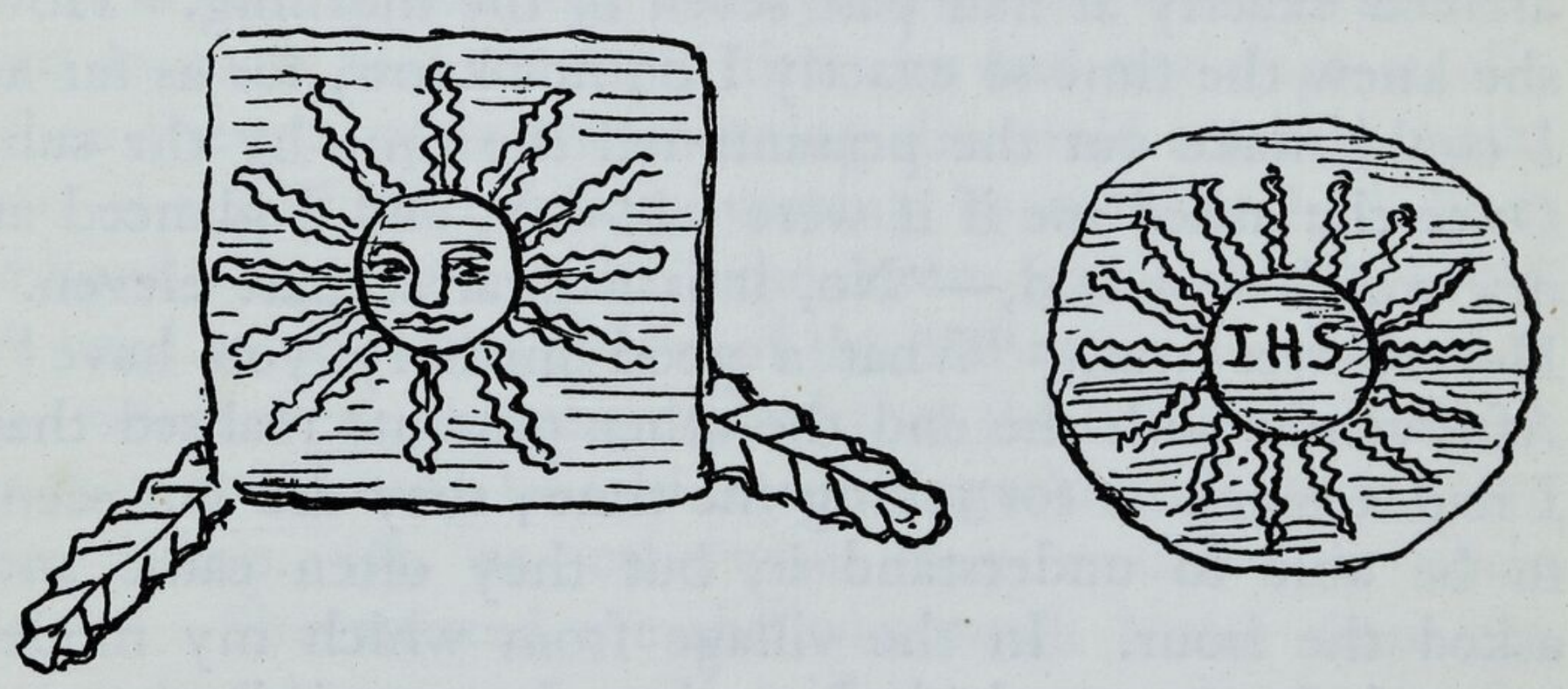
the onlookers, and therefore it is better to keep away from a bad person, but by breathing into the mouths of the dying three times, especially if this is done by a child, and each time asking the number for the *lotto* (lottery), the right number will come while dreaming; or, failing this, look under the wings of crickets to find the right number. If "Return, and tell me what goes on in the other world" is repeated three times, the spirit of the dead is certain to return, but this spirit will suffer because God does not wish us to know the future state, and the priest attending the dying therefore keeps people away.

After death a basin of water is thrown from the window in sign of tears, the door opened to allow the souls of ancestors to enter, and the windows opened to let in the angel who takes the soul to heaven. All water is thrown away, because the dead may have drunk of it. If a tear is taken from the eyes of the dying and their eyes rubbed with it, the dying person will go blind in the next world, but if anyone having a headache rubs his temples with it he will be cured of the pain.

When the bier becomes very heavy it is because the souls from Purgatory have met it and are resting on it, or it may become heavy with the weight of too many tears. Once a mother and sister wept so much that the bier could not be carried until they had stopped crying. Too many tears may also wet the dead man's shirt, and thereby prevent his soul from journeying on its way, and make its path too slippery.

The souls of those who have died unnatural deaths, not having been called by God, cannot find rest and have "to go on an errand" (*ji sperze*). At the masses for the dead on the 2nd November (All Saints' Day), the *drime sperze* kneel outside the church, as they are unable to

enter. Should there be a murder, the body is put in the middle of the room and all go and kiss it. On the murderer doing so the wound spirts blood on him, and he is discovered. He must clean away the blood from the ground and from the weapon he used, throwing this in the opposite direction from that in which he is going, as otherwise he could not run away or cross a river. During the funeral service relatives go to the home of the dead person and offer the *consolo* (consolation), which is a basket full of eatables. All relations dress in mourning, the widow and father and mother for one year, and the others for six months, and the menfolk let their beards grow. Near relatives, who never leave the sufferer during the last illness, weep in a remote part of the house, and do not go out for several days. The son recounts all the good his father has done for him, and publicly asks pardon for any grief caused to his father. After one month, and then again after a year, the relatives renew the ceremony. The requiem mass is repeated, and there is a mid-day dinner to which the relations, friends, and the priest are invited.



CHARDUSE.

Chapter IV.

Festas and Weddings.



At Prayer.

If a baby laugh in its sleep, "*ride nghe ll'angelé.*" [He laughs with the angels.]

BESIDES Maria, I had also arranged to paint a peasant from the next village, which was two hours away in the mountains. She was anxious to sit and did not mind the two hours' walk, and she always arrived exactly at half past seven in the morning. How she knew the time so exactly I do not know, for as far as I could make out the peasants tell the time by the sun. Once she asked me if it were mid-day, and I glanced at my watch and said,—"No, it is a quarter past eleven." Her answer was,—"What a good memory you have!" Afterwards both she and the other peasants realised that I had a machine for telling the time; they did not seem to be able to understand it, but they often came and asked the hour. In the village from which my model came there was no clock, but when she was sitting to me, once or twice we heard the hour strike from the church,

and she asked if I had heard the proverb which is the motto on the clock of the church at Santa Maria in Valle Porclaneta :—

"*Quanti tocchi do io qui dentro a sorte*	[As many strokes by destiny I give
Tanti passi dai tu verso la morte."	So many steps towards when thou'lt cease to live.]

I asked if she knew any other proverbs or sayings, and she said :—

Quando il Gran Sasso mette il capello,	[When Gran Sasso* puts his cap on,
Vendi le capre e fatti il mantello.	Sell the goat and get the cloak.
Quando il Gran Sasso cala le braghe,	When Gran Sasso sheds his breeches,
Vendi il mantello, fatti le capre.	Sell the cloak and get the goat.]

* The Gran Sasso is the highest mountain of the Apennines.

On the day before the festival of the Assumption of the Virgin, it was eight o'clock before my model arrived and she was very upset at being late, but said she could not help it for, when she went home the evening before, she had been looked at with the evil eye, and had been so swollen and in such pain all night that she had not slept at all ; when she got up in the morning she could scarcely walk, and she said that before coming to me she had been obliged to go to a witch who knew words which could be used to undo the charm of the evil eye. I asked what the words were, but she replied that she could not tell me as they could only be told to a stranger on Christmas Eve (see Chap. ii), as otherwise they would lose their power. She assured me she was much better since the words had been used, and without more ado she sat for me.

She said that menfolk who perform *facultura* (charming) only wear a white shirt and nothing else; I found that this dates from mediaeval days, and there is a picture of this subject in the museum at Aquila.

As long as my models kept still I encouraged them to talk and to tell me all they knew. The present model said that three times a year the waters of the Sangro turn red for about twenty-four hours, and rheumatic people, oxen, and horses are taken to bathe in them. The waters of the Pesca also turn red, but Pesca is female and therefore must not be trusted. It is not safe for a boy to wear a red necklace, for when grown up he could not cross water without danger of falling in it, because *lu rosce pijje la vista* (he would see a red apparition). The necklace should be white or some other colour than red. I tried to get my model to explain, but either she could not, or did not wish to do so. Generally red is a protective colour in Italy, and what she said struck me as curious. She would only tell me that, to find if there is *malocchio*, three drops of oil should be dropped in a dish; if they remain apart it does not exist, but if they join there is *malocchio*, and if this *occhiatura* (inspection) is done by a *donna maritata* (a married woman) the pain will go to the apron (*il dolore vada nella sinata*), and if by a widow it will go into the skirt (*se é fatto da una vedovella, se ne vada alla gonella*). We asked the priest about the colouring of the waters, and he explained it as due to the ochres and other earths washed down by the storms.

Naturally, my model was very excited about the portrait, and asked if she might call her sons, who were waiting below to see it. They came up, and when they had stood behind me watching me work for a few minutes she sent them away. When I had finished I told her she



My model who arrived late because she had been over-looked and had rheumatism as the result. Mascione.

PLATE V.]

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PLATE V.]



could also come and look. She stood in front of the drawing for a short time, and then she put up her hands and said,—"God bless thee for painting the petticoat like that!" (Plate IV.) She shook hands, and told me to be certain to come and see her when I went to her village. She said she had no time to go and see the preparations for the *festa* in Mascione, and after collecting her seven sons they all set out home, and then my father and I went off to see the fun in the village.

In the main street there was a kind of little market where various stuffs were spread out on the stones to be sold, and we were delighted when we saw some sour pears and garlic, for they were a great addition to our scanty provisions. Men and women shouted, gesticulated, quarrelled, bought, and slept, and donkeys and mules were tied up by the doors along all the narrow turnings. Various peasants felt my clothes and hair, and could not make out how the latter stayed up without the yards of tape with which they bind their own before putting it into a net and covering it with the headdress. Some of them said they were very poor and that I must be rich having come from so far, and they asked for money. I told them I never carried money with me, but if they waited a moment I would get them a little, and when I gave it to them they said it was blessed!

We next went to see the church. There were women and children kneeling in one long row by the door, telling their beads. Before the altar was another group of women, and others were in different parts of the church. Many of the statues were already decked with paper flowers and ribbons, and had lighted candles in front of them. We stood by one of the pillars, when suddenly a woman on the other side of the church jumped

up, ran across, found two rickety chairs, and told us to sit on them; we thanked her and obediently sat down, and she returned to her place by the door. The women by the high altar kissed its steps and moved along on their knees to the statue of the Virgin, which was on the left side ready to be carried in the procession the next day. They kissed the ground in front of the statue or the statue itself, while others rubbed it with their hands and kissed their fingers, and then they repeated prayers and went on to the other images, doing the same thing until they had been to every saint or relic in the church. Some of them then knelt in different places, mostly near the middle of the church, where they repeated prayers to all the four corners of the globe by facing each quarter in turn. I was wondering what would happen next, when the door opened and the priest entered. Catching sight of us he came towards us, and raising his three-cornered hat he held out his hand. I therefore shook hands, but it rather surprised me, as, wherever else I have been in the mountains, priests never shake hands with a woman. He then said he had heard of us, that he was sorry he had not seen us before, but that he had always been asleep whenever we had been to his house. He offered to show us the altar candlesticks and a picture, and knowing that I was interested in the customs of the place he called several of the women who were kneeling in the church. He described to me all their peculiarities as they waited their turn to be looked at, then he took off their headdresses and hair nets, and showed me what hair they had twisted up in the yards of tape. He also pointed out their brilliant striped petticoats under their bulky skirts. They all seemed immensely pleased, especially the ugliest of them. He said she was the ugliest woman in the place, that she

was old and had no hair but a beard and only two teeth, and that I ought to paint her! There she stood and grinned. She was very ugly, but she seemed immensely pleased with the notice taken and kept shaking me by the hand. They all chattered at once. One woman told me about the Novena of San Pantallone, but she got mixed up with all the interruptions of the other women, who began about witches. Then the priest straightened things out, and said that should anyone wish to see San Pantallone, a big hairy man who will appear and write three numbers which are correct for the lottery, the person must remain in a closed dark room for nine days, and few have the courage to persist: in the room there may only be bread and water on a small table, a pen and ink, and lighted candle, and no nails or images of any sort. Another woman told me that if I had a headache I should say nine *Ave Marias* and at the same time make the sign of the cross three times on the forehead, thrice over the right eye, and thrice over the left, and this should be followed by saying a *Gloria Patri*. I could also be cured if maize leaves taken from my mattress,—(mattresses are filled with dried maize leaves),—were put near the fireplace with a branch of palm from Palm Sunday over them. Then in the name of the *Santissima Trinità* three crosses must be signed, and the branch broken into three pieces and laid down in the form of a triangle.

After this a plateful of water should be placed over the triangle, nine embers taken from the fire with a pair of scissors, in the name of the *Padre*, *Figliolo*, and *Spirito Santo*, and the sign of the cross made over the plate. Then the nine embers must be thrown into the water, and the sign of the cross made for each ember. If they all sink the evil eye has struck, and if all float then there

is no evil eye, but if part sink and part float the evil eye has only partly succeeded. Finally, the finger should be put in the water in the name of the *Santissima Trinità*, the charcoal embers rubbed over the palms of the hands, the joints of the arms, and the eyes, and this will cure headache!

If I, in my turn, wished to harm anyone, I must obtain secretly something belonging to my enemy. This must be given to someone who has the power of *fatturare* (charming) and who will secretly make the appropriate *fattura*. When I return the object to my enemy, he or she will become *fatturata* (bewitched), the devil entering into them. The devil "can only be got out again" by taking the person *fatturata* to the Sanctuary, for the protector saint to exercise his grace.

I kept edging towards the church door, as I felt I would prefer the chattering to continue outside, and I asked the priest if he would come for a walk and tell me more. I was much relieved when he consented and when all the women trotted off to continue their prayers. The priest told us a piece of traditional history. He said that the inhabitants of Amatrice, Campotosto, Poggio, Cancelli, and Mascione have still the name of Jews, because after the conquest of Jerusalem the Emperor Titus took 70,000 Jews to Rome as slaves, and his mother, who was then living at Amatrice, asked him to send some of them to populate and till the land. He then said there were many interesting church festivals throughout the Abruzzi, and he began by telling me about S. Vincenzo, where he said that oval huts, made with canes and covered by *pannoni* (rough cloths) are still seen, and these are possibly of prehistoric origin. Wine is drunk and sold there, and a roasted pig, the traditional Abruzzese dish, may still be

obtained. This pig is said to record the wild boar (*aper*), from which *Aprutium* (Abruzzo) may be derived. The wild boar is in the coat of arms of the Abruzzi.

The priest told us that the Feast of S. Vincenzo de' Paoli at Villamagna was held on the day following the last Sunday in August; a stage was erected outside the principal village gate, and beds arranged on it as in a hospital. Peasants who pretended to be ill lay on the beds, imploring grace from the saint, while other peasants, dressed as sisters of charity, nursed them and gave them medicine. Towards mid-day a procession came out of the church, passed through the five principal streets, and stopped in front of the stage, mortars and guns being fired on its arrival. A peasant disguised as a doctor in a long frock-coat and top hat came and felt the pulses and examined the chests and tongues of the would-be patients, who mimiced real complaints. The doctor made many jokes, but ended finally by making the people understand that he had given up all hope of his patients living. The next to appear was a country priest in a funny dress. He began saying prayers for the dying people, but all the time he smiled and took tobacco out of a large snuff-box. Then the rattling of chains was heard, under the beds where Satan crouched, waiting for the souls of the dying. Until then the crowd had enjoyed the joke, but at the sight of the devil it was assailed by a sense of horror and invoked the intervention of the saint. The sheet behind which he was hidden dropped, and S. Vincenzo was seen in all his glory. On recognising him, Satan flew into a rage, for he was unable to cope with him, or conquer him; he struggled about, rattling his chains, and at last went down to his infernal domain, that is to say, under the stage. The patients then began to move, open their

eyes, and, kneeling with clasped hands, in a loud voice they thanked the saint for the grace granted them; the spectators took off their hats and joined in the thanksgiving. This representation was introduced in the seventeenth century, but it has been discontinued, because once, when the devil was fighting against the saint, the stage gave way, and the patients fell among the beds and planks, and were injured; but, in spite of this, the Villamagnesi still wish to have it again.

The priest then asked if I knew about the feast of the *misteri* and the procession of Corpus Domini at Campobasso, where there are tableaux vivants (*misteri*). These *misteri*, in former days known as *ingegni*, are carried on the menfolk's shoulders, and the groups represent stories from the lives of saints and other religious subjects. They appear to be suspended in the air without means of support, and are carried in triumph round the village. They then form a line in front of the church to receive the benediction. The *misteri* were invented in 1730 by Paolo di Zinno of Campobasso. There were eighteen originally, but in 1805, after an earthquake, the Church of the Trinity fell, and six were destroyed.

Another procession which is of great interest is held on July 13th at Villamagna. The tradition is that in the sixteenth century the village was saved from the Saracens through the intervention of S. Margherita. This saint appeared in the sky, and a bar of fire descended to prevent the Saracens from entering the village. Their riders were also frightened away by a sudden meteor, lightning, and heavy hail, and the village was saved. The assailants then wished to adore the saint, and their commander took their feathers, decorating them with jewels from his own turban, and presented them to the church, where they

remained for about two centuries. In the procession a double row of young women, each carrying a *staio* (copper pan or measure) on their heads filled with corn, walk in front of S. Margherita to a small church outside the village. In the middle of the corn bunches of basil are placed. They are tied with red ribbon and fixed in a bow with the image of the Saint at one end and at the other a *tarallo* (a cake of corn dough). After the saint, come the young men, mostly carabinieri. They have gay button-holes and long poles decorated with ears of corn and brightly coloured feathers at the top. Over a hundred girls follow, each bringing offerings of corn. When the procession arrives at the church, guns and mortars are fired. About eighteen or twenty peasants, dressed in old materials with coloured silk turbans and mantles, and carrying swords, arrows, and weapons of all kinds, some riding and some walking, represent Saracens. They shoot with bows, and the children collect the arrows.

When the Saint is put in position, four Saracens, two riding and two walking, advance to about forty steps from him; one of the robbers makes a fire, and their commander orders two others to mount guard. He then rides back with the fourth, giving the order to march on, and the statue is taken towards the village gate. The commander, preceded by a trumpeter, followed by his force, marches to relieve the guard. More arrows are shot, and the riders brandish their swords right and left. At about fifty steps from the gate, a large timber bar covered with lighted material falls, barring the way. The robbers throw themselves on their faces, the riders crouch trembling on their horses' necks, and the procession is again formed, and returns to the church, the Saracens following. They enter and prostrate themselves in

penitence before S. Margherita, and then flee from the village. Offerings of corn are presented, and a register is kept of each donor. This ends the *festa*.

I could not stop longer to talk, as the afternoon light was exactly right for me to finish the sketch of the shepherd in Plate I, and I asked the priest if he would tell me more in the evening.

After finding the shepherd's wife and telling her that I wanted her husband, she told me to go on and that he would follow. I heard the distant sound of piping growing louder and clearer as it came nearer, and on top of a ridge I saw the shepherd piping, *lo zampognaro* (bag-piper), followed by all the gaily clad children and girls of the village,—a veritable Pied Piper. The pipe went off in a queer wail when he took it out of his mouth, and he shouted to the children to remain at a distance. He came and sat himself down, and went on piping, the children and girls sitting at a respectful distance on the ridges. Gradually they crept and crawled closer, and now and then a head bobbed up from behind a stone or tussock. I was not going to have them (with all their fleas) quite near to me, and I said that only the wife of the piper and his children might come, and there they squatted, leaning their chins on my shoulder and eating the seed of a kind of vetch which everyone seemed to like. It began to rain, and I gave them my umbrella to hold, but it was not until it was raining in torrents and blowing a regular gale that I got up and found that with skirts and petticoats over their heads the rest of the village was still waiting for me. We all went home in the downpour in a kind of state procession. With their skirts over their heads and wrapped all round them, and their *conche* of water, they looked just like Egyptians, and they walked in a free easy Eastern way.

Next day was as fine and as hot as ever, and we went off to see the *festa*. Two carabinieri had come for the occasion, and they paraded up and down outside the church. Everyone had on their Sunday best, and the peasants who came from the neighbouring village had handkerchiefs and gowns of every imaginable colour. Groups of them stood outside the church, the boys and men on one side, and the women on the other. The church was crowded with peasants sitting cross-legged on the floor, and they only knelt at the Elevation of the Host. We waited outside, and everyone made way for us and prevented boys and children from getting in front, for they were most anxious to enable us to have a good view. Gradually the procession began to form up, men and boys carrying all the statues of the saints and banners. About the middle of the procession came the image of the Virgin, more banners, and chanting priests. Our friend the priest stopped the procession for us to have more time to look, and then went on again, followed by other statues and banners. Shots were fired and fireworks went off, the procession, followed by all the peasants, wending its way to the village and up a steep ridge to a small chapel. It was lost to sight, but we began to hear the singing again as the procession came down over the mountain-side on its return to the church. Some peasants then went off hunting and we wished them good luck, but their faces darkened and they said they feared that now they would not be successful, for it was an ill omen and brought bad luck if anyone wished them good luck. The rest of the day was spent in feasting and merrymaking, and a dance which was got up just outside our windows. A circle was formed, leaving a space in the middle about five feet across. It was four or five people deep, and from it

every now and then a man danced into the middle, seizing a woman or dancing in front of her to make her dance with him. The dance consisted of many very cleverly done steps, something like a Scotch reel mixed with an Eastern dance, but it was all so quick that it was difficult to follow. The general effect was a rhythmical swaying of the body, the legs being thrown out sideways. The women always danced with their hands on their hips, and confined themselves to the quicker movements. The partners faced each other, and sometimes two couples danced together, forming a figure of four. Now and then they ended by seizing their partners round the waist and with the quickest steps whirled them round the circle of peasants, before dropping aside into it and letting another couple take their place. If they went on dancing too long, the company either shouted at them, or another man began to dance, sweeping them aside until he had cleared the sandy circle for his lady and could dance in front of her before taking her into the middle, or the circle closed in until there was no more dancing room. A man standing on a chair played the accordion, and the dancing and shouting continued until it began to get dusk.

We had our usual evening meal, and again went to the window to watch the dancing. We heard the sounds of a guitar and fiddle, and were told this was the *saltarella*. A boy and girl faced each other jumping and turning without touching and in time with the music until they became giddy or another couple took their place; the boy placed his hands on his hips, and the girl held the corners of her apron or placed her hands on her hips, but after a little while the couple held each other's hands and went round; or the girl knelt and her partner called, "Who has stolen thy heart?" She answered "So and so," throwing

her handkerchief as a pledge to the youth named. He then danced with her and then knelt, in his turn inviting another partner to dance.

One of the peasants whom we had seen when we first arrived sitting at the committee round the table,—but now in his Sunday best,—shouted to us to come down. He made room for us in the crowd, and said he wanted to tell us that at Mascione, when the *saltarella* is danced, if lovers quarrel, the man or the woman kneels and asks, "*Cosa hai fatto?*" (What hast thou done?) "*Mi hanno rubato il cuore.*" (My heart has been stolen.) "*Chi te l'a rubato?*" (Who has stolen it from thee?) "*Giovanni*" (the young man with whom she has quarrelled). She throws her handkerchief at him as a pledge of love, rises and dances, and makes her peace. Or it may be the man who kneels, and has the same questions put to him.

During the evenings the peasants used to climb the first flight of stone stairs of the *municipio*, and sit in the little room where there was nothing save the large open fire-place, some ashes from a long-ago lighted fire, a table, candles fixed in bottles, and chairs, which we collected. There they told us many strange superstitions from this and from the neighbouring villages, which they absolutely believed.

It was on the evening of the dance, and just before we were leaving for Aquila, that the priest joined this little party of peasants who gathered in the bare stone room to tell me more customs and stories before we left. Mervi, who was less shy than the others, always came, and he told most. On this particular evening, with the help of the priest, he went through all I had written down, and I got the descriptions of the marriage customs and super-stitions quite clear. He said that, when a couple are to

be married, at the Sunday Mass the priest makes the *sgrido* (announcement of banns) from the altar. He announces the proposed marriage, and on hearing the *sgrido* everyone makes a noise in the church. A week before the wedding the *sposa* (bride) arranges her trousseau in a *cassone* (chest), the bridegroom coming to fetch it with a cart drawn by oxen and cows, adorned with ribbons on their horns and with handkerchiefs. These decorations become the property of the owner of the animals. *Conche* (water-pots), pillows, counterpanes, and other utensils are piled up on the *cassone* and called the *carriaggio*. The *zampogne* (bagpipes) are played as the party go to the house.

On the eve of the marriage an inventory (*adubbo*) of the trousseau is made, and early next morning the bride is dressed in a silk or woollen gown, according to her estate. The colour is a vivid red, purple, blue, or yellow, and according to the wealth of the bridegroom the sizes vary of the golden rings, earrings, and coral beads worn by the bride. The bridegroom's jacket (*grippetto*) is of the same material and colour as the bride's gown, and his trousers are brightly coloured, generally purple. The firing of firearms announces the departure for the church, and confetti are thrown right and left along the way, while the *zamponari* (bagpipe players) play the *piagnareccia* (weeping song).

The bride goes first between two weeping women, and the bridegroom follows next, and when they arrive one of the young men throws a glass or a bottle of wine against the wall of the house, as a sign of merriment. After the marriage the *sposi* (married couple) go home mounted on mules, amidst more firing of mortars and throwing of confetti. The relations ride horses.

Next comes the dinner, consisting of two or more thick soups (*minestre*), many sweets, confetti, wines, and liquors, and the *conocchia* (distaff, symbol of work) is taken to the bride, and the relations bring flasks of wine for everyone to drink. The bridegroom gives the glass to the bride, saying,—"Drink, signora sposa." She drinks, and is greeted with much applause and clapping of hands.

The local poet next announces the wedding toast *ferlinghina*. This name is taken from the old coin *ferlina*, which was paid him for his song. After dinner the relations weep, and when the bride marries someone from a distance, they weep all the more. The ceremony ends with more eating, and the *saltarella*, accompanied by citterns, violin, and *ciciombri* (cymbals), is danced.

After eight days the newly-married receive the *eanvita* (invitation), and the ceremony is again gone through. When the couple set out home, the bride kisses her father's and mother's hands; they cry and call her, but she follows the *carriaggio*, which is drawn by a she-mule with bells and a rose in front made of paste. A horse is also loaded with part of the trousseau and everything covered by a coloured cloth, which is generally made by the bride, and on this are put her pillows. The mother-in-law awaits the cortege on the threshold, but the eldest relation, who accompanies the bride, says they do not want to give her up until the mother-in-law gives her a ham with the *coda bone* (or best) end. Bread is also asked for sometimes. When these are delivered, the bride is admitted, and the *carriaggio* given her.

At Preturo there are differences in the marriage customs. When the bride marries outside the village, a ribbon is put across the road, and besides giving a *prosciutto* (ham)

she has to pay ten or fifteen lire to pass. After the marriage the mother-in-law with other relations go to see her, and put a red silk ribbon round her waist. They also give her a coral necklace. Next morning, to show her activity, the *sposa* rushes with her *conca* to be the first to reach the fountain.

Here is a bridegroom's serenade, which the priest gave me, together with the carnival songs:—

SERENATA DELLO SPOSO.

Occhio morello e cuore di diamante,	[Brown eyes and heart of diamond,
Se mille volte da questa strada passo	If a thousand times this road I pass
Tu sei l'allegria di questo mio cuore.	Thou art the joy of my heart.
Saranno le tue vicine che tieni avanti,	Thy neighbours who before,
Che vogliano menarne il tradimento	Who before meant to betray,
A te non ti hanno cosa da dire,	To thee they have nothing to say,
Ed a me non mi hanno cosa da fare.	To me they have no harm to inflict.
Che per stutare il foco ci vuole acqua,	As water is wanted to extinguish the fire,
E per scocchiare a noi, ci vuol la morte.	So to ruin us both death is wanted.
Di buone sere te ne lascio sette,	I wish to leave you seven happy evenings,
Tre gigli e tre viole, ed una rosa in petto.	Three lilies and three violets, and one rose on your bosom.
Questo lo dico a te, palma d'argento,	This I tell thee, palm of silver,
Che non mandi il nostro amore a tradimento.	Do not betray our love.]

SONG.

Ho risoluto di farmi romito,
Giacchè da tutti son abbandonato.

L'abito mi è venuto da Carrito,

Ed il campanello me l'applico al dito.

Porta per porta cerco la carità,

E vo alla porta della bella mia.
Lei mi risponde in buona grazia,
"Non siete romito, ma lo sposo mio!
Di buone sere te ne lascio tante

Per quanto ne desidera la tua mente,
Questo lo dico a te, spica di grano,
Lascio la buona sera alla tua ziana
Un' altra cosa mi ero dimenticato,
Di lasciar la buona sera alla madre tua."

[I have resolved to be a hermit,
For by everyone I am abandoned.
To me the gown has come from Carrito,
To my finger the bell I attach,
From door to door I beg for charity,
And I go to that of my beloved.
She replies with a good grace,
"Thou art not a hermit, but my betrothed!
Of good (happy) evenings I wish to leave you as many
As thy mind will wish.
This I say to thee, ear of corn,
I wish the happy evening to thy aunt,
Something else I have forgotten,
The good (happy) evening to thy mother to leave."]

CARNEVALE.

Carnevale puorche grasse
Se vennè lu caatenacce!
E la figlia pe dispiette
Se vennè ru scualitte!
La moglie pe dolore
Se vennè ru caltarone!
La nonna pe paura
Se brusciè la gonne ncure!

[CARNIVAL.

Carnival fat pig
Sold the door bolt!
And the daughter in spite
Sold the warming pan!
And the wife for grief
Sold the great saucepan!
And the grandmama in fright
She burnt the dark skirt (petticoat)!

Carnevale picchè t'e môrte?
Pane e vino nu te mancheaa,

L'anzalata steva all'uorto,
Carnevale picchè t'e môrte?

Carnival why didst thou die?
Bread and wine were not wanting to thee,
The salad was in the orchard,
Carnival, why didst thou die?]

A few days before we left for Aquila we sent a message for a cart to come and meet us at the end of the road, and we said good-bye to the peasants, who wished us a good journey and told us to come again. They put our baggage on to a mule, and, as usual, balanced it with a stone under the cord on the opposite side. To make me extra comfortable, and as a parting good wish, they spread a sheepskin on my mule and fixed a basket on each side, telling me to sit astride with a foot in each basket. We set out down the stony river-bed amidst the waving hands of the peasants, and when we turned to look back they still waved to us until they were hidden by the steep bank of the river bed. When we got to the road, the cart, of course, was not there, but our shepherd, whom I had painted and who had walked with us, said that probably three women might be coming up in a little cart with only one horse, or perhaps a cart and oxen might be going down, and it would arrive in nine or ten hours. We were very hungry, our own provisions having been finished several days before, and we did not like either idea, and still less the prospect of going back to the village and having nothing beyond sour bread and mildewy sausages. At last the little conveyance came, and, there being no other alternative, we took it. We wished to be at Aquila before dark, and so could not give the horse much rest, and the poor beast did fifty miles in one day. We said we thought this far too much, but were told that it was quite the usual thing for the animals to leave Aquila

in the early hours of the morning and return the same day, and they certainly did not seem to suffer from it. Some hours later we saw a cart with two horses coming along at full tilt, and this proved to be the vehicle we had ordered to arrive at six or seven in the morning to give the horses four hours' rest before starting again. We changed our conveyance and left the empty one to follow us, but our new driver insisted on keeping within speaking distance of the other man, and we got on very slowly. We were told that we could go by another and a shorter road, but it could only be used in going down, as it was steep. I think the driver really wanted to take this way because it went through a village where he could give a message to his lady love. It was just as long, if not longer, but we were glad we did not miss it. When we came to the chalky part of the mountains, there was a track only just wide enough for the cart to pass, and it went steep down the mountain side and zig-zagged into the valley. The wheels sank into the chalk, and when we reached the valley and still went along in the deep furrows, we saw ridge behind ridge of pinnacled chalk close at our side, rising right up the slopes of the mountains. They looked like the walls of a fairy palace. For a long time we drove along this fantastic way, the other horse and driver carefully following in our furrows, and at last we came to one or two almond orchards against the brilliant white background. The track gradually widened and became sandy, and went by an open space of burnt grass. To the right were the white walls of a village, enclosing fruit-trees, and beyond were the tumble-down houses. We saw a great crowd of peasants, and it was evident something was going on. We jumped out to see what was happening. There was a cart piled up with furniture of all kinds, copper pots,

cooking utensils, stuffs, costumes, brooms, boots and shoes, and stockings hanging all round the edge. It was drawn by a decked-out horse, and the last things were being piled on before it went to the future home of a bride, who was to be married next day. This was her trousseau, but we could not see her, for she was shut up in her own house until the time came for her to be married. The peasants were laughing, gesticulating, and shouting, but nothing more seemed likely to happen and we went on our way. Farther on we came to the village where the driver's lady love lived. He seemed to be known by most people in the place, for out of nearly every dark archway and window someone shouted to him. It was a very tumble-down village, and it was evident that not much notice had been taken of the damage done by the last earthquake. There were arches from one side of the street to the other, some broken and some whole, ruined walls and broken windows, and all kinds of weird dark passages, doorways, and cellars. Suddenly our driver jumped off and darted into a doorway. We waited for some time, and at last called him, for it was getting late. He came out laughing and talking, followed by strange, rough-looking men, and we drove on. He delivered various messages by shouting at people as he passed, and he wanted to go off again, but we firmly refused. He said he must wait for his friend the other driver, and he walked the horses very slowly along. At last we persuaded him to hurry. In about two hours' time we came in sight of Aquila. There it lay along the top of a slope, with its roofs of unequal height and its *campanili* (belfries), and we saw the women going to and from the fountains with their *conche* on their heads. The custom guards saluted as we passed through the gateway, and we once again heard the everlasting sound of beating copper.



S. Stefano, from the road.

PLATE VI.]

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Chapter V.

S. Stefano and Castel del Monte.



Calascio.

Se vuoi gabbare il tuo vicino ?
Coricati presto ed alzati di mattino.

[Would you fool your neighbour by your lies ?
Go early to bed and early arise.]
—*Archiprete* (*Castel del Monte*.)

AT half past five next morning we set out on another expedition into the mountains. We went out of Aquila and down the hill and along the white road which had fascinated me more than all the others. It was almost level for some distance, and on either side were dried-up fields, and on the right a little stream about a foot wide with a fringe of poplars and willow herb along its banks which looked refreshingly cool. A stream is

unusual, and in certain places in the Abruzzi we were told there is no rain for eight months and the trains are used to supply water. Peasants, lumbering oxen, and their creaky carts passed. We saw a woman threshing corn with a flail by the roadside, and then we came to the first village. Little boys with nothing on save torn shirts, and small girls dressed only in blue or red cotton frocks, rolled and played in the sun and sand, or stood gaping and staring at us. By the trickle of water, women were kneeling and washing their clothes and spreading them out on the ground to dry. We went on down the shadeless road, and were thankful when for a short way it was bordered by olive and almond orchards. Sky and mountains were a clear intense blue, with the grey olive foliage and baked yellow earth contrasting with them. The almonds were a pale delicate green, but as we looked at them the colour seemed to disappear into light and everything was bathed in the hot shimmering atmosphere. The road led upwards, turning to the left, and we stopped a moment by one or two broken-down houses where children were playing and peasants eating slices of water melon and drinking coloured waters. Then we went on through twisted olives and burnt-up country until we reached a fairly large village surrounded by threshing-floors (*aje*). It was the first time we had been close to these threshing-floors. They were large spaces from which the stones had been cleared away and piled up round the edges, making them look as if they were surrounded by low stone walls. Some of them were paved with small square stones and others were of beaten earth. They were all along the south side of the village, and some were in amongst the olive orchards. Everyone seemed to be out, men, women, and children all working and chattering in

the broiling sun. On one *aja* a woman was holding four or five roped oxen, swishing her whip in the air while they went slowly round and round, treading the grain. On another a man had horses, donkeys, and mules all roped together, and sometimes there were also oxen, but this did not seem so satisfactory, for they only walked, while the mules and horses trot round quickly. Men or women also ran round and round with the animals, the glaring sun pouring down on them. When they were tired, they flung themselves on the ground to rest, and other peasants and animals took their place. There were stacks of corn everywhere of all shapes and sizes, and the resting animals stood in their shade whilst the peasants with brilliant kerchiefs and petticoats sat drinking from terra-cotta pots. In other places the winnowing was carried on by men, women, and children. They had large wooden forks and heart-shaped wooden spades with which they tossed up the grain and straw, letting the chaff fall to one side. This is done several times, and then the grain is sifted and spread out on sheets to dry in the sun. The straw and chaff is used for burning lime, a man continually throwing it into a fire. This man sleeps in a straw shelter, and has a black scarecrow to keep away the dogs.

The road now turned sharp to the left by some beautiful old olives, and under their shade were various groups of resting peasants and animals. The peasants were eating the seed of a kind of vetch. We stopped to rest, and they told us that "*Riscordemi*" is a good herb, and junket made with goats' milk and flavoured with almonds is delicious. They added that there was once an *aja* where a peasant threshed his corn on S. Giovanni's Day; the ground opened, and he and his assistants and oxen were engulfed

in the opening, which afterwards became filled with water. On S. Giovanni's Eve every passer-by hears the belling of the oxen and the cries of the buried, and a similar disaster happened to a *cavallero* at Aquila on S. Maddalena's Day.

We watched children who were playing. To choose who was to start a game they made a circle, one of them standing in the centre and with his fingers striking the breast of each, beginning with himself, according to the accents marked in the following words, and the choice falling on the child to whom *schiatt* is allotted.

Vill, villùtu
Cavall pizztùu,
Chi file, e chi tesse,
Cavàll sin èsce
Esce fratene cunsuprine,
Và lla guerre pi sparti,
Ti sparti li tricc
Ùn, dù, trè, e schiatt.

[The velvet
Horse thin,
The one spins, the other weaves,
The horse goes.
The brother cousin goes out,
He goes to war to shoot,
To shoot the hits
One, two, three, and dies.]

The first game they played was *Tatamellone*, in which one boy kneels blindfolded in the centre. His companions place themselves round him, their right hands over his head. The chief goes round and says,—"*Chi port da Roma?*" (What do you bring from Rome?) The chief answers,—"*Na rimangella*" (A lemon). The kneeling boy says,—"*Dammi na fella*" (Give me a slice). The chief sings,—"*Mi ni vado nituorno nituorno.* (I go round and round). *Mi la capa la maja donna.* (I choose my wife, the best woman)."

Then he touches the shoulder of one of his companions, who then lays hold on the back of his jacket, going round with him while he repeats the formula "*Tatamellone*," etc.,

and so on until all the companions form a row behind him, holding each other's jackets. Then the blindfolded boy gets up and tries to catch the chief, asking him for a hen (one of the companions). He refuses, and a fight takes place between the two to catch one of the players, who is in the row behind the chief. This continues until the blindfolded boy catches all the players, who are thus gradually excluded from the game.

The children then began a game of blind man's buff. To choose the first one to be blindfolded they said, standing with legs apart :—

Trèspe, trèspe, cantate,
Uno sceije, e uno lava,
Uno prega Santo Vite,
Che rimanna m'buon maritu.
M'buon maritu sta a ru liette.
Che rimanna ti cumbiette.

[Three legs, three legs, sing,
One chooses, one washes,
One prays to St. Vitus,
Let him send me a good husband.
My good husband stays in bed.
Let him send sweets.]

It was too hot to join in the games, and we sat under an olive by the resting peasants, who told us that at the fairs there are wrestlers, and a sheep is hung by its feet and riders with sabres gallop past it at full speed, the winner being he who cuts its head clean off. An old man, weather-beaten and brown, with a baby on his knee, said that in *il gioco del formaggio* (the game of the cheese) a string is tied tightly round a *pizza* of cheese. This string is to fling the *pizza*, and he who throws the *pizza* to the farthest point wins it for himself.

We always found it comparatively easy to get the peasants to tell us about such matters as games or traditional stories, but to persuade them to tell us of their own personal superstitions was another matter and took much more time to gain their confidence than one could spend in just

resting by the roadside. They described how in another game two players stand a few yards apart, each with a stick in his right hand with its end in a ditch. One player begins by throwing a peg towards his companion with his left hand, and the other must hit it back with his stick, replacing the stick in the ditch; then the first player must send back the peg in the same way and so on. When a player fails he pays a fine to the other player, and the player who pays the most fines is naturally the loser. The children told us that when the fireflies come out at dusk they put them under a mortar and believe they will turn into new coins, and they say:—

Luci capella, vien a mne,
Che sso chin belle
Viena, viena natta natta,
Ca ci truovi la ciaciavatta.

[Firefly, come to me,
That I am more beautiful
Come, come slowly, slowly
That thou wilt find the slipper.]

New coins they think shine like fireflies. Then they sang us a little song:—

WEDDING PRESENTS SONG.

E'sse manucce tue merdano anella,
E'sse recchiucce 'n pare de fioccaglie,
E'sse cannuccia 'n filo de coraglie,
E quannu vie l'amor l'attacche e scioglie.

[And thy little hands deserve rings,
And thy little ears a pair of earrings,
And thy little throat a thread of coral,
And when love comes it gives and takes.]

We again resumed our journey, and we passed a church with some good bits of moulding and an iron cross on a stone base in the middle of a small patch of grass. The road led up into the mountains, and we left the village far beneath us. In the valley along which we had come with

range beyond range of mountains behind it we saw stone houses, the dull red roofs, the church, the busy *aje*, and the olive orchards, and beyond all was bareness and stones. We were approaching another barren ridge, and it appeared to have immense boulders along its crest, but when we drew nearer we saw they were the ruins of a castle. There was a change in the air, and clouds came sweeping up over and down the peaks, and the clear blue mountains, stones, and ruined castle changed to every shade of pink, purple, and grey. Stretching away there was nothing save the bareness and stony ridges with ruined castles and rocks jutting out. It looked just as if some savage spirits had piled up beautiful palaces and then joining in a rage with storm and earthquake suddenly destroyed them, leaving the remains in utter solitude. The road twisted, going along the side of a steep slope hundreds of feet beneath, and covered with loose stones, and then it led between the ridges, some of which showed large holes in their gleaming white sides, evidently the entrances to caves. These caves are deep grottos cut in the mountain where the peasants keep potatoes all the year round. Each cave has a wooden door guarding the entrance. Were they hiding places from the fury of past destruction, we wondered? A bend in the road brought us to some burnt-up grass in a kind of dingle where cattle were grazing, the next moment we were in amongst the stones again, and then suddenly beheld in front of us the little castle town of S. Stefano piled up on its hill, the sides of which went almost sheer down into the valley. Behind were the stony mountains and the ruined castle and over-hanging houses bathed in a glowing light with delicate purple and blue shadows. It all looked like a fairy town. There was a narrow pathway leading up to the village itself,

but we stopped at a group of houses on the left. We had written to the *archiprete* of the place, and he met us and took us into a courtyard where he showed us *bisacche* and pieces of carpet made by the peasants. *Bisacche* are bags made of long strips of woollen material of the most brilliant colours, and very Eastern-looking with their stripes and other designs. The two ends of the material are just turned up and sewn along their two edges to make a bag at each end. The *bisaccha* is thrown over the shoulder, making a bag behind and a bag in front. All the peasants use them, and they are most convenient. The carpets were also Eastern in character and colour. The *archiprete* offered us coffee, and said he was sorry he could not take us in as there was no one to do the cooking; even when we told him we only needed bread, milk, and eggs he was too alarmed to allow us to stay, and we left, promising to visit him in his little castle village some other day. When we went out of the courtyard we saw that there was the usual dead falcon and ox horns hanging over the doorway, and the *archiprete* said it was customary to have them everywhere.

We asked him to tell us any customs, stories, or superstitions. He said he knew some beliefs about storms and whirlwinds, but the only legends which came into his head were those of the waterspouts, which he would try to remember. We had come through some of the wildest deserted country, and when he said he could only think of superstitions connected with storms we realised how much nature had worked on our own imaginations and felt that it would be possible to believe almost anything. He told us that storms are due to bad spirits which are called *lu cifferotte*, and that it is the Devil who makes destructive winds when he has lost somebody's soul,

which has been saved by exorcism (*Caccòsa brutt' avem a scudi*), or when someone goes in search of treasure without having observed Easter. When the Devil first starts riding on the clouds, the ringing of bells is effective and will stop him from doing more harm. Hail is made when two clouds join, one being over the top (male) of the other cloud (female). The male cloud makes the rain wind pass between them, and the female cloud freezes the rain, producing hail. Once a priest who was passing the Palena mountain saw a male and female spirit making hail, and to stop them he put the largest hailstone he could find on the palm of a child under seven years old (the most innocent of the family), because he believed the tempest would only last the time the hailstone took to melt, but if he had collected the hail the tempest would have become worse. He said that thunderstorms may be prevented by keeping the sacred ashes of charcoal from the burning of the log (*ceppo*) on Christmas Eve, and anything left over from the Christmas dinner is burnt on the *ceppo* for Gesù Bambino (the child Christ). These same ashes are also rekindled for maintaining the temperature in silkworm rearing.

The *archiprete* then told us that the monks sell to sailors specially printed prayers to protect them from waterspouts, and that, when the sailors see a waterspout coming, they say certain words and turn towards it, cutting the air with a knife with a black handle and making the sign of the cross with the knife. These waterspouts are also male and female, *li scijjinne*, and are spirits who become water-spouts just for mischief and to add to the terrors of night. They are born during Christmas Eve, and from the length of their hair one can see their sex. Don Giuseppe from Ortona was one of them (*scijjone*). A girl from Ancona

was another. One day in a storm she arrived at Ortona. After the storm an old man saw some boys throwing stones at a serpent which lay paralysed along the road. They did not kill it, but bruised it. The old man, taking pity, stopped the boys, and with his stick threw the serpent into the middle of a hedge. In its fall one of its eyes was hurt and bled. Some years after, the same old man went to Ancona for the feast of S. Ciriaco. At the palace window he saw a beautiful girl, who was blind in one eye. Directly she saw him she came into the street, welcomed him affectionately, asked him in, and treated him most sumptuously. To the old man all this seemed as a dream which he could not explain, but the girl told him she had been the serpent which he had saved from stoning, and, although she had lost one eye, he had saved her life and thereby also enabled her to resume human form and return home.

Another story told how once on S. Pietro's day a boat put out fishing and met a waterspout. One fisherman tried to cut it with his knife, but was not quick enough, and the boat capsized; only a few of the fishermen were saved. Among these was the man who had tried to dispel the waterspout. On arriving at home he found his wife with one of her fingers severed and bleeding. He was convinced that she was the waterspout and that now she was *libera*, liberated from that form; and he so ill-treated her that she died.

The road we followed went in amongst the stony ridges. Up above we saw the ruins of another castellated village, and down beneath on the ridges rising out of the valley were other ruined castle-hamlets. We stopped at Calascio,—a village on the side of the mountains and overhung by the little groups of houses and ruined castle of

La Roca di Calascio. The same types of dusky peasants gathered round us, but we noticed that in these mountainous parts their earrings and jewellery were more gorgeous than ever. Nearly everyone had necklaces of gold stars with filigree and chains, rings of gold and enamel, and pendants with topaz or brilliants, or paste, and rings of various designs. We wanted to get to Castel del Monte before dusk, for we were afraid we should have some trouble to find somewhere to sleep. Just outside Calascio were more *aje*, and branching from the road was a rough track, down the precipitous sides of the mountain, leading to Castel Vecchio and other "castle" villages, which we could see in the distance. We turned to gaze at La Roca, which looked most wonderful with the crimson setting sun behind its ruins. The white road reflected the illuminated clouds, which every moment were becoming more brilliant; the ridges towards the evening sky were curious harmonies of the greys of the stones and the warm browny purply greens of the baked earth and dried-up tussocks of grass. Standing out clear and sharp against the sky was a shepherd with his sheep, and in another moment the whole flock lifted up their heads and looked at us, and the dog with his spiked collar barked and rushed down furiously. Seeing, however, that we passed by, he rushed back to the shepherd, and the sheep dropped their heads and went on grazing on anything they could find amongst the stones. The road wound in and out, but the right side became less precipitous, and we saw attempts to cultivate corn on the banks sloping down into the valley. The valley had ploughed fields and square patches of burnt grass. In front of us lay two immense hillocks, very steep, with the road going between them. Suddenly there was a whirl, and almost before we had

time to see what was happening a beautiful little mare with a long mane and sweeping tail came galloping at full tilt down one hill and rushed up the other. A boy was riding her barebacked, and he was without even the rope noose which is so often used. Four or five riderless foals tried to keep up with the mare's wild career, but they could not go so quickly. Our driver said that these horses were almost wild, but it was not until we had ridden into the mountains to see where they were bred that we learnt how untamed they are.

Then we saw Castel del Monte towering up before us. It was lighted by the last rays of the setting sun, while all else was fast fading into the shades of twilight, and with the dimmed flickering lights from the tower and windows it looked even more enchanting and mysterious than the other villages we had left behind. We heard another stampede, and more wild horses and foals with their bare-backed riders wielding long poles tore past us into the village for their evening drink at the fountain in the little square. We climbed the last bit of the hill and came to the piazza, where oxen, mules, horses, foals, and goats were all of them struggling for their evening draught, some of them, apparently ownerless, tearing down the narrow paths from the mountains. Savage-looking women with their jewels and coloured handkerchiefs carried *conche* and terra-cotta pottery on their heads to the fountains in the middle of the piazza, and we were surrounded by the enquiring faces of men, women, and boys. Our driver put our boxes by the fountain, telling a boy to look after them, and we asked our way to the *osteria*. Various hands pointed across the piazza, and through the gloaming we found our way to a door. We knocked, but the owner said gruffly that he had neither rooms nor

food. We returned to our boxes, and asked someone to find the priest and tell him that we wanted to stay and sleep somewhere. He came, and after some discussion told our driver that he was to tell his wife to take us in. Then we stumbled along a narrow alley, got on to the roof of a house covered with grassy stubble and stacks of wood, and went through an opening to our rooms. They were clean and had good beds, and the wife of the house ran in and bustled round to make us comfortable. Her family consisted of herself and her husband and son with a dog and numerous birds, and they all went in to what I suppose was another room above ours, leaving the downstairs rooms for us. There was only one jug and basin, but there was always plenty of water which could be brought in *conche* from the fountain, and we all had to take it in turn to wash. My father and myself were allowed to use the utensils first, and they were then carried into the kitchen for the others.

In my room there was a Madonna statuette which had a lighted wick floating in oil and water in a small cup in front of it, and various prints of saints were pinned on to the walls. In the daytime the rooms had the windows closed and the shutters fastened to keep it cool and dark, and water thrown over the stone floor so that it was refreshing to come in out of the heat and glare.

The windows of my room opened sheer down into a pit, and therefore, as usual at night, I kept my windows open, as I thought no wolves could possibly get in. I had been warned that sometimes they come into the village, but this happens mostly in winter. The first night, about one or two o'clock in the morning, I was awakened by a girl shrieking and screaming and battering on a neighbouring door. At first I thought it was some

one being attacked by wolves, and I jumped out of bed and ran to the window. I could see nothing except the precipice and the dim outline of a house on the other side. I called to her to know if she wanted help and if it were a wolf. She shouted back that she had got lost and delayed in the mountains, and was now only trying to waken her family to let her in! I could see from my window the carcase of a sheep which a wolf had killed and half eaten. We were told it was left for the dogs to finish.

There was one very handsome woman in the village with a lovely apricot-coloured handkerchief, but she absolutely refused to sit, and I confined myself to landscape. I painted all day, and had the sketching umbrella to shade both me and the drawing.

I worked a little way up on a mountain track, and numerous peasants were continually passing to and fro with their mules and donkeys. They nearly all made the same remark,—"Alone? Alone? Where is thy father? What art thou writing down? That umbrella is useless, it is small; thou should'st have one of ours to keep away the sun; it is hot." Sometimes they stopped in a row in front of me and stared, and asked where I came from, and then I made them show me their jewels.

Chapter VI.

The Shepherd Poet and Rhymes and Proverbs.



TALLY.

Rosa, rosetta, della prima pianta,
Sei peccirella e sei tanto dorente
Salisci in celo e fai peccar li santi,
Ricaschi in terra e fai morir la gente.

[Rose, little Rose, of descent so olden,
Slender thou art and of beauty golden
Rise thou to Heaven then saints sin would cherish
Back on the earth, (of love) folk would perish.]

IT was on this mountain track on which I painted that I first met "the poet." I was working hard one morning when a little old man with sparkling eyes, a scrubby beard, and an unusually gentle expression, suddenly stopped in front of me and said,—"Good morning, thou who lovest poetry. Good morning. I am the poet whose verses thou admirest, and I am a shepherd." For a moment I could not think what verses he meant, and then I remembered the following, which the priest had given me some two days before.

PASQUETTA.

Bona sera, miei signori!
Buona sera e buona notte,
Vi do nova che son rotte

L'empie forze dei dannati.

Dentro una grotta

[Good evening, my friends!
Good evening and good night,
I give you the news that has broken
The impious forces of the damned.
Inside a grotto

E nato il Bambino,	Is born the Babe,
Il poverino tremante sta.	The poor little thing stays shivering.
L'Epifania a mezza notte*	Epiphany at midnight
Cala giù per il camino	Comes down the chimney.
Ad honore del Bambino	To adore the Babe,
L'Epifania calerà.	Epiphany will descend.
Noi facciam la Pasquarella	We celebrate the little Easter
Per aver la salsicella	To obtain the little sausage
Se formaggio e se prisutto.	Of cheese and of ham.
Mi contento, e mangio tutto.	I am contented, and eat the whole.
Se mi dai una gallina	If thou givest me a hen
Preparata sta in cucina,	Prepared in the kitchen,
Raccomando a te, patrone,	I recommend to thee, master,
Va in dispensa e taglia bene,	That thou goest in the larder and carvest well,
Tanto a sottile tu non tagliare,	So carefully thou needst not carve,
Ca lu dito ti poi mozzare.	Because thy finger thou canst cut.
Porta pure un po di vino	Bring also a little wine
Ad onore del Bambino.	In honour of the Babe.
Dove pende lo sitaccio	Where hangs the sieve
Possi fa nu figlio maschiò	Let there be born to you a little boy,
Dove pende la sitacciola,	Where there hangs the big sieve
Possi fa na bella figliola.	Let there be born to thee a beautiful girl.]

I asked him whether they were his verses, and he said "Yes, I made them; dost thou want more?" and then and there he began to recite a long poem about the fields and the sun. He hesitated once or twice, for he was evidently composing extempore. I asked him to write the poem down for I liked it, but he said he could not write, and

* Epifania is often personified as a human being.

could not remember so much, and also that he had composed many shorter poems which he had forgotten, but he would get someone to write those he could remember. He also said he had not much time to repeat them, for he had to look after the sheep. I asked him to collect and dictate all the old peasant songs and stories that he could; he promised to do so, and he brought some to me nearly every evening as I was going home. I would feel a tug and hear a voice say "signorina," as out of some corner the little old man came to thrust his poems towards me. Then he would shake hands and say,—"I wish thee a good appetite," and then all in a hurry disappear. He asked me what I was writing. I said I wrote the mountains in colour instead of in words, which was another form of poetry. He seemed to grasp what I meant, and after looking over my shoulder told me he must go to his sheep and poems, and that we should meet again. We shook hands and he trudged away amongst the stones. Here is another poem:—

La Pasqua la più grande	[The greatest Easter Babe
Scelta da tutti i Re,	Chosen by all the kings,
La ra, la ra, la ra,	La ra, la ra, la ra,
La ra, la ra, la ra.	La ra, la ra, la ra,
Su poco fieno giace e giacente	On little hay is lying,
Così circondato di povertà.	So surrounded by poverty.
La ra, la ra, la ra,	La ra, la ra, la ra,
La ra, la ra, la ra.	La ra, la ra, la ra.
La madre poi lo stringe in braccio	The Mother then presses Him in her arms
Lo stringe al seno	Presses Him on her breast,
Ed il suo latte succhiando va	And her milk sucking,
La cantica Stella	The clear Star
Si mostra più bella.	Becomes more beautiful.
Il padre poi, quel vecchierello,	The father then, that little old man (Joseph),

I pannicelli scaledenco sta,
Dall'oriente,
La cantica Stella
Si mostra più bella.
Vengono i Maggi,
Egli da essi cercante si va.
La cantica Stella
Si mostra più bella.
Sull' alto cielo
Gira la Stella
Si chiara e bella, che luce da.

La cantica Stella
Si mostra più bella
Questa pasquetta
Con allegria
Con San Giuseppe e con Maria.
La cantica Stella
Si mostra più bella.
O miei Signori
De! compatite,
Abbiam finito e non è più.

La cantica Stella
Si mostra più bella.
Or che abbiamo terminato
Di cantare e di sonare,
Spetta a voi, ed a voi tocca
Rinfrescar la nostra bocca.
Se ci offrite l'anzalata
Ci sarebbe molto grata,
'Na dozzina di mostaccioli,
I più fini e li più boni,
Con terroni accompagnati
Ci sarebbero si grati,
La ra, la ra.
Se presciutto e salsicelle,
Se galline e pollastrelle,

Warms the clothing.
From the East,
The clear Star
Becomes more beautiful.
Come the Magi Kings,
He from them looking goes.
The clear Star
Becomes more beautiful.
In heaven so high
Travels the Star
So clear and beautiful, which lights.
The clear Star
Becomes more beautiful.
This little Easter
Let it be with merriment
With St. Joseph and with Mary.
The clear Star
Becomes more beautiful.
Oh my friends
Excuse us,
We have finished and there is no more.
The clear Star
Becomes more beautiful.
Now that we have finished
With singing and playing,
It is your turn, and it is for you
To refresh our mouth.
If you offer us the salad
It will be very welcome.
A dozen of *mostaccioli*,
Of the finest and of the best,
Accompanied by *terroni*
Will be gratefully accepted.
La ra, la ra.
If ham and sausages,
If hens and little chickens,

Anche i pesci e capitone,	Also fishes and fat hens,
Sazia il ventre ed il polmone.	Replenish the stomach and the lung.
La ra, la ra.	La ra, la ra.
E la carne di vitella.	And the meat of veal.
Viva, viva Pasquarella,	Long live, long live Eastertide,
Un bicchier di vino forte,	A glass of strong wine,
Buona pasqua e bone notte.	Good Easter and good night.
Ogni sorte di liquori.	Every kind of liquor.
Bona notte, miei Signori.	Good night, my friends.
È finita l'orazione,	The prayer is finished,
Bona Pasqua a lor Signori,	Good Easter to you, masters,
Son finiti i nostri canti,	Our songs are finished,
Bona Pasqua a tutti quanti.	Good Easter to you all.]

I always took a thermos of water with me when painting, for the heat made me thirsty, and one day a girl came along the path with a blue terra-cotta pot and a bottle. She stopped and said,—"From whence comest thou?" "From a far country," I said, and asked her,—"Whither goest thou?" She said she was going for water to take to the mountains, and then she went on to the village. About half-an-hour after she returned, and held out her bottle to me, saying "Drink." I said I had water with me, but she said "Drink, this is fresh." I answered,—"But if I take thy water there will be less for thee to take to the mountain." "Drink!" she commanded. "I can get more when it is finished." I accepted it, and she went on her way.

Then the poet appeared, like the girl apparently from nowhere, and gave me a song about S. Antonio, thrusting it into my hands in his usual shy and hesitating way. He smiled, and was off again, vanishing from sight amongst the stones before I could thank him. It was the first song I had come across about S. Antonio, and the date on which he said it was sung was January 17th instead of

January 16th, which I was to learn later was the usual date for the *festa*.

CANZONE DELLA SERA DI S. ANTONIO DA IL 17 GENNAIO.

[SONG SUNG ON S. ANTONIO'S EVE, ON THE 17TH JANUARY.]

Buona sera, gente amici,	[Good evening, faithful friends,
Il Signor vi benedici,	God bless you,
Che doman è S. Antonio,	To-morrow is the day of S. Antonio,
Protettor contro il Demonio.	Protector against the Demon.
S. Antonio, giacchè giocondo,	S. Antonio, because so mirthful,
Nominato per tutto il mondo,	Lauded by all the world,
Chi lo tiene per suo avvocato,	Which holds him as its advocate,
Evviva S. Antonio Abbate.	Long live S. Antonio the Abbot.
Quando il cielo va sereno	When the sky is serene
A voi, signori, buona sera.	To you, gentlemen, good evening.
Per dispetto del Demonio,	For spite to the Demon,
Viva Iddio, per S. Antonio.	Long live God, then S. Antonio,
Chi lo chiama per i monti,	He who calls him on the mountains,
S. Antonio gli esce incontro;	S. Antonio goes to meet him;
Chi lo chiama per lu mare,	He who calls him on the sea,
S. Antonio lo soprano;	S. Antonio will know;
Chi lo chiama per la via,	To him who calls to him on the way,
S. Antonio è compagnia.	S. Antonio is company.
S. Antonio è padrone	S. Antonio is the master
Delle vacche e degli buoi,	Of the cows and of the oxen,
Di giumente e dei cavalli,	Of cattle and of horses,
Ogni cosa che sta in stalla.	Of everything in the stable.
Quando fu à una cumicella,	When he went into a little church,

Si presenta una donna bella.
Quella era il Demonio
Che tentave S. Antonio.
Il povero marinaro si trovava
In mezzo a mare,
Il povero carcerato si trovava
inserrato,
D'erba fresco si cibava,
Sopra spine riposava.
L'era una donna cristiana,
Andi per l'acqua alla fontana,

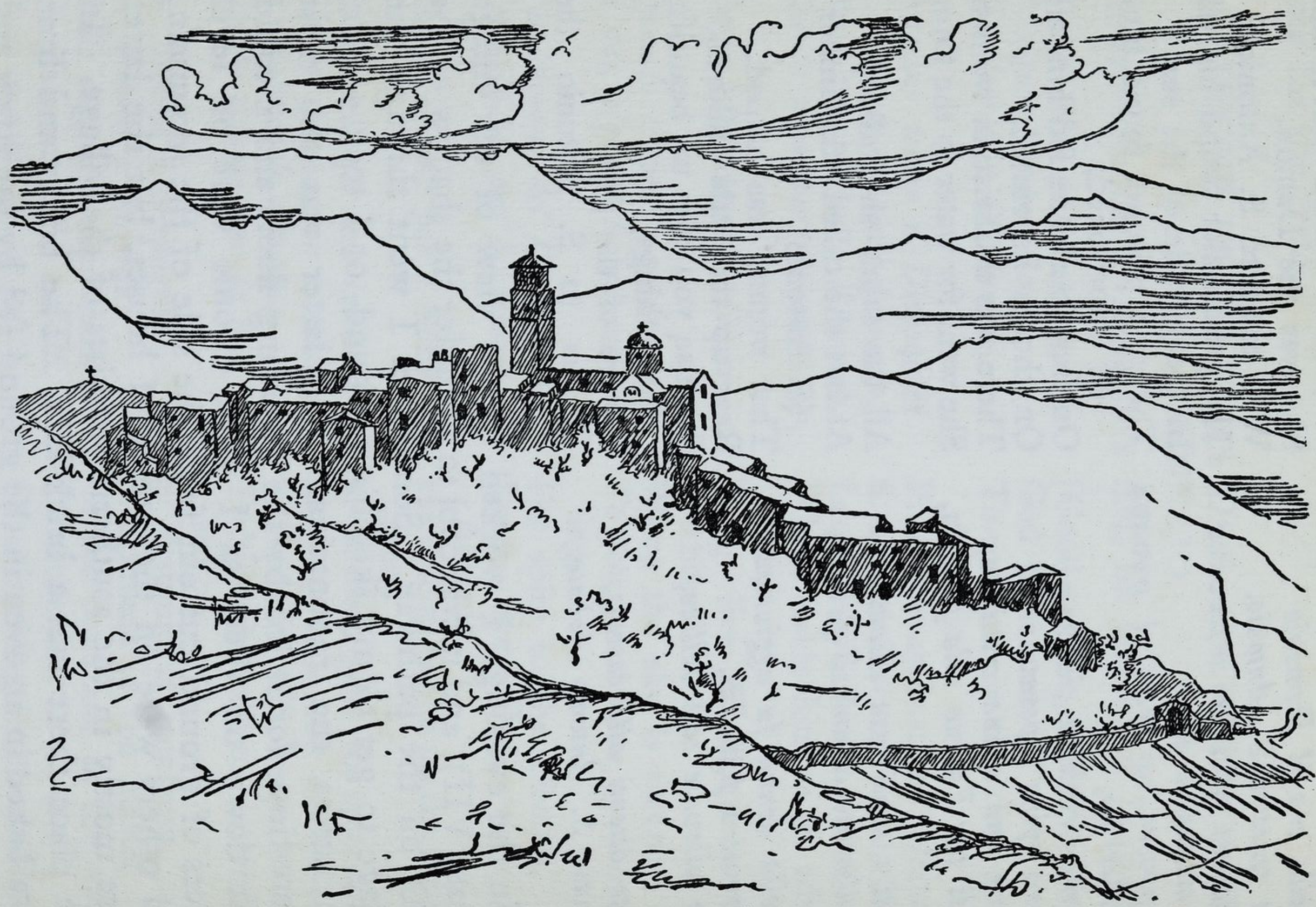
Tutti i santi essa chiamava,
Finalmente chiamò il peccato,

Quella donna fu aggiutata.
Allevate i figliolini,
Che allevate cosè belline,

State attenti alle cascate,
Grazie S. Antonio Abbate.

A beautiful woman went to him.
She was the Demon,
Who tempted S. Antonio.
The poor sailor found himself
In the middle of the sea,
The poor prisoner found himself imprisoned,
On fresh herbs he fed himself,
On thorns he rested.
There was a Christian woman,
She went for water to the fountain,
All the saints she called,
At last she called "the sinner" (S. Antonio),
That woman was helped.
Rear up the little children,
Because you rear up beautiful little things,
Beware of the falls,
Thanks to S. Antonio the Abbot.]

In the evenings I worked at the view of the village (Plate VII), and it was cool to sit under the shadow of the bank on the pathway. Sometimes I went through the village to get to my sketching ground, or I took a short cut across the mountains. The latter was the most interesting, for it led by the threshing floors and I could look down on them as I went. Some were on level pieces of ground cut out from the side of the mountain, and others were on the roofs of houses, but the latter were mostly in the southern outskirts of the village. In one place there was a brick-kiln. The bricks and lime were baked in an oven in the ground fed by the straw and chaff from the threshing, and it was one man's work to keep on throwing the straw into the furnace. There was



CASTEL DEL MONTE.

a straw shelter where another man slept, and he had a dog with him with a heavy iron collar. His shelter was surrounded with poles on which pieces of peat and rags etc. were tied, and these he said were to keep away the wolves and stray dogs.

From where I was painting I could see range beyond range of mountains with the castle villages on their crest and the valley beneath, where the peasants were cutting and ploughing one or two fields, and the threshing floors on the opposite side of the hill looked like so many pennies put side by side and surrounded with stones. The peasants loaded their mules with sacks of corn, and at that distance they appeared like ants creeping along. They wound their way down the tracks, were lost to view, and finally came along the path where I was sitting, followed by peasants and children who continually shouted "Ah ! Ah !" to urge them on more quickly to the threshing, that they might return again before the evening and carry home their bundles. One evening a little boy came along the narrow path, and after pausing a moment he said,—"Good evening, signorina, wilt thou permit me to stand on the bank behind thee that I may see?" I nodded. After a few moments, he said,—"Signorina, wilt thou permit me to come near thee that I may see better?" I said he might, and after he had been bending over my shoulder some time I asked him to sit down and said,—"Dost understand? Dost thou draw?" To which he replied,—"Oh, it is wonderful! Yes, I try to draw." I asked him how old he was, and what he did. He said he was eleven, and that he was a shoemaker, and that he drew whenever he could. He asked all kinds of questions about colour and what he had better do. He sat with me all the time I was there, and also came the next evening.

I told the boy to study nature. The next night he came and said he had seen the sunset, which was beautiful, and after that he promised always to look at it. He and the poet were my two special friends in the village. Afterwards, when I was working in other villages and came home at dusk, he and the poet generally met me and walked as far as the alley leading to the house.

My friends told me of the song of the months, and they took much trouble in getting it written out for me. The dialect is difficult, but with the help of the priest I believe that I finally got it correct:—

SONG OF THE MONTHS.

Introduzione.	Introduction.
I sò lu padre di dodici figli, *E tutti dodici sono mortali.* *L'ho lavato co'rose e co'li gigli.* *I so lu padre di dodici figli.*	[I am the father of twelve children, And all the twelve are mortal. I have reared them with roses and lilies. I am the father of twelve children.
Gennaio.	January.
I sò Gennajo, mi stngo a lu foco, *Volto l'arrost e faccio un bello gioco,* *M'assett' a tavole com'un signor.* *Fra l'altri misci i sono lu migliore.*	I am January and stay near the fire, I turn the roast beef and play a good game, I sit at the table like a gentleman. Amongst the other months I am the best.
Febbraio.	February.
I sò Febbrajo, che port' lu sereno, *Rompe lu ghiacc, 'ndurisce lu terrento.*	I am February, which brings good weather, Breaks the ice, and hardens the soil.

E vero che so Febbrajo curt,
Ma se ni arsveglio so peggio di tutt'.

It is true that I am short February,
But if I awake I am worst of all.

Marzo.

I sò lu Marzo lu ghiù sventurato,
Perchè la carne giammai l'ho mangiate,
E li signuri me l'ha comandato.
I so lu Marzo lu ghiù sventurato.

March.

I am March the most unlucky,
Because meat I have never eaten, (because of Lent)
And the masters have so ordered.
I am March the most unlucky.

Aprile.

I so'n Aprile, e so lu più gentile,
L'arbore secco faccio rifiorire,
Giovani e vecchi li faccio allegrare.
Faccio allegrare le zitelle ancore.
Fra l'altri misi i sono lu migliore.

April.

I am April, and I am the most sweet,
The dry tree I make bud again,
Young and old I make them merry.
I make also the spinsters merry.
Amongst the other months I am the better.

Maggio.

I son Maggio, e sono lo ghiù bello,
Porto le rose intorno a lu cappello,
E me ne vad con i canti e con i sone.
Fra l'altri misi i son lu ghiù bone.

May.

I am May, and I am the most beautiful.
I carry the roses round my hat,
And go with the songs and sounds.
Amongst the other months I am the best.

Giugno.

I son Guigne, che mete lu ramo,
Mete a li munti e mete a li plane,
E me lu mete co'grande sudore.
Fra l'altri misi io son lo migliore.

June.

I am June, which cuts the corn,
Cuts it on the mountain and cuts it on the plain,
And cuts it with great sweating.
Amongst the other months I am the better.

LUGLIO.

I sono Luglio, che tresco lu grano,
Tresco a li muntì, e tresco la lu piano.
I lo rivolto col mio furcone.
Fra l'altri misi i sono lu ghiù bone.

JULY.

I am July, which thrashes the corn,
I thrash it on the mountain, I thrash it on the plain,
And I turn it with my fork.
Of all the months I am the best.

AGOSTO.

I son Agosto, arcalichi li butti,
Li novi e vecchi l'arcalichi tutti,
E gli levo di poi quello stufore.
Fra l'altri misi i sono lu migliore.

AUGUST.

I am August, which mends the vessels' hoops,
New or old I mend them all,
And I take away that stuffiness.
Amongst the other months I am the better.

SETTEMBRE.

I so Settembre, bonnanzia di frutti.
Giovani e vecchi li consolo tutti,
Li consolo col frutto e no col fiore,
Fra l'altri misi i sono lu migliore.

SEPTEMBER.

I am September, abundant of fruit.
Young and old I console them all,
I console with fruit and not with flowers.
Amongst other months I am the better.

OTTOBRE.

I son Ottobre, sumento lu rano,
Sument li muntì, sumento lu piano,
E lu sumento col mio bidentone.
Fra l'altri misi i sono lu ghiù bone.

OCTOBER.

I am October, I sow the corn,
I sow the mountain, I sow the plain,
And I sow with my hoe.
Amongst the other months I am the best.

NOVEMBRE.

I me chiamo Novembre, di buona luna,

NOVEMBER.

I am called November, of good moon,

Adocchio les cerque ad una ad una,
Le butt a terre col mio accettone.
Fra l'altri misi i sono lu ghiù bone.

I eye the oaks one by one,
I throw one down with my hatchet.
Amongst other months I am the best.

DICEMBRE.

I so Dicembre, che stengo tremenne,
Nanzi mi coce, di rete m'ingenne,
I sò Dicembre di chisti paisi,
I sò lu peggio fra tutt'i misi.

DECEMBER.

I am December, I stay trembling,
In the front I cook, at the back I fry,
I am December of these countries.
I am the worst of all months.]

The following weather sayings* were also given to me.

GENNAIO.

1. *Gennaro siccu, Massare ricco.*
Se Gennaro mete erba,
Se tu ai grano
Tu lo serba.

JANUARY.

[January dry, farmer rich.
If January gives grass,
If you have corn
Keep it.]

2. *Gennajò sta in camicia,*
Marzo scoppio dalle risa.

[If January's shirts are white,
March bursts into laughter light.]

3. *Il gran freddo di Gennajo*
Empie il granajo.

[Great cold in January
Fills up the granary.]

4. *Gennajò fa il peccato,*
E Maggio n'e incolpato.

[January commits the sin,
And May gets the blame.]

5. *Per San Bastiano sali il monte,*
E guarda al piano;
Se vedi motto, spera poco,
Se vedi poco, spera assai.

[On S. Sebastiano's Day go on the mountain,
And look over the plain;
If you see much, hope little,
If you see little, hope much.]

* The numerous dialect variations, such as Gennaro and Gennajò for Gennaio, show that the sayings come from a number of different villages each with its own pronunciation.

6. *Non v'à gallina ne gallinaccia*
Che di gennajo n'ova non faccia.

[There is no hen nor capon
That lays no eggs in January.]

7. *La buona greppia*
Fa la buona bestia.

[The good manger
Makes good cattle.]

8. *Sotto la neva sta il pane,*
E sotto l'acqua fame,
Mezzo granio,
Mezzo pane e mezzo pagliaio.

[Under the snow is the bread,
And under the water hunger,
Half granary,
Half bread and half straw.]

9. *Di strami e di paglia*
Abbi il bue sempre soffice il letto;
E ciò spesso gli giova più che il ubo,
E il buon tetto.

[Of litter and of straw
Let the ox always have soft the bed;
This is often better than food,
And better than a good roof.]

Febbraio.	February.
10. *Febbraro curto e amaro,* *Fevvanzzo è peggio di tutto.*	[February short and bitter, Furious and the worst of all.]
11. *Se febbrajo non febbreggia,* *Marzo campeggia.*	[If February is not like February, March will bring a warfare.]
12. *La pioggia di febbrajo* *Empie il granajo.*	[The rain of February Fills the granary.]
13. *Gennaro ingenera,* *Febbrajo internera.*	[January generates, February makes tender.]
14. *Per la Cannarola* *L'inverno è fora,* *Per San Valentino* *Primavera è vicino.*	[By the Day of Candlemas Winter is out, By S. Valentino's Day, Spring is near.]
15. *Quando il gallo canta a pollajo* *Aspetta l'acqua sul grondajo*	[When the cock crows while still at roost Expect rain in the evening.]

16. *Vale più un vecchio in un canto*
Che più giovani in un campo.
[The old man is worth more
Than many youths in a field.]

17. *Ogni pruna fa siepe.*
[Every thorn makes a hedge.]

MARZO.
MARCH.

18. *Marzo chiovi, chiovi,*
Nel Marzo un sole, e un guazzo.
[March rains, rains,
In March sun and showers.]

19. *Se Marzo non marseggia,*
Aprile mal pensa.
[If March is not like March,
April is ill thought of.]

20. *Quando Marzo va secco,*
Il gran fa cesto ed il lin capecchio.
[When March is dry,
Corn makes baskets and linen trash.]

21. *Marzo non a un giorno come l'altro,*
Il sol di Marzo muove ma non risolve.
Tanto durasse la mala vicina
Quanto dura la neve marzolina.
[March has not one day like the other,
March sun moves but does not revolve.
May the bad neighbour last so long
As endures the snow in March.]

22. *Per San Benedetto*
La rondine è sul tetto.
[By S. Benedetto's Day
The swallow is on the roof.]

APRILE.
APRIL.

23. *Aprile mal rifina.*
[April ends badly.]

24. *Aprile quando piange,*
E quando ride.
[April sometimes weeps,
And sometimes laughs.]

25. *Aprile caccia la vecchia dal cenerile.*
[April sends away the old women from the ashes (fire-places).]

26. *Aprile una gocciola il die,*
E spesso tutto il die.
[April's little drop of rain,
That day certain comes again.]

27. *Chi pau cavolo d'Aprile*
Tutto l'anno se ne ride.
[He who plants cabbages in April
All the year long laughs.]

28. *Terzo Apri'lante*
Quaranta di durante.
[The third of April (fast)
Lasts forty days.]

29. *Se d'Aprile a potar vai,*
Poco vino e molt'acqua beverai.
[If in April you go pollarding,
Little wine and much water you will drink.]

30. *Di Marzo ogni villan va scalzo,*
D'Aprile va il villano ed il gentile.
[In March every peasant goes barefoot,
In April only the ruffians and the gentlefolk.]

31. *Chi vuole un buon baco*
Per San Marco o posto o nato.
[He who wants a good silk-worm
By S. Marco's Day it must be either placed on the tray or born.]

32. *Le galline fanno le uova dal becco.*
[Hens make eggs by their beaks.]

Maggio. — May.

33. *Maggio una e buona.*
[May is one and good.]

34. *Fungo di Maggio, spighe d'Agosto.*
[Mushroom in May, ears of corn in August.]

35. *Per S. Urbano,*
Il frumento a fatto il grano.
[By S. Urbano's Day,
Corn has made the grain.]

36. *Maggio asciutto,*
Grano per tutto.
[Dry May,
Corn everywhere.]

37. *Maggio ortolano,*
Assai paglia, poco grano.
[May garden (green),
Much straw, little corn.]

38. *Maggio molle,*
Lino per le donne.
[Soft May,
Linen for women.]

39. *Nel mese di Maggio*
Fornisciti di legna e di formaggio.
[During the month of May
Get wood and cheese.]

40. *Pane con gli occhi,*
Formaggio senz' occhi.
[Bread with holes,
Cheese without holes.]

41. *Guai a quell'anno*
In cui l'iuccello non fa danno.
[Woe to that year
In which the bird does no damage.]

GIUGNO. JUNE.

42. *Acqua di Giugno*
Rovina il munno.
[Water in June
Ruins the world.]

43. *Per Giugno la falce è in pugno.*
Se non e pugno bene
Maggio seu viene.
[By June the scythe is in hand.
If not well in hand
May comes.]

44. *Le quazze di Maggio,*
Il buon mieter di Giugno.
[Shower in May,
Good reaping in June.]

45. *Fino a S. Margherita*
Il grano cresce nella bica.
[Up to S. Margherita's Day
Corn grows in the ear.]

46. *Per S. Barnabà*
Il più lungo dell'està.
[By S. Barnaba's Day
The longest day of Summer.]

47. *Per S. Barnabà*
L'uva viene e il fiore va.
[By S. Barnaba's Day
Grapes come and flowers go away.]

48. *Per S. Pietro, o paglià o fieno.*
[By S. Pietro's Day, either straw or hay.]

49. *Gente assai fa assai, ma mangia troppo.*
[Many people do much, but eat too much.]

50. *Quando il grano è nei campi,*
Egli e di Dio e dei Santi.
[When corn is in the fields,
It belongs to God and to the Saints.]

Luglio.	July.
51. *Il buon butter di Luglio.*	[The good butter of July.]
52. *Chi semini di Luglio* *Chi vuole un buon rapeglio.*	[He who sows by July Gets a good crop.]
53. *Secca aunata, non è affamata.*	[A dry year is not a famine year.]
54. *Chi mal semina, mal raccoglie.*	[He who sows badly, reaps badly.]
55. *Il fresco dell'estate* *Fa dalere il corpo d'inverno.*	[The cold in summer Makes the body ache in winter.]
56. *Il gran rado non fa vergogna all' aja.*	[Scanty grain does not shame the threshing floor.]
57. *Cacio serrato e pane bucherellato.*	[Cheese closed and bread with holes.] (Cf. No. 40)
58. *Terra nera buon pane mena,* *Terra bianca tosto stanca.*	[Black earth good bread brings, White earth soon tires.]
59. *Chi semina fave frispola grano.*	[He who sows beans loses grain.]

Agosto.	August.
60. *Per S. Donato* *L'inverno è nato.*	[By S. Donato's Day Winter is born.]
61. *S. Antonio gran freddura,* *S. Lorenzo gran caldura,* *L'una e l'altra poco dura.*	[By S. Antonio great cold, By S. Lorenzo a great heat, The one and the other little lasts.]
62. *Le piove per S. Lorenzo* *La viene a tempo;* *Se piove per la Madonna,* *L'è ancor bona.*	[If it rains by S. Lorenzo's Day It comes in time; If it rains by Our Lady's Day, It is still good.]

63. *Chi vuol aver del mosto,*
Zappi le viti d'Agosto.
[Who wants wine,
Hoes the vines in August.]

64. *L'olive, castagna, e ghianda,*
Di Agosto ne dimanda.
[Olives, chestnuts, and acorns,
Are wanted by August.]

65. *Chi dorme d'Agosto,*
Dorme a suo costo.
[Who sleeps in August,
Sleeps at his cost.]

66. *Le tre acque d'Agosto con buona stagione*
Valgon più del tron si Salomone.
[The three rains of August with good seasons
[Are worth more than Solomon's throne.]

67. *Alla prim acqua d'Agosto,*
Pover uomo ti conosco.
[At the first rain of August,
Poor man I know thee.]

Settembre. September.

68. *Di Settembre la notte ed il di contende.*
[In September night contends with day.]

69. *Se canta la cicala di Settembre,*
Non compra grano da vendere.
[If the cricket sings in September,
Do not buy corn for sale.]

70. *Alla luna Settembrina,*
Sette lune se le inchina.
[To the moon of September,
Seven moons bow to it.]

71. *Per S. Michele le castagne nel paniere.*
[By S. Michele's Day chestnuts in the basket.]

72. *Chi il suo campo ara inanzi la vernata,*
Avanza di raccolta la brigata.
[He who ploughs his field before winter,
Prepares crops for a whole troop.]

73. *Chi semina nella polvere*
Faccia i granai di rovere.
[He who sows in the dust,
Will make his granaries of oak.]

74. *Faccia chi può prima che il tempo mute.* [Do what you can before the weather changes.]

75. *Che tutte le lasciate son perdute.* [All that which is not done is lost.]

OTTOBRE. OCTOBER.

76. *D'Ottobre il vin nelle doghe.* [By October wine in the vessels.]

77. *La buona cantina fa il buon vino.* [Good cellar makes good wine.]

78. *Mercante di vino, mercante poverino.* [Wine merchant, poor merchant.]

79. *Per S. Simone*
La nespola si ripone. [By S. Simone's Day
Medlars to be replaced.]

80. *Chi la beva non la mancia.* [He who drinks it does not eat it.]

81. *Quanto senti il maglio,*
Pianta l'aglio. [When you hear the hammer,
Plant the garlic.]

82. *Quando il gallo canta al pollajo,*
Aspetta l'acqua nel grondajò. [When the cock crows while still at roost,
Expect rain in the evening.]
(Cf. No. 15)

83. *Le rannuvola sulla brina*
Aspetta l'acqua mattina. [When it is cloudy and frosty
Expect rain next morning.]

84. *Ne caldo nè gelo*
Restò mai nel cielo. [Neither heat nor frost
Ever stayed in the sky.]

85. *Sereno di notte*
Non val tre pere cotte. [Serene in the night
Is not worth three baked pears.]

86. *Per andare scalso, e per seminar fondo,*
Non arrectic mai uomo al mondo. [To go barefoot, and to sow deep,
Never bring man into the world.]

89. *Il gran rado non fa vergogna all'aja.* [Scanty grain does not shame the threshing floor.] (Cf. No. 56)

90. *Chi vuol un lavor degno,*
Assaì ferro, e poco legno. [He who wants good work,
Much iron, little wood.]

91. *Vigna nel sasso,*
E orto in terren grasso. [Vine in stones,
Kitchen garden in fat land.]

92. *Anno fungato,*
Anno tribolato. [Year of mushrooms,
Year of trouble.]

Novembre. November.

93. *Per S. Martino sta meglio grano*
Nel campo che nel molino. [By S. Martino's Day better to have
Corn in the field than at the stall.]

94. *Per S. Martino*
Ogni mosto è vino. [By S. Martino's Day
All grape juice is wine.]

95. *Per S. Martino*
Si spilla il botticino. [By S. Martino's Day
One draws wine from the barrels.]

96. *Presto per natura,*
E tardi per ventura. [Quick by nature,
Late by venture.]

97. *Chi il suo campo ara inanzi la vernata,*
Avanza di raccolta la brigata. [He who ploughs his field before winter,
Prepares crops for a whole troop.] (Cf. No. 72)

98. *Chi à carri e buoi*
Fa presto i fatti suoi. [Who has the carts and oxen
Does his business quickly.]

99. *Tugamma il suo vicino*
Chi pone il fico grosso e il fico piccolino. [Deceives his neighbour
He who puts together the big fig and the small fig.]

100. *Molta terra, terra poco,*
Poco terra, terra assai.

[Much land, little land (neglected);
Little land, very much land (cared for).]

101. *Chi mal semina, mal raccoglie.*

[He who badly sows, badly gathers.]

102. *Mercante d'olio, mercante d'oro.*

[Oil merchant, gold merchant.]

103. *La neve a S. Andrea l'aspetta,*
Se non a S. Andrea, a Natale,
Se non a Natale più non l'aspettare.

[Snow by S. Andrea's Day,
If not by S. Andrea's Day, at Christmas,
If not by Christmas no more expect it.]

Dicembre.

December.

104. *Freddo e fame*
Fan brutto pelame.

[Cold and hunger
Make ugly skins.]

105. *Vanga e zappa non vuol digiuno.*

[Hoe and pick need no fast (from work).]

106. *Dicembre piglia e Giugno rende.*

[December takes and June gives back.]

107. *Per S. Lucia, il più corto di che sia.*

[By S. Lucia, the shortest day of all.]

108. *Dice il porco,—Dammi, dammi;*
Nè mi contar ed anni.

[Give me, give me, says the pig;
Don't remind me of the years.]

109. *Chi non ha orto e amazza porco,*
Tutto l'anno sta col muso torto.

[Who kills the pig and has no orchard,
All the year remains with sad face.]

110. *Avaro agricottor non fu mai ricco.*

[The avaricious farmer was never rich.]

111. *Arar di bue, e seminar di vaca.* [Plough by ox, and sow by cow.]

112. *Anno di neve, anno di bene.* [A year of snow, a year of good.]

113. *Quando la neve e alta come un mattone,*
Il grano torna a un testone.
[When the snow is as high as a brick,
The corn turns to a head.]

DOMENICA DELLE PALME.

PALM SUNDAY.

Palma benedetta,
Che vè na vota l'anno,
Saccime a dire se more chest'anno.
[Blessed Palm Sunday,
Which comes once a year,
Tell me if I die this year.]

EPIFANIA.

EPIPHANY.

Pasquetta Befanie,
Che vè na vota l'anne,
Sacceme a dice se vo vivo n'atranne.
[Blessed Epiphany,
Which comes once a year,
Tell me if I shall live another year.]

VENERDI SANTO.

GOOD FRIDAY.

Già cundennat lu figlio
Da le rubalde squadre.
Piagne l'afflitta madre,
"Lu Figliu mio dov'è?"
La madre sconsulàta
S'incontra cu la gente,
E die tutta piangente,
"Lu Fifliu mio dov'è?"
Adduman pur le meste
Figliole de Sionne,
"Dicitemi, buone donne,
[Already condemned the Son
By the bold bad squadrons.
Weeps the afflicted mother,
"Where is my Son?"
The unconsolable mother
Meets the people,
And asks, weeping,
"Where is my Son?"
She asks the sad
Daughters of Sion,
"Tell me, good women,

Lu Figliu mio, dov'è?"
Saje sopre lu monte
Cu frettolosi passi,
E dic'pur li sassi,
"Lu Figlio mio, dov'è?"
O Mamma, dulce e cara,
O Virgine pudica,
Permet'che te lu dica
Lu Figlio tuo morì.
Le tomb', li sass', li monti,

Le stelle, lu mar, le spere,
Tutt'ca ti fa sapere
Lu Figlio tuo morì.
M'armira su la croce,
Ch'a te s'arvolta e dice,
O mesta genitrice,
Lu Figlio tuo morì.

Where is my Son?"
She goes up the mountain
With quick steps,
And asks even the rocks,
"Where is my Son?"
O Mother dear and sweet,
O Virgin modest,
Allow me to tell thee
Thy Son is dead.
The tombs, the rocks, the mountains,
The stars, the seas, the spheres,
All must know
Thy Son is dead.
Look on the cross,
Which turns to thee and says,
Oh sad mother,
Thy Son is dead.]

—*Petrilli.*

("Rivista Abruzzese," November, 1909.)



Candle Holder.



GOLD JEWELLERY.

I. EARRINGS.
II. GOLD BEADS WITH PENDANTS.
III. TYPES OF GOLD BEADS.

The actual size of the large earring is shown on the cover of the book.

Lu Figliu mio, dov'è?"
Saje sopre lu monte
Cu frettolosi passi,
E dic'pur li sassi,
"Lu Figlio mio, dov'è?"
O Mamma, dulce e cara,
O Virgine pudica,
Permet'che te lu dica
Lu Figlio tuo morì.
Le tomb', li sass', li monti,

Le stelle, lu mar, le spere,
Tutt'a ti fa sapere
Lu Figlio tuo morì.
M'armira su la croce,
Ch'a te s'arvolta e dice,
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Look on the cross,
Which turns to thee and says,
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—*Petrilli.*

("Rivista Abruzzese," November, 1909.)



CANDLE HOLDER.


I
I
II
III
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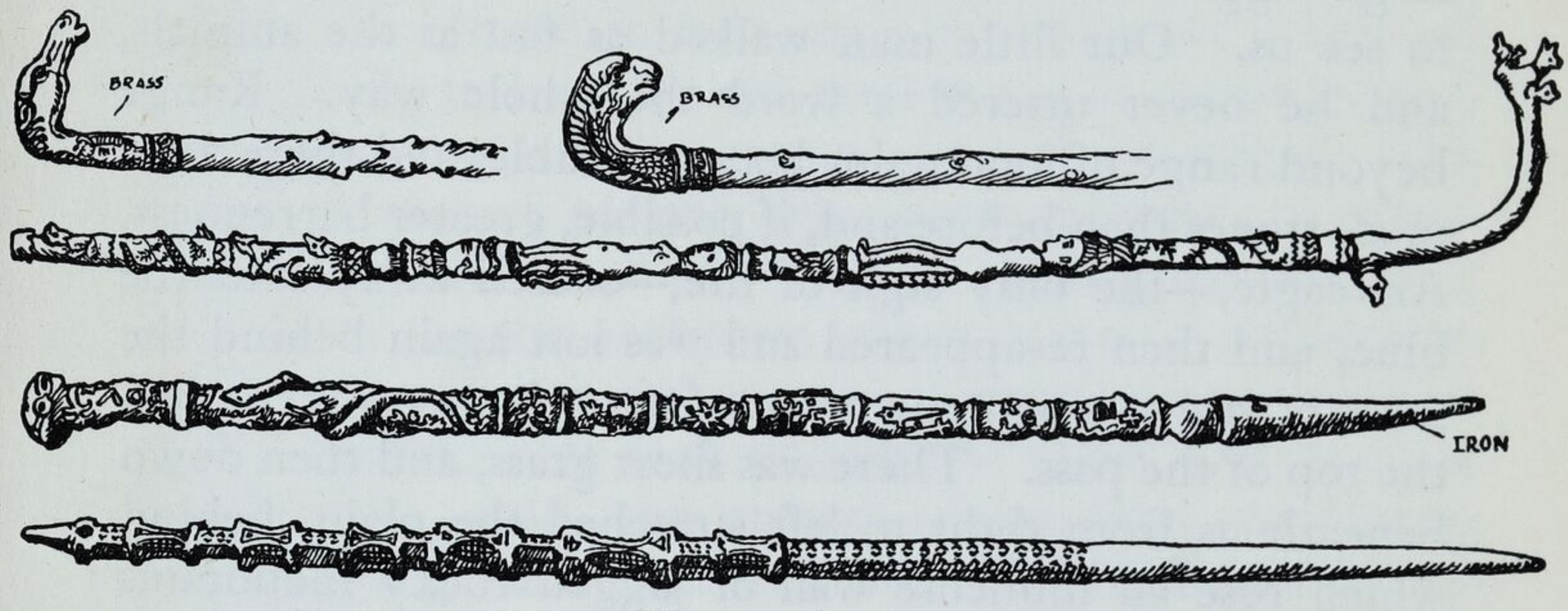
III

Chapter VII.

More about Castel del Monte, and S. Stefano.



Walking Sticks.

L'amor comincia co lu suono e canto,
E va finir co nù mare dippianto.

[With song and music love will start,
But in a sea of weeping part.]

WE had heard a good deal of the Pian d' Emparatore, an immense stretch of short grass about fifteen miles long, away in the mountains where thousands of sheep were taken to pasture. We got a queer-looking little man with a head like a fungus, who said he had mules to take us there. He tied sacks on to the mules and we mounted, and, as it was hot even at that early hour, I put a wet towel under my hat and poured a jug of water down my back and rode under the sketching umbrella. We went along the stony track and the scenery became ever more wild; it was like riding over the rocks of a seashore at an angle of forty-five degrees, with the stones slipping from beneath the animals' feet. We went on and

came to some patches of earth where the stones had been cleared away and piled all round the sides, and here the peasant women were busy cutting the ripe corn. Another group of women came in single file down the track with large faggots of wood on their heads, and seemed amazed to see us. Our little man walked as fast as the animals, and he never uttered a word the whole way. Range beyond range of mountains became visible, and there were more stones than before and, if possible, greater barrenness. An eagle,—the only sign of life,—soared away into the blue, and then re-appeared and was lost again behind the mass of stony mountains to our left. At last we reached the top of the pass. There was short grass, and then down beneath us from right to left stretched the plain, behind which rose an immense wall of jagged rocky mountains crowned by the Gran Sasso. To the right, at the foot of these mountains, were some thick forests, and shepherds who passed with their sheep said it was in these forests that the wolves lived. We could not see any sheep in the plain; they all seemed to have been taken to pasture on the hills, and, as we had a long way to return and a bad storm was blowing up, we remounted and set out homewards. Riding astride without a saddle was all very well until we reached the top of the pass, but when we began to go jogging down over the stones one slid forward, and quite the most comfortable way was sitting tailor-fashion, or with the left leg down, the right knee making a pommel which prevented one from slipping, or, as an alternative, riding fairly far back with one foot on each side of the animal's neck, in the way many of the peasants ride. The clouds drifted down, and for a short time it was chilly, but they cleared, and then it was as hot as ever. On our return to Castel del Monte the *archiprete* (priest) asked us where

we had been, and when we told him he said it was a pity he had not known, for he would have taken us to see the wild horses and mules caught with lassoes. He asked us if we would go another day with him, and we were, of course, only too delighted to do so.

Then he offered to take us to the different houses of the peasants to look for old terra-cottas or carvings, and we set out to climb the steep narrow village alleys. We talked to several peasants who were carrying up water past the church, and we must have lingered rather a long time, for the *archiprete* said it was time for him to read vespers and that they were already waiting for him in the church. He took us into the vestry and gave us lovely silver, gold, and enamel crosses, stars, necklaces, earrings, rings, and odds and ends of all kinds which had been given as votive offerings, to look at while he put on his vestments, and he told us we could wait in the vestry until he had finished vespers. My father, however, went to see someone in the village, and I went into the church. Vespers were being said at one of the side altars, and there were a number of old women and children. For mass all the women wore on their heads white pieces of linen with lace borders, but for vespers only some had it. They sat cross-legged on the floor, but they moved just before the service was finished, when they got up on to their knees and kissed their hands to the Madonna. The *archiprete* said this was a salutation used throughout the Abruzzi, and also that it was the usual thing to sit tailor-fashion on the ground, but it was the first time I had seen it. We went higher up into the village. The ways were steep and narrow, and there were dark passages, arches, overhanging houses, steps, and gloomy entrances and holes everywhere. A few peasants were outside, and we asked

them if we could see their dwellings; then we were invited into several. There was generally a broken step in the doorway, and after getting safely over it we found ourselves in utter darkness and had to pause a moment to get accustomed to it, for after coming in from the sun it seemed darker than ever. Going into the little rooms and passages we stumbled over numerous odds and ends, and the first thing we always noticed was the large open fireplace with the fire on the ground, and the shelves laden with coppers and bowls; sometimes there was an attempt at a window. There were also the small brass and tin oil lamps hanging ready for use, and a box or a few broken chairs, and one was lucky if one did not tumble over a pig or tread on a cat or a chicken. In one or two houses there were blue and black, and white or purple, and black and white, or black, orange, and white tiles round the hearth or walls. They were beautiful, and in some of the churches the whole floor was covered with them, and in one or two cases they looked quite Moorish. It was so dark in the houses that we asked the peasants to bring their terra-cotta pots, *aqua santini* (holy water-founts), distaffs, and other woodwork outside for us to see, and we were surrounded by a whole villageful of shouting and clamouring dusky women and children. More and more kept coming and bringing jewellery, sticks, and everything they could lay hold of. Many things they did not want to sell, especially their beautiful jewellery, but altogether we got a good deal. But what with the noise and everyone feeling my clothes and all asking questions at once, and the fleas, I was glad when we had finished and at last got away with the help of a peasant carrying our numerous pots, including some fifteenth century majolica lamps fashioned in the shape of

women holding their arms above their heads for the receptacle for the oil. (Plate XIII.)

When we had deposited our acquisitions we again went forth, this time to rummage round in the hope of collecting superstitions and customs. We learnt that at Castel del Monte there are caves beneath the church, into which the dead were lowered through openings in the floor, which were then sealed with slabs of stone. The poor were placed indiscriminately in a common cave *carnajo* (charnelhouse), while the rich had special caves under their own chapels in the church; the priests also had their own graves, were interred in their clothes, and let down on to chairs upon which they sat, or on to solid seats with their chins resting in wooden forks, by ropes under their arm-pits and feet. The chairs were made with canes from Apulia. Since the cholera in 1860, the corpses were removed from the *carnajo* of the church and buried outside in a cemetery. Quite recently Vincenze d'Angiolo, who was in his cellar making a hole through a wall next the church, in the dark came across one of the dead, clothed, and with a big hat on. He took fright, immediately closed the hole, and never opened it again. In 1912 some bricklayers were testing the vaults of the church, and removed the slab of pavement. They found skeletons, and invited the village schoolmistress to come and see. She lit a piece of paper, which she threw into the cave. The clothes of the skeletons took fire, and burnt for several days, and were only put out by laying a hose on from the public fountain, and afterwards filling the cave with earth and lime. There was a demonstration against the schoolmistress.

A dead person is at once taken from the death room, which is thoroughly swept, and candles are lighted in the

house. The corpse is dressed, and wears stockings with the toes cut out, and the thumbs are tied together by a ribbon ; it is then carried in an open case (coffin).

The peasants take their old clothes to the home of the dead, and dye them black in a big cauldron especially arranged for the occasion ; all must do it, or otherwise they are considered enemies. All then go to the funeral in their mantles, and men let their beards grow. Women follow crying the virtues of the dead.

It was a steep pull up to the top of the village, and until now we had not had time to go and see the towers which are the upper part of Castel del Monte and called the Recetto ; in mediæval times they were the last refuge and stronghold to which the inhabitants fled for safety. The streets going to the Recetto had formerly iron gates, closed at sunset against the incursions of marauders and brigands. In 1675 the brigands sent in a petition to the Court, which was accepted with joy by the citizens and the Court itself. The petition ran as follows :—

"We the undersigned commandants of the bandits of the Abruzzi with all our companions being present by the help of the procurator Fra Tommaso Maria Nicolai da Cerinignano, Apostolic Dominican missionary but not a confessor by a special brief of His Holiness Clement X, not being allowed to do our duty by appearing in person with the greatest submission and all possible humility, on our prostrate knees and with our tongue on the ground, throw ourselves at the feet of everyone we have offended by our bad and iniquitous life, stealing, killing, setting fire to buildings, and dissipating with no restraint whatsoever, and no difference of state, place, or condition of people, not only in farms, properties, and animals in the country but also in walled grounds, towns, and populated places, such as Scorrano, Spoltore, Montorio, Nocciano, Moscufo, Montepagano, Barcano, Miano, Isola, Poggio, S. Omero, Ofena, Pescocostanzo, Farindola, Apignano, Fano Adriano, and other

villages, and other walled villages on this and the other side of Pescara of these provinces of the Abruzzi *citra* and *ultra*, in which not only we have stolen and ransacked houses, burnt farms of the citizens of Teramo, and cut fruit-trees, but have also been cruel to life, ransomed with the most unimaginable fierceness and killed many, nearly without number, with much barbarity, so that even the barbarians themselves, Turks and heretics, could not have done worse slaughter than we miserable beings, and confessing now our mistake, although unworthy of pity but worthy of being chopped up into pieces, notwithstanding the bowels of mercy of Jesus Christ and for His blessed Passion, and all the Saints of Heaven, we ask pardon very humbly from our Catholic King on his behalf, and the very excellent viceroy of Naples, and to the very illustrious Signori Presidi of Aquila and Chieti, for the little respect we had, and also to all the other officers, promising for the future to amend our life, and not only not to damage anyone, but to wish to be servants, slaves, and useful to all and in everything to serve them and to put our goods and life at the service of our King and of all others; likewise we beg all by the bowels of mercy of Jesus Christ and of His Holy Mother to pity us if by the right punishment of God all the goods we have taken from you go into smoke, though very needful to us, as the present procurator Fra Tommaso will represent to you and he has known by experience, that you will make a present for God's sake of them. And if anyone wants satisfaction let him come in safety to us, that we will embrace him to our hearts as a brother and, if not in everything, we will make some effort to give him some satisfaction according to our state, and we would come in person to kiss his feet, but through there being in all places persons offended, besides the suspicion and inconvenience, it is impossible for us to do it. And if it be pleased to grant the grace of pardon and forgiveness we will pray, as long as we have life, the majesty of God to remunerate them for us, and to return and multiply so much more than what we have taken away, and to pardon their sins, having begged the aforesaid procurator, who, as he has so much fatigued himself to reconcile us with God, in this holy year of the holy Jubilee, and induce us to the obedience of our

superiors, should intercede to obtain from your benignity the desired pardon from public and private persons, and particularly from those of whom he has a special list.

Santissima Trinità di Campli, 1675.

(Signed):—

I, Commandant Santo di Lucido, alias Santuccio, supplicate with my companions with our own hands.
I, Medoro Narducci with all my companions.
X, Sign of the cross of Gio Carlo Vitelli with all my friends.
I, Salitarello di Ascanio with companions."

The royal court, deceived by this petition, gave them license, but this only enabled them to overrun the country more freely. They availed themselves of the name of the court and committed worse murders, and forged documents of sales of lands and goods, threatening the landlords with death if they were denounced. They attacked the people on their way from Rome, where they had gone for the Jubilee, and ransacked the castle of Teramo, stealing even the women's clothes. They joined forces to enter Teramo, but the governor, D. Ignazio di Dura, closed all the gates except the one of S. Leonardo, and for three days and nights his men fought from behind barricades of vessels and barrels till they repulsed them. The coolness of the brigands was so great that the inhabitants of Teramo did not dare to come out of their town, and the brigands went to the olive mills, to assist in crushing the olives, and then stole the oil produced. From the convent at Civitella they tried to kidnap a young nun. Some brigands lived to a great age, and it is said that a brigand chief, Giuseppe Ranieri, died at 110.

The schoolmaster told us the following story about Nicolo Palmieri, a young marquis, who was staying at his castle of Villalba in Sicily in 1812, when his steward ran in

terrified, with the news that a band of brigands had surrounded the Castle and tied all the guards, and their chief, Luigi Laura, wanted to be led to his presence. Palmieri did not object to this. Laura, he said, was a good fellow. "I will see him with pleasure." He gave orders to let him in, and received him with great cordiality. The brigand got puzzled and asked pardon. "There is nothing to ask pardon for, thy visit has been a pleasure. I am at thy disposal; there is some money for thee and for the *picciotti* (little ones)." Saying so, the Marquis opened a drawer and pulled out some big rolls. "There are 200 ounces. Are these enough, Don Luigi?" "Thanks, thanks, your Excellency, from to-day I will be the most devout servant of the house of Palmieri." Don Nicolo ordered a good dinner for the brigands, and at last Laura with his companions,—twelve in all,—left and paraded, riding in fours under his window. But one of them cried to him that he had made a joke of them, and that they had been fools to be satisfied with so little. At that moment Laura pointed his gun at him and shot him dead on the saddle; unsheathed his sword, and severed his head with one stroke, and placed it in a bag which was attached to his saddle.

No one breathed a word, and Laura returned to the castle, and presented himself to Don Nicolo holding the brigand's head, all bleeding, by the hair: "Here," he said, "Is the head of that villain who has dared to lose respect for you; keep it, it will serve for a remembrance of the sentiments of gratitude which you have inspired in us." Thenceforward, in recollection of this cruel event, Villalba has been respected by the brigands.

Next day there were to be seven weddings, and the *archiprete* told us to come to the church to see the brides.

When we arrived he was hearing their confessions, but someone told him we were there. He at once came out of his confessional. We said we would wait, but he insisted on taking us round there and then. There were some queer wooden chandeliers painted blue and green, and they looked as if they had been made of carved chair rails or banisters, and there was a nice iron candlestick. The brides were all in their best silk gowns and kerchiefs, and there they all sat in a row waiting their turn.

We learnt that it is generally on S. Donato's Day (7th August) that marriages are arranged, and friends and relations gather to make compliments. Soon after this day, the marriages take place. The peasants carry the statue of S. Donato in procession, and for this honour bid against each other, and as much as eighteen lire was paid the last year. The losers pray the saint to forgive them for not having been able to pay more money to carry him. Other statues follow that of S. Donato, each carried by four members of its Confraternity.

During the feast of S. Agapito, in the cucumber season, which is on the 15th August and lasts three days, young people make their promises of marriage. According to what we were told the young man offers his girl a cucumber, insisting that she should accept it, but, if she refuses, the offer is not accepted and the suitor breaks the cucumber on her head.

Young men present their sweethearts with *spudaturi*, which are pieces of carved wood used to take off the leaves of the Indian corn. The wood often represents two flowery hearts chained together, a sheath, a pot of flowers, or a house with windows, and the handle is generally made in the shape of a woman. The *piruni* are also made symbolic of love, family, and agriculture.



More Evil Eye Amulets.

I. Painted ox horns to keep away the evil eye. S. Stefano.

II. Red flannel decoration hung between ox horns and arranged over the faces of the oxen to keep away the evil eye. Aquila.

III. Feathers dyed red, green and purple to keep away the evil eye. Cocullo.

IV. Thread with coloured knots to bind round the wrists and neck to keep away the evil eye. Scanno and Cocullo.

PLATE IX.]

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MORE EVIL EYE AMULETS.

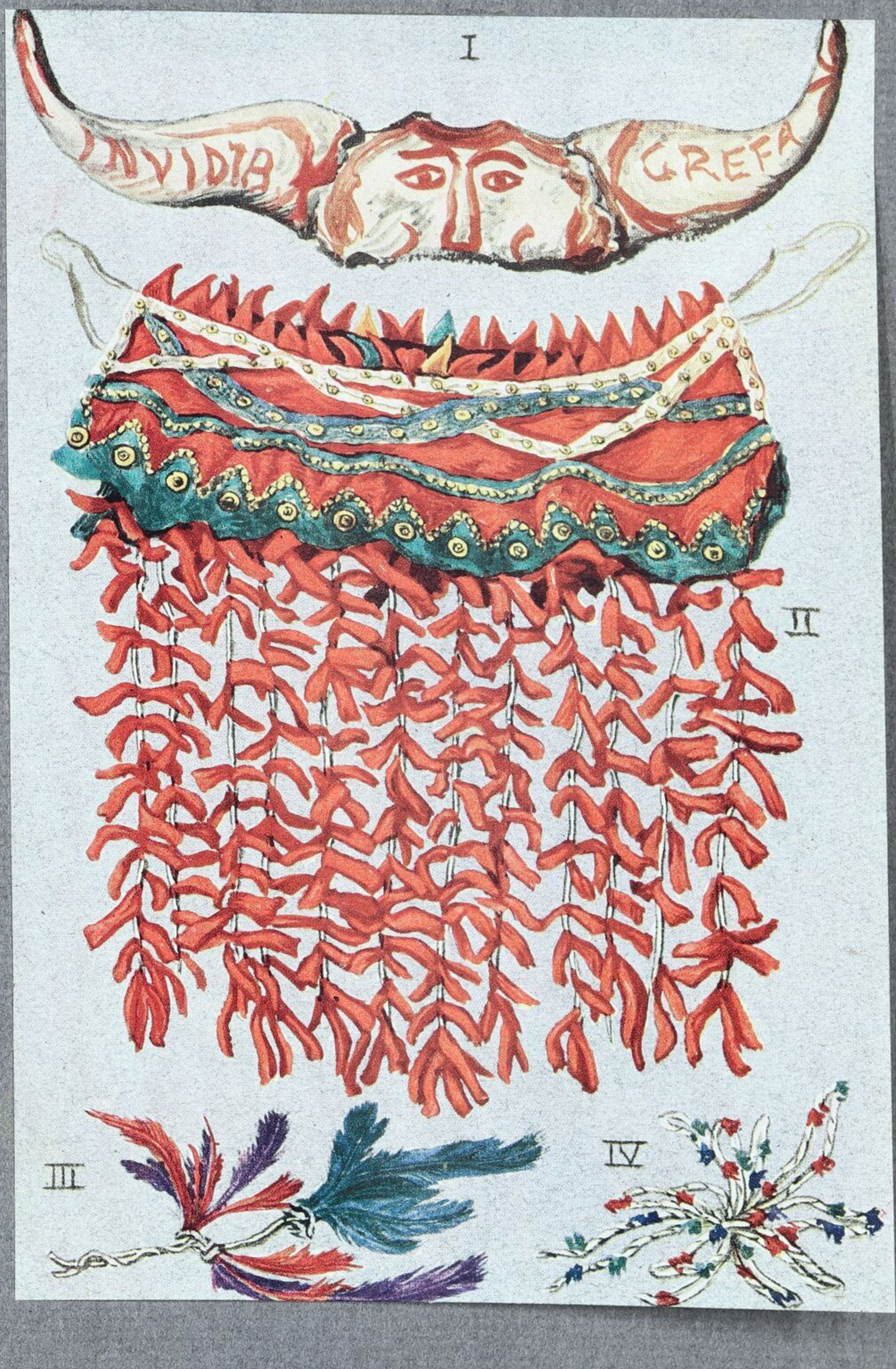
I. PAINTED OX HORNS TO KEEP AWAY THE EVIL EYE. S. STEFANO.

II. RED FLANNEL DECORATION HUNG BETWEEN OX HORNS AND ARRANGED OVER THE FACES OF THE OXEN TO KEEP AWAY THE EVIL EYE. AQUILA.

III. FEATHERS DYED RED, GREEN AND PURPLE TO KEEP AWAY THE EVIL EYE. COCULLO.

IV. THREAD WITH COLOURED KNOTS TO BIND ROUND THE WRISTS AND NECK TO KEEP AWAY THE EVIL EYE. SCANNO AND COCULLO.

PLATE IX.]


I
INVIDIA
GREFA
II
III
IV

They are pegs used for planting, and are ornamented with a coloured representation of a house with windows, two hearts, or a sheath. Another token is, if two young people find two beards of Indian corn of the same colour, they kiss and make love. Girls come to the feast to invoke the saint for their marriage, and on the same eve promises take place. The bridegroom invites the relations to the house of his betrothed for three o'clock for the formal presentation, and the bride, dressed in her best clothes, awaits the arrival of the guests. When they have assembled and are seated in a circle, the bridegroom rises and offers the bride a gift in money, one or two twenty-lira pieces (*marenghi*) according to his position. The relations follow one after the other, according to their relationship, and also offer gifts of money in an envelope or white paper with the traditional words,—"*Tempo a cento anni*" (a hundred years to come). The bride returns thanks, and puts the gifts in a large handkerchief, which she keeps on her knees, and afterwards the coins are counted on a square stone on the threshold of the church of S. Rocco. The bride offers the *complimento*, which consists of the *calcionetti* (a small basket made of paste (dough) containing a savoury composition of cheese and eggs), and *pizzelle* (made of sugar and eggs, baked in a special iron mould), and confections, liquors, red wine, and Marsala. Friends and relatives give the bridegroom a basket filled with eggs, macaroni, and a ham "with a golden ring." After the marriage and after congratulations have been paid to the bride, she goes to her new home with her father or uncle, followed by her relations and friends throwing confetti along the way. At the door of the bridegroom's house she is met by her mother-in-law, or aunt, who takes her hand, and with it rubs the sides of the door, saying,—"*Tempo a*

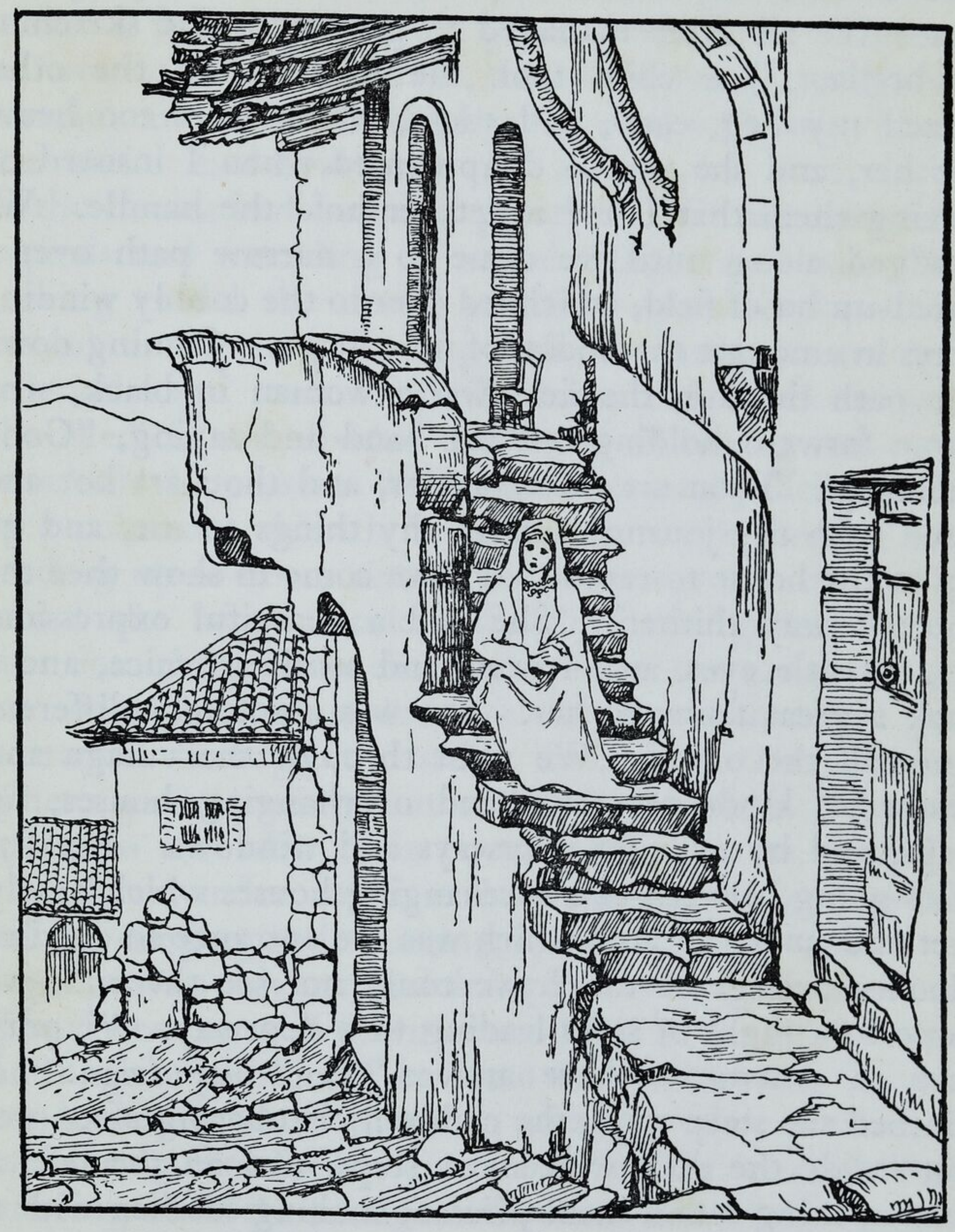
cento anni" (a hundred years to come), or, "*Sia con salute*" (be in health), and then the mother-in-law takes a plate full of confections and lets it drop on the threshold of the house. Afterwards, all join in presenting congratulations (presents) and touch the bridegroom's hand.

Should the young wife wish to know if her baby is to be a boy or a girl, she should be made to give someone a blow with her fist. If this blow has the thumb enclosed within the hand, the child will be a girl, if outside, a boy. Another way is to break the breast bone of a chicken, and it is a boy, or a girl, according to which side the vertex of the bone remains.

When married people from Teramo have no children, or when they cannot agree, they go to the *fattuchieri* (charmer), who says special words to undo the *nodo* (evil spell). Should a widow marry again, she is the butt of the village, especially on the eve of her marriage. The inhabitants go about the village beating broken drums, tins, saucepans, and other kitchen utensils, and make a great noise, out of contempt. The schoolmaster told us that, when a girl does not keep faith, her lover in spite and jealousy makes the *grattata* (gridiron) by scratching her face with the cheese grater, and for some days she is ashamed to come out, and stays indoors.

The following morning, when I was working at the sketch of San Stefano, a village some distance away, I saw the local *archiprete* under a large umbrella coming along the road with two children carrying a basket. When he reached us he said he had seen us from his window, and had brought us some lunch. There were delicious home-made cakes of different kinds, and he had brought sugar and water coloured pink, which he had especially made for me, as I do not drink wine. We

shared all our eggs and bread and cakes, and there was far more than we wanted, but our visitor kept telling us



San Stefano.

to eat, for that was only the beginning and that he was preparing soup and a proper repast when we went to the

village! I was anxious to finish my sketch; my father returned with him, and I promised to follow later. The two children stayed with me, and about three o'clock we set out. We all three managed to get under the sketching umbrella. One child took the basket, and the other seized my bag, easel, and sticks, which were too heavy for her, and she was so disappointed when I insisted on having them that I had to let her hold the handle. We trudged along until we came to a narrow path over a dried-up bit of field, which led over to the cobbly winding ways in amongst the houses of the village. Coming down the path through the field was a woman in black, who came forward holding out her hand and saying, "Good morning. Thou art the *signorina*, and thou art hot and tired with thy journey. Give thy things to me, and go up to the house to repose. I have come to show thee the shortest way thither." She had a beautiful expression, large gentle eyes, and a sweet and soothing voice, and I took a great fancy to her. She was absolutely different from all the others. We went through the village and under all kinds of arches and overhanging houses, up steps, and by exciting doorways and windows. Finally, after going between two overhanging houses which nearly met and under an arch which was the entrance to a grim, gloomy passage of which we could not see the end, we came to a flight of steps leading to a doorway. "I pray thee to enter; we have arrived," said my friend. I climbed the steep steps, the children clambering after me. Just inside the door were more steps, and on the left, a door opening into a small pleasant-looking kitchen with a red-brick floor, lovely blue, black, and purple tiles all round the stove chimney, and bright copper pots hanging on the walls. On the right was another step leading into

a little room where the *archiprete* and my father were waiting for us. Our host insisted on my eating a melon; sitting by me and telling me how to eat a whole melon, at last I finished it, to his great satisfaction. Then we set out to see the village, the *archiprete*, the peasant woman, and the two children coming with us. It was the most mediæval place we had as yet seen. Some of the houses had beautiful pillars to their windows, with capitals and moulding of varied design, and others had carving round the doors, beautiful open fireplaces, and carved and painted ceilings. These little houses were evidently the remains of the large castle belonging to the Medici, now divided up into small houses and rooms in which the peasants lived. I did several pencil sketches of a pointed arch with its carved arms overhanging steps leading up to doors almost under the eaves of the houses, and I also began a colour sketch of the "gallery" which was one of the main thoroughfares of the place. It was an arched passage underneath the houses, and had grim entrances through the stable doors into the buildings. There were openings out of which the inhabitants could creep to see what their enemies were up to, and then rush back under cover, and it was here that the whole village congregated, chatting, spinning, occasionally feeding a goat or chicken, and doing all kinds of odds and ends. They went up and down continually, or sat on the stones and logs of wood, and now and then a man with his mule or donkey laden with straw, corn, or other goods came wandering slowly by, the sound of the animal's hoofs echoing down the passage. The man called to the peasants to make way for him, and the mothers snatched their children aside. Then there was a sound of a distant horn, gradually coming nearer until the owner blew three

blasts and shouted that he had tomatoes and macaroni for sale. He was a pedlar wandering from village to village carrying his goods in a basket, but no one seemed to buy from him. I could not work long, for the dim light changed quickly, and besides, hearing that we wanted pots, the peasants kept coming with everything they possessed. The *archiprete* walked up and down, trying to keep them away and telling them to bring the things to his house, and when we returned we found the little room crowded with carpets, terra-cotta, brass, coins, a Roman fibula, plates, woodwork, jewellery, and a queer peacock whistle. We bought a good many things, and amongst them the painted ox horns. (Plate IX.)

One peasant gave us false change, and she was there and then excommunicated by the *archiprete*. When she made amends the excommunication was at once withdrawn.

It was getting late, the sketch was not finished, and we had not seen the whole village. We said we would return another day, and the *archiprete* told us that next time we must have a meal with him, and we promised to do so. We left strict injunctions that we should be quite happy with bread and eggs, water, and fruit if there were any, and that he must not give himself any extra trouble. When the sketch was finished, we went as we had promised. After the eggs I said I had had enough, but the *archiprete* was horrified, and told us that the eggs were only a preliminary. We had had the eggs without any plates or tablecloth, but at this stage he told the woman to get a clean tablecloth, glasses, knives, and plates, and the soup. As he only lived on bread and milk and cheese himself, we did not like all the extra bother he was having, but there was no alternative, but to sit down and wait, hoping

the next course was the last. It was followed, however, by a dish of steaming macaroni and tomatoes, and then by a plate of stewed meat. The *archiprete* took all the best bits on to his plate, looked at them, tasted them, and then held them to my mouth on his fork for me to eat, and this time I decided to let him have his own way. After the meat, came a dish of chicken cooked with all kinds of herbs, followed by another dish of chicken differently cooked. In between each course the woman wiped my knife and fork and gave me a fresh plate. We told him we could not eat any more, but it was useless, for there were still three more dishes of chicken cooked in different ways and these we had to sit and eat. After the five courses of chicken there was a delicious bowl of junket, made of goats' milk and flavoured with almond, and almost the whole of the contents the *archiprete* poured into my plate and besides this we had home-made cakes with jam made from a wild berry the name of which I could not find out, and then figs and grapes, sugar-water coloured pink, and finally coffee. Everything was most beautifully cooked, and we were very grateful, but I never ate so much in my life! After I had done some pencil sketches we went to see the rest of the village. Some of the ways were very narrow, and there was one which we could only get through by going sideways. It led to a large deserted house which had a beautiful carved and painted ceiling and an open fireplace big enough to roast an ox whole, with its stonework richly carved with figures and leaves up to the ceiling, and there were various pieces of broken capitals and mouldings lying about on the floor. In another part of the village there was an old disused chapel with richly painted beams and the remains of pictures, but the whole thing was falling

to ruins and it was scarcely safe to tread on the rotten planks. Peasants were still taking pottery to the *archiprete's* house and we returned to look at it and buy some more. Then we all set out to go down to the group of houses by the roadside at the bottom of the village, leaving our pots with a blacksmith to take care of until we came for them on our way to Aquila. While we waited for our driver we talked to an old man who looked like a crumpled-up withered leaf, and seated on a stone wall he sang us the song of S. Antonio, and described how on the night of January 16th the peasants dressed as pilgrims make a chorus and go round ringing bells and singing "*Domani è S. Antonio*" (to-morrow is S. Antonio's Day) accompanied by music.

Next day on the *festa* of *S. Antonio Abate* (17th January), decorated sledges drawn by oxen and laden with big logs of wood are taken round by the peasants, and the wood distributed amongst the convents. After a good meal they all return in a procession, and then a peasant dresses up as S. Antonio and sings his adventures and also descriptions of the local incidents of his life in a humorous and ingratiating style. Another peasant represents an angel, and a third the Devil; they knock at the doors of the principal houses, enter, and then S. Antonio sings his part, while the angel and Devil try to conceal themselves. There is then a feast of wine, chicken, sausages, and other good things. The following day there are big dinners, and thus the Carnival is opened.

The old man on the wall sang with hesitation. He kept stopping and saying he could not go on, but the *archiprete* and children, who had come to see us off, encouraged him, and we managed to get the song. After the song the old man said he really could not remember

more, he seemed to be becoming nervous and shaky, and, giving us the pilgrim flask of S. Antonio (page 143), he told us we had better go and look through the grated window of a little chapel lying back from the road, as we should like it. We went by a piece of swampy ground where women were wading with their washing, and came to the chapel, inside which, as far as we could see, the floor and altar and part of the walls were covered with beautiful coloured tiles. When we returned to the group of houses to see if our driver had come, we gazed up toward the village, for the sun was setting and it shone through the ruined battlements and broken windows of the castle with a deep fiery glow, the unequal heights and irregular shapes of the pile of buildings looking still more strange and dark against the crimson light. The driver now arrived, and we said good-bye to our friends. As I shook hands with the peasant woman, she held my hand in hers, stroked it, and said,—"Thou goest over the world; I remain here; return again to me; who knows if I shall ever see thee again." "*Chi lo sa*" (Who knows?) "We may come back next summer," I answered. "Come," she said, still holding my hand, and then she added after a pause, "If not here, we will meet again *nel Paradiso*."

The following is the song or little drama which the old man sang to us while we waited for our conveyance:—

S. ANTONIO.

O del cielo eterno Iddio	[Oh, of the Heaven eternal
Scendi e vedi il volto mio,	God,
Queste carni impallidite,	Descend and see my image,
Come reso io son quaggiù	This pallid flesh,
Dal digiuno io già spossato,	As I am here reduced
Dal Demonio insidiato,	By fasting already worn,

Mi sento in petto ognor' la morte
E non so che farmi più!
Mai che veggo un angiòl viene
Che mi toglie da ste pene.
Egli è bello come il sole,
Che tramonta d'ogni splendore.
L'Angioletto sovrumano
Nuda spada tiene in mano.

Tormented by the Devil,
I feel in me my death
And what more have I to do!
But I see an angel coming
Who takes me from these pains.
He is beautiful as the sun,
Which sets in great splendour.
The dear angel superhuman
A naked sword holds in his hand.]

The angel then appears in the presence of S. Antonio and the master of the house, and says:—

Non temere, Antonio mio,
La tua prece accolse Idoio.
Dio ti manda questa spada
Per trionfar dal Tentator.
Non temere se il Demonio viene,
Il Signor ti sostiene,
E la gloria al Regno Santo
Ti ha serbato con amore.

[Do not fear, my Antonio,
Thy prayer God has accepted.
God sends you this sword
To triumph over the Tempter.
Do not fear if the Devil comes,
God helps you,
And the glory of the Holy Kingdom
Has preserved you with love.]

The Devil enters last, and protests as follows:—

Il digiuno lasci ormai,
Vieni al mondo che vedrai.
Il deserto è per le belve,
Non per te che vuoi soffrir.
Io ti fo sempre guerra,
Tu non godi in questa terra.
E se il voler mio non senti
Io ti vengo ad insequir.

[Thy fasting now leave off,
Come to the world which thou wilt see.
The desert is for wild beasts,
Not for thee to suffer.
I make on thee always war,
Thou wilt not enjoy this world.
And if thou wilt not do my will
I come to persecute thee.]

The Chorus sings:—

Soffri, Antonio, ogni tormento.
Che sarai un di contento.
Questo mondo è pien' di colpa,

[Suffer, Antonio, every torment.
Thou wilt be content with me.
This world is full of sin,

Lascia pure e non temer
La celeste eterna gloria
Serve dunque una memoria
Che di fiori una corona
Il Signor ti fa tener.

Leave it and do not fear
The celestial eternal glory.
Keep therefore the memory
That a crown of flowers
God will give to thee.]

Meanwhile the Chorus inside and outside continue to sing, and the master of the house distributes eggs, wine, and coppers to everyone.

ANOTHER SONG OF S. ANTONIO THE ABBOT.

Pellegrini che noi semo
Pe'lù munno ce ne jemo,
Visitando le casate.
Vive Sant'Antonio Abate.

[Pilgrims that we are
Round the world we go,
Visiting the hamlets.
Long live S. Antonio the Abbot.

Si visteva da rumite
Pe' menare aspra vita.
La lu monno ave' sufferto,
Si tiro' lu nu deserto.
Nel deserto mentre stava,

He dressed like a hermit
To lead a hard life.
From the world he suffered,
To the desert he retired.
While in the desert he remained

Lu suo corpo lacerava.
Lacerava d'astinenze,
Co' vigilie e penitenze.
Ora date a noi la mancia,

His body he tormented.
He tormented with abstinence,
With penance and vigils.
Now give us the pour-boire (tips),

Co' salsiccie, lombi, e guancia,

(The pigs)—sausages, thigh, and cheek,

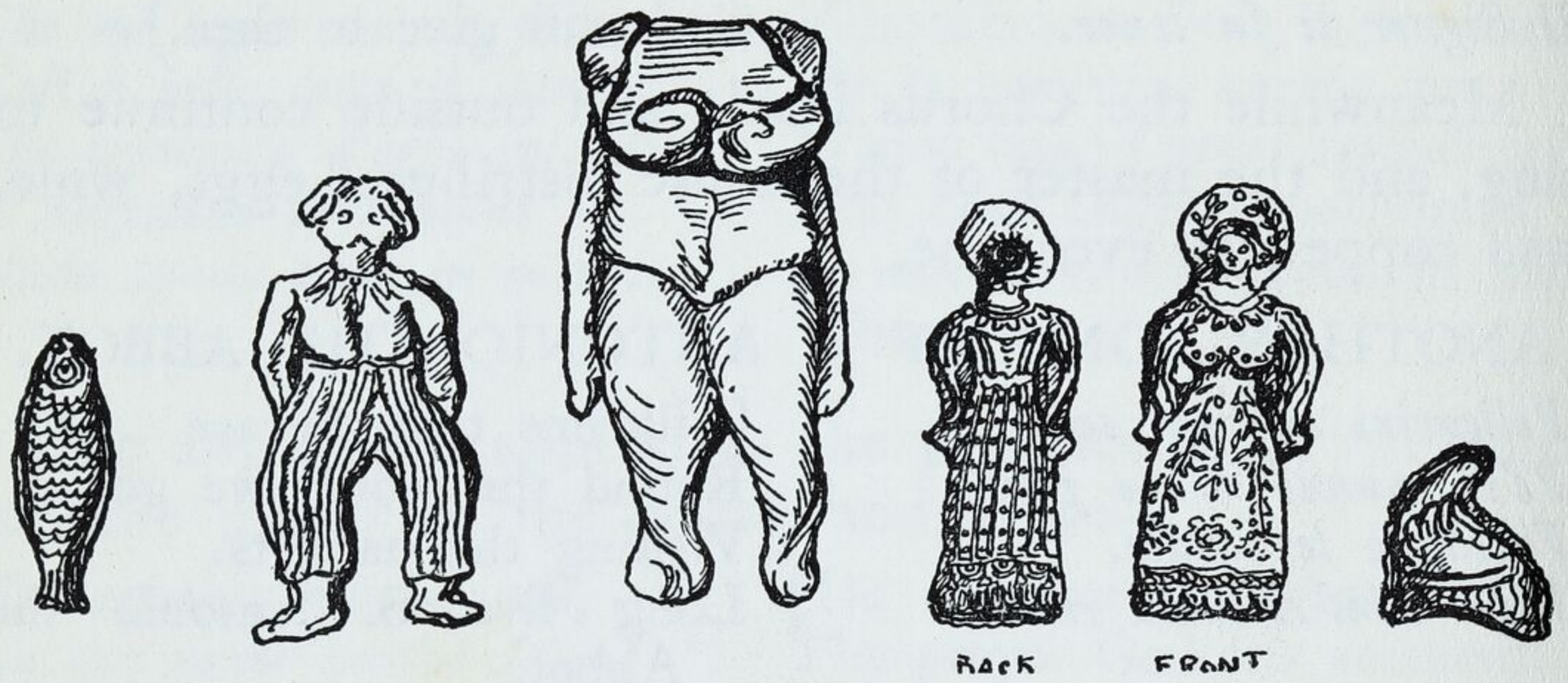
Li prosciutti e le gambette,
Date a noi puverette
In onor di Antonio Santo.
Ecco noi finiamo il canto,
Non abbiamo più che dire,
Ce n'abbiamo da partire.
Fate presto e non tardare.
Noi avem' da camminare,
Ca da qua a n'altro poco
Avem da ire ad altro loco.

Hams and small legs,
Give us poor creatures,
In honour of S. Antonio.
Now we finish the song,
We have nothing more to say,
We must go away.
Be quick and don't delay.
We will have to walk on,
As in a little while
We have to go to another place.]

—*Petrilli.*

Chapter VIII.

Pian d'Emparatore; Folktales.



Bread Shapes.

Ai muli passagli avanti,
Ed ai preti passagli addietro.

[Go in front of mules,
But go behind priests.]

THE *archiprete* had promised to take us to Pian d'Emparatore, and next morning at half past five we went to see if the mules were ready. He had provided us with his own animals and had sent a man for a guide, as he could not come till after mass, when he was going to catch us up. The man had a mule, and there was another mule and a horse, both fine animals, and we were also given saddles and stirrups, which, after riding peasant fashion, were most comfortable. The man rode in front, then came my father, and I and my horse, who had a will of his own, followed. We went along a narrow stony way, the mountain rising above us covered with stones. We rode in shade, for the sun had not yet risen above the top of the mountain, and it was pleasantly cool. The views over the valley and the ridges with the castle

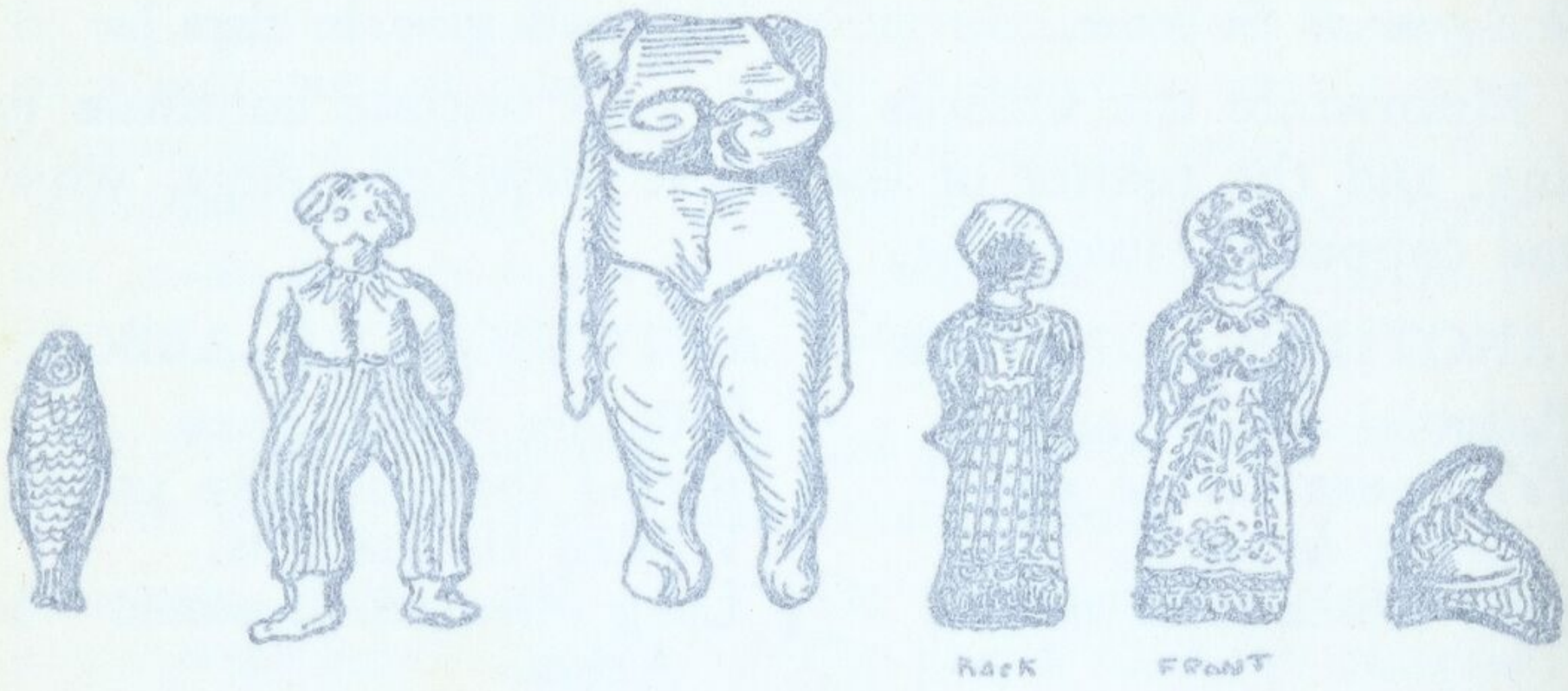


PLATE X.]

ON THE WAY TO PIAN D'EMPARATORE.

Chapter VIII.

Pian d'Emparatore; Folktales.



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ruins and distant ranges of mountains were all bathed in the pale, golden light of the sun, and up to the left was the towering mass of stone, with white clouds drifting by. At last we arrived at the top of the ridge, and followed the narrow path between small fields of rippling grain with stones piled up round their edges, and we caught the breeze as it came sweeping over the corn, making it rise and fall like the waves of the sea. My horse sniffed the air and dipped down into a cornfield to get some mouthfuls of grain, and this he tried to do several times, but I made him content himself with snatching at a few stray overhanging ears by the path. He knew quite well that our tall athletic-looking guide with his coffee-coloured complexion and his large sombrero hat drawn down over his black eyes was looking at him to see that he behaved. We still went up, finding it was not quite so steep, but there were no more cornfields, and again we went through loose stones. Our animals were very sure-footed; the mules never stumbled, and it was only now and then that the horse half-stumbled and then, to keep his balance, just slid with the falling stones. Our guide told us that these horses, born and bred in the mountains, are almost as sure-footed as the mules, the one disadvantage being that they never "smell" a precipice when they are nearing it, like a mule who, however quickly he may be going, even if he is running away, will draw up at the edge of the precipice, whereas a horse plunges down it straightaway without realising it is there. Mules are seldom killed or hurt, because they never struggle, but simply relax and let themselves go, whereas a horse struggles and becomes rigid and either gets killed or his limbs broken. The country became wilder and wilder, and we rode up and down places which looked quite impossible. Finally we found ourselves at

the head of the pass. For some distance we rode over an almost level track of short, green grass and a plant with leaves like thrift, and on either side of the track were masses of tiny white foxgloves and tall yellow gentian. Then we came to a steep bank leading into the bed of a wide dried-up river, and the Pian d'Emparatore lay on the other side.

When we descended the bank, I looked back and there was the *archiprete* coming at full tilt over the stones. His man said he would soon catch us up, for his animal was very *svelto* (nimble), and therefore we went on. Our animals went carefully down the bank, and we arrived at the river bed. It was a mixture of sand and stones, but we soon crossed and began to climb up the other side, which was one of the stiffest climbs we had ever had. The mules followed each other, but, as usual, the horse insisted on going his own way, and the man said it was best to let him do so, for he knew what was safest for himself. The *archiprete* joined us, and we all set out over the plain together. Away in front was the immense chain of mountains and the Gran Sasso, and to the left there were green hills shutting in the plain on that side, and about fifteen miles away in the opposite direction we saw the forest.

The *archiprete* was very anxious for us to see the shepherds having their early breakfast before dividing their flocks and going off for the day on to the green slopes. But the shepherds had breakfasted earlier than usual and they were far away, some going over the plain and others climbing the hillsides with their sheep, which varied in number from 200 to 300. They each went in a different direction, and did not meet again until night, when the five or six shepherds all crept into their straw shelter to

protect themselves from the wolves while they slept. Then we came to a little dip in the green plain, and there were all the wild mules and horses with their foals standing in a group, with one donkey amongst them.

Mules and horses are bred at Pian d'Emparatore, and left wild for three years, after which they are caught with a lasso; they would be strangled by the loop if they continued to struggle. It takes five men to hold an animal. Then a man takes a rough rope bridle on the end of a pole, which he tries to put quietly over the animal's head. This done, the lasso is taken away, and a horse, which has been trained for the purpose, is taken up to the wild animal. The plain where the animals are bred is about ten square miles, and the only place in the Abruzzi where there is pasture. The pasture is short, inferior grass.

The mares had their forefeet roped together in the customary manner, and the others were free. A little distance off were men who looked after these animals, all of which belonged to the *archiprete*. There was an encampment of straw and wood shelters, copper pots, and wooden pails for the milk and cheese, and prowling about were savage-looking dogs with their iron collars. We dismounted, the *archiprete* calling to the cowboys that he wished us to see the wild animals caught and shod, for the blacksmith had come up some time before. The *archiprete* had a large horsewhip, and he went in amongst the horses slashing at the animals he wanted caught. Of course the horses went dashing away at full tilt over the plain, and the cowboy had to jump on a tame horse to ride after them. Meanwhile the *archiprete* told us that, whenever any of the animals were to be shod, he always came to look after them himself, to see it was properly

done. The first time they are caught the forefeet are shod, then they are allowed to go free for a fortnight, then caught again and the hind feet shod, and the mules also have their manes clipped with scissors. Then they are again allowed to go free for another fortnight before they are caught and tamed. Everything is done very gradually, always with a fortnight's interval, until they have become accustomed to having a bridle and saddle, and then a cowboy mounts them and they go dashing away until they are tired. Sometimes a cowboy will jump on an animal's back when it is lying down asleep, waking it with a start, and the animal then tears along until it is tired and manageable. They are also held by a long rope at the end of which is a noose round their noses, and are made to trot round and round in a circle. There is always a tame horse to help to break them in, and the wild ones are petted and caressed while being shod, and whenever they are caught. Generally it takes about two months to tame them. These mules and horses, the finest breed in Italy, are bought for the army; and the horses are famed because they can go up and down precipices.

The wild horse the cowboy had been pursuing came galloping back towards us, the boy riding after him. The other boys were ready with their lassoes, and watching their chance threw one round the animal's neck. He kicked and reared and struggled, but the other boys ran up, and six of them held on to the rope so that the animal could not get away; when the rope gradually tightened, and he found it difficult to breathe, he stood still. A boy with a long pole on to which a rope noose was put went quietly up and tried to put it on to his nose, but he reared and nearly pulled the six men over. Again the

boy tried to put the noose on, and this time, in rearing, the animal got his forelegs over the rope, and the boys at once let him go. He galloped off for some distance, and the boys scattered and gradually closed in on him until they could pick up the rope. This time they succeeded in getting the noose on. The tame mare was led up and her head put to the wild horse's head, and she stood quite still while his head was pulled over her shoulder, and held by the ears and rope bridle; then his forefoot on the side away from the mare was roped, and the rope drawn up over his back, pulling the hoof up with it in order that it could be shod. At first he struggled, but the mare stood by him and a cowboy caressed and whispered to him while the blacksmith did his work. When that hoof was done, the mare was led round to the other side, and the same process gone through, and the horse was set free. He stood still for a moment, and then went trotting off, while another horse was caught from the very middle of the group. The boy singled out the victim and caught him, and for a minute the animal stood, not knowing what had happened; the *archiprete* slashed his whip making the other horses start away while the victim began to struggle. The same process was gone through as before, only the horse did not get his legs entangled and was therefore not let go; another horse was caught and he had his hind legs shod, the only difference being that a rope was twisted round his lip and held with a stick, and he was held by the lip as well as with the noose. Several more animals were caught and shod, a mule had his mane clipped, and another horse had a rope bridle put on him, but the boys said they thought he would never get tame for he was just as wild as two months ago. He went dashing away with the rider on his tame horse keeping up

with him and still holding him by the bridle. A boy jumped on to the back of another animal, and he went rearing and plunging away over the plain up on to the hill.

After the shoeing the animals are run round in a circle and caressed. Gradually real bridles are put on them, then saddles, and finally they are mounted, always with a tame horse near by, to soothe them. Later the eyes are covered, and the animals branded with initials and numbers.

The *archiprete* took us to the little encampment consisting of the few shelters, copper cauldrons, and nets for the sheep, but he would not go near without a cowboy for fear one of the savage dogs would fly at him. The boy spoke to the dog, and he lay down quietly. Inside the shelters were a few small sacks of corn, evidently used as pillows, the occupants lying on the ground, but how six of them get into these small shelters it is difficult to imagine. We were told that when the wolves arrive they sometimes come out to frighten them, but they generally leave it to the dogs, who are, however, not always successful in driving them off. Only two nights before over sixty sheep had been killed by a *flotta* (pack) of wolves. When the wolves are hungry, they only kill two or three sheep and carry them off to devour them. "But," said the cowboy, "when they kill a hundred or so it is because they just want to have some fun. They enjoy it, and they kill the sheep by biting their necks or snapping their heads off. Then they leave them." I asked why they did not shoot the wolves or dig pits and entrap them, but the boy shrugged his shoulders and answered, "*Chi lo sa?*" The horses and mules scattered in all directions over the plain know when the wolves are coming and signal to each other, and come galloping up to one place manœuvring

to put the foals in the middle, making a circle round them with their heads outwards. The wolves, when they come, can therefore do nothing, for, whenever they are attacked, the horses rear and stamp them to death; but should the wolves break through the circle, it is all up with the horses. This seldom happens. If there are only one or two wolves the horses encircle them and stamp them to death, and, although the savage dogs give warning when the wolves are coming, if one of them by chance gets inside the circle he is also stamped to death "for the fun of it!" The dogs know this, and keep guard about three hundred feet away from the horses, whereas with the sheep they remain close by them. If a horse or mule is attacked by himself he seldom escapes, for the wolves jump at his neck. Two young foals the winter before were attacked, but they managed to escape. The snow was lying on the ground, and their tracks and those of the wolves could be followed. The foals had galloped all the way from the plain to the village, with a wolf on each side, and in the morning one of the foals was found with his neck wounded and the other with his eye and ear torn, but they healed up and now they are both strong beasts.

The *archiprete* said he must see about the breakfast for the smiths and cowboys. He gave us a little collection of *graziose* (lyrics) and other songs, saying that he did not like to leave us, but he had to look after his boys, and he thought the songs might give us pleasure while he was away. We went off and stretched ourselves on the grass in the sun, ate our food, and read through these very characteristic poems. Then we fell asleep.

GRAZIOSE. [Lyrics.]

Zumpu, zumpette,
E Maria di Isabetta,
E chi centi matarassi
La Madonna ci parto in braccia,

Ci afferra chi mi di tue ditre,
E ci porta 'mparadisu.

[Skip, little skip,
And Mary, Elizabeth's kin,*
And with a hundred mattresses
The Madonna carries us in her arms,
And holds us by the finger,
And carries us to Paradise.]

Zumpo, zumpitto,
Calicagnitto
Preta roscia,
Preta blanca (Pietra nera).
Nun mi fà fà
Nu mare di sangue.

[Skip, little skip,
Jump well
Red stone,
White stone (Black stone),
Don't make me make
A sea (pool) of blood.]

Êlle la gliuna,
Êlle le stelle,
Êlle Maria piccirella,
Êlle ru glupe ncatenate,
'S'ha magnata na pizza de cascie,
E non chiu che pozze crepa
Piglia na mazza
E schiaffagliela ncapo!

[Look at the moon,
Look at the stars,
Look at little Mary,
Look at the chained wolf,
It ate the cheese tart,
And I can no more
Take the cudgel
And strike it on the head!]

Ezic, ezic Janni,
Famme a Sangiuvanni!
Cu ci purteme?
Na soma de lena.
Chi ce la porta?
La gallina cioppa.
Chi l'ha ciuppita?
Ru palu de la porta.
Dovelu rù palu?
Ru avemo missú a lu focu.
Dôllu ru focu?
Ru a ranmorto l'acqua.

[Come, come, John,
Let us go to S. Giovanni
What do we take to him?
A load of wood.
Who will carry it?
The lame hen.
Who lamed the hen?
The bar of the door.
Where is the pole?
We have put it on the fire.
Where is the fire?
The water put it out.

* Elizabeth is the cousin of the Madonna. On the 2nd July she visits the Madonna.

Dôlla l'acqua?
Se l'a veveta la curnacchia.
Dôlla la curnacchia?
E' ita a ru mulino
Quanne revé facimi ri tajilini.

Where is the water?
The crow has drunk it.
Where is the crow?
It is gone to the mill.
When it comes back we will make the macaroni.]

I' 'sacce ne canzone
De galle e de capone.
E sera la cantive
Nuanze a Monsignore
Monsignore nun ci steva,
Steva alle munachelle,

Stevano a fa le pizze belle.

Me ne dereno po'n altru
Ru metteve sopra a la banca,
E la banca era cupa,
Che ne steva ru lope sotto,
E ru lope era vicchie,
E rumpè a ru rette;
E ru rette se trittichè,
E rumpè sopra a ru forne,
E ru forne era cucente,
Zumpè sopra a la gente,
E la gente pe pavura
Zumpirene pe le mura.
Mammame, me ci fu ristata,
Tutte le genti ci cascarono,
Alle vecchie le palle mbiette,

A le giovani ri combiette,
A le vecchie na schiuppetata
A le giovane la serenata.

[I know a song
Of a cock and a capon.
Last evening I sang it
Before Monsignore.
Monsignore was not there,
He was staying with the little nuns,
He was staying to make the beautiful tarts.
They gave me some more
And I put it on the bench,
And the bench was dark,
And the wolf was under,
And the wolf was old,
And it jumped on the bed;
And the bed it shook;
And the oven was broken,
And the oven was hot,
And it jumped over the people,
And the people for fright
Jumped over the walls.
Mama, I went back,
All the people fell down.
To the old women shots in their breast,
To the young women confetti,
To old women rough music,
To young women a serenade.]

Sicchi, sicchi, Jannandré,
Chi ti l'a fatte le calze a tì?
Mi l'a fatte mamma mì.

[Here, here, Jannandré,
Who has made thy stockings?
My mother has made them.

Mamma mì mi s'è perduta,
Tatà mi è rinvenuto,
Rinvenuto da la mantagna,
E quanni vè se cotte le sagne.

My mother has lost herself,
My father has returned,
Returned from the mountain,
And when he arrives the *sagne** is cooked.

Nu plattuccio a tatà,
Nu plattuccio a mamà,
A sta citela la vredelella!

A small plate to dada,
A small plate to mama,
The choice morsel to this girl!]

ZARANTELLA (Taunt).

"*Balla, balla, Dominico cioppo.*"

["Dance, dance, lame Domenico."

"*Ballu tu, che jo son cioppo.*
Se ce l'avessi la bella mia
Cioppo, cioppo, balleria."

"Dance thou, for I am lame.
If I had my beloved
Lame, lame (as I am), I would dance."]

ZARANTELLA (Taunt).

Pecorale, manga ricotta,
Vieni qua se vuoi far a lotta.
Jo co una mano e tu co due,

Pecorale, ha da perde tu.

[Shepherd, eat the curds,
Come here for a round (wrestle).
I with one hand and thou with two,
Shepherd, thou must lose.]

In about an hour's time we woke, everyone seemed to have finished eating, and we saw a boy go towards our horse and mules which were wandering about. We went to meet the *archiprete*, whom we saw coming. On our way we passed the large slabs on which salt is put every three or four days for the mules, horses, and sheep to lick; they are always delighted to get it. The wild horses were now beginning to come together. Many of them had been lying in the sun or wandering about, but they now all seemed to expect something, and the cowboy said that they knew it was drinking time. Every day they are

* A plate of thick macaroni.

driven off to the one small watering-place, and they know that they are not allowed to go alone.

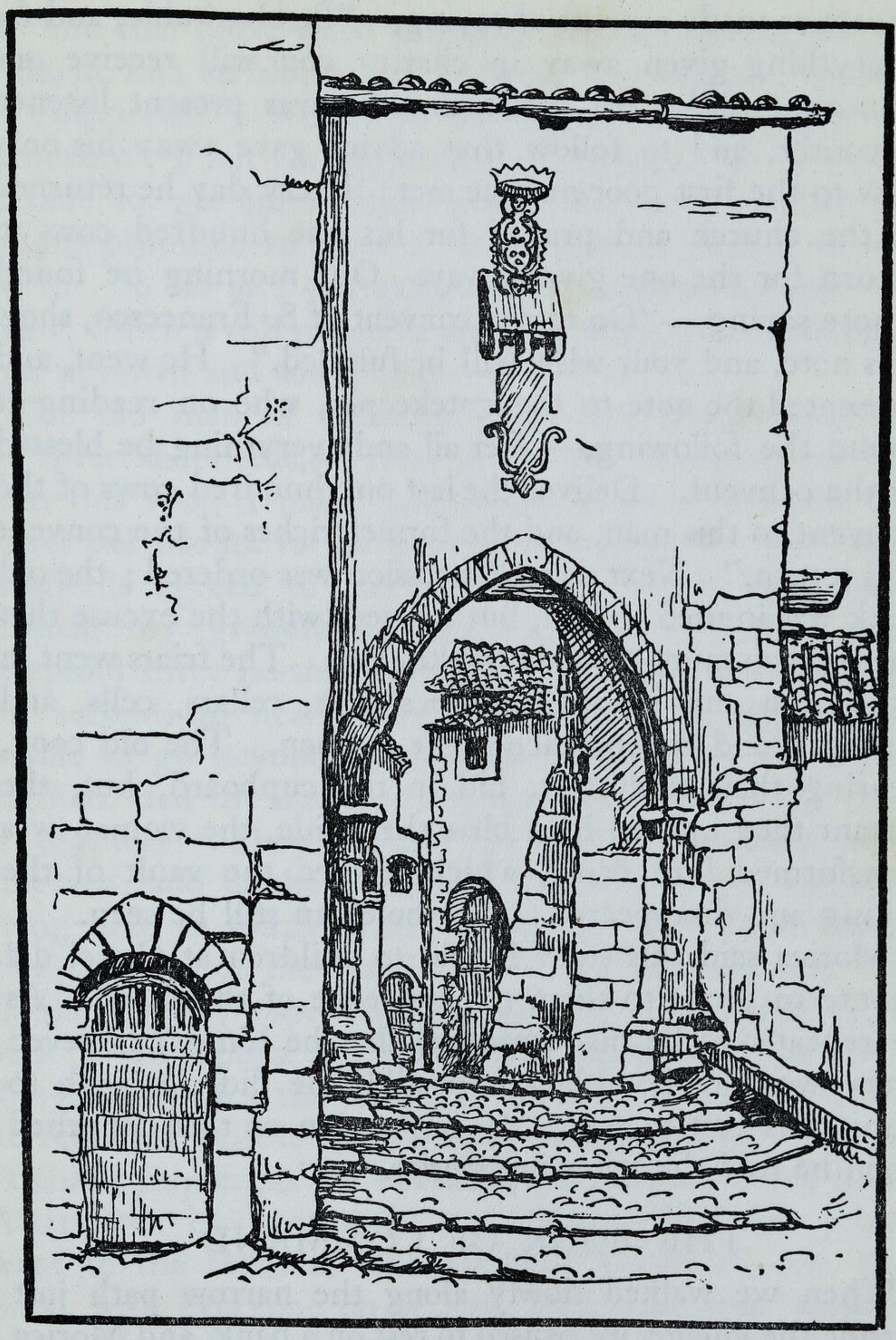
We mounted our own steeds and set off homewards. The *archiprete* said he would take us another way, and it was wilder than anything we had seen. Instead of going over the plains for some distance before crossing the bed of the river, we rode straight to it, and going down one of its steep banks we followed its course until we came to a bend. We found ourselves surrounded by immense pinnacles of rock looking like strange fortresses and towers. We rode on amongst them on the sand and stones, the gorge becoming narrower until we found we were on the edge of a deep still pool surrounded by rocks. The mules went carefully down the bank and the horse followed, but he was very nervous, and he decided, as usual, that he had better go his own way, which was much steeper and more slippery. Finally, we reached a little ridge of sand by the water's edge, and we waded in. The *archiprete* bundled up his petticoats, and I held my feet high. The water was quite still, but in some places the animals sank into the mud and sand. The water got deeper, and the boy shouted that we had better return. The *archiprete* said he always went that way, and that if I did not mind getting a little wet it would be all right. We came to some large holes in the weird towering rocks, and these were the entrances to caves where the brigands had lived. The water-way gradually widened out and became shallower, and going round another bend we came out into the dry river bed a little way from the bank down which we had come in the morning. We climbed the bank, and the *archiprete* said that even now we need not follow our old track, and we went over an undulating stretch of short grass until it dipped into a valley on the

other side of which there was the stony country with its large rocks. The horse sniffed the air and set off downwards, choosing the steepest way, whilst the mules zig-zagged down. In the valley we were sheltered from the air from the plains, and it became very hot and our wet things soon dried. We rode on and on through the rocks and stones, going up again until we came to the top of the pass, and from there until we reached the village it was downhill all the way with the loose stones slithering under us. Just outside the village by one of the threshing floors the *archiprete* dismounted, for he said he did not like to be seen riding into the village. We also walked, leading our animals home, and thus ended a wild and delightful expedition.

Morica, the schoolmaster, was one of our good and helpful friends, who met us when we returned from our expeditions in the evenings. On this particular occasion he gave us the following group of stories which he had collected. I give them as a group, and in translating them I have tried to keep the language as near as possible to the originals.

THE CONVENT FRIARS.

The friars of S. Francesco's convent lived in peace and prosperity until a certain old woman came to it. At first they refused her admission, but she so insisted and appealed to their feelings that at last they accepted her as a cook. Little by little she persuaded them to give up one fast after another until all were given up. It was the same with the Confession and all other religious practises, and the convent, which used to be very rich, possessing one thousand cows, became poor and was reduced to only one hundred cows. A sermon was preached in which the



San Stefano.

preacher made a point of saying,—"Be charitable, and for everything given away in charity you will receive one hundredfold." An old man who was present listened devoutly, and to follow that advice gave away his only cow to the first poor man he met. Every day he returned to the church and prayed for his one hundred cows in return for the one given away. One morning he found a note saying,—"Go to the convent of S. Francesco, show this note, and your wish will be fulfilled." He went, and presented the note to the gatekeeper, who on reading it found the following,—"Let all and everything be blessed in the convent. Deliver the last one hundred cows of the convent to this man, and the former riches of the convent will return." Next day a procession was ordered; the old cook was invited to join, but refused, with the excuse that she had too much to do in the kitchen. The friars went in procession and blessed all the stables, cellars, cells, and passages, and at last reached the kitchen. The old cook, hearing their psalmody, hid in the cupboard, but, the instant they opened it to bless the inside, the woman was transformed into flame, which pierced the vault of the ceiling and disappeared. The hole can still be seen.

Morica said this story is told to children at Castel del Monte to prove to them the existence of the Devil. As he repeated it he made me feel that he himself believed every word of it, although possibly he did not wish to admit this fact to me. My impression of this deepened when he told the following stories.

THE BOOK OF COMMAND

When we walked slowly along the narrow path just outside the village, we paused to rest on a bank, and Morica said, as he pointed towards Apulia, that his grandfather

told him that once, when in Apulia with two other shepherds, he met an old man of Calascio who had the "Book of Command." When he mentioned the "Book of Command" I felt his suppressed excitement. It is most difficult to get information about this book. Once a peasant promised to show it to me secretly, but I never saw it. So far as I can gather, it is a mediæval book of magic, which is still passed in secret through the mountains both in north and south Italy.

The old man of Calascio, continued Morica, asked the three shepherds,—"How much will you give me if, from this spot, I make you return in a few minutes to Castel del Monte to see your young wives?" The two shepherds agreed to pay eight florins each, but, said Morica, my grandfather paid nothing. Outside the sheepfold three horses appeared, which carried them in a few seconds to near Castel del Monte, but they were unable to go beyond the Chapel. The riders therefore alighted, tied the horses to the trees, and walked the rest of the way. They reached their homes, entered unobserved, and in the night they saw their wives without being able to touch them. After this they rode back. The only words they could say to the animals were "*Il diavolo scappi* (*rompi*) *collo!*" (May the devil break your neck!) In Apulia my grandfather refused to pay anything, but struck the old man and stole his book. Later he returned with it to Castel del Monte and laid *fattura* (a charm) upon his old sweetheart, who had refused him. Afterwards he became ill and died. When the priest went to the room to take his body to the church, the floor, with everyone on it, gave way. All were unhurt except the old sweetheart, who had her arm broken. The priest stayed on the threshold, and, said Morica, my

grandfather's body became suspended across one of the timbers of the room. He then asked the reason of the accident, and was told that it "was due to my grandfather having had the Book of Command. The priest seized the book and endeavoured to burn it, but the book jumped all the time over the fire without burning."

Morica said,—"My mother told me this story when I was ten years old:" it was quite evident he believed it, and was still frightened of the tale.

He then told me the following tale of

THE RAM.

A goatherd of Castel del Monte, going home late, found one of his rams missing near the Chapel of Cona S. Angelo. In despair he returned to the wood, Riparate, calling the goat by its name. Afterwards he saw it on the rocks of the Tre Monarche, in its turn calling him, bleating its lamentations. He went to it, but it did not stir, and therefore he had to carry it home on his shoulders. At each step the animal grew heavier, and before he could reach the fold the weight became so unbearable that he threw it down and cried out,—"Thou art not my ram, but the Devil!" The ram rolled to the bottom of the mountains, changing into a ball of fire, and disappeared.

It was getting late, the shadows of evening crept over the mountains, and dim lights flickered in the windows of the village. They shone all the more orange in the midst of the deepening blues and purples of the hills, the forerunners of the darker shades of night. Stars appeared; away in the distance a dog barked. It all made an imaginative setting for the following wolf stories which Morica hastened to tell.

THE WOLF WITH NO TAIL.

Scaramella, a charcoal burner, used to call wolves by putting his head between his legs and howling like them. Some shepherds asked him to do this, but Scaramella said that if he did the wolves would come and eat their sheep. On their insisting, he called the wolves, which came, and killed the sheep during the night while the shepherds were asleep. The shepherds, infuriated, tried to kill Scaramella with their heavy sticks, and he was obliged to run for his life.

Another time, when burning his charcoal, he again called the wolves, and told his friends how many would come. He hid in the trunk of a tree where he was wont to sleep, and the wolves came. After counting them, he lit a fire to send them away, but one remained, his tail caught in the trunk of the tree. From inside the tree Scaramella pulled its tail, shouting at each pull. To extricate itself, the wolf pulled all the more. After a fierce struggle the wolf gave a sharp pull and ran away, leaving its tail behind. The wolf became more and more mischievous, and the shepherds determined to kill it, but it left the mountains, went down into the plains of Teramo, and did so much damage that everyone was in despair. In the summer, Scaramella went to the Teramese to reap, and he promised to expel the wolf. Everyone laughed, but one night he slept where the wolf had been. As usual it came, jumped into the middle of the sheepfold, and Scaramella called out,—"*Ci vogliamo riessere*" (we want to pull). The wolf became so frightened that it fled, and next morning was found dead. The Teramesi carried Scaramella in triumph to Castel del Monte, giving him seven asses laden with corn, chickens, and other presents.

Scaramella was a friend of Morica. "He was a wild, fierce, strong-looking man," he exclaimed.

WITCHES.

Giovanna Petroni had lost several children, and, as we were worried about her last baby, who was ailing and becoming very thin, we wondered what we should do, said Morica. Finally we decided that a certain witch was sucking it, and we asked Alessandro, a bricklayer, who was suspected of being a *stregone* (wizard), if he would go to see her. He went, telling her he knew how to cure her child. Giovanna had no money, but agreed to give him twenty yards of hemp cloth (*forotella*). The bargain was concluded, the cloth handed over, and Alessandro made a *breve** for the baby, put it round its neck and assured the mother that the baby would recover, but it would be necessary also to keep the witch out of the way. To do so, at midnight she must undo the *fascie* (swathings) of the baby, because the witch was hidden in it, stretch them out on the floor, and cut them into pieces with a hatchet. This was done. During the night many hard strokes of the hatchet were heard on the floor where the *fascie* had been spread. Next day, Pugliesa, who also had the reputation of being a witch, went to the mother, saying she was in great pain because during the night she had received many strokes on her back. Giovanna Petroni rejoiced in her deed of the previous night, but marvelled greatly that the woman Pugliesa was still alive after so many strokes of the hatchet on her spine. To get rid of her she gave her a pot of lard, and all else that she had, telling her story to everyone. But, notwithstanding this, the baby died. This was in 1870.

Last night, while in bed, Morica said he heard strokes

* *Breve* is a kind of small flat cloth bag filled with amulets, such as Saints' or Madonna's images.

during the night. In the morning he found some baby's clothes burnt and thrown in the gutter of the fountain at Castel del Monte. A mother had given these strokes to her baby's clothes, and she had afterwards tried to burn them in order to burn the witch.

THE WOLF AND THE CRANE.

One morning in October a crane went to till a small plot of land at the side of the mountain and met the wolf. The wolf asked the crane to be friends, and promised to come and help. The crane accepted the offer. The wolf saw a big boulder, and told the crane to go on tilling while he kept the stone from rolling down and doing great damage. The crane worked all day until night. Summer came, and the corn was to be threshed. The wolf with the usual excuse did nothing, the crane working all day. "My dear friend" said the wolf, "the winter will be a very hard one; the sun has revealed it at sunset. Do thou take all the straw, for that will be warm." "No!" answered the crane. "Thou take the straw, and I will take the wheat." They were on the point of coming to blows, when a big dog appeared, heard all the quarrel, attacked the wolf, and killed it. The crane was very happy at this turn of events, because he now had everything.

We rose to go before it became quite dark, for our path was steep and we had no lantern. Peering into the gloaming and watching the lights in the distant village, stories began to suggest themselves in my own mind, and I wondered if those gleaming lights might not be the eyes of bad enchanted wolves who were now *fatturata* into stone houses and thus imprisoned, their eyes alone coming to life and shining at night, as from the windows they

looked over the valley where they could no longer do any damage. At the entrance to the village we met the tailor, who added the following tale to our collection.

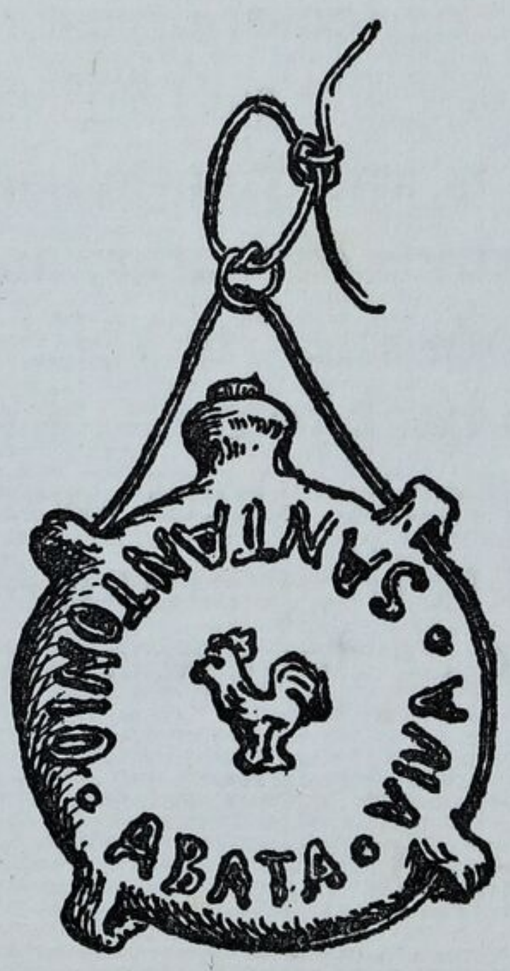
THE LARK AND THE FOX.

The lark and the fox agreed to cultivate a cornfield together, but the fox left all the work to be done by the lark. When the time came to thresh the corn, the fox wanted half the crop. The lark protested, but was obliged to go and fetch the *mezzetto* (measure) himself. The fox refused to measure the corn evenly. On going for the *mezzetto* the lark met his *compare* (friend) the dog, to whom he told the whole story. The lark said that he would give the dog a good meal and a good greasing to heal him from the skin disease which troubled him, if he would see that the lark had all the corn. Thus they concluded the bargain.

A woman then passed. On her head she carried the *cofano* (vessel) in which was the meal for her husband, who was the thresher. The lark saw her, hopped towards her slowly, to show he could be easily caught, and the dog hid himself under a bush. When the lark was near, the woman put down her *cofano* to catch the lark for her children. The moment she did this the dog came out of the bush, went to the *cofano*, and while the woman was trying to catch the lark the dog ate the meal. When he had had enough the lark suddenly gave a start and flew away, and the woman in great shame returned to the village to fill her *cofano* again with new food. The dog now waited for the greasing, and went to meet the lark again. An oilman who was going to sell oil in the village came by, and the lark sang most beautifully, until the oilman fell asleep. The dog immediately came on the scene,

went to the sleeping oilman, removed the cover of the oil jar, and with its contents smeared himself all over. Then the lark went to get the *mezzetto*.

The lark and the dog left the oilman asleep, and went to the cornfield, the dog hiding itself under the *mezzetto*. The time having arrived to share the corn with the fox, the lark called the fox and told him to get hold of the *mezzetto*. The fox came, but suddenly discovered the dog under the *mezzetto*. No sooner did he see the dog than the fox tore away for his life. The dog chased him until exhausted, but the fox succeeded in reaching his den. The disappointed dog, who kept guard all the time, heard the fox murmuring to himself,—"Thou, my feet, can run away, not to go in the dog's mouth, but to go into the den; thou my eyes saw that nasty dog, and guided me into the den; and thou my ears heard that ugly dog, and made me tear away more and more; and thou my tail stood back, stretching out to be in the ugly dog's mouth, with my feet already in the den, and thou my tail must be left out and punished." The dog, hearing all this reasoning, kept watch, got hold of the end of the tail which was out of the den, and pulled with all its might until he got the fox out and devoured him. Then the lark had all the corn for himself.



Flask of S. Antonio.

Chapter IX.

Castelvecchio.

Bellezza de lu ciele so (son) le stelle ;
Bellezza de le donne so (son) le capelle.

[The beauty of Heaven is the stars;
The beauty of women is their hair.]



Silver Ex Voto.

NEXT day we thought we would like to go and explore Castelvecchio, which everyone said was very strange, a long way off, and difficult to get to. We had some trouble in finding a driver who was willing to go there. We got one at last, and early next morning set out, the mule going at a quick trot. The driver told us what a fine animal he was, and said how much better mules were than horses, for they can travel a whole day without resting and without food, whereas a horse must be fed and rest two or three hours in the middle of the day. He said his mule was quite accustomed to travel like this, and that he had fed him the evening before. I had a thermos of water, and as usual, when the driver took water from me, he spilt some on the ground before giving the cup back to me. I noticed that everyone did this whenever I gave them water, and I wondered whether it dated back to the pouring out of a libation to the gods. Now it seems to be done as a form of politeness. We



CASTELVECCHIO.

PLATE XI.]

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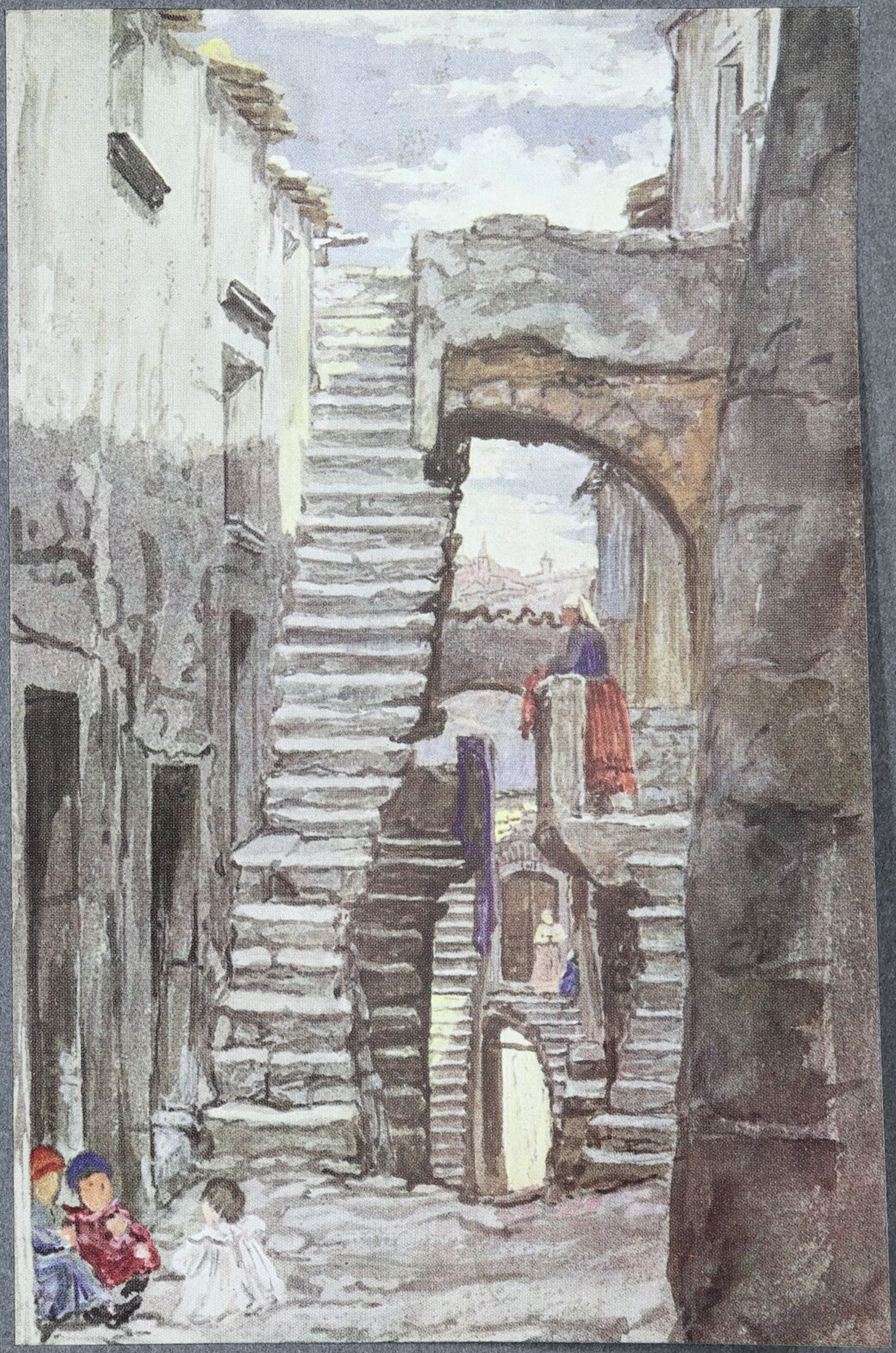
CASTELVECCHIO.

PLATE XI.]



went along the road as far as Calascio, which is the village before San Stefano, and then we branched aside on to the rough track down the mountain side. We passed several threshing-floors, where the peasants stopping a moment in their work to gaze at us, but very soon we were beyond the sound of any human life and all was barrenness and sun. By the white, rutty track there was a fringe of blue succory, the yellow thistly succory, mountain thistles, and a few poppies, and beyond were the mountains and castle villages on their ridges, all glistening and shimmering in the hot atmosphere; beneath us the road zig-zagged into the valley, and we went down until we came to a burnt-up almond orchard. Then the road became almost level, and we drove through more almond orchards until on the top of the opposite ridge we saw the castle village of Castelvecchio. It looked almost as if the houses were part of the burnt-up mountainside, for their colour was only a little paler than the earth and they overhung the ridge in the most forbidding manner. We went on amongst the same burnt-up orchards and barren earth through which we had come down. The track zig-zagged up this ridge until it took a long curve to the right round the ridge, and looking up we saw the village above us. We passed another almond orchard, with a very old man and woman sitting in the trees cutting the branches, with glimpses of a white wall behind them, and then we came to the first houses. They overhung the ridge, and were a kind of outer entrance to the village. The track went half-way round, bringing us to an irregular square, partially surrounded with stones, ruins, and tumbledown houses.

At the end of this square farthest from the valley there was a dark narrow passage, and this was the entrance to the castle village. We told our driver to draw the mule

up into the shade, and said he had better unharness and feed him and get something to eat himself, as we should be several hours.

"There is no food here either for beast or for myself," he answered,—"Neither do we want it." When we offered him some of our bread, eggs and cheese he would not take it, saying that both he and his beast would eat in the evening, and we left him stretched out on a large stone in the shade. He also refused to unharness the mule, as he said the villagers were thieves and that he must watch everything. We went towards the narrow passage. Women with skins like wrinkled leather and grey tousled hair were sitting on the steps leading to their doors, or in the dark entrances or on the ground, looking over their children's hair to clean it. One woman was the proud possessor of a comb and she was tugging hard at a screaming child, and every now and then all the children were cuffed to keep them quiet. Some nearly naked boys crept out of a dark hole to look at us, the women nodded, and we entered the narrow passage, which was the main thoroughfare of the place. If we had tried we could just have walked abreast, but it was more comfortable one behind the other. The houses on either side were of three storeys, and built of large irregular stones. They had black entrances with uneven steep steps leading into them, and there were small windows here and there. No sun entered this gloomy street, and the ground was all up and down, with a pavement of irregular stones and steps. We went along carefully, and then we came to an opening and a similar street ran across at right angles. In front of us our street was covered in with a shadowy gallery, for the passage, held up by large heavy beams, went under the houses. The beams were dark with age and smoke,

and were all different heights and at irregular intervals, and the entrances looked darker than ever. We were surrounded by shadows. Sometimes a strange swarthy face with black hair looked out of a doorway or window and disappeared again. The gallery led to another narrow street like that by which we had entered, and right away at the other end of it there was a refreshing gleam of sunlight on an outer wall. Two other alleys crossed ours at right angles, but we first of all went to the end of the street we were in, before exploring them. When we came to the end we found that a little alley, sometimes wider and sometimes narrower, went round the village, the three alleys which crossed the main alley leading into it at each end. We next went to explore the transverse ways. They were all steps and archways, and there were Venetian-looking windows, carved mouldings, and here and there a good capital of a broken pillar. The whole place was just like some great mediæval castle with galleries and underground passages, and must be little changed since the days of the Medici. We were afterwards told that the only difference was that peasants now live in it, and that they had knocked it about and stopped up some of the entrances of the subways, dungeons, and passages, all of which led to the most important part of the castle in the centre. We peered into the dark open doorways, and all we could see was an uneven flight of narrow steps leading right up to the top of the building to small rooms. Many of these rooms were like black holes with only a ray of dull light coming through a dirty window about a foot square, or through some chink. All the doorways we looked into had the flight of steps up to the top of the building, and many of the houses had also a steep and uneven stairway outside them leading right up to the

top like the sketch on Plate XI. One alley had these outside steps everywhere, and the peasants went up and down them like goats or monkeys. We explored the whole village before I decided what to sketch, and there were so many interesting and extraordinary corners that it was difficult to choose. Wherever one turned there were archways, galleries, steps, mouldings, and windows. Finally I decided on the alley with the steps, partly because we could not stay very long and it was fairly simple, and partly because in doing it I could sit on a flight of steps out of reach of the clamouring peasants and, I hoped, also of the fleas. Before beginning we looked at the church, by the other alley which surrounded the village. It was queer and uneven, built by the side of a rock, and it had corners, angles, and pillars in all sorts of unexpected places. At the uneven end of the church, in a recess which faced west, there was a very elaborate high altar covered with gold. It had carved pillars, flowers, and leaves all gilded, and was very fantastic and quite in keeping with the queer place. To the left there was another large altar much in the same style but not quite so rich, and there were lustre candelabra and curious painted wooden chandeliers.

We went off to have our bread and eggs before I began painting, and by this time we had attracted the attention of the whole village. Peering out of the dark windows and doors came savage-looking faces, and we were followed by a troop of clamouring women, girls, and boys. Everywhere we looked there were strange beings dodging in and out to get a view of us. They followed us to the entrance of the village, and there the women stood and gazed while we went towards our sleeping driver and mule. We got out our lunch, our driver never stirring—

(so much for his saying he must watch the things !)—and then sat down on some large stones with several boys standing in front of us. After a little the boys picked up stones which they threatened to throw at us, but we threw a bit of bread at them and they all went squabbling after it. Then I made a dash down a dark alley to the place where I wanted to sketch, and managed to get settled on top of the flight of stairs before they came, and my father sat on the bottom step to keep the peasants from climbing up to me. The whole village was there; shouting, fighting with each other, trying to stop their babies' howling by cuffing them, and sending the chickens out of my way by throwing things at them and shooing them, the result being that squawking fowls tumbled and flew over me, scattering showers of dust on the sketch and palate. Boys climbed up the side of the steps, hanging on and looking over the edge, but when I had had enough of them I had only to push their fingers and they half-jumped and half-tumbled to the bottom amidst shouts of laughter. Then boys, women, and girls climbed up the uneven stones of the houses and hung on to ledges, or got into windows or on the roof, so that they could overlook what I was doing. Sometimes I lifted the drawing for those who were down below to see, but whether I held it upside down or right way up, there was always the same shout of admiration. Now and then a man went along the narrow alley with his beast laden with grain and straw, and the people were shouted at and pushed about to send them out of the way. By degrees the attention of the peasants was taken by an old woman in black rags and bits of black hair hanging from under her handkerchief, who began to make a kind of discourse about us. She compared our hair and cheeks with the peasants around, and said it was

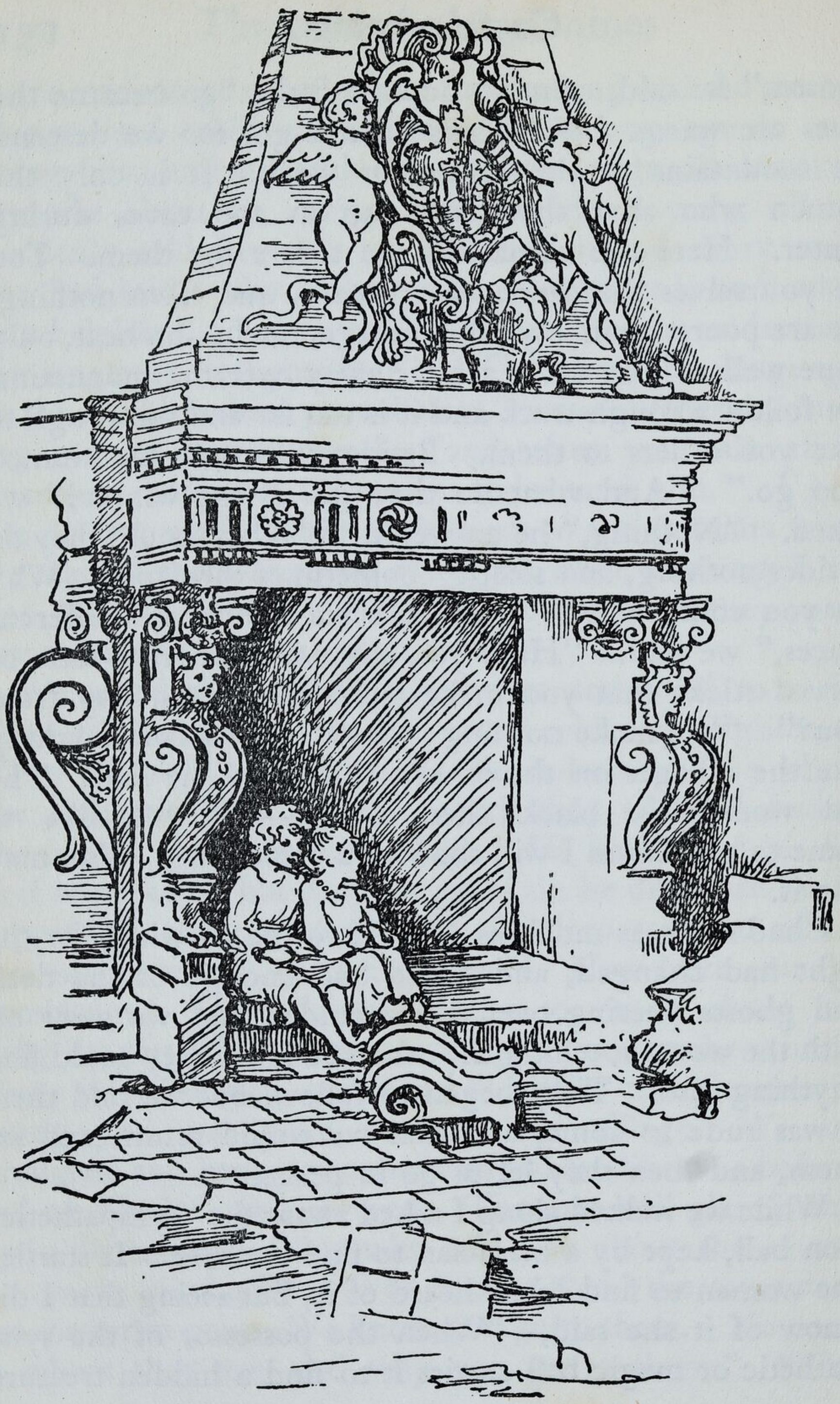
quite evident we came from a strange land and did strange things, and could not understand her language or anything that anyone said to us. She made all kinds of remarks about us, saying how stupid we were, till we suddenly told her that we had understood every word she had said. She looked rather frightened, and asked in a helpless kind of way,—"But how is it you understand our language; is it possible?" "There are other languages in the world besides your dialect," we said (thereby causing general astonishment); "and when you talk about strangers remember they may understand you." Up to the present we had only made signs to the peasants when we wanted them to move away, for while working I did not wish to answer a lot of questions, and they were astonished to hear us speak now.

We asked them about themselves and tried to make them tell us stories, but they were evidently frightened. Then we asked a tall, splendid, fierce-looking man where the mountain caves were in which they all lived during the winter, deserting the village. He half-raised his fist as if to strike us, but dropping it again he demanded with suppressed anger,—"And who dared to tell you others that in the winter we live in caves? How have you the knowledge? How do you know so much about us? Why do you others come to this place and make writing about it? Are you enchanted?" "For the pleasure of seeing you and your country and village. We are strangers, and have never been anywhere like this before, and we like it," we answered. The man still glared, and again demanded,—"But who told you about the caves? You mean mischief." "Who told us about the caves does not matter to you. We know you go to them. Now tell us where they are, and why you go to them." "The

women," he said, calming down a little, "go because the caves are warm. We others do not go, for we descend the mountains to the towns for work. It is only the women who shut themselves up in the caves during winter. Here the climate is too severe for them. You see yourselves that here we are poor, and have nothing. We are poorer than any other village, no fire, no heat, only stone walls. The caves are far away over the mountains. We follow a rough track and it is too far and too rough to take you others to them. Besides it is only the women who go." "And what do they do all the winter?" we asked. "Nothing," he answered. "What should they do besides nothing, and sleep? Sometimes they spin. Why do you come here?" "Because we like to see different places," we said. "Have you any coloured terra-cotta or carved sticks that you make and that we can buy from you?" "We make nothing; we have never had anything like the villages on the other mountains," he said. The old woman in black then added,—"If you like to come to my house I will show you something. You may like it."

I had done as much as I could to the drawing, for the light had changed, and I had had enough of the fleas, and ghosts peering over my shoulder, and we went off with the woman, telling the others to see if they could find anything also. They began to follow, but we told them it was rude to come, and that we would return and see them, and then they let us go in peace.

While we walked along I asked about the "sympathetic" iron ball, kept by a magician to find treasure. It startled the woman to find I had heard of it, but seeing that I did know of it she said,—"When the possessor of the sympathetic or magic ball carries it to find a hidden treasure,



CASTELVECCHIO.

it compels him to halt at the right spot. Once some searchers were excavating for a treasure, when they were suddenly transported to distant places. Their comment was that the devil still possessed the treasure. At the Forca di Palena there is a vault in a ruined castle, and the entrance is closed by a square stone with a ring. A treasure was said to be there, and the people led by the magic ball opened it. While trying to get in they were frightened, none of them dared enter, and they also were suddenly transported elsewhere."

The woman would not tell me any more. She had a little square room overlooking a precipice, and it was fairly light. Copper cauldrons were about everywhere, and there was a broken table, a chair, and a box, and a large open fireplace. She took us in, and then called a girl in to us and went out herself to get the terra-cotta, locking the door behind her and leaving us prisoners. We looked out of the window down into the valley, and saw that from the house, which was built on the very edge of the ridge, the mountain side went down like a cliff for hundreds of feet into the blue depths. For a few minutes we wondered if we had been trapped. There was, however, no way of escape, and all we could do was to wait and see. It was hazy, a thunderstorm was gathering, the opposite mountain was shrouded in heavy grey clouds with here and there a lurid gleam of light, and the first distant peal of thunder came rolling and echoing among the mountains. The air was oppressive. The key again turned in the lock and the woman entered, and we asked her if she had any water. "I must first lock the door," she said,—"For my boy and girl would otherwise come in." She put down her bundle, which was wrapped in a rag, and filled a copper ladle for us to drink from one

of the cauldrons. (The water is good in these mountain districts, for it is from springs.) She then uncovered her piece of terra-cotta, but she saw at once we did not like it. It was broken and ugly, with no design. She covered it up again, saying,—"There is nothing here, but you can see what the others have." We asked if the priest had anything, or if he knew any stories. "I know not," she said, "but will take you to him."

We went with her to his house, and she pushed ajar the door, behind which sat two women, saying we wanted to see the *archiprete*. The women poked their heads round the corner, and told us he was asleep. "How long does he sleep?" we asked. "*Chi lo sa?*" they answered, "Until he wakes." They pushed the door shut again, and we went off to see another woman's house. She was waiting for us, and we climbed the steep stairs into a large pleasant upper room with a beautiful fireplace and carved marble decorations. This was one of the principal rooms of the castle, she said, and she took us into another large room which was used as a bedroom. She was neat and tidy and had a gentle soothing voice, and her rooms were clean and orderly. She told us she was the last descendant of an ancient family who had had many beautiful things, but they lost all their money and became as poor as the peasants. There was a good looking-glass and a few other things, and one good Savona pot, which she said was the last of twenty, all of which she had gradually sold for ten lire each to an Italian, but the last she would not let him have.

We asked her if she knew any songs. She was not very interested, but she thought of the little song beginning "Knock, knock," and we finally managed to get the following songs which she said the menfolk sing when they

leave the mountains in the winter to go and get work in the plains.

Tup, tup, Zi Salamone! [Knock, knock, Uncle Solomon!

Chi ti ra fatto ru calzoni? Who has made your trousers?
Mi r'ha fatto Gianfrancischi! Gianfrancischi has made them!
Porta mocca le zitelle, I laugh at the spinsters,
Li zitelle fetene l'ovà. The spinsters make a noise (against him).

Porta mocca a Giannicola. I laugh at Giannicola.
Giannicola cantava la missa. Giannicola sang his Mass.
Porta mocca l'abbadessa, I laugh at the abbess,
La badassa e le Tudino The abbess and Tudino
Porta mocca a Sabatino, Laughed at Sabatino,
Sabatino di l'imfierno. Sabatino of the Hell.
Porta mocca a Salerno, I laughed at Salerno,
Salerno cacaneve, Salerno the very timid,
Piglia la gatta pi migliera, He takes the cat as a wife,
Piglia nu sorgi pi garzone. He takes a mouse for servant.
Tup, tup, zi Salamone! Knock, knock, Uncle Solomon!]

FROM THE SHEPHERD IN APULIA TO HIS SWEETHEART AT CASTEL DEL MONTE.

Questa è la lettera che l'amor ti manda, [This is the letter which love sends thee,
E stata scritta nel mare profondo, It was written on the deep sea,
Se in caso la risposta non mi mandi, And in case thou sendest me no reply,
Si turba l'aria e si sobissa il monte. The air will become turbid and the mountain fall in the abyss.

Vattene, lettera mia, vattene avanti, Go, my letter, go before me,
Tu passa il mare, e piano, e valli, e monti, Thou passest sea, plains, valleys, and mountains,
Va trova la mia bella a Castel del Monte. Go and find my beloved at Castel del Monte.

Tu la saluterai da parte mia,
Dal giorno che parti dalle mie parti.
Povera vita, condannato a morte.
Ma se ritornerò dalle mie parti,

Colla spada d'amor combatto forte.
Sono gli uccelli che cantano al sole,
Bacianti amor, e son per parte mia.
Rispondami, Amor mio, se mi vuoi bene,
E in Puglia non starò con tante pene.
La tua risposta voglio tenere in petto,
Per ricordanza e per il grande affetto.

Greet her from me,
From the day thou goest from my parts.
Poor life, condemned to death.
But if I return from these places

With the sword of love will I fight.
The birds sing in the sun,

Kissing love, and they are on my side.
Reply to me, my Love, if thou wantest me,
And in Apulia I will not then stay with so much pain.
Thy reply I will keep on my heart,
For remembrance and for great love.]

She offered us coffee, but we said we must be going on our way, and she took us downstairs, wishing us a good journey and saying that we should not find anything else of interest belonging to anybody in the village.

It was getting late, and the coming storm made it dark. We woke our driver and set off home, faces smiling and nodding to us as we passed. I looked up towards the village and the houses overhanging the edge. In front of one of them there was a small open space where women were sitting on the ground eating macaroni and spreading out grain to dry in the sun. Then came the precipice and the blue depths, and we thought of the spies Rahab let down out of the window. The air was oppressively hot, and we were thankful the sky was overcast. In the distance there was the sound of thunder, and we could see it

raining in torrents, but we did not get a single drop. It was so dark when we reached the bend of the road that we could only see the dim outline of Castel del Monte with many little flickering lights. When we drove up to the fountain the poet caught my hand and the boy said,—"Hast thou done any work? There was no sunset to-night, signorina." "But here is a poem for thee," added the poet.

O tu chi sti a su colle
i a sta valle,
Se mi vulisse bene,
calisse a balle.

Si vuò vide lu fiori
di la bellezza
Tu vieni a la marina
quand è bonarza.

Avete l'uocchie nere,
e sete belle pecchè

Nasceste aceante a la marine.

[O thou who art on that hill
and I
in the valley,
If thou lovest me,
thou wilt come down.

If thou desirest to see the flower
of Beauty
Come to the seashore
when the sea is calm.

Thou hast black eyes,
and thou art beautiful because
Thou art born near the seashore.]

PASQUETTA. [The Little Easter]

Cari Signori, state a sentire.
Vi voglio dire gran novità.
Dentro una grotta
Nato è il Bambino
Quel poverino
Tremante sta.
La cantica stella
Si mostra più bella.

[Dear friends, stay to listen.
I will tell you the great news.
Inside a grotto
Born is the Babe
That little poor one
Stays trembling.
The clear star
Becomes more beautiful.]

Chapter X.

Back to Aquila; and a fair.

Chi non vide lepre correre
Non deve parlar di paura.

[He who has not seen a hare run,
Must not speak of fear.]

WE found a driver who had a good mule and a *biga*, and we asked him to take us to Aquila. It was hot, and we decided to leave early to stop at Calascio to see some pottery. The mule was a fine animal, and trotted along like a horse. We passed some mules with large *bigas*, covered with tin, on which designs of the Madonna and Child, horses' heads, and flowers were beaten. They also had loose horns and bells which shook and flashed in the sun. There was little colour in the landscape, for the glaring light seemed to absorb it all into its shimmering intensity, and as we jogged, hour after hour, along the white road we were almost sent to sleep by the light. Our driver, who rarely spoke, was a tall dark man with large whites to his eyes, which were nearly hidden under his broad brimmed hat.



CASTELVECCHIO.

At Calascio we left the driver and mule in the shade of



MAIN STREET, S. STEFANO.

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CASTELVECCHIO.

At Calascio we left the driver and mule in the shade of



the church, and went off to see the Sacristan, who had promised to collect things for us. He gave us the little Pasquetta which is sung in Aquila, and which was given him by the chemist who had come to see him.

Giachè è passatu Natale	[As Christmas has passed
Bon capu d'annu ti vengo da,	Good year I come to wish thee,
La Santa Befana ti vengo, da	The Santa Befana to wish thee,
Ti vengo a da la Santa Befana.	I come to wish thee the Santa Befana.
Cari Signori che stante a sentire,	Dear friends who are listening,
Vi voglio dire, vi voglio dire,	I want to tell ye, I want to tell ye,
La novìta della candida stella,	The news of the clear star
Si mostra la più bella.	Most beautifully which shines.
Pasqua novella ricercano i Re,	The King searches for the new Easter,
Pasqua novella ricercano i Re.	The King searches for the new Easter.
Aggiù vinuto da Santa Pidocchin,	I come from Santa Pidocchin,
Aggiù saputo c'ha accisu lu porcu.	I have learnt they have killed the pig.
Se mi date la Salsicella,	If thou givest me the little sausage,
Te la cantu la Pasquarella.	I will sing thee the *Pasquarella.*
E se non me la vó 'da,	If thou dost not want to give it me,
Non mi fate più aspettà.	Don't make me wait any longer.
Dall'Oriente si risplende una Stella	From the East shines a star
Che chiara e bella,	Which is clear and beautiful,
Che chiara e bella risplenderà.	Which is clear and beautiful and is resplendent.]

He then told us about Vincenza Ciotta, an old woman who died lately at Calascio and who, it was said, spoke

with the dead, who told her the number of masses necessary for their souls; enquirers paid her with presents. When she invoked the spirits, she made first the sign of the cross, nodding her head, or whispering as if to a living person. Before she died, Ciotta called the *archiprete* to her bedside, telling him she was talking to her mother, who had died long ago, and when her end came, she cried :—

Lasciatemi stare! (Let me alone !)

Ajutate voi me! (You help me !)

Che io non posso più ajutare voi. (Because *I* cannot help you any more.)

The *archiprete*, who had come to bid us farewell, said this was quite true, and he thought we would be interested to hear about it. He then gave us the stories of the "King's Son" and the "King's Children," which he had collected for us.

THE KING'S SON.

A king condemned his son to remain in a desert because of his faults, until a beautiful girl had fasted for him for a year with bread and ashes. The son met with a gracious girl who out of pity undertook this fast, and the prince returned to his father's palace. The girl presented herself at the Court, worn with fasting, and hoped the king's son would marry her. But the prince, instead, spat in her face, saying,—"And thou for a man hast suffered hunger! Go from here!" The poor girl did not wait to be told twice, and wandered about the country sadly, until, overwhelmed by sleep, she sank under a tree. A *fata* saw her, waked her, and gave her a talisman, saying,—"Whatever

thou wishest, this will give it thee." The girl, taking the talisman in her hand, said,—"I want a palace in front of the king's palace, with servants and every good thing of God." So it happened. The prince, who was accustomed to rise early, on the following morning did not appear. A servant went to call him, asking why he had not risen. "Because it is early. The sun has not yet come into my window." He was informed that the sun would never come in at his windows again, for a palace had risen in front of them.

The king's son immediately sprang out of bed, went to the window, and beheld the wondrous palace. Through a window he saw the splendid figure of a woman, who he did not recognise as the girl who had saved him. She had recovered her beauty by virtue of the talisman. "Who can she be?" he wondered. "She is so lovely." The prince sent her a diadem incrusted with pearls and precious stones, asking her to show herself at the window that he might admire her. The girl, on receiving the gift, took out all the precious stones, threw them to her chickens to pick up, saying she did not know what to do with them, and in return she sent a cucumber. The king's son was sad. "Who is this woman?" he asked. None could tell him, and he could not understand. He continued sending presents, but the girl did not come to the window. Finally, she sent word that, if he wished to see her, he must feign himself dead, be carried on a bier beneath her window, and then she would come to see him. The prince placed himself on a bier and was carried, with many followers, past the palace of the girl. When he passed beneath her window she came and spat in his face. He raised his head and asked why she did this. She replied,—"Because a man who will feign himself dead for

a woman, what kind of a man is he?" Then the procession broke up, and the Prince was obliged to humiliate himself, but finally he married her.

THE KING'S CHILDREN.

Three sisters during the long winter evenings used to spin near the fire and talk. The eldest said,—"I would like to marry a miller," and the second,—"And I a blacksmith who strikes the anvil, and who in striking iron strikes gold, according to the proverb." The little merry sister said,—"And I should like to marry the king's son." At that moment the king's son passed under their window and overheard their talk. Next morning he came and said,—"I heard your words yesterday. Therefore the eldest sister, who wants to marry the miller, she shall marry him; the second, who wants the blacksmith, she shall marry the blacksmith; and I shall marry the youngest, whom I like, and who wants the king's son." Everything was soon done, and the young sister became queen. The other sisters envied her. When she gave birth to a son they asked to be allowed to nurse her, and then they put her child by a river, where a miller found him, but to the king they gave a piece of wood. The king was grieved at this. The queen then had a son and a daughter, the sisters presenting the king with a puppy and a kitten, and saying these were his children. The king became very angry, imprisoned the queen in a dungeon with a small window, and told every one to spit on the glass when they passed. The true children of the king, who were cared for by the miller, grew up. The boys went hunting, made a fortune, and built a large palace where nothing was

wanting. When a *fata* came, she said to their sister,—"This palace equals that of the king. If you wish it to be better, you must have the dancing water, the bird that speaks, and the tree which sings. These three things are in the Castle over the hill. He who goes in search of them must not turn at the strange noises he will hear, as otherwise he will be changed into marble."

The eldest son said,—"I will go, and unless I come back to-morrow, come and find me." He did not return, and, therefore, his brother went in search of him. He also did not come home. They had both become petrified. The sister, in despair, stopped her ears, and went to find them. She saw her petrified brothers and wept, but she did not turn back. At the top of the hill she found the bird which spoke, the tree which sang, the water which danced, and she took them back with her. The bird alighted on the petrified brothers, and they again came to life, went home with her, and found the king waiting for them. When he saw the water which danced, the tree which sang, and the bird which spoke, he said,—"These are my children, hidden by the sisters." The king freed the queen, took back the children, and sent the bad sisters away.

The Sacristan said it was a pity we could not go to Rocca (the battlements of the castle we could see on the mountain above us), for there was an *Acqua Santina* (holy water stoup) there, which he thought we would like. However we had not time, and we had to bid good-bye and to go on our way. At San Stefano we again left our driver and rushed up to say good-bye to our friend the *archiprete*, and found that he had already been down to the road and had waited an hour for us for we had told him we should

probably be going to Aquila that day. He pressed us to stay and have one of his so-called "little repasts," but we wanted to be at Aquila before night, and we had to hurry on. On our way we passed the square pond where the sheep are washed, and also the holes in the mountainside with their wooden doorways which are the entrances to the long passage-like caves where each peasant keeps his potatoes etc. Some peasants who came out of one of these caves shouted to us to come and help to bring out potatoes. We shouted back that we had not time then, but "*un altra volta!*" We offered some lunch to our driver, but as usual he said that neither he nor his animal would eat till the evening. Whenever he spoke he always began and ended his sentence with *Cavaliere*, e.g. "But, Cavaliere, I your servant could not think of taking your food, Cavaliere." We divided our lunch into three parts, and finally he took his share, admitting that he was hungry. He was much interested in the thermos, and could not understand why the water was cold. We had two cups, and before giving back his cup he swung the water round in a ceremonious way, spilling some of it on the ground. It became hotter as we descended the mountains, and the atmosphere danced more than ever in the light, but whenever we passed a threshing-floor it was always busy with life, none of the workers taking the customary siesta. We passed a Renaissance fountain by the roadside with steps leading up to it. Girls were filling their *conche* and copper cauldrons at it, and oxen were standing with their forefeet on the steps trying to push in between the coppers to get at the water. Our driver borrowed a pail and filled it for the mule to drink, and after a few minutes we drove on. When we got nearer to Aquila several carts went by full of peasants, and they all had either umbrellas up or torn

pieces of canvas awnings. The mule went slowly, and it was only because the driver was sound asleep and because there was no back to our plank seat that we kept awake. We saw a woman beating maize with a flail by the roadside, and shortly afterwards Aquila loomed in the distance. The mule went up the steep hill leading to the town, and only then did the driver rouse himself and put on his coat. The Customs officers saluted without stopping us, for they knew us by this time, and we drove up the shady avenue of planes, the driver cracking his whip in style. A few heads nodded to us from various doorways, and, when he had deposited us at our destination in Aquila, our man went off with his mule to a church which had been turned into a stable.

Next day, luckily, there was to be a fair, and early in the morning the market was thronged with peasants. They came in from the surrounding districts, driving in carts painted blue and red. Some carts were large and heavy, and others small and light. They drove in *bigas** or rode horses, mules, or donkeys. The *bigas* are small, light mountain carts on two wheels, with openwork bodies, for they are only made of thin strips of planks with spaces between. They are like a trolley set on high wheels, with two sides in the front part where a plank is fixed as a seat, the back being left for packages. Under the carts a coarse net is strung and this carries all the goods the peasants require, and often children. Nearly all the peasants had blue umbrellas to shade them from the sun as they drove, rode, or walked. In the carts they either stood, or sat on the sides, or bits of planks, or chairs in the middle, or on the bottom with their feet hanging over the edge. Some even sat on the shafts and

* The term *biga* is also used for the rein-halter (*Cf.* Chap. i.)

held on to the animal's tail. The piazza was full of stalls with canvas awnings or umbrellas over them. One side held all the fruit, capsicums, sacks of grains, and onions, which were mostly in large baskets, their owners sitting under an umbrella to which the scales were generally fixed, and on the other side were baskets, agricultural instruments, pottery, stuffs, ribbons, rags, copper utensils, tin lamps, old iron, and other odds and ends, either spread out on the ground or on stalls. There was one stall covered with the sugar *corone* (see Plate II.). The animals were mostly unharnessed and put up in odd barns and places, but a few oxen and donkeys were left in their shafts at the further end of the piazza, where most of the empty carts stood together.

The oxen are magnificent white animals, with immense horns. They stand with their heads low, and have high reinholders, and yokes, and the harness generally consists of rope. The left-hand ox is roped, the rope being twisted round the left-hand horn and hanging down. The rein is a rope tied to a ring through the nose. The peasants were in every sort of gay garment, and each village had its own type. Some of them had gold earrings and pendants covered with enamels, or designed in gold without colours, and they had also strings of large golden beads or of coral, at times as many as six strings of large coral beads being worn. All had charms against the evil eye, and many did not like being spoken to and escaped as soon as possible by dodging behind each other. They sat on the ground all along the edge of the piazza, some cross-legged, others with their knees nearly touching their chins; some sat on boxes, but they mostly seemed to prefer the ground, and others stood chatting, bargaining, and knitting. The usual way of carrying knitting when it is

not being done is to stick the pins through the hair or handkerchief on the head, and one often sees women walking about and going into church with half a stocking on top of their heads and the loose pins either behind one ear or stuck through the hair. The peasants were queer dusky-looking people with black hair and eyes, and they chattered and shouted in every imaginable dialect, and some others. One woman had on a splendid red and white head-dress, but the moment we looked at her she went off. There were one or two women from Scanno, a village we hoped to see, and several from the environs of Sulmona with their deep fringed *tovagliole* hanging down almost as far as their knees. I chased them to talk to them, but at first they would not tell me even where they lived, only saying that it was a long way away, and asked if I would buy the large baskets of eggs and tomatoes which they held over each arm. I admired their linen fringes and gold beads and amulets, and then they became less frightened, and we parted quite good friends.

We heard that there was also a *vaccine* (ox market) by the fort, and we wandered along the crowded streets towards it. The peasants were pushing past each other, but we did not hurry and stayed to see courtyards and bits of architecture as we went. In one courtyard there was a fountain, the water of which flowed from the mouth of a woman, and the owners had put a large black bullock's horn on to the woman's head and it looked like a tall pointed cap. They had done this, we were told, because one of the children died when he was fifteen years old, and then another brother died a fortnight later. The horn would prevent any more deaths in the family. We looked at the pillars supporting the vaults of a stable which had evidently at one time been part of a palace.

The capitals were each of a different design, and on one nearest the entrance were two large horns and the half-decayed body of an owl, caught by flickering candle light, to prevent the evil eye from harming the horses. "They should always be caught at night," the stable boy informed us. We went down a dark passage and under an archway between two houses, to the sunny patch of ground which we saw at the other end, and came out at the mule, horse, pig, and donkey market. The bit of land in front of the fort was the market place, where there were all the animals with a rope from tree to tree or from pole to pole, to keep them off the roadway. On the other side of the roadway on the steps and in the doorways of the houses, which looked towards the market, men and women were sitting on the ground, on baskets or bundles, on copper pots or broken chairs, eating and drinking their mid-day meal of soup, bread, macaroni, fruit, and wine, whilst they sang and quarrelled and chattered. Others wandered amongst the animals looking at their teeth and observing their various points. There were foals and mules and tiny baby donkeys little more than a day old, and they nestled close to their mothers or frolicked round them. There were also a great number of large black pigs and numerous little ones. Many of the animals lay sleeping flat on their sides on the ground, and others stood panting under the shade of a few almond trees. The *vaccine* (cattle market) was just outside the town, and we went through the gates to see it. Here the ground rose to the fort, and the whole side of it was crowded with the creamy white oxen with their immense horns. Most of them lay sleeping in the sun, but some were standing by their owners, who were often not as tall as their backs. There were circular groups of sheep,

all standing with their heads down to the ground, and half-naked children went in and out of the crowd of animals and peasants, selling ices, coloured scented iced-water, and wines. Fathers and mothers nursed their babies, most of whom were either sleeping or howling. Where possible the peasants remained in the scanty shade of the almond trees, under their painted carts, or under large umbrellas, but all the children were bare-headed and did not seem to feel the intense heat.

I wondered if it were only in March that they would keep out of the sun, because they say sunstroke is principally due to the March sun; to avoid it put red thread (wool) round your wrists.

We met our friend the jeweller, who had explained the charms in his shop (Chap. I.), and knowing our interest in everything characteristic of the country, he wandered round the market with us, pointing out the finest animals and the long white horns of the oxen, some of which had bits of clipped red flannel hanging between them and down over their eyes to keep away both the evil eye and the flies. He said these beasts were specimens of the finest in the country, and he again repeated that it was around horns that many beliefs were centred. He also told us that we should hear many animal stories, and asked if we had already heard about the "Goat with the Golden Horns." It was the only tale "that sprang to mind just then."

THE GOAT WITH GOLDEN HORNS.

A peasant of Capracotta had a boy, Beppo, and a daughter, Elena. His wife died, and he married a wicked woman, who persuaded him to get rid of his two children.

They became suspicious, and told their grandmother, who advised them to take a pocketful of wheat and drop it grain by grain when they were taken to the wood to be lost. This would enable them to trace their way back. Their stepmother, surprised at their return, planned again to lose them and let the wild beasts make a meal of them. The grandmother then told the children to take some bran with them, and spread it along their path to enable them to return. Unfortunately the wind blew the bran away, so this time they were lost in the wood and left by themselves. After walking a long distance with no hope of reaching home, they came to a fountain, and Beppo, who was thirsty, was beginning to drink, when suddenly an old man appeared and stopped him, crying out,—"For the love of heaven don't drink; otherwise you will become a goat with golden horns!" Beppo took no notice. He drank, and became a goat with golden horns. Elena, greatly dismayed, could only wander on, followed by Beppo. After many days, they came to a large town where a good prince reigned. The surprised townsfolk took them before the prince, who at once became interested in their adventures, and finally fell in love with Elena and asked her to marry him. She consented on condition that she should not be separated from the goat with the golden horns. The marriage took place with great pomp. Princess Elena expected a baby. Her lady-in-waiting was tired of attending to her as well as to the goat, and she was also jealous of the princess. She made up her mind to get rid of her and take her place at the court. One day she persuaded Elena to go to the terrace overlooking the lake to admire the sunset. While the princess leaned on the parapet, the lady-in-waiting stuck a long pin in the back of her head. The princess fell into the lake, and

was drowned. The lady in waiting returned alone to the palace, and went to sleep in the princess's bed. The prince was astonished to find his wife so changed, and could not believe it, but the false princess pretended to be angry at his astonishment, and insisted that the sun had changed her colour and the wind her voice. Meanwhile, the goat, which had been present at the scene of the murder, continued to bleat most plaintively night and day, until at last the prince gave way to his supposed wife and ordered the goat to be killed and thrown into the lake. The goat was therefore taken to the terrace, bleating all the time, but, when on the point of having its throat cut, it called out in great fear,—"Sister, sister, help me!" Then a voice came out of the lake,—"Brother, brother, I cannot help thee. I am inside a shark, and have two babies in my hands." The prince, who at that moment passed by, heard everything, and ordered that the big fish should be caught. The shark was fished out, and from it came the princess with twins in her hand. She told the whole story, and the prince in a fury ordered the false princess to be placed in a barrel full of tar and burnt. The old man who had warned Beppo not to drink of the fountain reappeared and turned the goat with the golden horns again into Beppo, and everyone lived happily ever after.

The jeweller was sorry that he could not remember more animal stories, but thought we might be interested to hear about the *Festa dei Talami*, at Orsogna, which is also called the *Festa dei Pazzi* (madmen), or of Maria SS. del Refugio. The procession comes out of the church of the Madonna del Refugio at eleven o'clock, headed by the band and then four peasants of the confraternity of the

Refugio carrying the statue of the Madonna. A priest comes next, and is followed by the Friars del Ritiro and many women, singing the Litany. It returns to the church at about twelve o'clock, after going through the town.

A deputy goes through the crowd, announcing the "Passage of the *Talami*," and distributing the programmes of the representations with descriptions and songs. These representations would include :—

(1) Moses saved from the waters.
(2) Moses striking the rock for water.
(3) Solomon leading the Queen of Sheba to his palace.
(4) The Annunciation.
(5) Jews' marriage procession.
(6) Firstfruits offered to Mary, varying according to the season.

The *Talami* are portable platforms on trestles made of boards about fourteen feet long and seven feet wide, backed by a hoarding about eight feet high. A disc of wood, three or four feet in diameter and painted chrome yellow, represents the sun, and is fixed on the hoarding. This background is covered by drapery ; in front there are three chairs, and on the middle one, which is highest, stands a beautiful girl five or six years old, in white, and a blue mantle, studded with silver stars, a silver crown on her head. Her legs are tied to the hoarding to keep her from falling, and she has a stick in her hand to steady her. The two most beautiful girls in the village, richly dressed as angels, with damask band and flowers, sit in the other chairs.

This forms the background for each *talamo*, which is announced by the ringing of bells ; every *talamo* is preceded

by music and by about thirty girls in white, their heads covered with white veils and fastened by small orange wreaths. They sing the "Inno Maria," accompanied by music. In turn every *talamo* is carried on the shoulders of twelve peasants through the streets to the church, amidst firing of guns, playing of bands, and the ringing of bells. The sixth representation is not a *Talamo*, but is two rows of girls, who offer in baskets, bowls, and plates the firstfruits of the fields.

When Easter falls in April these firstfruits are a windfall for the Deputation of the *festa*, because they are sold by auction, and the price paid is fifty or a hundred times their value. The ceremony takes about three hours, and ends with the *donanti* (providers of the expense), followed by a pair of oxen, covered with drapery and tapestry, pulling a cart loaded with corn. These corn sheaves are carefully preserved from the last year's crops. Four young men, standing on the cart, rapidly throw away and distribute the grain. The crowd raises a cry of joy as each one fights to catch an ear of corn,—the *Sacra Spiga*. Young men want it for buttonholes, mothers as a remedy against children's illness, and old people to remind them of the time when they stood on the *talamo* in their gorgeous silk gowns. In olden days peasants crossed the piazza and Corso, picking up earth and pebbles, and distributing handfulls of corn, while hunters followed, shooting at their pretended game.

In the morning of the *Festa della Madonna* at Tollo, about fifty peasants go round the village dressed in anything they can get from old families,—women's silk jackets, shawls, petticoats, or bands ornamented with gold paper. They divide into two groups, Christians and Saracens. Each one carries a pole with an iron point,

spear, lance, or arrow. Towards eleven o'clock the Madonna del Rosario is carried in procession along the main road of the village. The two representative groups of Christians and Turks join the procession. A scaffolding of a two-storied wooden tower enclosed with canvas is erected. On the first floor is a smaller tower with a door leading on to its terrace. When the procession arrives, the Christians occupy the tower, and, gaining the terrace, they stamp their feet, twirl their poles, lances, and swords round and round, and "challenge the air" to a mortal duel. The crowd fills the square; the Madonna is placed on one side, and protected by the confraternity and the priest.

A herald preceded by a trumpeter comes forward, carrying a sheet of paper fixed on the point of his lance. This is taken by the chief of the defenders in the tower. He unfolds the document and reads it. There is a cry of indignation, and he tears the paper to pieces and scatters it to the winds. The herald then retires and relates this occurrence to his captain, who at once commands his party to march and surround the tower. They search for a place where they can scale it. The Turks gain the terrace, but their victory is short-lived, for the Christians, having trapped their enemy by a trick, re-occupy the tower and slaughter or make prisoners all the Turks. Then Christians and Turks make peace, fraternise together, and the *procuratori* of the *festa* give them plates of cooked grease and macaroni. These are thrown to the crowd, every one running away to avoid being greased. Then the Madonna and the procession re-enter the church.

We left the noisy cattle market and went towards the fort, crossing the deep moat. We asked a sentry whether there was anything worth seeing within, to which he gave the usual reply "*Chi lo sa?*" Then he added,—"Go

and see. There are underground passages." We went under the arch, and found the place where the portcullis had been, and beyond the arch was the square round which the fort was built. A soldier asked us if we would like to see underground, and he guided us down a wide steep incline to a passage which seemed to go all round the fort. Light came into it through windows high up in the wall, but in spite of this it had a disagreeable feeling of chilly gloom, which was all the more intense after the great heat we had just left. Peering into the depths and groping our way down the holes and passages, it was easy to imagine one felt the presence of the ghosts which are said to haunt this place. In the walls were dark holes leading apparently into the depths of the earth. Our soldier lighted a little candle and guided us down. Sometimes we went by a steep incline or down steps roughly cut in the earth. It was absolutely dark and very cold, and there were strange echoes. In some places the roof was so low one had to stoop, and it reminded one of the catacombs. At last we came to a circular space faintly lighted from one or two holes very high up. All round the walls were dark holes, entrances to more passages, and in the middle was the opening of what was supposed to have been a large well. The soldier leaned over it and shouted, and his voice echoed far away in the well and through the empty subterranean ways. The echo repeated itself nine times, and then died away. The soldier said that he very much regretted that all excavation and exploration had been stopped by the colonel, who was afraid of the evil spirits wandering in the depths below. He told us that the passages were innumerable, but that many were blocked up, and no one had ever been to the end or knew why they had been made. Along many of them it was

only possible to crawl on one's hands and knees. The former colonel was keen about the excavations and had done a great deal, and his wife was also interested. One day she and the governess and two children went into the passages roped together. They did not return, and in the evening the colonel went in search of them. They could not be found anywhere, although the soldiers shouted and fired revolvers. But never a trace was found, and, ever since, no more excavations have been attempted.

It was mid-day when we left; and we returned to have lunch and to borrow the *bigas* (rein-holders) from the harness maker who had promised to lend them to me to draw. At four o'clock there was to be a festival of the relics at the church of S. Maria di Collemaggio (*Collemozzo* in dialect), just outside the walls, and there was not much time to draw the *bigas*, which are the halters with the *tasso* (badger's hair) and bells on page 4.

On 28th August at four o'clock we set out for the church, and we went along one of the side streets. It was a steep road covered with cobbles, and the houses on either side had dark entrances. We passed through an arch and then came outside the town, and the road again rose to the level of the square in front of the church. Although past four o'clock the sun was very hot, and the beggars and sick people who lined the way remained in the shade as much as possible. Some were nearly blind, others bent double with age, and by the roadside crouched maimed men and women who stretched out a naked arm without a hand, or a leg without a foot, as we passed by. The church was already crowded with peasants in costume, soldiers, shop people, priests, friars, children, chickens in baskets, and here and there a dog running in and out of

the crowd. Most of the peasants went to the different saints and relics on their knees, rubbing them and then kissing their hands, or kissing the images themselves and the ground on which they stood. They recited prayers and then sat on the steps of the different altars, threw down their bundles, baskets, coppers, and other burdens, and slept or chattered or gesticulated. Others sat and waited in the doorway, the sun shining through their long white *tovagliole*, and others marched straight into the church, head erect, with their bundles on their heads, till they came to a bench, where they flung them down as they knelt. One woman knelt on a tomb carved in the pavement, and then prostrated herself and kissed it. But the most interesting group was some women who were kneeling opposite an open doorway on the left of the church. They all knelt one behind the other, sometimes two or three in a row, and then went on their knees to the steps leading out of the doorway. Some of them then got up and walked up the steps and then knelt again, but others went up them on their knees, crossing their hands and holding their rosaries over their skirts, which were folded up in front, and then they went out to a little shrine of the Madonna decorated with paper flowers. Here they knelt and prayed, and kissed it. They also kissed their hands before crossing themselves, and then returned to the church, where they went through the same ceremony eight or nine times. Formerly there had been a beautiful Renaissance shrine, but as it was getting damaged it was taken to the museum and a modern shrine put in its stead. The church became more and more crowded, and we sat on one of the benches. The whole place was a pandemonium, and at last, through the gleam of sunlight which flooded in at the church door, came the bishop

in his brilliant robes of red and gold. Peasants pressed forward to kiss his hands and garments, and one or two ran in front of him holding as high as they could baskets of bread and other things covered with handkerchiefs. The people made way for him, and for a little time there was almost silence whilst he went quickly along, turning neither right nor left. He was followed by the other church dignitaries, all robed in lovely blues, purples, and lace, and they also passed on quickly to the altar steps, where they were joined by a few of the friars in their sandals and brown gowns. Then everyone began talking again, and we asked two men who were standing beside us what bishop it was, but they turned away laughing, joking, and saying they were revolutionaries and did not know, and I turned from them in disgust. After twenty minutes of putting on and taking off different vestments, the bishop finally had his mitre placed on his head and began to chant vespers. Meanwhile the people went on wandering about, some of those on the steps of the various different altars woke and stood up, whilst others slept on peacefully. A great many people went to kiss the image of a saint in an alcove to the left of the high altar. There was also a wrought-iron grating forming a screen, and from behind the openings of its pattern tufts of cotton wool specially blessed for the occasion were pushed through to anyone desiring them. These were kissed and carried away.

Going out of the church we passed a friar seated at a little table with candles on it and holding a relic framed in silver for everyone to kiss. They all knelt and kissed it, crossing themselves as they did so, and after every two or three people had passed he wiped the glass with a handkerchief, and pans of chloride of lime are placed about the

church, for the authorities do all that is possible to prevent disease. The setting sun came streaming in a golden glow through the handkerchiefs and hair of each one as they entered the church. The piazza was already crowded, and there were a few old-fashioned lumbering carriages of bygone shapes, the most interesting belonging to the bishop, and they were drawn up in a row right in front of the neighbouring asylum. On a bank to the left were numerous prisoners and harmless lunatics, and more and more people kept coming.

We talked to a group of young men in the crowd, and to our surprise encountered a very curious survival of that profane mocking of sacred ritual which was tolerated, and even encouraged, by the Church in mediæval times, when it both permitted and took part in such popular burlesque ceremonies as the Feast of the Ass and the Boy Bishop.

Salve, Joseph, custos pie,
Sponse Virginis Mariæ,
Educator Domini.

Changed to—

San Giuseppe fa la spije	[S. Joseph watches (spies on)
Alla Vergine Mmarije	The Virgin Mary
Te dducate otte.	For eight ducats.]
Salve, o tejàne	[Save for my frying pan
Chjin'e de catapàne,	My daily bread,
A mmé me té fàme,	For I am so hungry,
O Ggesu.	O Jesu.]

Panem nostrum quotidianum changed to *Nostro pane cúotte allu tejane*. [Our daily bread cooked in the frying pan.]

Flectamus genua Levate changed to *Frettate de Ggenua—Levate.* [Lift yourself from bended knees and fry the Genoese omelette.]

Male nostra pelle changed to *Mare la nòstra pelle*. [Our bad skin.] (*Misera.*)

Pax Vobiscum is changed to *Ugn*e *matin*e *pan*e *frische*. [Fresh bread every morning.]

Santa Croce is changed to

Pan' e nnoce	[Bread and nuts
Piazza calle	Hot tart
E ccase-cavalle	And cheese
Evvine forte pe mmanná 'bballe.	And strong wine to swallow down.]

The formula is followed by the sign of the cross and the joining of the hands as in prayer, kissing the finger tips, and lastly putting the hand to the mouth as if to eat. The blessing is changed to :—

'Nnomena pátre	[In the name of the Father
Bbarba de frate,	Beard of the monk,
Farina fresche,	Fresh flour,
Ov' ncanestre	Eggs in basket.]

or—

In nome del padre	[In the name of the Father
Pizza squadra,	Square tart,
Picinisco, } two villages.	Picinisco,
Settefrati }	Settefrati.]

One young man said that to pour drops of wine or of water on one's fingers at table or to put one's fingers to the fire or to the flame of a candle saying,—"*pi'sota luce di Dio*" (for the holy light of God), is a strong oath. But if the flame, wine, or water is wanting, the person who swears kneels, and with a powdered clod of earth makes a cross on the ground with his right finger, and kisses it, always repeating the words,—"*pi'sota terra di Dio*" (for the holy earth of God). A cross at the bottom of the staircase is the strongest invocation of a curse against a family.

The church of S. Maria di Collemaggio was erected in the thirteenth century by Pietro Morone of Isernia, a hermit living in a grotto in the Majella mountains and

founder of the Order of the Celestini, and is very beautiful. The greater part of it was destroyed by an earthquake in 1703, when two thousand people perished. The facade has figures, and carved capitals and mouldings of different designs, some surrounded with a vine and grapes. There are two types of niches between small carved pillars, and the twenty-five statuettes in the niches, flowers, leaves, fruits, and animals are richly carved. The three round windows above the two side doors are in the same fantastic style. Pietro Morone was elected Pope under the name of Celestino V, but he resigned after a short time. There is a tradition that a nail was put in his tiara on the second day of his election to the Pontificate, and this was ultimately the cause of his death. It is also said that he refused to go to Rome to be crowned on account of the heat, and therefore he was crowned in this church in the presence of the King of Naples and 200,000 people on the 29th August, 1294. After his death his body was stolen by the monks of the order he had founded, and carried to his church, where his relics are kept in a fine silver casket. There is also a beautiful Madonna in the church said to be by Luca Della Robbia's son.

Every year on the 28th August the feast of the *perdono* with the exposition and benediction of the relics, which we witnessed, takes place. On the part of the *campanile* which had not been destroyed by the earthquake, a red-gold curtain had been spread, and over the balustrade there was another piece of red drapery. We all waited for the bishop to go up the *campanile*, and at last the band played part of the royal march and he appeared in front of the drapery. The other priests stood on each side of him, and there was a herald on the right. One of the priests raised the different relics, and, just before the relic was

given to the bishop to hold up for everyone to see, the herald blew a mediæval air on his trumpet. As each relic was raised the band played part of the royal march to very quick time, and a priest chanted in Latin what the relics were. There were a tibia, a humerus, a clavicle, various pieces of jaws, and a thorn said to be from the "Crown of Thorns." When the different relics were raised, priests took off their caps, some peasants raised their hats, some knelt, and some clapped, but when the Thorn was raised both priests and people knelt, the band played louder than ever, people clapped, prayed, shouted, jogged their babies about, and the lunatics clambered up and down the bars of the windows, pawing the bars and whining and moaning to get out of the asylum. Some said they clambered at the barred windows that they might be healed by the sight of the relics and by the bishop's blessing. The bishop then blessed everyone, and after more cheering and firing of guns, which made the horses rear, the bishop finally drove away and there were illuminations and fireworks. The sky was of the deepest red without a cloud, and the mountains deep amethyst against it as we went down the hill towards Aquila. The sick and beggars were still lining the road, and by the time we reached the archway it was quite dark and we had to feel our way up the cobbled ways, with only a small oil lamp gleaming here and there through the open doors.

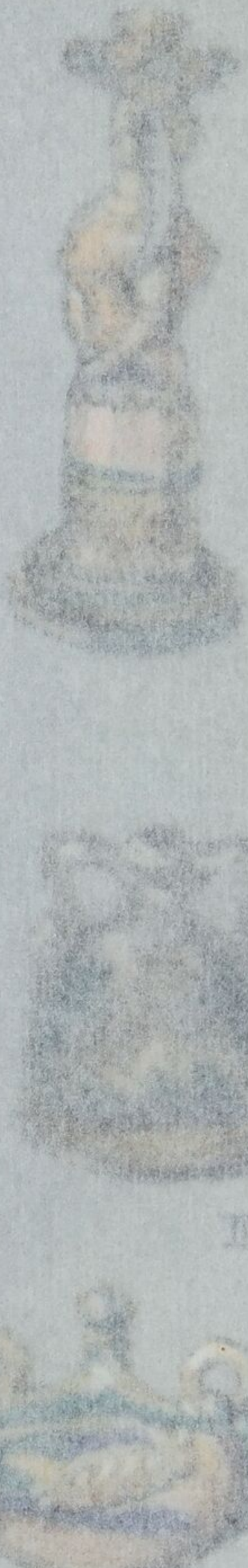


Abruzzese Type.



I





II

III

IV

V

Majolica Pottery.

I. Majolica lamps from Castel del Monte.
II. Pilgrim bottles.
III. Majolica figure.
IV. Bottles in the form of fish.

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Abruzzese Type.

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Majolica Pottery.

I. Majolica lamps from Castel del Monte.
II. Pilgrim bottles.
III. Majolica figure.
IV. Bottles in the form of fish.

[Plate XVII.]



I



I



II



III



II



IV



IV



Chapter XI.

A Trip to Sulmona.



In Church.

Una bugìa ben detta
Val più di un fatto stupido.

[A lie well told
Is worth more than a stupid fact.]

WE had heard many rumours of Albanian colonies, with their weird superstitions in the country surrounding Sulmona. The Albanians were said to be some of the most interesting people in South Italy, and we had been told they believe in the *drekesit* (*driadi*), *lupi minarii*, *margarat* (witches) and *fiatazit* (*fate*). They say the *drekesit* still exist, and that they are immortal beings, who no longer show themselves, because of the malice and incredulity of the people. Formerly they were seen at dusk in summer, their skin whiter than snow, bathing in the rivers and washing their long breasts. An old man once surprised eight of them; the *drekesit*, who saw him, said,—"*Ljèm tè ljaan, se na paan*" (Let us stop washing, we are seen). They all uttered a howl, threw their long breasts over their shoulders, ran for their lives to the nearest

wood, and hid themselves in the hollows of the trees where they lived. They only come out to wash their breasts.

Lu mazzemarelle (*folletto*) which the Albanians also believe in, is a mixture of a baby, a child with a silk cap (*infioroto*), and a mischievous whirlwind. He knocks at the doors and plays tricks, and the only way to find if he is about, or if a spirit is in the place, is to fix a knife in the ground and say,—"For God's sake, tell me who thou art." Then this queer creature is obliged to answer, and only then can it go away. To make certain that no harm will come from resting at mid-day in the shade of a tree in summer, it is as well to say,—"*Bbón giòrn a le fate*" (Good day to the *fate*), because they might themselves be dining under the tree, and it is not safe for anyone to eat or drink without repeating these words.

La Pandafecte is most frightening, and stretches quietly on those who sleep and oppresses them by sucking their breath. The *Pandafecte*, both male and female, can only be got rid of for ever by seizing its hair, and when it demands what is held in the hands, it must be told that it is a horse's mane. The hair must then be wound round and held until nine drops of blood are obtained.

The chemist of Aquila told us about the Birth of Atessa. In olden days there were two distinct villages facing each other on opposite hills. One was called Ate, and the other Tixa. Both villages were in despair because of the dragon living in the valley which divided them. This beast devoured all travellers, besides daily exacting human flesh from each of the villages. When the Bishop, San Leucio, came to Ate, the bells of both villages rang of their own accord, and the inhabitants knew he was a saint, and knelt and prayed him to free them from the

dragon. "In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost" he slew the dragon, took one of its ribs, and gave it to the population for a remembrance. On the spot where the dragon was killed, the church of San Leucio was erected, and the rib hung from a beam in the sacristy. San Leucio became the patron saint of the village, and the dragon's rib is there to this day. The two populations gradually filled the valley, and the two villages of Ate and Tixa became Atixa, now the modern Atessa.

At Fara S. Martino, a village amongst the mountains near to Atesa, there is a narrow valley which was widened by S. Martino with his elbows. From its sides, when the wind blows, stones fall. S. Martino lived at the top. At the mouth of the valley an *abbazia* (abbey) was erected which centuries ago fell in ruin. The S. Martino statue of the abbey was carried away by the river, and floated intact down in the Aventino and then on into the Sangro. At Atessa the inhabitants put the statue in their church with great solemnity, but after the feast the statue disappeared. It returned to Fara. This was repeated three times, and now the peasants, seeing the futility of their efforts, take their offerings to the statue of the Saint at Fara.

The severity of the landlord of Paese dei Peliqui,—a village in the district near Sulmona,—with his peasants was proverbial. Once one of them happened to kill one of his hunting dogs. Infuriated, he imprisoned the peasant and kept him tied up under the continuous watch of his gaolers, to prevent his escape. After a few days, the gaolers found the prison empty, although the door and window were intact. The escape was reported to the landlord, and he gave strict orders for the capture of the prisoner, but there was no trace of the fugitive. Three

days later, however, the gaolers were surprised to find the prisoner again in prison, in a most distressed condition, his face contracted and his limbs covered with scars. He begged to be taken before his master, because he had an important communication to make; and he would answer no questions. He told the landlord that, when in prison, in his despair he invoked the Devil, made an agreement with him, was taken out and carried to hell, where he saw the damned, some of whom were apparently dressed in gold and purple, but on touching them he found they were dressed in fire and he burnt himself. Amongst others were kings, princes, priests, and dignitaries of all degrees, besides many of his own acquaintances. A great friend of his asked what his master was doing, and if he were still severe and cruel, because in such a case a place would be reserved for him in hell. At that the master took fright and promised to amend. Ten days later the prisoner was dead.

Early one morning we left Aquila to go to Sulmona. Our route lay up one of the winding white roads on the opposite side of the valley, and the driver said it was the highest, steepest, and most troublesome, as it had so many curves. Now and then there were groups of chestnuts and oaks, and we had a good deal of shade from the shadows of the mountains towering above us. We passed the rock where the patron saint knelt and prayed for Aquila, and it is the last point from which Aquila can be seen. When he got up there were the marks of his knees on the stone, and there they are to this day. For the first half of the day the country was not so characteristic of the Abruzzi as it had been on the other side of the valley, but after we reached the top of the pass and came to the other side it again began to have its queer wildness. Near one

village there was a plain very like the Pian d'Emparatore with barren mountains rising from it, but it was smaller. Horses and mules were grazing and peasants were draining the country, but the village lay some way back from the road and we did not go by it. Farther on we came to another village, built on the edge of the rocky ridge we had been crossing. A crowd of peasants rushed forward and stared at us, and there was one woman with a mass of black hair who looked exactly like an Egyptian and as if she had stepped out of one of the ancient mural paintings. The village was empty save for the peasants who gathered round us. At one end of it there was some crockery spread out on the ground for sale, but no one seemed to be taking the least notice of it. The other side of the village faced the cliff, and the stone houses were built of the same stone on which they stood overhanging the precipitous rock. Our road wound round the side of the rock, and we gazed at the fierce-looking rocks and houses with the sun glaring down on them. Again we were everywhere surrounded by masses of barren rocks and stones. A violent wind which burnt one's skin blew up from the valley. Far away in front of us, framed by the two masses of rock, was the distant green plain with a background of disappearing blue mountains. It had silver lines going across it in squares, and it was originally the large district called the lake of Fucino, which is now being drained. It is an extensive tract of country where there is much fever, and it was from it that the disagreeable wind was blowing. As we went down the road the opening in between the rocks widened, and we saw the flat country stretching for miles to right and left, with mountains on all sides. A turn in the road showed us the little town of Alano with its beautiful castle standing on a

kind of headland overhanging the plain. We stopped a short time by the market, and I rushed round the stalls to see what there was. It was a fairly large square and crowded with men, women, and children; the stalls had shelters or umbrellas, and goods of every description were spread out on the ground. There were crockery, grain, rags, iron, tomatoes, and cheese, everyone was shouting, and the women were spinning, the distaffs tucked in their belts. But we had to catch a train, for we wished to get to Sulmona that night, and we thought it best to be at the station at the hour marked on the time table, in case the train happened to be punctual.

The station was a little distance from the town, and we arrived there to time, but no one knew anything about the train or when it would come, and everybody said,—"*Chi lo sa*"? "in an hour or so." We sat down on one of the benches. At last a train was signalled. The station-master told us he supposed it was ours but he did not know for certain, and rushed up and down waving his arms, saying he would find out when the train arrived where it came from and where it was going. The only porter in the place said it was ours, and then that it was not; therefore, when the train came slowly into the station, we decided to capture the guard and find out for ourselves. It was a very long train, and we had to go the whole length of it to get to him, and every carriage, first as well as third, was crowded with peasants from every-where in the South. The guards told us they were pil-grims on their way to Loreto, and that some came from the wildest parts of the country. He said the train had only stopped to let them get water, and he added, as he began opening the carriage doors, "they are (*una brutta gente*) like wild animals." All the peasants made a rush

for the spring, and there they stood, fighting and cursing and swearing to get water. They had coloured terra-cotta pots and pilgrim bottles, tin flasks, glass bottles, and skins of different shapes and sizes, and they fought to fill them. There were old men with coarse white stockings and *coce*, which are shoes made of a square piece of leather with the two corners at each end fastened together. The corners at the heel have also two long leather thongs fastened to them, and these are bound round and round the leg up to the knee. The men wore short blue breeches and waistcoats and queer little jackets, either blue or white, and slouchy hats, and they carried staves, but their large crucifixes they had left in the train and we only saw them through the windows. The women were very varied, some magnificent, wild, and savage-looking, their hair scarcely fastened back under their coloured handkerchiefs. Others, however, were quite severely prim, with clean white collars rather Dutch in character, and their masses of black hair braided in long coils which were partly twisted up against their heads in different patterns and partly looped down their backs, reminding us of Leonardo da Vinci's drawings. They had full skirts of all kinds of faded colours, and bodices with coloured laces and white chemisettes with deep frills, or open work round the cuffs, but from the struggling mass of fighting men and women it was difficult to get any definite idea of them. Before they filled their utensils they drank from the spring, and then filled their bottles and skins, and rushed back to the train for more. The guard drove them all into their carriages, saying another train was signalled ; but it was a long time coming, and I walked twice up and down the whole length of their train to look at them. They were shouting for more water. I took their flasks and filled

them and when I handed them back some thanked me, or saluted, whilst others shook their fists at me.

We again waited. The stationmaster asked why we were in "such a country, and why we did not go to Paris if we wished to see foreign lands?" I said I was collecting the legends and traditions before they had disappeared, and I also told him I was painting the peasants. He became a little more interested, and said that when a boy he had been told the following story of:—

THE HUNTER.

A king's daughter had a son she did not like. He ran away, and then the king sent away his daughter. The son grew strong and beautiful, and when hunting in the woods one day he met twelve brigands, fought them, and slew them all. He saw a lovely *fata* looking at him from a beautiful *casino* (small house); she asked,—"Why didst thou come to kill the brigands?" The hunter told her he had run away from his mother, who disliked him. Then he saw his mother, who had followed him, but through fatigue she fell on the ground, complaining of her pain, and saying,—"The cure would be the lettuce." This lettuce was possessed by a magician, who lived far off, beyond the river. The son set forth to find the lettuce. The beautiful *fata* reappeared and warned him not to go to the magician, because he ate everyone. She told him that if he wished to obtain the lettuce he must take a packet of tobacco, which she gave him, telling him to show it and then he would get what he wanted. The magician, who was very ugly, wanted to devour the youth, but calmed down when the tobacco was shown, and gave him the lettuce. This he brought to his mother, and she was

saved. Then other brigands came and danced and screamed. The mother fell in love with their chief, and with his help she determined to make her son perish. That night, she again feigned to be ill and said she could only recover if she had a bunch of grapes from another magician, on another high hill. "I will go to him," said the poor son. The *fata* reappeared a second time, saying,—"That magician kills everyone who goes. When he sleeps, he sleeps with his eyes open, and thou must take him by surprise and seize the bunch of grapes. Touch this ring and thou wilt be transformed into a pigeon, and then thou canst fly over the castle." The hunter touched the ring, flew over the castle, surprised the magician asleep with open eyes, took the bunch of grapes, and returned to his mother. Instead of being ill, he found her dancing with all the brigands. Blinded by rage, he killed them, and his mother died of fright. Thus he was left master of the *casino*. The *fata* came a third time, he married her, and they lived happily for many years. [Petrilli tells the same story.]

The stationmaster said he could not tell us any more. We still waited in patience, and then finally our train was signalled and we left for Sulmona.

The country through which we passed was wild and barren, with sweeps of shelving stones going down into the misty purple valley. The ridges rose from the valley, their bases shadowy and dim, but the upper parts were golden and rosy in the setting sun, and beyond the ridges were the mountains. We slowed down by a tunnel, and there, on the top of the sloping ground close by, was a wolf. He paused for a moment, and then rushed full tilt towards the higher mountains. We went on again, and on coming out of the tunnel we looked west and saw the

whole sky lighted up with crimson, but it faded and ridges and valleys were all hidden in the shades of night. Away in the distance were lights, and we knew that we should soon be at Sulmona.

Next day we wandered about the town, for there was much to be seen, although the greater part of it is quite modern. The Church of the Annunciata has a very elaborate façade, for each of the doorways is of a different design and has intricate mouldings round it, and whenever one looks at it one sees something fresh. There are many churches, and a museum with a ragged piece of tapestry which is supposed to be of great value. At the end of the main street were the ruins of a Roman aqueduct, and its arches went along one side of the market and also made shadows for various stalls. The numerous side streets, which had not been rebuilt, were still interesting. Many of the shops sold nothing but the *corone* of coloured sugar-plums of every size. Some of the small ones cost only six sous, whilst others were six or seven francs. There were also many jewellers who showed us all kinds of odds and ends of peasant things, but they were mostly modern and the good old designs are fast being given up. Whenever we asked the price of anything we were asked how much we would give for it, and when we said we were not jewellers and did not know the value, the man always answered neither did he know the value, but if we would make an offer he would see if he could accept it. We replied that we could not waste time in bargaining, but the man would never name a price and we never got further than receiving his profuse bows when we passed his shop. Next day was market day, and there were already early arrivals. The goods consisted almost entirely of capsicums and grain. On one

side of the piazza capsicums, from the big fat kind to long narrow kinds, like pieces of coral, were piled up in baskets, and spread out on sacking or on the stones. They were of every shape and colour, from gorgeous Chinese vermilion to deep orange, pale yellows, and rich greens. Then here and there was a mass of tomatoes, water melons with their black seeds against their lovely rose-coloured insides, baskets full of purple aubergines, and strings of garlic and onions. Peasants from all the surrounding villages with large white *tovagliole* (head-dresses), and barbaric-looking bodices of faded blue, purple, green, or red velvet in stripes and checks with gold in between them, squatted in rows by their baskets. They had their hair cut in a straight fringe across their forehead, the rest of their heads being shaved. They were a savage and strange-looking type, quite different from any we had seen, and afterwards when we went to see them in the villages we found them to be as difficult to manage as they looked. On the other side of the piazza different kinds of grain were spread out, and there were also a few eggs, cheeses, and dress materials. Women stood or squatted by their goods, and there were crowds of peasants wandering round the market buying and selling and chattering. Some of them had coloured rosettes and ribbons attached to their bodices and immense earrings, and after a lot of trouble we found from whence they came, but they did all they could to prevent our finding out, and when they saw that we knew they went away and hid from us. At one end of the piazza all the carts were put together. They were painted in numerous designs in blue, white, and red, and others had green also, besides painted wheels. Children and dogs lay under them in the shade. In the market, blind, diseased, and crippled people went

about begging and shouting their diseases. There was one old woman who went along with her staff and basket, whose face and neck were covered with sores, each of which had a piece of cotton wool sticking to it, and on her forehead and coming down her nose was stuck a large white cross made of paper, the arms of which went over her eyebrows and the stem down the nose. There was another queer-looking woman, all brown and tousled just like a witch, dressed in coarse rags and bending over a crooked staff. She tottered and shuffled along, and sometimes almost jumped, and all the time she jabbered. She came up to me jabbering and stood in front of me, but I could not make out what she meant, and she took no notice of my questions. I picked up the bunch of amulets which she wore round her neck to look at, and then gave her money, but she went on chattering and wriggling just the same.

Everyone refused to sit for me, but at last, when I was buying some *corone* in a shop, a woman came in and after some discussion said she would do so. She lived at a village some distance away, and she offered to drive over her little carriage to fetch us. She was a driver, but she wore the large white *tovagliola* and piece of red felt on the head which belonged to her village, and she also had the immense black stays-bodice which sticks out in front of the wearer to be used for a basket into which anything and everything is stuck. The following afternoon we went. There was a stable, out of which rose a short flight of stone steps going straight up into the kitchen. It was a fairly large irregular room, with a nice hearth and a few benches, and coppers and plates on the shelves. In the chimney itself there was a little window, and a flood of light came through it, and there was also a door

opening on to a small wooden balcony and a stove near the chimney surrounded by blue and white tiles. The woman squatted on the floor. I asked her to sit like that, and she seemed delighted and sat very well. There were various relations about; a daughter-in-law and her husband, who she said had deserted, and also the woman's husband. One of them had a head like Nero, and the other like Caracalla; and then there were some nieces, but they all seemed fairly willing for me to work in the place, and at sunset, when the woman had driven us home, we told her that we were coming the following day. When I first went in the morning everyone seemed agreeable, but towards mid-day they went off into passions, the woman absolutely refusing to sit any more. We went out and sat on a wall in the shade, and had lunch. When we returned everyone was as nice as they could possibly be, but they pretended that they were very offended that we had not had lunch with them. We said we had not been asked, and that was the reason we had brought our own lunch. They tried their hardest to quarrel. One of the women offered us some roasted figs. I thought of the Borgias and their custom of giving poisoned figs to their guests as a certain means of disposing of them, and, like the guests of other days, I said "eat first," and pushed the dish towards them. Things calmed down again, and I worked a little, but the woman would not sit and bustled about all over the place. My father asked her husband if he would go out with him to see the village, but this he refused to do, saying that he never went in the village, but that he would go for a walk with him in the country. The day before he had also refused to go into the village, and we were rather glad when the doctor from Sulmona arrived, saying that he wished to be

driven to a neighbouring hamlet to see someone who was ill. The peasants were again getting angry, but this took one of them away. I could not work without the model, and when the other man and one of the women went upstairs for a moment, leaving the entrance free, we got out quickly. The woman shouted at us from the balcony. We said we were going to see the village and would come back. The streets were steep and narrow, but there were no arches and arcades like those we had seen in the other villages. There was a sinister atmosphere over the place, and again my thoughts returned to the olden times with their many murders. Everywhere the women with their white *tovagliole* and coloured skirts and hair cut straight across the forehead were sitting in doorways and on steps sewing, spinning, and feeding their children, and chattering. Others were carrying water on their heads, and they had some of the best earrings and gold beads we had seen. The earrings were large,—a great ring of gold, the lower half filled with designs of stars and flowers, each hanging on separate little rings. The women gazed at us when we passed, and generally nodded, asking where we came from and where we were going. We climbed to the top of the village to the piazza in front of the church. There was a fountain at one side of the piazza with a good piece of stone carving, and when I stretched over to get at the water a woman told me I could drink from her *conca* which she had just filled, and she tilted it up for me. On the other side of the piazza there was a row of small trees, which had orange-coloured fruit rather pointed in shape and about the size of a large plum. I had seen these trees at Sulmona also, and when I asked what they were everyone always answered, "*Chi lo sa?* The fruit is bad," and here again I had the

same answer. We explored the rest of the village, and then went back and called to the woman that she was to drive us home at once. The other woman still scowled at us from the balcony, but the horse was soon ready, and we waved our hands to her and set off down the road.

There were sparse fields by the village with a little grass and some water in a dried-up stream, and here oxen and horses were drinking and resting while women washed clothes and carried the heavy bundles of wet linen on planks on their heads. They all wore their white *tovagliole*, but those who were in mourning had also a thin black veil which covered it, and several who came from the next village had green felt instead of red. The sun was setting, and heavy dark clouds had rolled up and shrouded the surrounding mountains, but the burnt-up earth of the fields caught glints of its slanting rays and aspens with shaking upturned leaves were golden in the light. Then we came to the part of the road whence we could see the high range of the Majella mountains. The clouds hid their base, but the whole of the upper part of their white jagged rocks was bathed in a deep rose, and they shone out from the clouds like a vision, their appearance fully justifying all the strange stories of the spirits, witches, and wild people by whom they are supposed to be inhabited. When we neared Sulmona the woman suddenly turned round and demanded "Where am I to take you?" She had not driven us before, and she did not know we wanted to go to the little inn outside the town. We told her where it was, and she said,—"I will not enter the town, I will go round it, we shall meet fewer people." It would have been shorter to drive under the pointed arch and go through the town and out at the other side, and we wondered at her saying she would meet less people,

for, except early in the morning, the streets were quiet enough. We let her go her own way, however, driving round outside the walls, and we wondered where we were going in the dusk. We had to enter a gate, for the road went no further. As she approached this gate the woman drew her *tovagliola* closely round her face and drove in at full tilt, shouting to the guard that we had nothing on which *dazio* should be paid. They did not stop us, and she drove on, whipping up her horse all the time. One or two boys shouted and tried to hang on behind, but she slashed at them, also bending with the *tovagliola* drawn tightly round her. We arrived at the inn, and the porter, when he took the sketching things, remarked,—"Strange kind of a driver ye have found." My father was going to pay her but she caught hold of him, drawing him to the wall so that the porter should not see. My father gave her more than she had asked, but, of course, she was not contented, and after giving her still more, we at last got rid of her, the porter again remarking,—"Strange driver have ye found."

We were told that the origin of the Albanian colonies round Sulmona, besides those in other parts of Italy, is connected with the Turkish invasion in the Balkans. Altogether there are about three hundred thousand Albanians distributed in nearly eight villages in Italy. About five hundred live a patriarchal life at Villa Badessa, a village in the Province of Teramo, and they profess the Greek Orthodox religion and form a separate colony. After the subjugation of Albania by the Turks, many Albanians emigrated into several of the Italian provinces, and there are other colonies therefore in Sicily, Calabria, Basilicata, Apulia, Abruzzi, etc. This happened also because the Kings of Naples, knowing their valour and

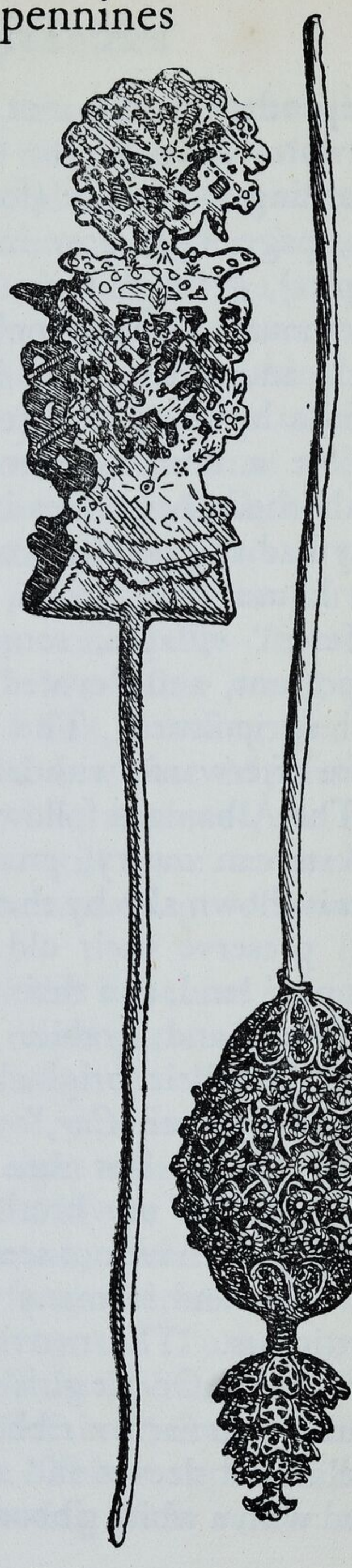
independence, did not desire them to remain united and form a danger to their throne. In 1746 the king, according to charter (for which consult the MS. of Curiz Seo, page 154, now in the Royal Bourbon Library at Naples), granted them seven hundred "*tomoli*" of land, two thousand ducats for building their cottages and buying cattle and agricultural implements, and other privileges, besides building a church, reserving himself the right to impose a tax to recover the money advanced. They established themselves in the kingdom of Naples, where they had the goodwill of Alfonso d'Aragon, Carlos III of the house of Bourbon, and other kings. They formed different villages, some of which are now large and important, and devoted themselves principally to pasture and agriculture. The privileges granted by Carlos III were afterwards withdrawn by his successors.

The Albanians follow the Greek Orthodox rites. Their priests can marry, provided they are previously chaste; this is shown also by their songs and popular poems. They still preserve their old customs, adapting them to their adopted land, and their patois is mixed with some elements of Greek and Arabic. At Easter their songs reveal their love for their original home,—"*Teghenugh te pee! O ebucura Moree, Cur*," ("O beautiful Morea, since I was born I have not seen you, There lies my father, my mother, and my brothers! O beautiful Morea, since I was born I have not seen you!") The women keep to old customs, and in many villages wear the traditional scarlet petticoats. The married dress differently from that of spinsters. On the girls' scarlet petticoats there are triangular patterns in narrow ribbons. The shirt has an embroidered collar and sleeves and a red jacket (*figaro*), and the hair is tied with a white ribbon, but the very short petticoats of the

married women have wide horizontal ribbons all round, the number of these depending on the amount of their dowry. Their hair also is tightly twisted with a white ribbon, and they put on their head the *chesa*, a small cushion all embroidered in silver and gold and secured by a marvellous silver hair pin with two enormous ends of very fine work.

Another marked characteristic of the women is that they carry everything on their shoulders instead of on their hips and heads as in other villages. It is said they take the place of beasts of burden, and they carry the biggest bundles of straw and the smallest buckets of water alike, and this causes them to be bent even when young.

Each family has its own guardian saint. On the festivity of their saint, Mass is celebrated, and the priest attends the family banquet. In the church at Villa Badessa there are several



SILVER HEADDRESS PINS.
Weight 5 oz. and 8 oz.
Length about 18 inches.

pictures of Byzantine character; and in the houses there are large portraits of S. Demetrius and of Scanderbeg.

Baptism is performed by immersion according to the Greco-Oriental rite, the chrism and unction (corresponding to Western Confirmation) being administered at the same time. For marriage the parents are consulted, and, when the choice has been made, the head of the family visits that of the bride and makes the request. The day of marriage is generally arranged for a Sunday, and the relations gather at the home of the bridegroom on the preceding Thursday. A bran pie is made from a large quantity of cornflour, and a gold ring put in it. A boy and girl are then asked to find the ring. If found by the boy the first-born will be a boy; if by the girl, a girl. The most characteristic dance is called "*Valle*," and is formed by a long chain of men and women while a chorus sings patriotic and merry songs.

On the eve of a marriage all the village is filled with dancing girls, who enter the bride's house and sing, while the bride prepares the yeast for the nuptial cake which will be kneaded the next morning. On the day of the marriage the bride is dressed by one of the oldest women. She discards the "girl dress" for the married one. Over the petticoat she wears the *zoga*, which is all green. In the whole village there are only four or five of these green petticoats. They are lent from one family to the other, the greater the antiquity and bad condition of the *zoga*, the better being the omen. A white veil fixed with four silver pins with big heads covers the head and body, and two pink ribbons hang down over the shoulders. The bride sits waiting for the bridegroom, while her companions sing sad songs. At the bridegroom's home, his friends form a procession, which goes to the bride's house,

carrying a curious flag, or banner, on a short flag-staff, on which are fixed long ribbons in brilliant colours.

The procession is headed by the nearest relations, and they sing as they go. On their arrival they find the door closed, and they simulate an attack and forcible entry; the bridegroom enters, singing "*Lo Sparviero.*" Then everyone goes to the church, where a special altar for the ceremony has been erected on a tomb, and the priest offers two wreaths plaited with ribbons. The Orient rite is observed in the service. The priest gives the married pair bread cut in the form of a cross three times, and makes them taste wine three times, from a chalice which he afterwards breaks to pieces. This custom symbolises fidelity, and the bride and bridegroom must allow no one else to drink from the same glass. The two processions, that of the bride and that of the bridegroom, go to the bridegroom's home, where his mother offers the bride the keys of the house. Finally, the bride's father gives her away to her husband, together with a stick, the symbol of marital power. After this, the *sposi* enter the house singing "*O sposa gentile.*"



CANDLESTICK.

The most characteristic part of an Albanian funeral is the distribution of boiled corn and wine to all comers after the burial. There is also a banquet, which is again repeated after forty days, and the boiled corn and wine for this ceremony is blessed the evening before.



SPINNING. NEAR SULMONA.

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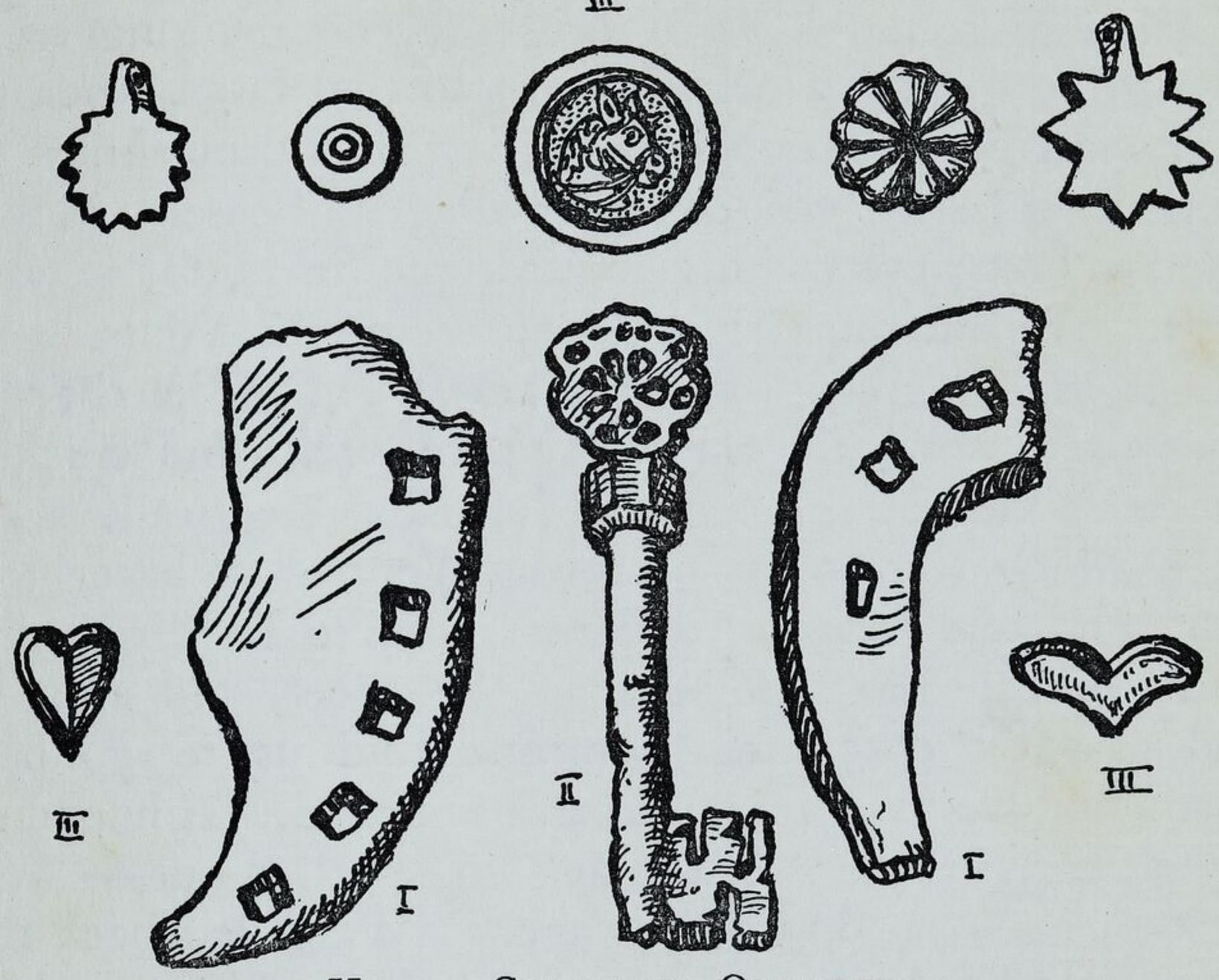
Spinning. Near Sulmona.



Chapter XII.

Near Sulmona; witchcraft.



HARNESS CHARMS AND ORNAMENTS.

Sola la zucca è testa senza preoccupazioni. [Only the pumpkin is a head without cares.]

ANOTHER expedition we made was to a village about three hours away, and this time we tried a driver from Sulmona. On our way we saw an old man in long ragged brown garments, sandals, an old black hat, and a wallet. He had also a staff, and the cockle-shell sign of the pilgrim on his shoulder. Our driver said he was one of the many hermits who lived in caves in the mountains, and came down to Sulmona every now and then to get provisions.

We went along the road leading across the valley, and

as usual it was hot and dusty. Two ragged hedges bordered the road for part of the way, and I noticed a queer thorny-looking plant, which appeared to have bunches of round keys of bright green hanging on it. The driver picked a branch and said that later, when the fruit was ripe, it was good to eat, but he did not know the name. At last we arrived at the village. Peasants in their Sunday best were coming towards the fields, for it was a *festa*. We left our driver asleep on his box outside the village, and walked up the main street, which had an open drain down the middle, where ducks and chickens pecked. Out of this street led various steep alleys and steps which were very narrow. We had a letter to a man who sold tobacco, and we asked to be directed to him. The peasants pointed up the street, and after we had passed the fountain someone told us to go back again, and we went to a door and knocked. It happened to be the right one. A woman's voice called out,—"Who art thou? What dost thou want?" We called back that we wanted her husband, and that we had a letter for him. She shouted that he was out and would not be back for two hours, when he would go to sleep. Then some one called to her that she must come down and speak to us, and in a few minutes a woman opened the door a little way. She invited us in, but a boy then shut the door in our face. The woman took the letter and said she would give it to her husband, as she could not understand or answer it for him, and she told us to return in two hours' time. So we explored the village and went to the church, which was full of women in their best handkerchiefs for High Mass. The peasants sat on their heels everywhere on the floor, and there were benches which were crowded. I stood near the door, but one or two women pulled me by my

skirt towards a bench, and the peasants who were sitting there squeezed together to make room for me. Every eye in the building was on me, and as there were numerous fleas, and it was very hot, I soon went out to find my father. Then we went up a steep flight of cobble steps, and wandered into a vineyard where we had lunch in the shade of a chestnut. It was evident that the boys who were sent after us, and who hid behind the brambles, came to see that we did not steal the grapes! There were actually one or two birds twittering. Gradually we persuaded the boys to come and talk to us, and they told us how on Easter Sunday, at ten o'clock, a procession formed by the Confraternity of Sulmona comes from the Chiesa della Tomba, followed by the Apostles and the Three Maries, and stops in the Piazza del Mercato, where an altar with the statue of Our Saviour has been erected. The statue is then taken down, the procession divides in two rows, and from its middle S. Pietro walks to the Chiesa di San Filippo on the other side of the Piazza, to tell the Virgin of the Resurrection. Another statue, Nostra Madonna di Loreto, covered by a black mantle and holding a handkerchief, which is the symbol of her tears, waits in the church of S. Filippo. She does not believe in the Resurrection, and so, to convince her, S. Pietro fetches all the other Apostles and the three Maries, and together they go to the Virgin. S. Giovanni and S. Pietro pay their homage. The Virgin this time believes, and runs to her Son. Half way, her black mantle drops, revealing her gorgeous green dress, doves fly from underneath, and her tears now change to flowers, which fall into her hands. The statues of Our Saviour and the Virgin then go in procession round the tower. This lasts till mid-day.

On Good Friday a recumbent statue of Our Saviour, nude, on a stretcher, carrying a white standard in His left hand, and with the right hand raised in blessing, is carried through the town, followed by the Confraternities singing the Miserere. The Apostles and the Maries are represented as usual, but the Confraternities wear white shirts and green silk mantles, and carry green standards.

One of the boys was the sacristan's son, and he described how the inhabitants of Albanese, a village just outside Sulmona, as a *devozione* to their patron, S. Antonio decided to have a statue in his honour in their church. A great part of the money was collected in North America, to which many of them had emigrated. They ordered the statue to be made at Lecce di Puglia. It was sent by rail to Sulmona, and carried in procession to their church. There was a *festa*, all the surrounding villagers and many people from Sulmona going to it, with bands, and decorated carts. At dusk, fireworks and mortars were let off in front of the church and many stones and tiles from the roof and cornices fell on the crowd. Not a single stone or tile struck anyone. A big stone from the top of the roof also fell, and then flew over the heads of the crowd without striking anyone, and it became evident that the saint wished to prove his miraculous power.

We still had to wait, and another boy told us that *La Vala* or the Easter Dance, the procession of the Compagnia della Morte, and the kissing of the ass's skull takes place in the afternoons of Easter Monday and Tuesday. The *ridda* (dance) begins before the mid-day dinner. About fifteen or twenty newly-married girls, in Albanian gowns of gold and silk, make a circle, holding hands or handkerchiefs. A young man (corporal) commands, and an old woman chants old songs, while they sing and dance. These

ancient songs are Albanian rhapsodies, which glorify Giorgio Castriota (Scanderbeg), and are interrupted by howls against the Turks (the *chien rinigat*) who were the oppressors of the Albanians. The dancers are then invited into the houses to take wine, liqueurs, and biscuits. They give thanks to those who have *elargito tanto onore* (given so much honour), and they sing the customary songs,—"*Neve cuscena fori. Me stiavucche e me bicchiere. Na trattuan si bugliere.*" (To us they have rendered honour, with serviettes and glasses; they treated us as cavaliers.) Then they all meet in the piazza; if they find a stranger, or an official, they try to surround him and he is kept prisoner by the circle of girls. The young men have sheep bells on their belts, and are clothed in varied dresses with dyed (coloured) laces; they smear the face of any stranger with their fingers, and, should he refuse to be smeared, he is surrounded and made a prisoner. The knights (*pielgesit*), brilliantly clothed with helmets or turbans like the old Albanian nobility, are the most attractive of the characters, and they go about singing and dancing. At dusk the Compagnia della Morte, a group of men in white sheets with a kind of white hood, their faces whitened with flour, carry long poles; the oldest man, who is their chief, carries a pole on which is fixed the skull of an ass, which he invites all to kiss. This characteristic *festa* is also held at Lungro S. Basilo and Civita and other Albanian colonies.

When we returned to the village we saw sieves of tomatoes prepared for sauce spread out in the sun to dry, and there were also pumpkins tied into different shapes hanging up. As we were going along the main street we saw a man coming, and we concluded that he was our woman's husband and spoke to him. We found that he

was the tobacconist for whom we had brought the letter, and he said he would do all he could for us, and that, although it would be difficult to get anyone to sit, he knew of several people whom he might persuade to come. He took us to one woman, who first said she would sit, but then she ran away shouting that she would not, and afterwards, whenever we saw her in the village, she either hid from us or ran away as quickly as possible. The tobacconist asked us to go with him to see more people, but when they knew what was wanted they also hid or ran away, and for this I was thankful, for they were so ugly I should not have known what to do with them. It seemed hopeless, but one peasant said that if we left it to him he would try and find a good-looking person with a good costume. We went to find our sleeping driver, woke him up, and then set out home.

On the way home we decided to try and find a group of houses about which I had heard a woman talk. We told the driver, and he took us down a narrow stony road which almost shook the little cart to pieces. We bumped along for three miles, crossing several streams, and at last we came to a church set back from the roadway. There was bare ground in front and a stream with stepping stones. The driver drew up, saying,—"We have arrived." We asked where we were, for we could see nothing in particular, and he said that if we walked we should find houses. We went along a path, and came to a group of women carrying large sieves on their heads. We followed them, and at last one spoke to me, asking where I was going. "For a walk," I replied, "and whither goest thou?" "To the mountains," she answered, and then I went along with them, listening to what they said and answering some of their questions. One of them was rather nice-looking.

I said I wanted to paint someone in a costume, and asked her to sit. At first she said she would, then the others said they would, then they all said they would not, and then they all said they would, but when I tried to fix a time they again began to say first one thing and then another. We came to an apple tree, and we sat down and piled the red apples which were lying on the ground into their sieves. One girl climbed the tree and shook down more apples, and I helped to put some in the sieves. They were all munching apples, and one of them gave me some and told me to eat them. I ate two and she gave me more, but they were rotten, and I had to try and prevent her seeing that I could not eat them. I again asked the women to sit, but everyone went on in the same indefinite way, and when a large sieve was filled a girl got up and put it on her head. I said, "Whither goes thou?" "To the mountains," she answered, and walked away. "I also go to the mountains," I said, and got up to go, but once again I asked if they would sit, and they answered,—"Perhaps we will, perhaps we will not." As I moved away, they said,—"Art thou coming back?" "Perhaps I am, perhaps I am not," I answered. They went on eating apples, and I went back to my father.

We looked inside the church before leaving, and there was a man who was evidently the sacristan. We told him what we wanted. He took me down a narrow footpath to a small house hidden by the trees. Outside there was a very rough-looking man shaking dead leaves off branches for faggots, and there was also a large tarantula on the ground. I stepped over the branches and the tarantula, and the sacristan explained what I wanted, saying I would give double the wages that the woman earned in a day. The man called to his wife, who put her head out

of a little window. He shouted to her, and he seemed delighted at the idea of her sitting, but the woman put her head in as soon as she saw me and absolutely refused to put it out again. The one glimpse I had of her was enough, for she was so ugly that she looked quite deformed. When we got away, I told the sacristan that I wanted a beautiful type, and he took me to another house hidden by trees. There I waited, sitting on a log in a very muddy yard with pigs, till two women came out, who were quite as hideous as the other. They were anxious to sit, and I was trying to make excuses and get away when various peasants appeared from their scattered houses hidden in the trees. They were all most anxious to come, and there were two very splendid-looking women amongst them. I managed to get them aside, telling them that I liked their costume, and they were overjoyed at the idea of being paid double their ordinary wages. Everyone was pleased and I said I would return at half past nine next day, and we drove away. Next morning, however, on our way there, we met the woman and her child carrying fruit on her head and going to the market. We asked her why she was going to market as she had promised to sit. She shrugged her shoulders and replied that now "she was going to market." We said she had better give her fruit to someone else and come back with us. She and her child got into the little carriage, and another peasant took the fruit. She took us to her house, which consisted of two rooms, one downstairs and the other above it. She showed me her loom and how to spin, and then her sister, who was also going to sit for me, came in with a *conca* on her head, and I decided to paint them both together, the one spinning and the other with the *conca*. The room had apples piled up on the floor under the

loom; copper pots, different clothes, and blue umbrellas hung on the walls, and boxes of agricultural tools were scattered about everywhere. The child had a bad finger, and the mother kept cuffing her to make her stop crying. I offered to wash and dress her finger with clean water, but both mother and child became very alarmed at this, and the child was turned out to grub in the earth. Things went on fairly well for a short time, and my father went off to explore. Then the woman's sister began to be a great bother, flattering me and talking a lot of nonsense and giving me an egg and some grapes, which I said I would eat at lunch. After a while she said that I was to pay her sister four times as much as had been arranged, and that she would not sit for less than five times as much. Then the hideous woman whom I had seen the day before came in, and sat down in the doorway saying she would sit for three times as much. Wanting to get on, I took no notice and tried to work. By degrees a disagreeable crowd of men, dirty children, and women came round the doorway, and the sacristan, as he passed on his way to the fields shouted,—"You can ask anything. They can pay!" The women then began to make plans as to how they would rob us and barricade us in and all kinds of other arrangements, adding,—"She is a stupid one, and understands nothing. We can talk!" I wondered if it were a joke! At last it was quite impossible to work. I pretended to be angry and told the whole lot to go away at once, saying I would never go there to work again if they could not behave themselves. They seemed rather surprised, and everyone went except the sister, who again began to flatter. I was amused, but still pretended to be angry and sulky and not to understand them. When my father came back we went off to lunch in the fields, and

then returned in the afternoon. The woman had been working in the fields and came back barefooted, but I wanted to paint her in the red and purple socks which are knitted with very thick soles to them instead of shoes, and are characteristic of the place. I asked her to put some on, but she refused, and then the ugly woman came along, kicked her own off, and threw them at the woman. She put them on, saying I was to give her five lire for each foot! I asked the ugly woman to lend the other her gold beads, as the latter refused to go upstairs to get her own. The ugly woman said she would not do so unless the other promised to return them to her. This was done, and she threw them over to her. At the end of the day the woman demanded to be paid, but we said we would pay her next day, when I had finished, and I left my easel as a hostage. Next day we only took the cart half-way, as they had already said we must be very rich to have driven all the way, the price for the whole way being 1.20 lire! At first all went well, and everyone seemed to be in the sweetest temper. My father went off to explore. The two women then talked together in low voices, making still more disagreeable plans. After a little I said I should not want the sister till the evening, and she went off to work. My father came back, and I told the other woman I had finished with her for the present, and she could go and get her apples whilst I went on with the background. She demanded to be paid treble what was arranged, saying that her sister would ask even more. My father handed her the money, and I said,—"It is one thing for your sister to ask. It is another thing for me to accept." For some time two fierce-looking men stayed by the door to watch us, and then a woman and two children were put in charge, only one man remaining in his own doorway.

I said I was going to sit in the roadway, and put my chair outside, and that I wanted my father to hold my umbrella up for the sun. The woman had to get us the umbrella, which was still in the house. We then told her we were going to lunch in the fields, and asked the child to be ready to call her mother should we want her. We walked slowly out of the village the opposite way from the road, turned a corner of the little path, and dropped over a stream into a vineyard and took a short cut to another road which we had noticed. We were afterwards warned that this group of houses had been formerly one of the very worst places for brigands, and that up till a few years ago no one had dared to go near them.

That night we went to a little café just inside the walls of the town. Our inn was outside these walls, and from my window I could see the arched gateway and the guards as they walked up and down by the light of a lantern, challenging all who passed. But they knew us, and saluted as we went by. "Have a care," they exclaimed, "and go not into the country at night." At the café the tobacconist had promised to meet us and tell us traditions. He said that at Santu there are two kinds of witches (*magara*); one is the *magare* who makes enchantments and does ill by means of demons, and the other goes about in March on Friday nights to suck men's lungs. The former sell their souls to the devil, and the latter are predestined. All the Albanians believe in the last, and the vampires, although blood-suckers, are quite different from them. It is not known who was the first *magara*, but a dying mother who is a *magara* will call out,—"Take it! Take it!" To satisfy their mothers, the daughters answer,—"I have it! I have it!" The dying mother is grieved at their fate, but says,—"All right! All right!

Thou must take it!" and the daughters there and then become *magare*. It is only on Fridays in March their terrible fate transforms them into *magare*; then at midnight by occult influence they make their parents sleepy, and go round the village, smelling the houses which they wish to assail. Should a piece of cheese roasted on the Tuesday of the Carnival be hidden in the rafters over the door, or a small plant of *ruta* (rue) be put on the windows, they will run away frightened. Cheese is also sewn inside their children's frocks, and one of the family takes the *tabarro* (mantle) or bed-cover to church on Good Friday. On Fridays in March children run about, ringing bells and crying,—"Come out, *magare!*" On these nights every mother looks at the bed-covers and cushions of her children. The easiest way to discover *magare* is, on Easter Sunday to put some of the roasted cheese cooked on Carnival Tuesday, or a piece of *ruta* (rue), at the door of the church when it is full. After the service is over, all can leave the church except the *magare*, who can only walk round and round inside the church, not being able to step over the threshold of the door until the cheese or the *ruta* has been removed.

Another way to trap a witch is, at the Christmas midnight mass to dress as a mower, wrapped up in a mantle [*coppa*], with a scythe with teeth, held in the right hand, and stand either near to the church door's entrance, or to the holy water stoup. The mower must rest his chin on a fork, which, on the women coming out of the church, becomes invisible to all but the witch, who is bound to utter "*Chè fa questo inviso quà?*" (What does this hateful fellow here?)

The dress of mowers consists of a leathern apron, a separate sheepskin sleeve for the right arm, and small

canes for the left-hand fingers, but with leather fingerstall for the first finger. A queer woman with whom I made friends dressed me in these garments, with the canes on my finger, and gave me a fork to hold, and then took me to the church, where she hid me behind the door with the last rays of the sun at the right angle, to show me how, if a witch entered the church, she would be caught. She said that all mowers think they have the right to insult all passers-by during their mowing, and that only two years ago a mower was sentenced to twenty-five days' imprisonment by the Court at Isernia for insulting a lieutenant of the *carabinieri* who was on duty. She also told me that whoever is born on the night of S. Paolo or on Christmas Eve will be a *lupo manaro* (werwolf) (see p. 14), or if a girl she will also be a witch.

Another method of catching witches is for a woman to put her hair comb into the holy water stoup, also at the Christmas Mass. This prevents the witches from getting out of the church, and they can be recognised. If precautions are not taken, the witches can enter the house through the keyhole, or any hole or crack, and go straight to the beds. They may enter in the form of black cats or spirits, and then a broom and some salt is placed behind the door, and a piece of rope; it must be the same rope that is used for oxen, and it is tied under the bed, the master of the house watching to see if a black cat passes and trying his utmost to strike it. Next day, to find out if he has succeeded, he looks to see if the suspected person has her skirt torn, or a wound, or a bruise, because, if so, she is a witch. Witches never come on a Saturday night. Before beginning to suck, they look under the pillow for knife, sword, hatchet, or other sharp or pointed tool. They examined carefully the bed-covers or any *tabarro*

(coverlet) in the room, which may have been taken into church on Good Friday, because their bad luck would oblige them to count each hair of the *tabarro*. At dawn they must leave off counting, even if they have not finished the long addition, and then they will be caught.

When the family has not been careful, the *magara* begins by putting her lips to the ear of her victim, and sucks, and sucks. The lung rises up as blood to the ear, and from the ear passes to the mouth and throat of the *magara*. That same night the *magara* runs away to vomit the blood into the hollow of some old tree, and it is said the proof of this is that coagulated blood is everywhere found in the hollows of the trees.

There is a story how, on a Friday night in March, a peasant called Veronica was feeding her baby in bed. She had no light, but she heard something rubbing at the lock of the door, then light footsteps. A head approached and got under the covers and searched for her baby's ear. She took courage, seized the witch's hair, and cried out,—"Wicked creature, don't touch my angel!" Trembling, the witch said,—"What clutchest thou in thy hands?" and she answered,—"*Tirkuuz*" (ropes). At this answer the wretched witch could not move, and changing her tone of voice she implored Veronica to let her go. At the sound of her voice, Veronica recognised one of her dearest friends, and said,—"Why didst thou come to kill my baby?" "Pardon me, Veronica, it was my fearful destiny. I am thankful that thou hast discovered me and saved thy baby. I should suffer, just as thou, for its death. Take pity on me. Let me go for thy father's blessed soul!" Veronica unclenched her hand, and, after having made her swear that she would not return, let her go. Had Veronica said "*Ljes*" (hairs), the witch would

only have laughed and answered,—"*Sket si pres*" (meaning not known), and she would have been able to go away unpunished.

The woman who dressed me up as a reaper also told me that to cure *ghilbanis* (the demon), I must go to the houses of three old women and knock at the door. When the first woman asked "Who is there?" I must say loudly,—"*Ggelon a mmé se ne pozza ji. E a tté se ne pozza meni.*" (I have no power over you, Gelon. You should have no power over me), and run away. This should be repeated for each woman.

The tobacconist gave me the two following stories, which were collected also by Petrilli:—

THE THREE SISTERS.

Laura, Fiore, and Carofiore were three sisters. The king fell in love with the last, and always passed under her windows. The other two sisters, becoming jealous, decided to drown her in the well of their house. They therefore ordered her to wash some of their crockery in the well. While she was washing, the eldest sister dropped a piece of crockery down surreptitiously. Then one of the sisters counted the crockery, and found one piece missing. They charged the younger sister with the loss of it, but she denied the accusation. The eldest sister pretended to look down the well, and said,—"The piece of crockery is there; the one who dropped it must fetch it up." The youngest sister consented to go, and they tied a rope to her and let her down. When Carofiore reached the bottom of the well, she cried,—"Pull me up, I have found the crockery." But the other two sisters only let her down deeper, each crying in turn,—"Thou shalt not come

out again," and so poor Carofiore, instinctively seeking safety, knocked her foot against a stone. A door opened, and she went into a beautiful kitchen, with food in the fireplace, and a table, where macaroni was prepared for cooking. Carofiore then explored the house, but did not see or hear anyone. She was hungry and thought she would light the fire and cook the macaroni. When she had cooked and garnished the macaroni, a door opened and a man with a wolf mantle entered. Carofiore, frightened, crouched under a seat. The wolf-man *lupino* ate the macaroni with gusto. After he had finished, he said,—"If I knew who had cooked and dressed this macaroni, I would adopt that person as my child." At first Carofiore was too frightened to come from her hiding place, but presently her appetite overcame her fear, and she crept forth, saying,—"It was I!" The wolf-man thereupon overwhelmed her with caresses, made her sit in his place, and afterwards led her through the house, giving her a bed to sleep in, and told her she was on no account to enter three of the rooms. Next morning the man dressed himself in his wolf mantle and went out, leaving Carofiore to cook and attend to the house. She went about her duties contentedly, but it then came into her mind that she would explore one of the rooms she had been forbidden to enter. On entering she found a toilet table, and began to comb her hair. A parrot in the room cried out,—"How ugly is the daughter of the wolf." Carofiore took offence at this, but remained silent. At night, when the wolf-man returned, she told him what had happened. He reproached her without anger, and said,—"It serves thee right. Did I not forbid thee to go into the room? Don't do it again." But she wished to return, and while she was there, behold the son of the king passed

by, shot at the parrot which was in the window, and killed it. He saw Carofiore, and said,—"It is not true that the wolf's daughter is ugly; on the contrary, she is very beautiful!" And the king's son married her, scorning her sisters. The wolf-man remained alone again, and made a good meal off *confetti*.

THE TWO TOWERS.

A king had a son who did not want to marry, and was therefore kept in a tower. At the same time another king had a daughter who likewise did not want to marry, and she too was put in a tower. News flies to a great distance. The king's son, shut up in his tower, heard of the girl shut up in her tower, and he told his gaoler that he had dreamt of a beautiful girl, and that he would marry her if he could find her. The gaoler, unknown to the king, took him to the other king's daughter in the tower far away. On seeing her he said that she was the girl he had dreamt of, and that he would marry her. Then a *fata* appeared and gave him a talisman, saying,—"With this thou canst have what thou wantest, even the king's daughter." The young man took the talisman, and asked the girl,—"Wilt thou marry me?" She at first did not want to do so, but in the end, through the power of the talisman, she could not resist. The two young people, in fear of punishment for having come out of the towers unknown to their fathers, ran away. They travelled and travelled, always content and happy. One evening they arrived at the cottage of a well-to-do peasant who was on the point of dying. They looked after him, and, before dying, the peasant said to the young man,—"After my death thou must dig the orchard under the fig-tree, and

thou wilt find a treasure." The peasant died, and the young husband, after giving him a decent funeral, went to dig for the treasure. He found it. While he was taking it, the talisman fell from his breast, and a white bird picked it up, and flew away. The young man followed that day and the next, without being able to catch it. In despair he returned to where he had left his bride, but she, thinking herself bereaved, had gone. Notwithstanding his grief, the bridegroom did not give up his hope. If he could only recover the talisman, everything would be right again. At that moment the white bird came and it let the talisman fall. The husband picked it up, and put it in his breast, and ordered it to make him find his bride. Meanwhile he put into the bottom of several baskets the money he had found with the treasure. To hide it, he covered it with fresh olives and dry figs ; then he packed it on to several mules. He travelled over mountains and valleys, always in search of his beloved, the talisman as his guiding star. At a great palace he asked for and obtained lodging. He unloaded the mules, and hid the talisman in one of the baskets, to prevent it from being lost or stolen during the night. He then went to sleep with the servants. The mistress of the house, who was a beautiful girl, for curiosity went to look through the baskets, and found the talisman. She was his lost bride, and on finding it she knew that, as it belonged to her bridegroom, this man must be he. In the morning, by virtue of the talisman, they recognised each other. The two kings agreed to the marriage, and were especially pleased because the bridegroom had brought all the baskets full of money and every good gift of God.



COOKING. NEAR SULMONA

PLATE XV.]

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every good gift of God.

COOKING. NEAR SULMONA



The following is a collection of Albanian proverbs made for me by the sacristan :—

L'asino zoppo lu pete gli dole, [The lame ass feels its aching foot,
La donna quanne cant' nun sa che vole. The singing woman does not know what she wants.]

L'asino zoppo lu pete ferito, [The lame ass feels its wounded foot,
La donna quanne canta vo marito. The singing woman needs a husband.]

Prima Natale nè fame nè freddo, [Before Christmas neither hunger nor cold,
Dopo Natale la fame e lo freddo. After Christmas hunger and cold.]

Tanto possa durar la mia nuora [So long may my daughter-in-law last
Quanto dura la nêve marzarola. As long as endures the March snow.]

E la donna quann' è bella,
Si conosce al camminà,
Da na bott'a la gonnella
Lu zinal lu fa ballà.

[A beautiful woman
Is seen by her walk,
She gives a kick to her skirt.]

E s'io ti putess' cambia lu nome
Ti chiamerai di nome ruba core— (*Sulmona; Aquila*).

[And if I could change thy name
I would call thee the breaker of hearts.]

Pasqua fattela a casta,
Natale coi Signori,
E Carnevale coi scrocconi.— (*Santin; Aquila*).

[Pass Easter at home,
Christmas with thy masters,
And Carnival with the wits.]

Di notte non si guarda
Nè donna nè tela,
Col lume di candela.

[At night don't look
Either at women or linen,
By candle light.]

Caldo di panno
Non fa danno.—(*Pescocostanzo*). [Warmth from clothes Never does harm.]

Quando de sera cala la Pellara sta cuntenta la pecurara. [When the polar star descends at evening the wife is happy (i.e. in winter when the husband is away).]

La fame caccia r'lupe dalla tana. [Hunger makes the wolf come out of its den.]

Contra grasse nen pó la mal'annata. [Fat animals stand winter.]

Pecura magna e pecura paga. [The goat eats and pays.]

La mamma pe gliu figliu
Segliu affranca gliu bocconcigliu. [The mother for the child Spares even the choicest morsel].

Gliu figliu pe la mamma
Se jetta tutto in canna. [The son of the mother throws Everything in his throat (i.e. the mother's son eats everything up).]

It is said of the owl,—

Guai dove mira,
Beato dove posa. [Happy where it is, Woe where it looks.]

Chi non si ubbriaca la Domenica non è degno che gli stringa la mano il lunedi. [He who is not tipsy on Sunday is not worth shaking hands with on Monday.]

Terra che ce so' baiate re chiáne. [Land where barking has taken place, i.e. fertile land.]

Vvo' veve' a du' sise. [Wants to drink by two spouts]

Muórte ru cuáne, cessata la raia. [The dog dead, rage is gone.]

Mangniá che re chiáne e urluà che le lópra. [Eat with the dogs, howl with the wolves.]

De chèle che manie t'embriatte. [With what you handle you get soiled.]

Ze gràttane a une cuórne. [To scratch a horn.]

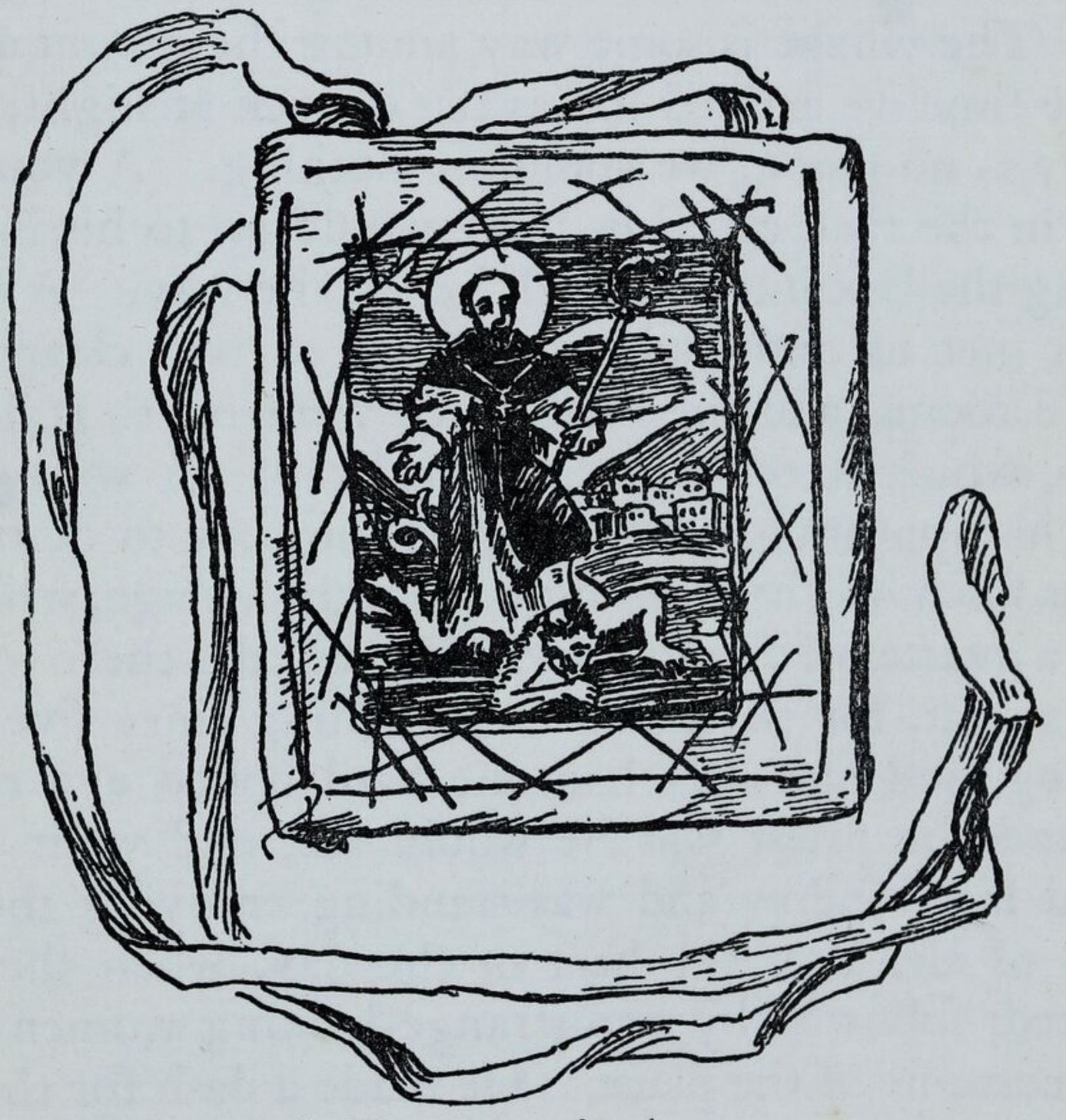
Ogne púale fa fratta. [Every pale is useful for a hedge.]

A latte cuviérte n'ce càcane mosche. [To covered milk no flies go.]

Ru cuáne pellicciatare pòrta sémpe la pèlle stracciata, [The quarrelsome dog has a torn coat.]

Se ogni uccello conoscesse il grano,
Ogni campo ne sarebbe scarco. [If every bird knew the grain, No field would have any.]

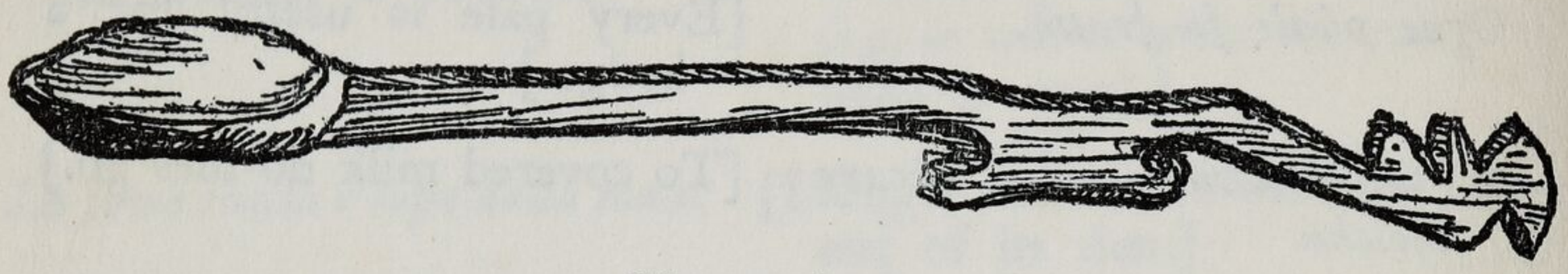
—(*Scanno*).



S. Domenico's Amulet.

Chapter XIII.

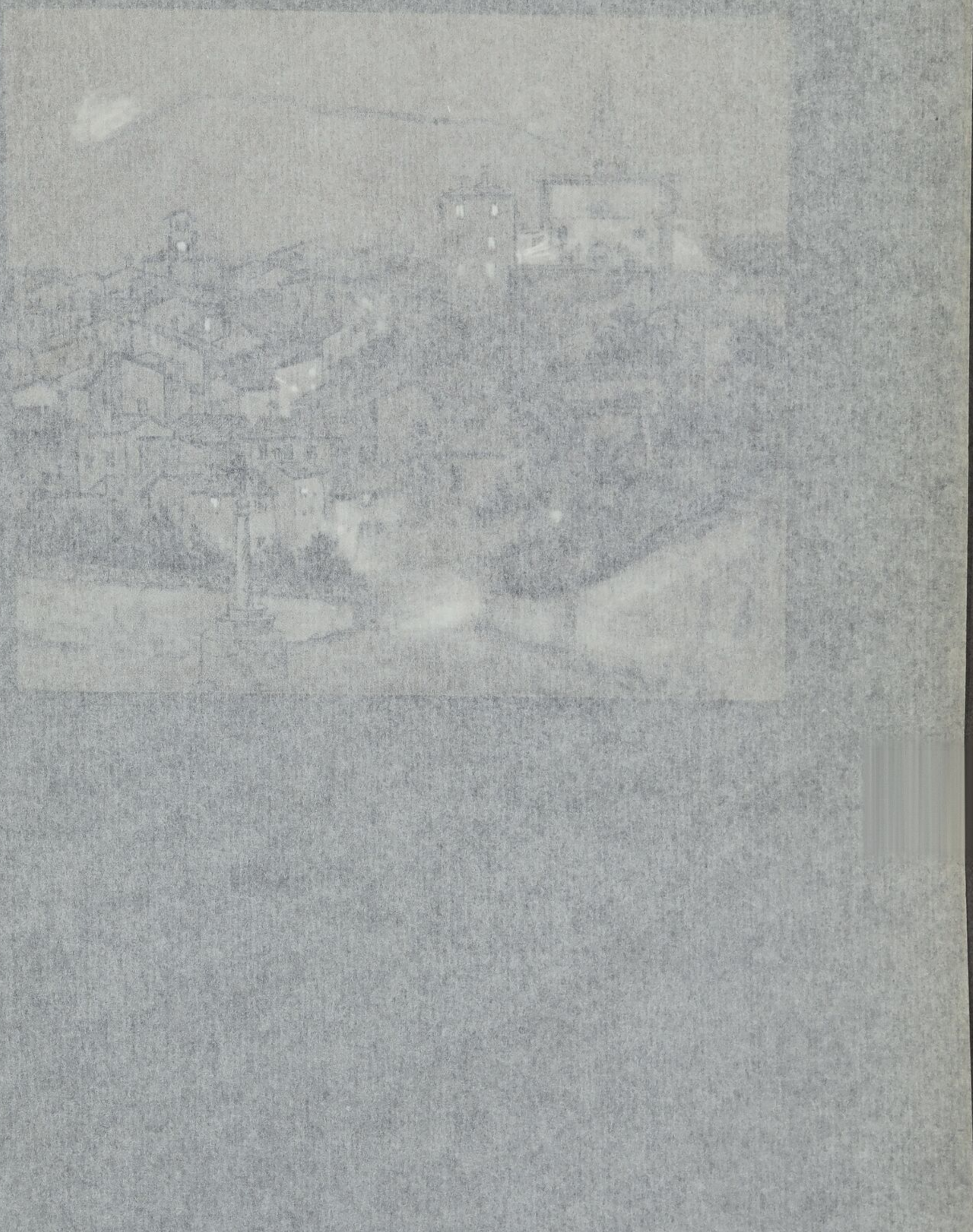
Scanno.



Wooden Spoon.

La luce va cercando il cieco. [Light pursues the blind.]

WE had heard much of the Scannese, the inhabitants of Scanno, and we decided to go there and explore. The village is some way among the mountains, and by the time we arrived it was ten o'clock at night, and, as there was no moon, we could see nothing. A youth who stood in the road asked us if we would go to his inn, and, hauling the box into the road, he led the way. A child of eleven met us and took us upstairs to two clean white-washed rooms, and the youth then went off to collect our things, which were still in the roadway. A young priest made his appearance, and ordered the beds to be made as soon as linen had been brought from the village, which was about a quarter of a mile away. We asked if there was anything to eat, for we had been travelling since five in the morning, and had only had one hard-boiled egg each all day, and the priest said he would see, and went off. I opened my window and was standing enjoying the fresh breath of air, after the heat of the day, when the priest appeared, followed by two strange-looking women in the queer costume of the place. He made a dash for the open windows, saying,—"You will die from a stroke of cold in



TWILIGHT VIEW OF SCANNO FROM MY WINDOW.

PLATE XVI.]

Chapter XIII.

Scanno.



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TWILIGHT VIEW OF SCANNO FROM MY WINDOW.



that air." I said that I always slept with my windows wide open and that I liked the cooler air after the heat. The priest replied he had never heard anyone say such a thing before, and the two women stared. They were both of them handsome, with dark sallow complexions and black eyes. One was much younger than the other, and I afterwards found her to be the daughter. The priest drew his cloak closer to him, and they all three stood and stared as I leant against the window, gazing at them and trying to read their characters. They certainly were strange-looking people, and quite a type of their own. The daughter ventured to ask some questions, and I tried to talk to her, but the mother remained silent. Not a single change of expression crossed those sullen faces, and their remarks were short and indefinite. I asked when the beds would be made and when we were going to get anything to eat, and the older woman then told her daughter that perhaps it would be better if she went and got the linen from the village. I enquired if any pilgrimages would take place soon, and the child, who had come back to the room, said that there had been a pilgrimage that day and that the pilgrims were already asleep outside on the church steps. I called my father, and we asked the child to take us to see them. The priest and the child both thought we were off our heads and made exclamations, but we insisted on going. The girl, however, said that she could not go without a shawl, hot as it was, and she wrapped herself up and put it over her head. We went to the church and searched everywhere in the village, but the peasants we met all said that the pilgrims had again started on their journey after a short rest. We returned, hoping that the macaroni was ready. Finally, it was, and, after eating it, I went upstairs to bed, but the

linen had not yet come. The priest again came to try to shut the windows, assuring me that he had never heard of anyone having them open before. Finally the girl walked in carrying the linen on her head, and the mother appeared with a broom and we all set to work to make the beds, and at about twelve o'clock I managed to get everyone out of the room and went to bed.

I was awakened next morning by a flood of sunlight streaming in. I got up and, leaning out of the window, saw that the village of Scanno was some distance away and piled up on a hill. There was a background of mountains in a haze of light, the village standing out a tone darker in front of them, but also bathed in light shining through the haze and the smoke which came from the houses. Down below was a road leading to the valley, which was also hazy with mist and sun, and it gave me quite a queer sensation to see that there were trees, so accustomed had I become to the barren mountains. Downstairs I met the two women and the priest, who said he expected me to be ill after sleeping with the window open. The women were as silent as they had been the night before, and looked as sallow and dark. They were working, and, according to custom, had their full skirts tied up below the waist round the bustle at the edge of their bodices. This made a roll about nine inches thick just below the waist, and the full skirts having many pleats made them the more bulky. When the skirts are fastened in this manner they scarcely come as far as the knees, and when the peasants walk along they have a queer swinging movement from side to side. The bodices which go with this costume are always black with full sleeves, and there are eleven little silver buttons in front, each peasant having a different design. Some of the buttons are curious, the

whole design consisting of a coiled serpent. All the women have thick long black hair; this is plaited up with twisted cord of different colours in two plaits, then twisted round the head, and it is on top of this that the headdress is arranged. These headdresses are carefully wound round and round and take a long time to get right, but when once arranged they can be kept as they are and taken on and off.

The principal parts of the village of Scanno are paved with square tiles, but the remainder has cobbles. There are several churches, and the whole place has a character and atmosphere of its own. In all the doorways women sat picking over grain or sewing, and out of nearly every window there was a sallow Eastern-looking head with its black headdress, and as in many villages in the Abruzzi there are looms in all the houses. The windows remind one of a harem with diamond-shaped trellis work instead of square, giving the effect of a lattice. The typical Scannese are quite olive-coloured, and have long almond-shaped eyes and Eastern looking lips, and one unconsciously looks to see if their nails are stained with henna. One tradition says that the Scannese came from the Red Sea, and another that they are descendants of the Phœnicians. They have a queer language, and a song in which the meaning of some of the words is unknown to even the oldest women in the place. They have always sung this song and still sing it. The people are quiet and reserved, especially the women, and when they go out they are not supposed to talk much or to laugh, and they are not supposed to walk with any man except their own husbands. In church they always sit cross-legged, only instead of being on the ground they balance on their ankles, and lean their elbows on their knees, and in their houses they

usually sit like this without using chairs. Throughout the Abruzzi the socks are often half red and half purple with white toes and heels. The socks are combined with soles made of cord, leather, and stuff sewn together and attached to the foot. No boots or shoes are worn. I had the greatest difficulty in getting a model, for they are superstitious, and afraid of everything, and they were especially afraid when my father was with me. The two women who came to our rooms absolutely refused to sit, and those I finally got were not of the really handsome, characteristic type. At first I wondered why there were so many peasants with toothache going about, but on enquiry I found that those who had their faces done up in their black handkerchiefs were widows. When a woman loses her husband she wears this handkerchief over her face for three years. (Plate XVII.)

At funerals the relations never go to church, but wail at home. The coffin has four handles for the poor, and more for a rich person. Men and women are hired to carry the coffin,—four, or six, or eight, according to the wealth of the family. Soon after the funeral raw pieces of meat are distributed by the family of the dead to all relations and friends who followed the bier and who said prayers, and everyone takes their clothes to a special cauldron where they are all thrown in together to dye them black. Anyone omitting to do this is regarded as an enemy. All material is made in the village, and for other occasions there is a herb which will dye the skirts green in the cauldron.

The old wedding dress, although more gorgeous in colour, is markedly different from the costumes in other parts of the Abruzzi, and seems more ancient. A characteristic is, that the breast is made to appear more protuberant at a point in the centre. The drawing on Plate



WIDOW AND BRIDE. SCANNO.

PLATE XVII.]

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WIDOW AND BRIDE. SCANNO.

[PLATE XVII.]



XVIII, is an example of the brilliant colouring. Before the war these costumes cost about one hundred and fifty lire.

I worked at the picture of the bride shown in Plate XVIII in a house at the end of a street belonging to a family of peasants I got to know very well; it consisted of three sisters, a father, brother, and a kind of servant. One sister was beautiful, the second had a humped back and was very ugly, and the third was mentally deficient. I do not think a day passed without something happening, and they certainly had every reason to believe I had the evil eye. The first day one of the sisters had an epileptic fit almost at the instant I entered the room. The second day the model who sat for the bride was ill. The third day she could not come because her brother had to have his foot amputated. The fourth day the other girl had two epileptic fits. The fifth day four models, one after another, were ill and had to leave. The sixth day the ugly sister, who was jealous, threatened to shoot her beautiful sister, because she was engaged, and she had to run away. All these things actually happened.

The father, a roadmender, was away in the mountains mending a road. One day the ugly sister came to me and said,—"Help me to shoot my sister. She is going to be married, and she will steal the money and the linen." I said,—"Thou canst not prevent her from being married. Let her go." "Help me to shoot her before she leaves at six to-morrow morning. Stop her in the fields when she is on her way to the *posta*, and I will shoot. 'Vengeance is the most beautiful thing,' says one of our proverbs, and I will be revenged." I was naturally somewhat taken aback at this demand, and I talked of other things. Just before sunset the beautiful sister came and asked me to go for a walk with her, saying she wished to talk to me.

We went through the fields by the little stream, watching the evening glow, and then she said,—"I have come to bid thee good-bye. I am leaving to-morrow before three in the morning. I shall walk down to the valley, and go to Naples to await my marriage. Otherwise my sister will kill me. She thinks I am leaving at six, but I go at three in the morning." She then told me that her father had five hundred lire, of which he had promised to give half to her, and half to the ugly sister on her marriage. The ugly sister had always been jealous, and when Maria was a child she had ill-treated her so much that she had run away. She went to a convent, and she was there for ten years. Whilst there, she nursed a *carabiniere* who was ill, and became engaged to him. On leaving the convent, when her ten years were up, she went home for a time, and now the date of her marriage was near. She said it was no longer safe for her to remain at home, and that she was leaving for Naples to stay with her future mother-in-law until the wedding. Then she said,—"It is getting late and nearly dark, and I leave at three to-morrow morning." She grasped my hand, and said,—"I bid thee good-bye. It is not true that I have stolen linen. I have taken my portion for my dowry, that is all. Ask God to bless me on my way. Now we must return before my sister comes and finds that I am out with thee."

Next day, when we were having lunch, I got a message from the ugly sister saying that she had heard we were leaving in three days, and asking me to come to see her, for she said she was ill in bed. After what had passed I thought it best not to go, and waited. Next day I got another message, and then a third came, saying that she really was very ill. I decided to go, and was prepared to drop, on entering the room if she made any movement

which might mean she was going to fire. When I arrived I found her in bed writhing with pain, her face yellow and distorted. She was one of the most horrible sights I had ever seen. I sat down by the bed and waited. She began to make some excuses about her sister, and asked between the intervals of writhing with pain, what she was to do to hide it all from her father, who had been sent for and who was returning from mending the mountain track. I told her to speak the truth for once in her life, if she knew what truth meant. She begged me to tell her father that she had not tried to kill her sister, and, seeing I remained firm, she began to blurt out remorseful phrases. She would not admit that she was sorry but she said it all made her ill and she was in too much pain to know what she was doing. I bade good-bye and told her we were leaving Scanno next day. When I went out I met her father, who had by now heard the story from the rest of the village. He had called a friend who was said to be a doctor, and they asked me to wait while they saw the sick daughter.

After they had seen her, they walked down the village street with me, and they both said the whole village would choose her as the "Queen of Wickedness" if there were such a queen to be chosen, and that she had always been bad and she was now an example of how ill-passion and bad thoughts could transform the body. An interesting statement from simple mountain people. They shook hands very cordially, and with that I left them.

There was a wedding while we were at Scanno and, although we did not know the bride's father, he invited us to it. We went to the house, and were told to go upstairs. We found the whole place filled with guests, all up the stairs and three rooms full, each of them sitting

with the back against the wall. In one room the bride, in her blue and white bridal headdress and silk apron, sat looking at her pocket handkerchief, which she held in her lap, and there she had been for hours looking at that handkerchief, and scarcely allowed to smile or look up or speak. Her relations and friends were seated by her, some knitting, others talking or feeding their children, or dragging the older children out of the way of the guests who were still arriving. We were told that in former days the bride held her rosary in her lap and looked at it, but that now she has a handkerchief instead. After we had also sat with our backs against the wall talking to the peasants next us for a time, the bridegroom came and shook hands with us, and told us who he was. Then he carried round, first a tray of little cakes which he offered to everyone, and then a tray of little glasses of liqueur, but he never spoke to the bride, who amidst the noise made by the guests still gazed in silence at her handkerchief. The women who knitted had the silver hooks on their left shoulders on which the thread is hooked, and some of their clasps were of a very good design, and had frogs and horns and crescents to keep away the evil eye. After we had been sitting there some time we thought we would go downstairs, for it was getting very hot and stuffy, and we went out into the street. We found it crowded with peasants, all waiting to see the bride and bridegroom go to the church, and we also waited with them. Finally they came, and were followed by all the couples who had been married that year, who also all wore the blue and white bridal headdress. This is the more modern form of dress which is now worn. The other peasants followed in couples, all in their best black headdresses, and their hair, which had been specially done for the occasion, was braided

with different kinds of different coloured cord. We followed them to the church, where the couple knelt at the altar, and the service was over before the last guests had even entered. The couple then disappeared immediately, for the civil ceremony had taken place the day before. After the wedding the bride is confined to her home for eight days. She is not allowed to see anyone except the two mothers and her husband, and she is not allowed to do any work of any kind, or even to go out. The two mothers make the fire and do the cooking. Neither may her husband work, but he may take his young wife for walks every day. It is not until eight days have passed that the newly-married couple may go to their first Mass, and then begin life in the ordinary way. We went to one Mass eight days after two couples had been married. They were near the high altar, and the women wore their bridal headdresses. The whole church was filled with peasants sitting on their heels on the floor, but they gave us chairs. The brides were very handsome, and so were most of the peasants, and many of them looked just as though they had stepped out of the *Arabian Nights*.

La femmene che se marete, ha da purta la dot' a le mane. (The girl who is going to be married must have her dowry in her hands, i.e. must work). I found records of dowries in the municipal documents of Scanno. The dowry consists generally of the trousseau, dresses, and underlinen of the bride, and also her bed and domestic utensils. Sometimes the trousseau is only what the girl has on, e.g. under date 1632, "*Inprimis detta, saveria zita calzata, e vestita come si trova.*" (The bride's attire as found.) One interesting document, of date 1643, I copy in full:—

"Livio da Leonardo di Serafino gave his daughter Maria 110 ducats '*et bona corredalia*,' and also two lamps, one brass

and the other iron, one big fork, two sheets, one large yellow bedcover, one Norcino cloth of linen, one white skin for the bed (sheepskin), one new cloth (*afriscella*) of white linen, with a hat of the same material. Two blue cloth petticoats lined with red satin, six pairs of stockings, a pair of green *lagetto*, one *impa* with *facciolo*, one nightcap, three hair nets, one of them of silk, and the other two of *capisciola*, one *accannatore d'ammari* (*d'ambre*) and *garfoli* with six *testeri* (coins) (*monete conteste*), four of 22 grains-and-a-half, and two of four-and-a-half, a gold *canacca* of 74 small beads with two jewels, value 25 *carlini*. One crucifix in gold, value 12 *carlini*, one tooth, one *sayetta* (coral) in the form of *vajetta*. One red coral and one black coral. One S. Leonardo, one Madonna, one S. Biase, and one silver frog (amulet against fever, epilepsy, hæmmorhage, and scrofula, and efficacious for freeing a baby's tongue). Two needle cases and one *tomolo* of corn for making bread.—*Corredo del* 1643 *MSS. Municipio di Scanno*."

I have been unable to ascertain the exact meaning of the unexplained items.

When the dowry is arranged, if anything is unfolded it must be folded again in the bridegroom's house, otherwise it would be unlucky for the bride. If bed sheets are unfolded, another pair must be found by the husband.

At Casacanditella and the villages near, the bridegroom, after the music of the *festa* is finished, knocks at the door. "Who is it?" "A poor passer-by who wants rest." "Go away." "If you want rest give me some cheese while the door is ajar." "Those who are inside want more." Then they ask for a small leg of mutton. At last they open the door, the bridegroom's father enters, and the relations and musicians sit at the table, which is already prepared for the meal.

At Ari, when the bride leaves her father's house, the peasants say, according to Finamore, "*Lasse lu vizie de la casa té è ppijji quèlle de la cas' addo' vaje.*" (Leave behind

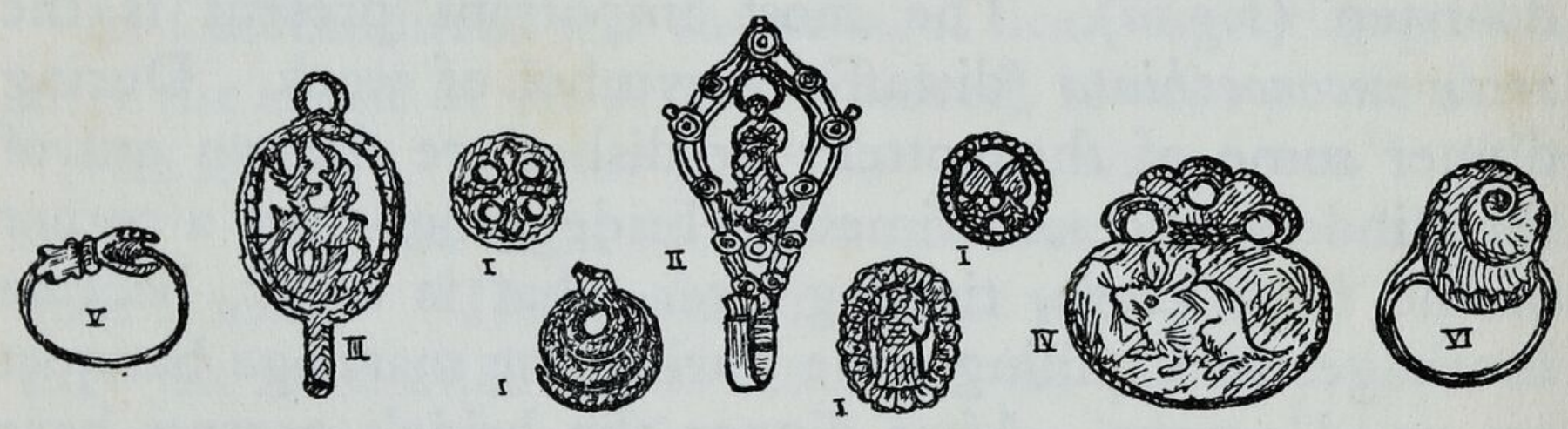
the vices of your house and take those where you go.) "*Puzza purtà la pac-i-a cohela case!*" (Take thou peace to the new house.) "*Puzza truvà tand amore pè cquande te n'à vulute pàtret' e mmàmmete!*" (Find as much love as was given by thy father and mother many times.) After mass, the procession goes home. The bride wears a silver wreath hired from the church besides her wreath of flowers. This silver wreath must be kept on until sunset. Should the sun go down while the bridal procession is on the way home the bride must take it off at that moment. Otherwise, she wears it until she enters her room to go to bed. If it rains during the procession, it means that the bride is greedy. On their arrival there is a fight between the bride's relations who want to keep her, and the others who wish to take her away. This becomes serious (*strascine*), and then everything continues smoothly again. Her mother-in-law puts sweets (*ciambella*) into her mouth, saying,—"*Puzz' èsse dòlge comè stu cumbètte*," (Mayest thou be as sweet as this sweet), and then she takes her by the hands and makes her jump inside without touching the doorstep (*soglia*). The most important present is the *rocca inconocchiata* (distaff), a symbol of work. During dinner some of the pottery or dishes are thrown out of the window, and sometimes the bridegroom raises a corner of the table cloth, tipping over what is on it, because breakages and spilling wine during the marriage banquet are good omens. After dinner the bride's parents have the right to choose the best hen in the roost and take it home. That one of the married pair who has the second toe on one foot shorter than the other will die first; this also applies to whoever has the least letters in his or her name, or to whoever puts the candle out first when they go to bed (which is the reason why they keep it alight all

night). Finamore says that it is a good omen if during the marriage ceremony a candle in the church falls, and this is also a good sign when one invokes God or the souls. When kneeling for the benediction the bridegroom must put his knee on a fold of the bride's dress or on the end of her apron, to ensure fidelity and obedience. The bride, by pressing the knee of the bridegroom, symbolizes tieing herself to his love.

For eight days the bride must not comb her hair, go out, or go up and down stairs, and in some villages the hair was cut, and one knew the married from their hair. Should the husband die the wife returns to her house and the cases of her trousseau are carried upside down.

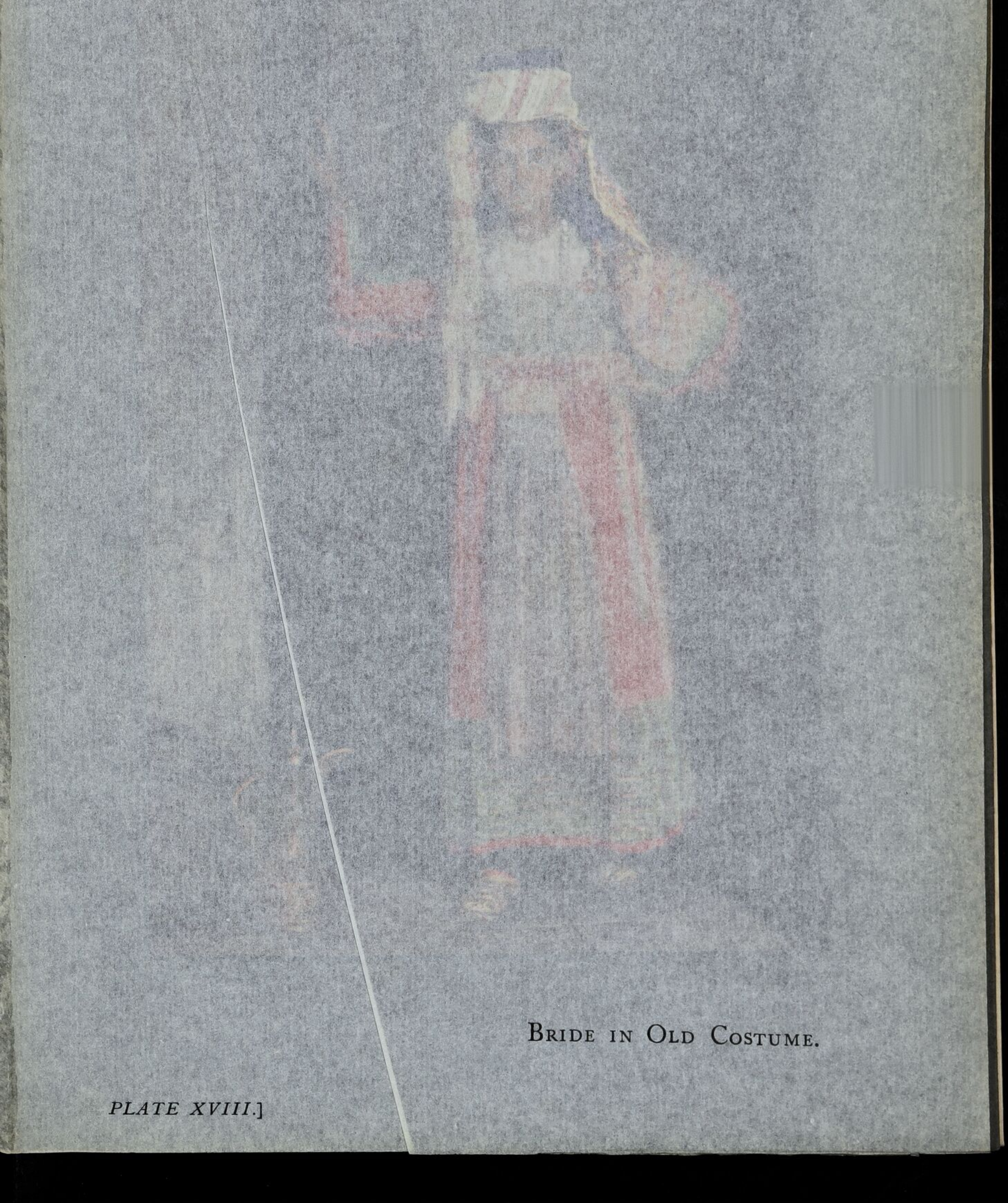
At Villalago, a village near by, once a year a *festa* is held with serpents as at Cocullo, although it is not so important. In the Church of S. Maria di Costantinopali there is a picture in tempera on a gold background, of the Madonna, of the fourteenth century.

The horse shoe fixed behind the entrance door is to keep fidelity.



MISCELLANEOUS OBJECTS.

I. SILVER BUTTONS, SCANNO.
II. KNITTING HOOK.
III. DECORATED WATCH KEY.
IV. BRASS ORNAMENT.
V. RING, SCANNO.
VI. CALAMITA RING.



BRIDE IN OLD COSTUME.

PLATE XVIII.]

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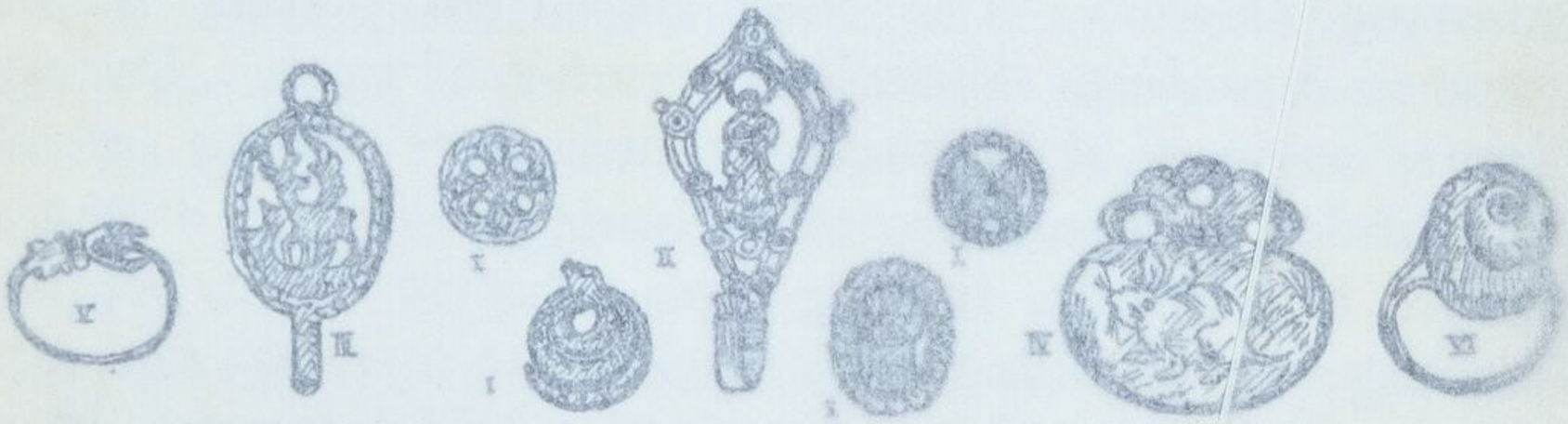
At Villalago, a village near by, once a year a *festa* is held with serpents as at Cocullo, although it is not so important. In the Church of S. Maria di Costantinopali there is a picture in tempera on a gold background, of the Madonna, of the fourteenth century.

The horse shoe fixed behind the entrance door is to keep fidelity.



Miscellaneous Objects.

I. Silver Buttons, Scanno.
II. Knitting Hook.
III. Decorated Watch Key.
IV. Brass Ornament.
V. Ring, Scanno.
VI. Calamita Ring.

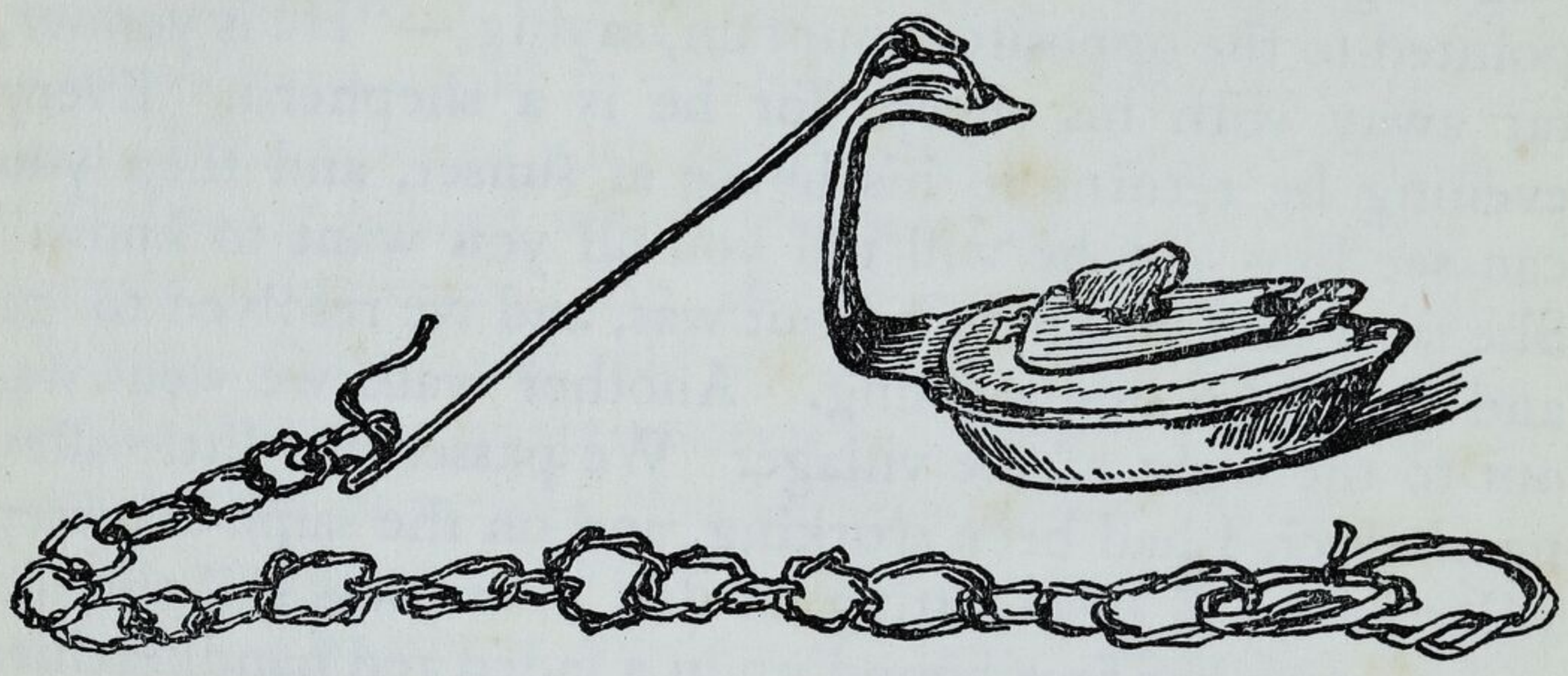
[Plate XVIII.

Bride in Old Costume.



Chapter XIV.

Walks round Scanno and Scannese beliefs.



Oil Lamp and Wooden Chain.

Pruccie, pruccie à lu muline,
E na soma di farine
E na soma di castagne
Quant' abbaste o ciuccicagna.

[Go, go to the mill,
With a load of flour,
With a load of chestnuts,
As much as can be carried.]

—*Petrilli.*

IN the evenings we explored the beautiful walks round Scanno. There was a fairly large lake a little distance away, bordered on one side with reeds and poplars, and it seemed strange to see so much green. By climbing a narrow path leading to a small deserted chapel on top of a mountain there was a lovely view of the lake. The chapel overlooked the water and the surrounding country, and the forests on the mountains to the left, which are famous for the numbers of bears in them. It was on the path leading to this chapel that we met a peasant woman who told us about a prophet-astrologer, famous for his power of telling the future. The peasant said that

everyone went to consult him when they wished to know anything, that he was always right in his answers, and that he had a wonderful old book full of strange signs which no one could read or understand. We asked whether we might go to see this interesting man, and the peasant pointed to the opposite mountain, saying,—"He is yonder, far away with his sheep, for he is a shepherd. Every evening he returns to his house at sunset, and then you can see him and he will tell you all you want to know." She then told us where his hut was, and we resolved to go and find him one evening. Another walk we went was out to the right of the village. We passed the little alley near which I had been working, and on the same doorstep where she had been sitting all day, there was still the old widow with her face bound up in a faded red handkerchief instead of the usual black. She was blind and could scarcely move, and sat with her hands clasping her heavy staff, and on her left shoulder the chicken who always perched there sat on one leg in a ruffled heap. It was only when a neighbour threw down some food for the other chickens that the fowl fluttered down and got something to eat and at once returned to roost on her shoulder. He was evidently her only companion, for I never saw anyone speak to her. All the chickens belonging to the various families wear different coloured garters, enabling everyone to recognise their own birds. Some have them on one leg and some on both. We went on our way and followed the narrow path leading between the steep slopes of the mountain, the sandy sides of which were worn almost into buttresses, and pillars, at the entrances to caves and hollows. Masses of yellow broom stood out against the deeper gold of the sand.

We told my model's sister that we would like to see the

astrologer, and one evening she took us to see him. We followed our guide at a distance, because she said the astrologer would realise we were coming and even a mile or so away he would know if he approved of us and if he would wish to see us or not. She said if he liked us he would shout to us to approach. After about half-an-hour a path branched off to the right. On one side of it there was a bank covered with great bushes of gorgeous broom in full flower, behind which was a background of blue and purple mountains. On the left was a small wooden shelter. Our friend told us to follow her slowly, for the astrologer was a queer reserved man who took strong likes and dislikes to people, that he very seldom spoke, and was easily frightened. We followed the woman, who called to him. The upper window of a shelter was thrown open, and we saw the full length figure of an old man, clad in brown clothes. The woman shouted that two people from a very far country wished to see him, and he answered, "I descend." With that he closed the shutter. Some minutes later the lower doorway was thrown open, and the old man, stepping over his sheep, which filled the stable and slept in the upper storey, came out to us. He bowed, took off his hat, and said,—"Strangers from a far country, ye wish to speak with me. I cannot tell ye anything. I live here with my sheep, and have brought them in for the night to shelter them from the wolves. I have nowhere where ye can sit within. Rest on these trunks of trees." We sat on the trunks, and he stood before us with one foot on a branch. The sun was setting, the whole sky was red and gold, and there was not a sound, save the bleating of the sheep in their shelter. The astrologer looked around him and towards the glowing light. "Fine weather and then a storm, but the sheep are

safe within," he said. "Thou knowest many things, and thou hast a wonderful book," we said. "Ah, the book! Yes, I know nothing, but the book tells me. I will get the book." He disappeared among the sheep. The woman said that many had looked at the book, but not even the wisest could understand the signs and symbols, and that it was very ancient. In a few minutes the astrologer came with his treasure. It was bound in vellum and yellow with age, and the leaves were old and brown, and the ink also brown. He opened the book saying,—"What dost thou want to know?" and after looking at it a short time he said,—"This is *il giorno di giove*" (Thursday). Then he looked at the sky, and again at the book. "There will be much grain and the crops good this year, but after that great cold." He told me I had a large mark on my left leg, and when I replied I had not, he said,—"Take down thy stocking, and thou wilt see." I did so, and he at once pointed to a big vaccination scar. He told us several other things, and then he let us look through his book. Amongst the pages were several prints of saints and angels which he had kept, and on the pages were drawings of the signs of the zodiac, and we saw that it was an old book of astrology.

We talked for some time, and then, as it was nearly dusk, we bade good-bye to our new friend and set off homewards. We went by the willows by the side of the road, where I did the sketch on Plate XX. While I was working at this drawing an old woman tried to make me give her money by muttering incantations over me. For a whole hour she sat by my side, holding the edge of my skirt with one hand and her rosary in the other, repeating prayers and formulæ, and rubbing her thumb and fingers together to show that she wanted money. First she sat

in front of me, then by my side, and nothing would make her go away, not even when I put the sketching umbrella between her and myself.

I was going to my work one day when the rich clear voice of a woman singing the following song came from somewhere amongst the rocks on the mountain side:—

Dentro il palazzo a lamie d'oro	[Inside the palace with alcoves of gold
È nata un erba circondata.	Is born a sheltered plant.
Vorrei che s'affacciasse la padrona,	I wish the mistress would come to the window,
E mi gettasse una bella rama.	And that she would throw me a beautiful branch.
Della scarpetta tua ne vorrei la sola,	From thy little shoe I would like the sole,
E della calzetta il gentil pedale,	And from thy little stocking the pretty foot.
Della tua gamba la legazza d'oro,	From thy leg the golden garter,
E della tua cintura una cinta regale	From thy waist the royal belt,
A sa cannuccia una catena d'oro	From thy neck a golden chain,
E della tua boccuccia una gentil parola.	And from thy mouth a gentle word.
A sa cannuccia una catena d'oro,	From thy neck a golden chain,
A sa boccuccia un bacio d'amore.	And from thy mouth a kiss of love.
Di buone sere te ne lascio mila,	And of good evenings I leave thee a thousand,
Cento alla mamma, novecento alla figlia.	A hundred to the mother and nine hundred to the daughter.]

A girl carrying stones on her head for building then came into my view. When she caught sight of me, her voice suddenly stopped and she walked on in silence. She was, I think, the most magnificent creature I saw all

the time I was away. She was olive-coloured, with a mass of black hair, and had the characteristics of the finest Greek and Jewish types combined. She was tall and straight, and walked along easily carrying her burden of stones. She wore two handkerchiefs, one a lovely apricot colour and the other a rich deep blue, half over the first. I passed her and went along slowly. She soon caught me up, for I saw that once out of the village she would speak to me. She asked me where I came from, what I did, and all sorts of questions. I asked her questions also, but she would give no definite answers and only laughed, showing a row of fine white teeth. I asked her to sit for me, although I saw there was no chance of it. She went on in the same indefinite way, saying she must ask her relations, and I knew this meant a refusal. She then said that if I went with her into the mountains for half-an-hour's walk, perhaps she would sit. I said I must also ask my relations, we both laughed, and I left her. I saw her several times, always carrying stones, but she would never again speak to me, and I could not get her to sit, or to sing.

Here are some Scannese beliefs told by my peasant friends in the village.

"*Canda la truvele casche lu spose passe.*" (When the shuttle [in weaving] falls on the ground, a girl goes to the window or to the door to see her future husband.)

There have been many witches who foretold the future, and one died last year. At first she was called a saint, and then a witch. She foretold what would happen, and knew what was happening at a distance. She was bed-ridden for ten years.

At Scanno the plaited thread which is put round the wrist or neck at Cocullo is used as a *devozione*, and is put

TYING ON CHARM.

PLATE XIX.

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TYING ON CHARM.



on before a pilgrimage. The peasants touch the statue of S. Domenico with it, and then the priest blesses it.

A child, the son of a bricklayer, still alive, was very ill and did not grow. It was suggested that the cause of this was due to the *streghe* (witches) who sucked his blood. The bricklayer applied to a man who knew the "*mestiere delle streghe*" (trade of the witches). This man brought holy water and incense taken from three different churches. With the holy water he sprinkled all the openings of the bricklayer's house, and with the incense he fumigated all the inside of the house. The child recovered, as the witches could not enter the house any more. (Told by a friend of the bricklayer.)

Every evening I went round the village to my various friends, asking them to tell me what they could, but it took longer in Scanno to gain their confidence than in any other village. Bit by bit I managed to collect a good deal, and when I finally got the song of Scura Maie (in the next chapter) I was overjoyed, for I was told that it was so old and traditional that it was certain no one would give it me. Later some Italian friends from Aquila said they were most envious, for they had tried their hardest to get these songs, but were unable to do so.

Maria Mancini, aged seventeen, was one of my models, and unlike the others she was not the least shy. She is the girl facing in the picture of the group of women tying on the charm (Plate XIX), and she delighted to tell the following stories which were told her when she was a child of seven, living at Peschina, near Attina. She was now living at Scanno. She said that an old woman of ninety on Sunday afternoons used to have the children of the village sitting round her while she told them stories. This was one she told :—

THE CAT AND THE MOUSE.

A cat found a centime. She looked at it and said,—"If I buy a centime's worth of meat it will not be enough. I will therefore buy a centime of ribbons and make myself pretty all over." She therefore dressed herself in the ribbons, sat on the window sill, and waited for the animals to pass! At first came the donkey, and she asked him to sing to her to see if his voice was beautiful enough for her. He he-hawed, and she said his voice was not beautiful enough. As each animal passed she asked them to sing, but none of them had good enough voices. At last the mouse came, and she asked him to sing, and he sang,—"Chic, chic," and she said that was beautiful enough for her, and that she was going to church while her dinner was cooking in the pot over the fire. She asked the mouse to look after the pot, but said that he must not lift the lid, as if he did so he would fall in. The cat then went to church and came back again, but on her return the mouse was nowhere to be found. She lifted the lid of the pot, and saw that the mouse had fallen in. She said,—"I told you not to look inside the pot and, now you have done it and fallen in, I will empty the pot on to a plate, and eat you up with the soup." And this she did.

THE BLACK VIRGIN.

There was a little girl in a field looking after a lamb. One day a beautiful tall black lady appeared, and asked her to take a letter to the priest in the village. The child said that she could not do this, as she had to look after the lamb and try and find some water for it to drink, but there was no water anywhere. The Virgin then said that she would take care of the lamb and give it water while the child

took the letter. She thereupon spat on the ground, and a beautiful spring sprang up which exists to this day. The child, after she had seen the water, went to the village with the letter, and told everyone what had happened. No one would believe her, but she said it was true and that the Virgin had really come. The people said they would go and see, but if it was not true they would kill her. Everyone went, and great was their surprise to find the water, and also that it cured cripples and all those who were ill. The child then saw a black statue, which she swore was like the lady who had appeared, and on looking at it the peasants saw that it was a statue of the Virgin. It was light, and they picked it up to carry it to the village, but it gradually grew heavier and heavier, until they could not carry it. They began to take it back again, and it grew lighter and lighter until they came to the place where it originally was. They put it down and built a church for it and gave many gold offerings, and all diseases were cured there. My model said that one day, when she was there during the feast of the Assumption, there was a girl of about twenty, who had always been well, but she became *faturata* (enchanted), and neither doctors nor anyone else could do anything with her. During the festival the priest advised that she should be taken to the church. They got her to the door, but she bit and scratched everyone, and they did not know what to do with her. They tried to push her in, but she refused to go, and went on scratching. Finally they got her in, and with much difficulty got her to the altar. But she broke the windows, and even "the glass case of the Madonna." The priest, however, would not give up, but he could not persuade her to pray to the Virgin for help. Her relations prayed for grace, and at last the girl fainted.

When she came round she was sick and brought up a string of beads, a bunch of her own hair, and a bunch of ribbon. The priests thereupon blessed them, and the girl was cured of the *fattura*, and the beads, ribbons, and hair are kept as relics to this day.

THE DEAD.

The same old woman of over ninety told the children how the dead rose from their graves and walked about in their winding sheets, and this made the children frightened and they did not like to go near the cemetery. One day a peasant woman got up at four in the morning to do her washing. Afterwards she noticed a group of people draped in white with black ribbons walking along. She thought they were going to a *festa*, but her basket of washing was heavy with the wet clothes and she found she could not get it on to her head without help, so she asked one of the white people to help her. The spirit told her to ask the next one. This she did, and the same thing happened until all the spirits but one had been asked. She asked the last spirit, who again told her to enquire of the next, but there were no more, and the woman did not get help with her washing. She still thought they were people going to a *festa*, and when she went home she went to a wise woman and told her what had happened. This woman informed her that they were the spirits of the dead, and sent her to the priest. The priest then said that she was never again to go out early in the morning.

My model said that she and the other children used to go and visit the old man who lived in a little house in the cemetery to look after the graves and keep watch over the dead the night before they were buried. He was an old man, and the children asked him many things about

the dead, and they got very frightened by his stories. When he was out they used to go and wash his plates and dishes and put the things ready for his meals, so that when he returned he was pleased, and then they made him tell them a story. They got so frightened that they did not like to go down his steps alone, and each child used to try and make the other go first, and finally, when they were all too frightened to go, the old man went first and let them out. His favourite story was how one night a very thin dead man was brought to him to keep watch over during the night. He could never sleep much on these occasions, as he had to keep the lamp and the candles burning near the dead. This night he did not like the dead man at all, because he was thin and haggard. When he had lighted the lamp, the guardian lay down to sleep. He had only been asleep a short time when he heard the bones of the dead man moving, and felt him near by. The dead man said,—"Come quickly, I am neglected and the lamp is nearly out. If you are not quick it will go out." He got up and saw there was only a faint flicker, and that he was just in time to prevent the lamp from going out. He filled it with oil and it burnt brightly, and he again lay down to rest. When he was asleep the dead again came to him and said,—"Now I am comfortable. I am no longer neglected."

My model lived next door to an old woman who had rheumatism, and who, if she tumbled down, could not get up by herself. Her husband was a shoemaker, and one day he went to the next village to get shoes to mend. Meanwhile a friend came in to prepare the dinner for his rheumatic wife. She then left. The wife was carrying it to the fire to keep it hot for her husband, but she fell on to the fire. My model and her old grandmother noticed

a nasty smell of something burning, but a neighbour said it could only be the old bits of leather from shoes, and they did not go to see. But the smell went on, and therefore, a neighbour sent in to see what had happened. She went through the two inner rooms, and on opening the door of the third room she was horrified to see that the old woman had been burnt to death, and that there were only her black charred bones. She screamed, and then my model rushed into the room and saw the horrible sight. She tried to keep a promise to the old woman, and dress the bones in the skirt, shawl, handkerchief, and bodice which the old woman had put carefully away to be dressed in when she died, but the rattling of the bones was horrible and she could not do it, and they were finally just wrapped in a sheet for burial. When the husband came home some neighbours took him into their house, made him eat something, and then told him what had happened. But he could not go in, as the *carabinieri* had already shut the door. He would have got into great difficulties for having left his wife alone, but, as she was over sixty, nothing happened and it was all right.

My model said that, when she was a child, she had to learn to carry the wood and water in the large pots on her head, and that when she carried the water the other children upset it for her and her grandmother thought she could not do it and scolded her. She loved the village, and lived almost entirely on fruit.

THE CLEVER GIRL.

Once upon a time, said my model, there was a girl whose parents asked her whether she would prefer to marry or to become a nun. She said she would rather become a nun, and they sent her to a convent. She was a

good and quick worker, and whatever she had to do she finished before the other girls. The nuns in the convent said she might go and water the flowers in the garden. All the others wished to do it, but they never got their work finished soon enough. One day, when she was watering, the neighbouring prince, whose palace was close by, looked into the garden and fell in love with her. He asked her how many flowers and leaves there were in the garden. She asked him how many stars there were in the sky and how much sand in the sea. This made him angry, and he went to the nuns in the convent and said that he would give them a sum of money if they would let the girl go and buy fish. The sum was agreed upon, and the prince dressed himself in rags, loaded his mule with fish and stood outside the convent wall. When the girl, who was watering the flowers, saw the fish, she at once asked the nuns if she might buy them, for she was fond of fish. They said she might, and so she went to buy it, but the owner said she should have all the fish if she kissed the mule's face. This she did, and thereupon the mule was sick over the girl's own face. She said nothing about it, but went and washed and changed her clothes. She then dressed up, got a mule, loaded him with fish, and took him to the palace. The prince wanted to buy the fish, and she said he might do so if he kissed the mule. The mule was sick over him also, and this made him very angry. The girl was again watering the garden when the prince looked over the wall and asked how many flowers there were. The girl answered,—"Who kissed the mule?" and the prince was more angry than ever. That night he asked the nuns to let him hide under the girl's bed, and when she lay down he pricked her through the sheets. She thought it was only fleas, and when she

told the nuns next morning they said that was impossible, as the sheets were all new. Then she knew it was the prince. That night she got a winding sheet, dressed up in it, and took a big stick. She spoilt the keyhole of the prince's door, and when he went to bed he could not lock himself in, and in the middle of the night she opened the door and called him, saying that she was "Death" and that he was to get out of bed and die. He begged and begged to be allowed to live, and at last she said she would let him live until the morrow, after she had given him a good beating. She beat him very hard, and next day, when he spoke to her over the garden wall, he could scarcely move, on account of his beating. She asked him if Death had visited him in the night, and then he knew it was she who had come. Thereupon he asked her to marry him, and they lived happily ever after.

THE MONKEY AND THE HOLY WATER.

There was a man who had a monkey, and when the man died the priest came and did all the last ceremonies. The monkey watched all that went on, and after the man was buried he got his clothes and got into his bed. All the people thought the man had come back to life, and sent for the priest. He came and blessed the place, and asked in the name of God who this person was, and spilt some holy water on the monkey while he was blessing the floor. The monkey thereupon jumped out of bed and chased all the people.

THE MAN WHO WAS PAID BY MAXIMS.

There was a man who served his master for sixteen years, for his wife and family were very poor and depended entirely upon him. At the end of the sixteen years he

asked his master if he might go home to see them. His master said certainly he might, and instead of wages he gave him a loaf of bread, telling him not to eat it until he got home. He also told him to follow the old road, and not to go by the new one, which was shorter, and also not to listen to anything he should hear. The man set out, and was almost tempted to go by the new road, but he remembered his master's words and kept to the old road. When he got to his village he was glad he had done this, for all who had gone by the other road had been robbed. He went to his house and looked through the window, and there he saw a priest sitting and talking with his wife. He was very angry and nearly smashed in the door in his rage, but he remembered his master's words and went to the inn for the night. There he heard how everyone talked about the new priest, and how he was going to give a feast the next day. On the morrow he rose early and went to the first Mass, which was read by the new priest. Then he went to his house, and his wife rushed to meet him as he pushed open the door, and brought him to his son, who was the priest, with much joy. They then all sat down to their feast, and the man took out his loaf of bread, and when he tried to cut it he found it full of gold.

THE GUARDED STEP-CHILD.

There was once a man and a woman who had one child. The woman died, and the child was left with the father. She went to school, and the mistress took a great fancy to her and asked her to come and live with her. She told her faher, and he said,—"Tell the mistress that when your mother's clothes become all rotten, then I will let you go and live with her." The child repeated this to the mistress, and she told her to take lots of mud and

put it each day in the box. This the child did, and the clothes soon became decayed. Then the father said she might go to the mistress. She adopted her, and was at first very kind, but then she married and had a child of her own, and she began to ill-treat and knock her about. They lived far away from the child's former home, and she could not go back to her father. Every day she was sent out with a little cow, and given a lot of flax to spin, and she had to carry wood on her head in the evening. She cried, and the little cow asked her what was the matter. When she told her, the animal said,—"Well, you get me some nice food and I will do the rest. You put the flax on my horns." The child obeyed, and the cow did everything, and in the evening when the child went home her stepmother could not scold her, as everything was done. Next day she gave her still more flax to spin, but the cow did it all. So the mother sent her own child to see how it was done. She came back and told all that had happened, and then her mother sent her alone with the cow. She did not give her much to do, and said it did not matter if it were not done. Then the child pretended to cry, and the cow told her that if she got her some nice food she would do everything, and that she was not going to be bothered to do it. The cow told her to put her flax on her horns, but instead of doing it she spread it about on all the hedges and trees, and that evening the cow gave no milk. The mother was very angry, and sent the step-daughter out to feed the cow; she also sent her to empty the rubbish into the river, and, as she did so, she dropped her basket also. She was crying, when the Virgin appeared and asked her what was the matter. The child told her, the Virgin bade her go to her house, and asked her if she could wash the plates. The child

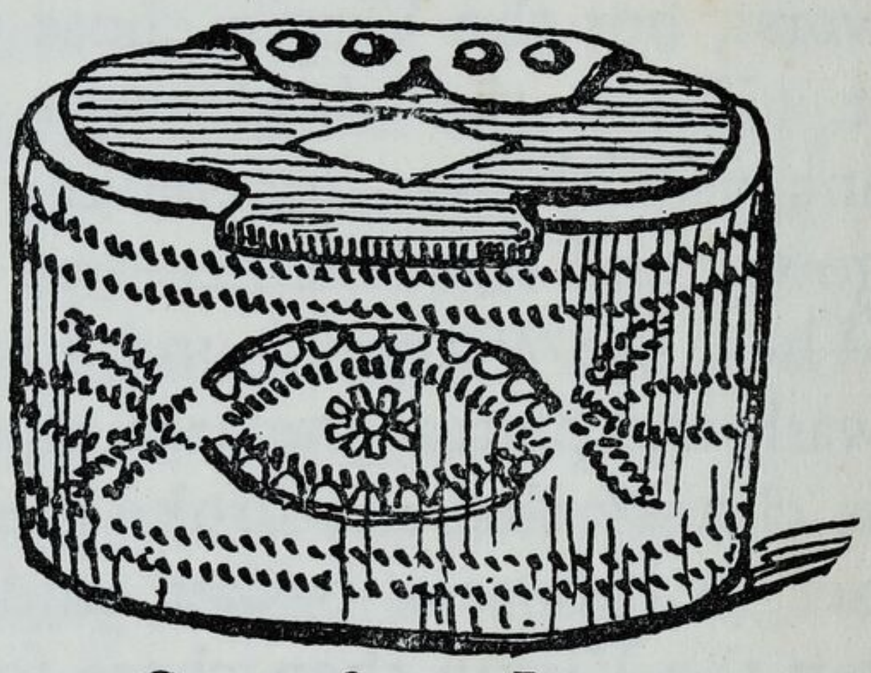
said she thought she could, and did it beautifully. The Virgin told her to choose a basket for herself. The child chose the worst basket, and the Virgin told her that now she would also choose one for her, and she picked out the best and gave it to her. She then showed her all her dresses, and told her to choose one. The child chose the worst, but the Virgin chose the richest and dressed her in it. When the child went home the mother was very angry with her for having the lovely basket and rich gown, and she sent her own child to get others like them. When the Virgin found her and asked her if she could wash the plates, she said of course she could, but she was so clumsy that she broke them all. The Virgin then told her to choose a basket, and the daughter took the best, but the Virgin then chose for her and gave her the worst. The same thing happened with the gowns, and the daughter went home in rags. A prince came by and invited the step-daughter, who was clad in her beautiful gown, to come to his ball, but just as she was getting the cabbage which was to change itself into a carriage for her, the stepmother came and caught her. She took away her gown and put her into a large wine jar, and went to get boiling water to pour upon her to kill her. The prince came and took her out of the jar, and put the stepmother's daughter in instead. He carried away the child and married her, and they lived very happily together. When the stepmother came back with the water she began to pour it in; the daughter cried out that she had been changed by the prince, but the mother would not believe her, and went on pouring in the boiling water until she killed her. She then found out what she had done, and killed herself also.

Chapter XV.

Scannese Dance and Song.

Non c'e sabato senza sole,
Non c'e donna che non fa a l'amore.
Campotosto.

[There is no Saturday without sun,
There is no woman who does not make love.]



Carved Snuff Box.

AFTER a wedding there is always a ball, and we saw some of the dancing. The dancers began by dancing at rhythmical intervals. According to the time of the music, they turn and strike each other with their shoulders or their backs. Men-folk dance the Chinese dance at Carnival. They dance not in the ordinary way, but they must do whatever their chief does, imitating him in all his pranks to the time of the music. If he hold up his foot, or throws away his shoe, or gesticulates, everyone must raise his foot, or throw his shoe away, or gesticulate, to the time of the music. Those who make mistakes are fined, and all fines are collected for drink.

In the *Ballo dello Specchio* (dance of the looking glass) a woman sits in the middle of the dancers on a chair holding a looking glass. Young men, one after the other, go behind her, and she sees each of them in the looking glass; when she wants to dance she puts down the glass and dances with the chosen one. Otherwise she cleans the looking glass with her handkerchief, each time, until the right partner comes.

In the *Ballo del Sospiro* (dance of the sigh) two dancers

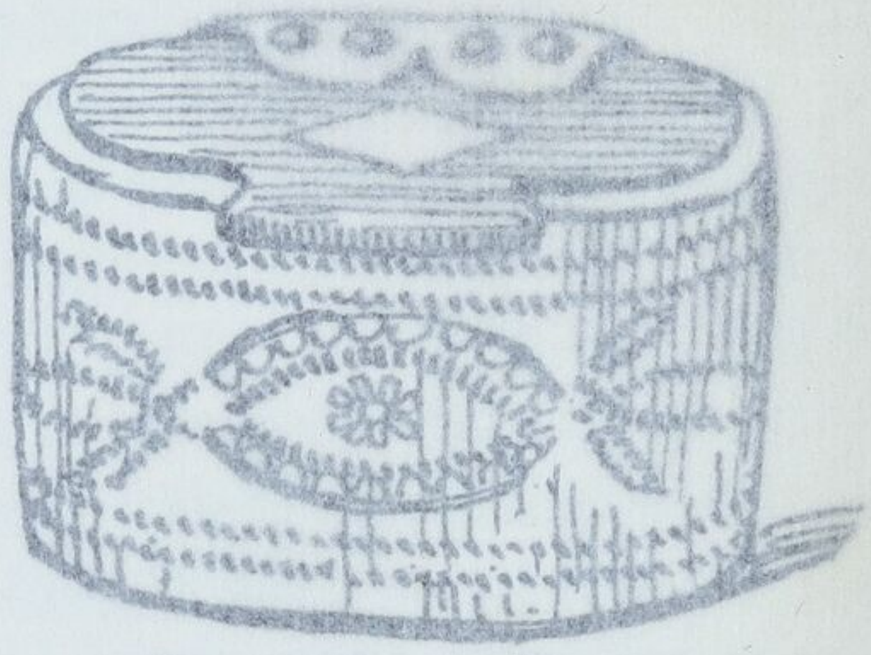
SCANNO, FROM THE VALLEY.

Chapter XV.

Scannese Dance and Song.

Non c'e sabato senza sole,
Non c'e donna che non fa a l'amore.
Campotosto.

[There is no Saturday without sun,
There is no woman who does not make love.]



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In the *Ballo del Sospiro* (dance of the sigh) two dancers

SCANNO, FROM THE VALLEY.

PLATE XX.]



dance the *Saltarella* (see page 54). After a few rounds the woman kneels, and her partner asks,—"What hast thou to sigh for?" She answers,—"I sigh for John," and goes to dance with John. After a few other rounds, the man kneels, and his partner asks,—"What hast thou to sigh for?" He answers,—"I sigh for Julia," and goes to dance with Julia, and so on, all round. The *Saltarella* is a dance in which a couple face each other and jump on their feet in time with the music, the man placing his hands on his hips, and the woman holding the corners of her apron, or her hips, and after a little while holding each other's hands, and going round. When one couple has finished, another begins, and so on. In the *Ballo della Seggiola* (dance of the chair) two chairs are placed in the centre of the ballroom, back to back. The master of the ceremonies puts two partners on the chairs, shoulder to shoulder, and says—"*Attenti*"; then, at a stroke of his hands, they must turn simultaneously their heads. If the two faces meet, they dance, if not, the operation is repeated with another couple.

On the eve of the day of the village patron saint, accompanied by music the peasants assemble in the piazza and form a circle. A man and a woman, dressed in paper like two puppets, dance the *saltarella* in the centre. The man has a light and fireworks under the paper, and the fireworks go off until the paper catches fire, to the great danger of the dancers. This is the *Saltarella della Puchella.*

The following are two of the oldest of the Scannese songs. I had great difficulty in getting them written down for me. I then got one of the few peasants who knew Italian besides dialect to write them also in Italian. The translation is as near to the sense of the two languages as possible, regardless of the correctness of the English.

SCURA MAIE!	POOR ME!
Scura maie, scura maie, *Tu suo muorte, e chinda facce?*	[Oh poor me, poor me, Thou art dead, and what shall I do?
Mo me stracce trecc e facce, *Buo mi iette sopra a taie,* *Scura maie, scura maie!*	Now I tear my plaits and face, Then I throw myself on thee, Oh poor me, poor me!
Chinda pecura smarrita, *Ma lassota sciplinata,* *Zu muntaune ma lassate* *Enghi sola, andonda vai?* *Scura maie, scura maie!*	As a lost sheep, Thou hast left me bereaved, My husband has left me, And alone, where shall I go? Oh poor me, poor me!
Ma lassota na fameia, *Scanze, neuda, appitetausa,* *Chindappena ci riveia* *Vole le pane, e ghi ni laie,* *Scura maie, scura maie!*	He has left me a family, Barefoot, naked, hungry, Which barely awake Wants bread, and I have none, Oh poor me, poor me!
Ieradotte pruoprii a stauza, *Propria a stauza, propria a stauza* *Me ne iette pe cicore,* *E ghi ntante la cuiaiva,* *Scura maie, scura maie!*	Yesterday eight days ago, Exactly at this hour, exactly at this hour, I went (to fetch) chicory, And meanwhile I gathered it, Oh poor me, poor me!
Menguntriette ghe na sciattata *Che me diette appiette de morte,* *Cezzicchietti na cantuneta,* *Netanzegna, l'accidaiva,* *Scura maie, scura maie!*	I have met a bad woman Who gave me insults, I threw a stone at her, A little more would have killed her, Oh poor me, poor me!
Appena a casa ietti *I la corte a fa nu sciepe,* *E da puo in iurnapprissi* *Cu faccia eviettavai!* *Scura maie, scura maie!*	As soon as I went home The judge (the court) made a seizure, And the next day What a face I had to make! Oh poor me, poor me!

Venne zu sciere ghinda un boi
Quante venne zu fribbore,
E peghietti chi gmorocchili amari
Se cherreine e ne trai,
Scura maie, scura maie!

Came the bailiff as a villain
When he came with the order,
And I gave with bitter eyes
Six *carlini* and other three,
Oh poor me, poor me!

La furteuna mi turmenta.
Pi i debiti e l'useura.

Misfortune torments me.
For the debts and the interest on them.

Me levrerne zu chetteure,
La frissaura e la tenaja,
Scura maie, scura maie!

They seized the saucepan,
The frying pan and the tongs,
Oh poor me, poor me!

Sci mallitti, sci mallitti,
Quanta bene t'hai fatte
Pi lu sanghe de na gatta.
Maia fo proprio na straia.
Scura maie, scura maie!

Be accursed, be accursed,
What good hast thou got
By the blood of a she-cat.
I must truly be a witch.
Oh poor me, poor me!

E di notte a la caventa
A la porta aia andra,
E di sanghe na viventa
Me fecerrie pi la raia,
Scura maie, scura maie!

And by night to the hole
To the door I will go,
And of blood a drink
I will make in my rage,
Oh poor me, poor me!

Steva grassa chinda norca,
Maie fatta secca secca.
Nce nu cane che mi lecca,
La cocceuna sempre abbaia.
Scura maie, scura maie!

I was as fat as a pig,
I have become dry bones.
Even a dog does not lick me,
The she-dog always barks.
Oh poor me, poor me!

Ieri ietti a zu cumpare
A cierca la carità.
Mi piette chi na staia,
Sura maie, scura maie!

Yesterday I went to a friend
To beg for charity.
He gave me a blow,
Oh poor me, poor me!

Prima tenaiva na casarella,
Mo ne tinghe chiù riciette,
Senza fuoche, e senza liette,
Senza pane e cumpanai,

I had first a little hut,
At present I have no shelter,
Without fire, without bed,
Without bread, without companions,

Scura maie, scura maie!

Oh poor me, poor me!

Ciele! Ciele! A famme nascie!
Oh heaven! Oh heaven! To have been born!

Pe maroite nu strappaune,
For a husband a pauper,

E nannai zu muntauno,
And the husband I have no more,

La cacceuna sempre baia,
The she-dog always barks,

Scura maie, scura maie!
Oh poor me, poor me!

Uh! Madonna! Quai fatte?
Oh Madonna! What have I done to thee?

A stu munne i pruella,
In this world a poor creature,

Ai rimasa viduella.
I remain a little widow.

Mi murraia, mi murraia,
I shall die, I shall die,

Scura maie, scura maie!
Oh poor me, poor me!]

MARIELLA E NANNO.

(In old Scannese dialect.)

MARIELLA AND NANNO.

I.

I.

Ferma, cumpagnio mio, nii chiu nente,
[Stop, my friend, don't go any farther.

Sona na zegna cussu colasciaune,
Play a little this cittern,

Ascultettim ven, tutt quent,
Listen to me, you all,

Ca la vuoii cantò na bella canzauna.
For I want to sing a beautiful song.

Maie chi sti ziti noble e galant
May never this noble and beautiful couple

Fene la parintezza ncunchiusaune.
Make their final departure!

Fela che spausa Mariella e Nanno,
Oh the couple Mariella and Nanno,

La mieie iuventeu che stienga a Sann.
The best youth which is at Scanno!

II.

II.

Tu mensa mai, chi stie sopra a zu colle
Thou my dear, who liveth on the hill

Scuaste a la casa rotta di Cicci,
Near the falling house of Cicco,

Alle mesci di Tucci di Tolle.,
To the farm of Tucci di Tolle.,

Donda la ciucciavatta fa zu cicci
Ntrumienti alla conserva sta nammolla
Zentro di zu caprine primaticce
Arrieca di chill 'acqua na scudella,
La vulaime rinturto la ciaremella.

Where the *cucciavatte* flourishes
Fed by the ever-fresh water,
Inside the kid-skin
Bring of that water a saucepan full,
We want to play the full bagpipes.

III.

Neu zu mais chi zu ciucci raia,
Entra la farchia cantani zi grilli,
E canta zu cuchieule alla Piaia,
E ci sente alla casa di Pantille.
Ntanni foi dabbatt la curmaglia,
Mariella friaiva ze buttilli
E Nanno chi zu Iovani ntrumienti
Ca iaiva ricudenne zi perienti.

III.

In this month in which the ass brays,
Amongst the vetch the crickets sing,
And sing the song of the mountain,
And one hears it at the home of Pantilli.
While the crew was still at sea,
Mariella was making the *buttilli*
And Nanno with Giovanni meanwhile
Was inviting the relations.

IV.

Era ntra leum e lustr a zu giordain,
Cumparaiva la staella naurient.
La zoita cu zu lecci marancoin
Ci rifece le traecc risplendent,
Ci lavet la faccia a zu cotoin,
E ci faic chinda d'arient
Ci mittet la gonna, cuz vuilit
E ci facet nu biezzi cappllitt.

IV.

It was darkening to dusk in the garden,
The beautiful star in the East was appearing.
The bride with the green laces
Made up her shining plaits,
Washed her face in the silver basin tray,
And put her gown on, and with a band
She made to herself a beautiful turban.

V.

La cummoro Minella può menet,
Disse alla zeta,—"Avé boni, cummor."
"Agriep zu arcucc, e pia la chezett,
Chele in zunturlacci verde e chiar,"
Ntrumient Mariella ciappniett
De petrennuost e Dammari tra flara.
Da può ci zi miettietti zi plenielli,
Chi gi z'aveva fatti Mastre Mantiello.

V.

Then came the friend Carmela.
She said to the bride,—"Good day, my friend."
"Open the cupboard, take out the stockings,
With the bands green and bright,"
While Mariella hung round her breast
Three rows of corals and of amber.
Then she put on her slippers,
Which had been made by Master Mantiello.

VI.

Cera vesteuta, che paraiva na fota,
Sagliette alla Madonna di Lureit,
Ziemida chi la ziana e chi la cugnota,
E nghilla mamma e sora di zu zoit.
Staiva la gente nchiesa radunota,
E z'Arcipreite gnov n'era scoit.
Arrevett la zoita, viatessor!
Sona zu campanello, e su la messa.

VI.

She dressed herself, and she looked a *fata*,
She went up the Church of the Madonna di Loreto,
Together with her aunt and sister-in-law,
And with her mother-in-law and sister.
The people were assembled in the church,
And the *Archiprete* was not missing.
The bride arrived, happy indeed!
The bell rings, and Mass is said.

VII.

Lucerosa mpro che staiva leste,
E la crauna la tenaiva alla mantera,

VII.

Lucia Rosa who was on the alert,
And was keeping the wreath in her apron,

Tutta cuntenta ci la mittet ntesta
E può ci va rascede de carrera.
E Mariella diitticota resta,
Tutta tremante e chi na ladia cera,
Nuomma spusette, e fuorne ze testimonie
Carlucc e Cola di Luritantonio.

Very happily she puts it on the bride's head.
But Mariella remains afraid,
All trembling and with a pale face,
She is married, and the witnesses were
Carluccio and Cola di Luritantonio.

VIII.

Ma quande fatta feu la bendezziaune
Mariella dicette a tutti quente,—
"Ar via, man ca vasta la graziaun,
Zi vulet spicciché tutti zi senti?
Iaim a la cosa a fo la culaziaun."
E sciete che d'avierne loche nente.
Mastre Bennenziu spara quarantti,
Fra tricchi, tricchi funtane e botte.

VIII.

But when the Benediction had been given
Mariella said to everyone,—
"Now then, enough of prayers,
Need you bother all these saints?
Let us go home to breakfast."
And out they came in front of the church.
Master Venanzio fires forty shots,
And lets off fiery fountains.

IX.

Chilla moglie di Viulini di Scardiella
Ievano tutt'appresso a Mariella
Cicella Torza e Rosa di Luciebella,
Marie di Ciacca ieva nghi e Nunziello
Lucie di Cavaliere nghi Calielli,
Da può ieva Lucie della Cristina Ancella,
Sueva Magnosa, e la bella Pristigliaura,
Ca ieva aghi Lucie di Cesaraun.

IX.

Together with Viulini and with Scarletta,
Went all after Mariella,
Cicella Torza and Rosa di Lucia Bella,
Maria di Ciacca went with Nunzielle,
Lucia di Cavaliere with Catielle,
Then went Lucia di Cristina Angelica,
Followed Magnosa, and the beautiful Pristigliaura,
Who went together with Lucia di Cesaraun.

X.

Appriess ieva Scenza di Ruscitt,
Marta di Cimiolla e Cardllaetta,
Arienzola e Marie di Cropitti,
E la moglie di Pauli di Foglietta,
Palma di Lello, ed Anna di Saloit,
Cheza Sieva e Perna di Sciarretta,
Pizzotita, Marie Naira, e Piedirotta
Ombra Cirelia, Riseulia, e Chichillotta.

X.

Soon after went Scenza di Ruscitt,
Marta di Cimcilla and Cardello,
Arienzola and Maria di Cropitti,
And the wife of Paolo di Paglieta,
Palma di Lello and Anna di Saloito,
Cheza Sieva and Pezza di Sciarretta,
Pizzotta, Maria Nera, and Piedirotta,
Ombra Cirella, Riseulia, and Chichillotta.

XI.

Da puo minaiva Nanno di Marianna,
Mancino Lauritucc e Cappillitto,
So Nanno Cucco Addezio ed Anticanne,
Casurataur, Liscii, e può Carlitt,
Può Viulino, Paunianiello, e Scanne,
Furvina, Turdo Vuozzo di Scarpitto
Ritauna, Mastr Brutt, e può Visciuotti,
Ventrella, Palmurine, nghi Marcuotti.

XI.

Then came Nanno di Marianna,
Mancino Laurituccio, and Cappillitto,
Nanno Cucco and Addezio and Anticanno,
Casuratauro, Lisci, and then Carlitti,
Then Vialino, Pannaniello, and Scanno,
Furvona, Turdo Vuozzo di Scarpitto,
Ritaanna, Maestro Brutto, and then Visciuotti,
Vintrella, Palmorino, and Marcuotti.

XII.

Chiunta alla cosa fuorni arrivet,
La iente alla finestra ciaffacciaiva,

XII.

As soon as they arrived at home,
The people came to the window,

Chi rumpaiva le platta chi le pignot,
E Mariella tutte ci ne ritraiva,
Jettette di ciumpetti, tre brancati.
Nanno ca na scarzella ne tenaiva,
Ca z'aveva paguati tre cherrein,
La libbra a fra Duvoin Carfagnein.

One broke the plates and saucepans,
And Mariella was all joy,
And threw confetti, three handfuls.
Nanno kept one hand in his pocket,
He had paid three *carlini*,
A pound to Friar Duvoin Carfagnani.

XIII.

Ntrumienti Lucientonia di Vincenza,
Rosa di Marco, e Carmena di Vuozzo
Le pusot mitteivan alla mensa,
Ch'erano di Peppa Anna Gentilozza,
Zi trebucchi la sora di Marenza,
E zu presutti Antonia di Parruozzi,
Sciuscia le pane, e Nunzia dilla Vitta
Mettaiva zi pletti di Iuenne Silla.

XIII.

While Luciantonia di Vincenza,
Rosa di Marco, and Carmena di Vuozza
Placed the cutlery on the table,
Which belonged to Peppa Anna Gentilozza,
And the glasses of the sister of Marenza,
And ham of Antonia Parinozzi,
Took the bread, and Nuniza di Vitta
Put the plates of Giovanni Silla.

XIV.

Da puo chi ciascidietti ogni ughivielli,
Cuminsierni a magnò pane e prsutt
Mariella magnaiva cumma un ciell,
Malappaina tuccaiva pane assutt.
"Come ni magni?"—Ci diciett Casielli
"Arre sora, ei a staura magn tutti,

XIV.

After everyone was seated,
They began to eat bread and ham.
Mariella ate like a bird (very little),
Barely she touched dry bread.
"Why dost thou not eat?" asked Casielli,—
"Cheer up, sister. At this hour everyone eats,

Ca solament quant ei spusietti
Mi purtietti la roba pi zi a zu
lietti."

So much so that when I married
I carried the things (food) even to bed."

XV.

Può pietti le ven di Nardilli,
Chel di quattran, zu vucol,
Mi guetti nu bicchier piccirill
Chinda quezi di Bleisci zu
spziol.
Lu vin di Peppe di Zarillo,
Ni li vulliett ca faceva mol.
Puo diciett,—"Sti vin è blanc,
blanc,
Mi ci pozza fo tutt latt e sangh."

XV.

Then I took the wine of Nardilli,
That one of four years (old), a pint,
I filled a small glass
Like those of Bleisci the Chemist.
The wine of Peppe di Zarillo,
I did not want because it made one ill.
Then I said,—"This wine is white, white.
It makes for us all milk and blood."

XVI.

Agnaisa di Tullo, la furnora,
Ca staiva a nu curnaun, zitta,
zitta,
E magnaiva chinta na pum-
munora,
Pan prisutt e curatella, sfritta.
Marie di Muncibiello la mam-
mora,
Chi staiva dicuost ci diss,—
"Giutta,
Magna nghilla crienza nill ved!
Ca ogni nghiviell ti tamment e
red!"

XVI.

Agnes di Tullo, the baker,
Who remained in a corner, silent, silent,
And ate like a *lupo manaro*,
Ham and fries, cake, cheeses.
Maria di Muncibiello the midwife,
Who was near her, said to her,—
"Fool,
To eat with such manners.
Thou seest not
That everyone looks at thee and laughs!"

XVII.

Dorda ci magnaiva. *Ntriett* *Luritaella*

XVII.

Dorda was eating. Enters Luritella

E disse,—"Voia ca ci nordina zu ball!"
Tutti allaura magnevan a piaella,
E chi magnaiva chinda zu cavall,
Chi di sciarra ci guaiva la scarzella,
Chia taiaiva cose, e chi caschiavall,
Nzomma ca ci vedetti a nu mument
Nitti zi plett e sci tutta la gent.

And says,—"Look for the summons to the dance!"
Then all ate to bursting,
And this one eats like a horse,
And the other filled a pocket,
This one cuts cheese, and the other *cacio cavallo* (cheese),
In fact one saw in a moment
The plates cleared and all people go out.

XVIII.

Casurataur, asces a na firrizza,
Cummunzett a sunnò zu culasciaun.
Zu Capituro subit l'arrizza
Pi ghié a nurdinò zu ballaraun.
La moglie di Cola di Turlizzu,
Dicett,—"Ar lvait sa canzaun.
Stenga la iente tutta quita, quita,
Ca mau arreva la roba di la zieta."

XVIII.

Casuratore, seated on an iron railing,
Began to play the guitar.
Capituro at once gets up
To go to order a long dance.
The wife of Cola di Turlizzi,
Said,—"Ho! stop that song.
Everyone to remain still, still,
For now arrive the bride's things."

XIX.

La mamma di la zieta allaura venne,
Chi na bona affleta di zitelle,
Chinda chi pi la fiera va vinneme
Acura, spingule, lecce, e zaarelle.
Ciella, la nipaut de Battienn,
Purtava a zu canistru du gunn,
Una addubbota di rascia e una di rusc,
Chi tagliat l'avaiva Peppa di Frusci.

XIX.

The bride's mother came,
With a good following of maidens,
As the one who during the fair sells
Needles, pins, laces, and bands.
Ciella, the niece of Battienn,
Carried in the basket two petticoats,
One coloured brown and the other pink,
Which were cut by Peppa di Frusci.

XX.

Maria di Luritucci può minaiva
Chi quattru turneliett e du sparver,
E ripleot Biezzi ca purtaiva
Quattr lnzola e quattru cuscinier.
Marie di Miella da può minaiva,
Purtaiva du crupett e di manter,
Chi la francia di saita, e chi zu lienzi,
Chi lavurota z'avaiva Peppa di Cienzi.

XX.

Maria di Luritucci then came
With four bedcovers and two tablecloths,
And folded up carried
Four sheets and four cushions.
Maria di Miella then came,
And carried two covers and two aprons,
With silk fringe, and decorations,
Which Peppa di Rienzi had worked.

XXI.

La fia di Iseppa di Cicirella
Purtaiva nu canistr nurdinot,
Chi du cammisc fatt a prituzella,
E quattr chi zu merlett rancatot,
E quattr chi li pret d'anella,
Tutt di seta verd lavurot,
Part lavurot da Nunzia di Masso
E parte da Barbuccia di Caitass.

XXI.

The daughter of Iseppa di Cicirella
Carried a decorated basket,
With two chemises made with borders,
And four with pleated bands,
And four with jewellery,
All with green silk embroidered,
Some braided by Nunzio di Masso,
And some by Barbuccia di Caitass (Gætano).

XXII.

Può Pepparosa di Maria di Cola
Purtaiva quattr pora di chezaett.
Angiluccia di la Cueacchiola,
Pruna chi faoss morta, li tagliett.
Quattr casacche e quattr camiciol,

XXII.

Then Pepparosa di Maria di Cola
Carried four pairs of stockings.
Angelica di Codacchiola,
Before she was dead, she cut
Four jackets, and four waistcoats,

Quattr cheuzeun, e quattr cheuz-
naett,
Ca due l'aveva tagliott Mariella,
E due di Michele Mancinella.

Four pairs of trousers, and
four pairs of drawers,
Two of which had been cut by
Mariella,
And two by Michele
Mancinelli.

XXIII.

Lutima figlia di Anna e di
Salvitt
Purtaiva nu conistr chin chin,
Quattr mintin e quattr viulitt
Mistich di refe verd e marancioin,
Du fascetueur senza zu pizzitt,
Un a stizzuccio, e noit a curdun-
ceun,
Chi Marie Chiora gi zi lavuraii.
Requiescant in pace ottonni faie.

XXIII.

The youngest daughter of
Anna and of Salvitt
Carried a basket over full,
Four napkins and four bands
(for turbans)
Worked in green and light
yellow thread,
Two tablecloths without lace
(fringes),
One made of thread, the other
out of thin cord,
Which Maria Chiara had
worked with.
May the workers rest in peace.

XXIV.

La figlia di Canazz, la man-
tora,
Minaiva appriess che zu cap
ciuc,
Purtaiva nu canistr senza spara
Nu fascio di mentizz e di tre-
bucchi.
Ma la Fota, pupro di la lapisciara,
Ca ci diciett,—"Aviert chi ni
ncucchi,
La tiengh na paeura chi ninfacci
Cascò sta roba, miese a stu
ncialfaccio."

XXIV.

The daughter of Canazz, the
needlewoman,
Followed with her head down,
She carried in a basket un-
trimmed
A bundle of napkins and ser-
viettes.
But Fota, the wife of the fisher-
man,
Said to her,—"Take care not
to push,
I am afraid to let drop
These things, in the middle of
the mud."

XXV.

Ntanne la stessa figlia di Canazz
Diette nu malann chi ti vienga.
Tu statte assente a cussu materazz
Ca chel di più la zeita non ti vienga.
Ma la Fota rivaita ncu nucchiazz
Dicett,—"Non e buscie chi scienca.
Savai fatta a ti nampa cuscera,
Busciarda, cuozz, chiorta e fattucchiera."

XXV.

Ntanne the same daughter of Canazz
Was late with a paltry excuse.
No more wilt thou be wanted by the bride:
But Fota in anger
Said,—"It is not hurry which delays thee,
The table cloth remains to be arranged
Hurry, run, and be quick in service."

XXVI.

E la Pienta, chi minaiva appriessa alaur,
Purtaiva pi zu liett nu pogliacc,
Ca z'aviava attaccot chi du pastaur
E giut et z'avaiva Vradinacc.
Da può la cumeta di Casurataur,
Purtaiva zi bancoli e zu plumacc,
E du crupett di nghiguiziaun,
Tisset da Librata di Catraccione.

XXVI.

And Penta, who came after them,
Carried the mattress for the bed,
Which had been fastened with the string
And tied by Vradinacc.
Then the sister-in-law of Casuratur,
Carried the trunk and the feather mattress,
And two woollen mixed bed-covers (of mixed colours),
Which had been woven by Liberta di Catraccione.

XXVII.

Tella, furnora, maoii di Vitill,
Purtaiva la callora e la chittaura
La crocca, zu murtol e zu pistill,
La conca, zu manier, e la frissaura.

XXVII.

Tella, baker wife of Vitill,
Carried the saucepan and the pot,
The salt cellar, the mortar and the pestle,
The pail, the ladle, and the pan.

Mirebella purtaiva zu catinillo,
La cataina, di fierr, e la rasaura,
Zu trespid, zu crunc e la padella,
La cucchiora di rom, e la tiella.

Miabella carried the basin,
The iron chain, and the bread knife,
The tripod, the stewing and the frying pan,
The copper spoon, and the casserole.

XXVIII.

Christina di Chicchi di zu Tigneus
Purtaiva di cucchior na nfilota,
Zaspaun zu guinnili e zu fous.
La chinocchia a tre corp a lavurota
La Pasquarosa di Anna di Pienfireuse
Purtaiva dieci platta e na cannota,
Sie pignot d'Aversa e du chetein,
Du scudelle di Vasc, e du d'Arpein.

XXVIII.

Christina di Chicchi of the Tigneus
Carried a quantity of spoons,
The bride the books and the spindle.
The distaff in three parts and carved
By Paquarona di Anna Pienfirense,
Who carried ten plates and a jug,
Six saucepans from Anversa, and two basins,
Two jars from Vasc, and two from Arpino.

XXIX.

Chi na casina rosa rosa
Arreta a tutt ieva Pasquarella,
Chi alla Cudacchiola te la cosa.
Accanta Cola cuot di Cachella
Purtaiva da nove a diec vos,
Andò la faroina e andò la siminella,
A sopra a tutti ieva zu prois
Aghirt chinda Cisiddu di Narciois.

XXIX.

With an over-filled *gerlo**
Behind all went Pasquarella,
Who keeps house for Cadiacchiola.
At the side Cola Cuot di Cachella
Carried from nine to ten pots,
With flour in some and semolina in others,
But on the top was a vessel
As high as Cesiddu di Narciois.

* *Gerlo* is the basket which the peasants carry on the back.

XXX.

Ma quand seliern tutt quend,
La mamma di la zieta fu trascenda.
Subit Nanno ci ris cett vent,
Ed alla socera dicette,—"Bemminenda!
Essa chiu chi me tutta prisenta,
Chi trascienti bonni zi risalenta,
Ci cunsugnett la dodda e ci dicett,—
"A tiemp un figliuole," e ciascidett.

XXXI.

Malappaina firneuta d'annunciare
Milli buoni anni a cuz matrimonio
Nonno ci rispunette,—"Lascia annare
Tante queleta e tante cerimonie,
Iela mo chiom coch nutor.
Zu Iudic a cuntratt e testimonii,
Accio scritta la dodda chi la carta
Stienga sicheura l'euna e leta parte."

XXXII.

Ierta a chiamò zu nutor Spacconne
Pi scrivi la dodda chi zi pietti.
Mannierna a chiamò Chiola Paulaune,
Che era allaura Judici, a cuntratt.

XXX.

But when all had gone up,
The bride's mother went up,
At last Nanno smiled at her,
And to his mother-in-law said,
—"Welcome!"
She with all her presents,
While three hundred persons saluted her,—
Consigned to him the dowry and told him,
"Take care of my daughter," and sat down.

XXXI.

As soon were finished the wishings
Of thousands of good years to that marriage,
Nanno answered her,—"Leave off
So many words and ceremonies,
But ask the notary,
And the judge for the marriage agreement and witnesses,
So that the dowry may be written on the paper,
And both sides remain contented."

XXXII.

Tersta asked the notary Spaconne
To write down the dowry.
Mannierna asked Chiola Paulaune,
Who was then judge, to the agreement.

Pi testimonie vienga zu Baraun,
Colarusci, Scupitto, e Colamatti
Scritta la doddo, ricca Mariella
Caccette pera secede a susumella.

For witnesses came Baraun,
Colarusci, Scupitto, and Colamatti.
The dowry was written, and rich Mariella
Jumped for joy.

XXXIII.

Ma Furcina, per farci na ballota,
A zi piedi, zi vervini, ci tnaiva,
Miez alla campra foce na zumpota
Chi neta ce zu piede ci chiurchiaiva.
Sona Casuratauri la spallota,
Ed issi attuorni attuorni ci vutaiva,
Facetti di ghiunizzi nu migliore,
Può checetti ad abballò zu capitori.

XXXIII.

But Furcina, anxious to have a dance,
Had in her feet pins and needles,
In the middle of the room she gave a jump
Which nearly sprained her ankle.
Casuratauri plays the *spallota*,
And round and round he turned,
Made the best of jests,
And made the captain dance.

XXXIV.

Può mettessi Rosa di Lucibiello,
Ed a zu capitore l'assiguitte,
A Mancini la moglie di Scardiello,
A So Nanno Risecca consiguette,
Arienzola la dette a Pachianiello,
Ed issi ad abballò suoci ci mettielli,
Può fa na riverenza tanta bella,
E ad abballò canetti Mariella.

XXXIV.

Then brought up Rosa di Lucibella,
And to the captain assigned her,
At the left Scardello's wife,
And signed to Nanno Risecca,
Azienzola he gave to Pacchianello,
And the relations began to dance,
Then he made so beautiful a bow,
And made Mariella dance.

XXXV.

Fra che la compagnié bella e compita,
Era na tresca meschia tanta grosso.
Chi disgrezia fecc alla peura zieta,
Ci curchiette nu pede dentra na fosso.
Essa allaura rimosa diittinata,
Chinto riavesse rotte tutte l'ossa.
Nanno ci spaventi, tutta la iente,
E zu ballu firnì a nu mumente!

XXXV.

In that beautiful and accomplished company,
It was as confused and crowded as at threshing.
Then a misfortune came to the poor bride,
Who put her foot in a hole.
She was paralyzed with fright,
As if she had broken all her bones.
Nanno was frightened, and all the people,
And the ball finished in a moment!

XXXVI.

Nanno vedenne chorili scetti fore,
Scappenne tutte furiouse arraiote,
Vlastimenne, mannette alla malaura
Ca zu matanne chi cera navoto.
Ietti a la cosa a chiamò zu so Visidori
Può che zu io Saverio ebbe chiamote
Che alla casa saie fussere ieti,
Pi ghii a bidà cheli chi era intervenuete.

XXXVI.

Nanno seeing this went out,
Flying all in a fury,
Cursing, wishing to the devil
Him who had displaced the stone,
He went to the house to ask Visidoro,
And after having called Saverio
Shouted that all should come to his house,
To see what had happened.

XXXVII.

So Saverio venne e salì moppa;
Dicetti,—"Cosa è stato, buo donna?
Linci e quinci prendi un pò di stoppa."
Ella pertanto scosti un pò la gonna,
E Nanno, pi sanà la moglie cioppo,

XXXVII.

Saverio came and went up;
Said,—"What is the matter, good woman?
Take at once a little tow."
She therefore raised a little her gown,
And Nanno, to heal the lame wife,

La graziaune faciava alla Madonna,
Diciaiva avummarie chi tuttielfietti,
Vasciava uterra e ci vattaiva npietti.

Said a prayer to the Madonna,
Saying Ave Maria with all his heart,
Kissed the earth and struck his breast.

XXXVIII.

Visidori arrivetti a cade zu ziti,
Cu zu bastaune sotto a zu sitilli,
Cuminzette ad attentò cu zu diti
Chilla crienza attuorne a zu spasillo,
Può dicietti,—"Signori miei riveriti:
Il male non è grave, e piccirillo
E per bestro eseguir l'opinione
Ciamerei questo mal d'ossazione."

XXXVIII.

Visidoro (the doctor) arrived at the bridegroom's house,
With a stick under his arm,
Began to feel with his finger
With care round the bone.
Then said,—"My esteemed friends!
The harm is not much, is small,
And, to express my opinion,
I will name it injury to the bone."

XXXIX.

Rispunnette Arnellino,—"Caro Signore,
Fisico, ut cunque speziale, ut dotto
Or non si accorge lei da quel stridore
Che chiaramente appar che l'osso è rotto."
C'innoizanetti allaura Visidori,
Chi neta cu ci zi ficcaiva sotto,
E può dicietti,—"Io sono speziale,
Tu vendi inquendo innanzi l'ospedale."

XXXIX.

Amellino answered,—"Dear friends,
Physician, and also chemist, so learned,
Do you not see from that noise,
That the bone is clearly broken."
Visidoro then lost his patience,
And nearly departed in anger,
And then said,—"I am a chemist,
But thou merely sellest ointment in front of the hospital."

XL.

Colarusci, cu stava scuteuni,
Gridenne, dissi chi na faccia chiorta,—
"Chi ti venga a la pleura zu malanno,
Si vulette gridé iete a la porta."
Allaura zu iovano di Nanno
Dicetti,—"Sò Nicola, via ca ci importa."
Solamente ci vurrié chi la patraune
Quando chiù prima pozza stenga bona

XL.

Colarusu, who was listening,
Crying, said with a dark face,—
"Lest to your lungs harm should come,
If you want to scream go to the door."
Then Nanno's grandfather,
Said,—"Never mind Nicola,
He wishes only that the mistress
Should in a little while be well."

XLI.

Era muzzeuti, e Carluccio aveiva
Nunziella sunota, ed Andriona
La zieta abbocca alla porta staiva,
Ascisa a na prietura plana plana.
E quella iente che ci ne riava.
Chi ci dunaiva tre chi quattro rona,
Ognuno ci diciaiva sti parole,—
"A tiempe a nu figlioli se Diè vole."

XLI.

It was midday, and Carlucci
Had rung a bell for Nunziella, and Andriana
And the bride in front of the door remained,
Seated on a flat stone.
And those people who went home,
Some gave her three or four coppers,
Each one said to her these words,—
"In time children, if it please God."

XLII.

Fra Bomminente dentro alla cuceina
Staiva a mette li soli a li pignoti,
Ntrumiente manette alla canteina
A guì tutti li fleschi e li cannoti.

XLII.

Fra Binimento inside the kitchen
Was putting beans in the saucepans,
While he sent to the cellar
To fill all the flasks and jugs.

A mastro Aliborio di Cicco o Farina
Nurdinaivo li platta e li pusoti,
E ntrumienti zu Ciccoppi di Cusenza
Ieiva mettenne nordine la menza.

Master Aliborio di Cicco, and Farina,
Sent for the plates and cutlery,
And Ciccoppi di Cusenza arranged
The food in order.

XLIII.

Z'uomini cuururiteti, a puoco a puoco,
Alla campra si radunierne tutti,
So Nanno allaura sascidette a luogo,
E si grappietti na lesca di presutti,
Cu fè cunsapricce chi ti scié fuoco.
"Fa chiacci,"—ci diciette Mastre Brutto,
"Te zu caucari cuorpi, e che stote
E qualche maisi chi ne magnote."

XLIII.

The menfolk who had appetite, little by little,
All assembled in the room,
And Nanno then sat in his place,
And took a slice of ham,
So that his mouth was more than filled.
"Go slowly,"—said Master Brutto,
"Despite that big body, perhaps it is
Some months since thou hast eaten."

XLIV.

Subiti chi la tavula fu posta,
Dissi Mastro Aliborio,—"A voi Bardasci,
Vicono alla tavola ognuno saccosta,
Cumminzaiti a diminò le ganasse,
Chinto quando na vecita di mecce."
S'insacca fra na pezzo di feciuze.
[Two lines missing.]

XLIV.

As soon as the table was prepared,
Said Master Aliboro,—"You Bardasci,
Each one come near the table,
And begin to move the jaws,
Since you have not yet seen food."
They took between them a portion of *feciuze*.
[*Two lines missing.*]

XLV.

Spacca Muntagne disse allegramente,—
"Che bene a dire, che state cuscì matto.
Che bene a dire, che tra tanta iente
Non cè chi faccia alla zita nu salute."
Che saleuta z'emici, e chi zi perienti,
Chi Mariella, e chi fra Comminente,
Chi rumpaiva zi pletti, e Finamuenne
Faceurne zu saleuti di Vilunne.

XLV.

Spacca Montagne cheerfully said,—
"May it be lucky, that you are so happy.
Although so many are here
There is no one who toasts the bride."
Then one greets enemies, as well as relations
Then one toasts Mariella, the other Comminente,
This one was breaking the plates, and Finamuenne
Was toasting the health of Vilunne.

XLVI.

Chiuda avierne magnoti a crepapanza,
E la tavula a nu mumente fu mineuta,
La cossa si strimaiva alla usanza.
E a do la crame ievano alla zita.
Ognuno la faciava la crienza,
Acciò tutta la iente fosse riscita.
Tutti si ritirieni a na cambretta,
Rimenietti suoli Nanno e Mariella.

XLVI.

After having eaten to repletion,
The table was in a moment cleared,
And the legs once more stretched.
They give the wreath to the bride.
Every one made compliments,
Until everyone had gone out.
All retired to their rooms,
And above remained Nanno and Mariella.]

Here are some other well-known Scannese songs which we got only with great difficulty :—

PARTENZA RER LE PUGLIE.

Eccomi bella mia, domani me ne parto,
Per compagnia il tuo cor mi porto.

THE DEPARTURE FOR APULIA.

[Behold me, my beloved, tomorrow I go away,
For company I take thy heart.

Piglia il core mio e fanne due parti;
Mezzo ne lascio a te e mezzo lo porto io.
La chiave del mio core la lascio a te,
E quella del tuo cor la porto io.
Quando aggio arrivato a quelle parti
Ti voglio fare una lettera a penna d'oro.
Spedisco un corriere con quella lettera.
La ci son lacrime, sospiri, e singhiozzi.
La luna di Gennajo af il cerchio tondo
A rivederci, bella mia, tra Maggio e Giugno.
Palma d'amore
Tu mi ferisci l'alma, la vita, ed il core.

Take my heart and split it in two;
Half I leave thee and half I take.
The key of my heart I leave with thee,
And thine I take with me.
When I have arrived in those far places
I shall desire to write thee a letter with a golden pen.
I will send a messenger with that letter.
Away there are tears, sighs, and moanings.
The January moon makes its circle,
We meet again, my beloved, in May or June.
Palm of love,
Thou art impressed on my soul, my life, my heart.]

IL RITORNO DALLE PUGLIE.

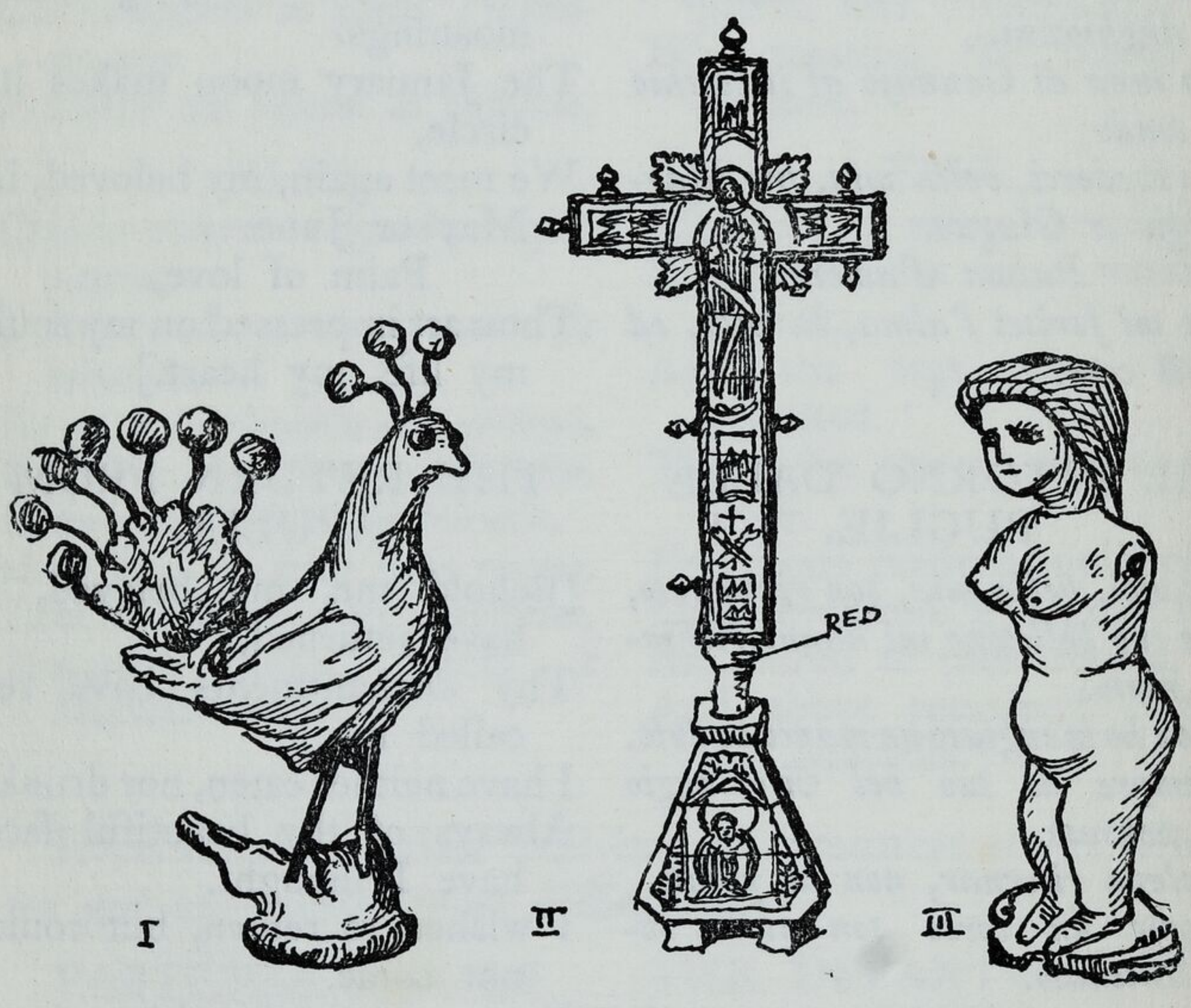
Eccomi, bella mia, son rinvenuto,
Le tue bellezze mi hanno richiamato.
Non ho mangiato ne manco bevuto.
Sempre al tuo bel viso aggio pensato.
Voleva ritornar, non ho potuto.
Come un corso son stato incatenato.
Se non credi a me quanto ho patuto,

THE RETURN FROM APULIA.

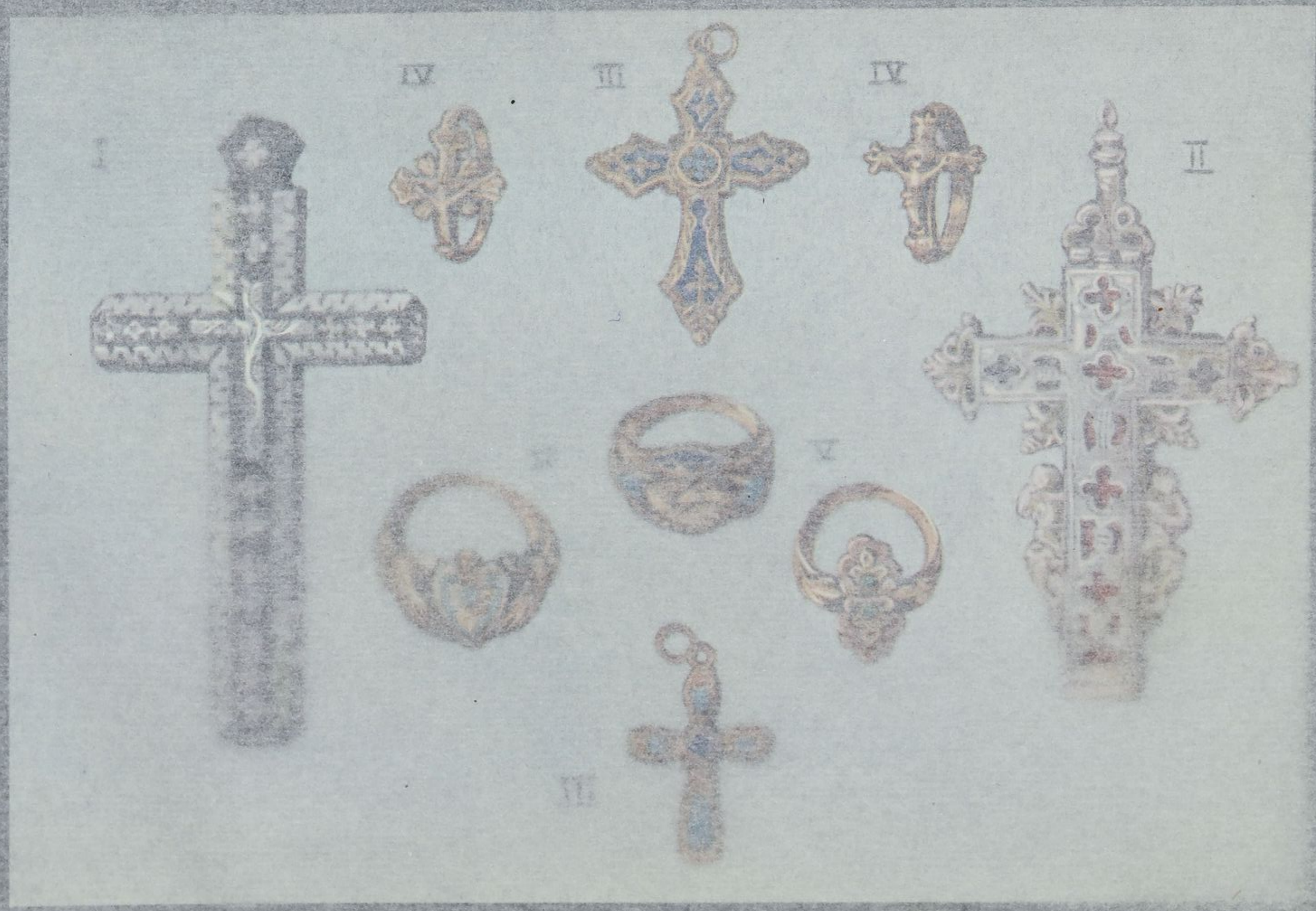
[Behold me, my beloved, I have returned,
Thy enchantments have recalled me.
I have neither eaten, nor drunk.
Always of thy beautiful face have I thought.
I wished to return, but could not come.
I was chained, although I wished to hasten.
If thou dost not believe how I suffered,

Guarda il vise, mio, quanto è mancato.
Scusa se da sonno t'ho disturbate.
Ritorna al bel dormir che me ne vado in pace.
Eccomi bella mia, doman mi parto
Per compagnia il tuo cor mi porto.
Quando aggio arrivato a quelle parti,
Leggendo il nome tuo é mio conforto.

Look at my face, how much it is marked.
Forgive me if from slumber I have disturbed thee.
Sleep again, and I shall go in peace.
Here I am, my beloved, and to-morrow I go.
For comfort I take thy heart.
When I have arrived in those places,
I will read thy name and I shall be comforted.]



I. Clay Peacock Whistle.
II. Mother O'Pearl and Wood Cross.
III. Wooden Figure.



I. Ebony and mother o'pearl cross.
II. Silver cross, containing relique.
III. Types of crosses decorated with enamel.
IV. Rings from Scanno.
V. Crucifix types of gold and enamel rings.

PLATE XXI.]

Guarda il vise, mio, quanto è mancato.
Scusa se da sonno t'ho disturbate.
Ritorna al bel dormir che me ne vado in pace.
Eccomi bella mia, doman mi parto
Per compagnia il tuo cor mi porto.
Quando aggio arrivato a quelle parti,
Leggendo il nome tuo é mio conforto.

Look at my face, how much it is marked.
Forgive me if from slumber I have disturbed thee.
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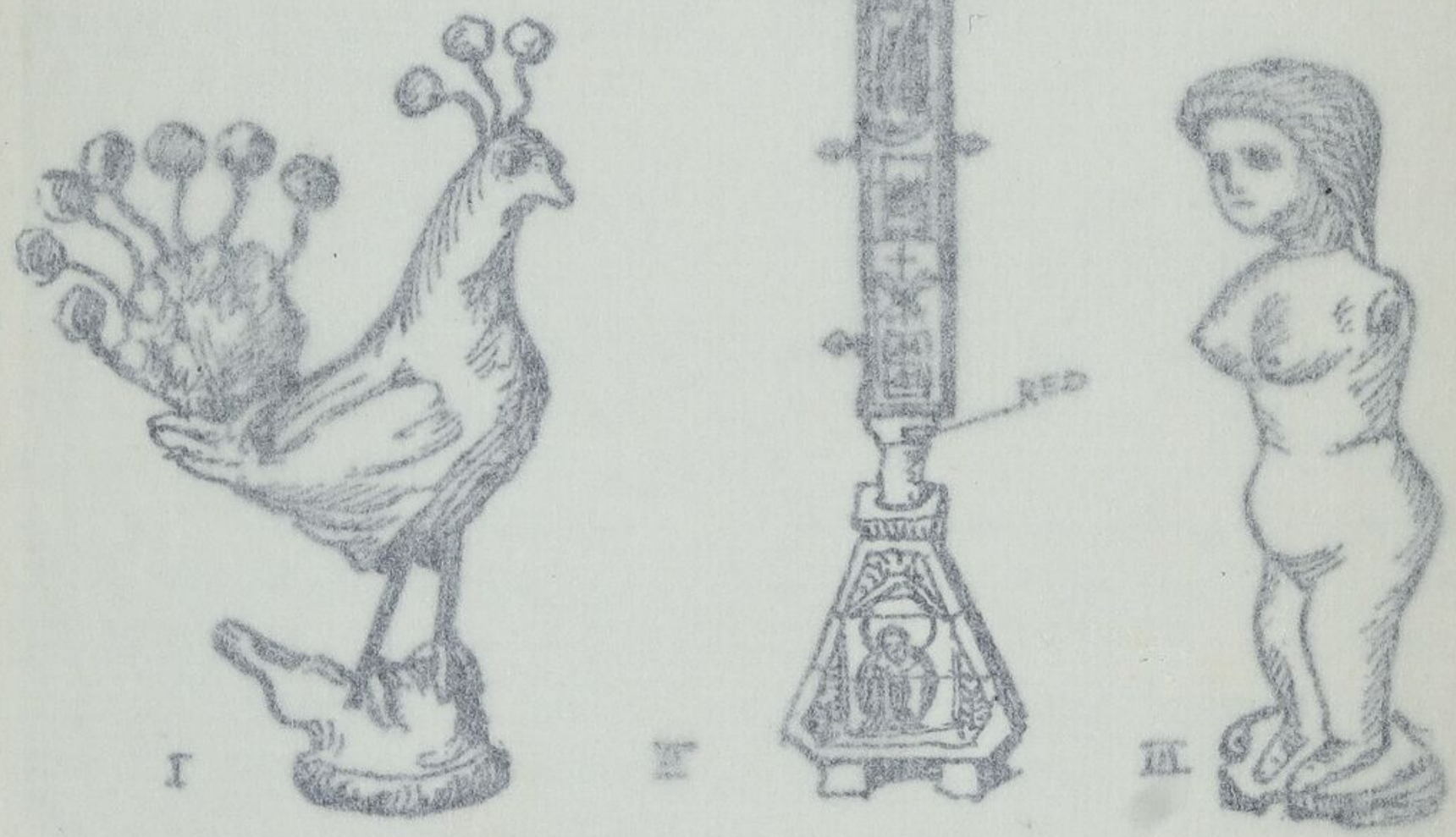
When I have arrived in those places,
I will read thy name and I shall be comforted.]



I. Clay Peacock Whistle.
II. Mother O'Pearl and Wood Cross.
III. Wooden Figure.

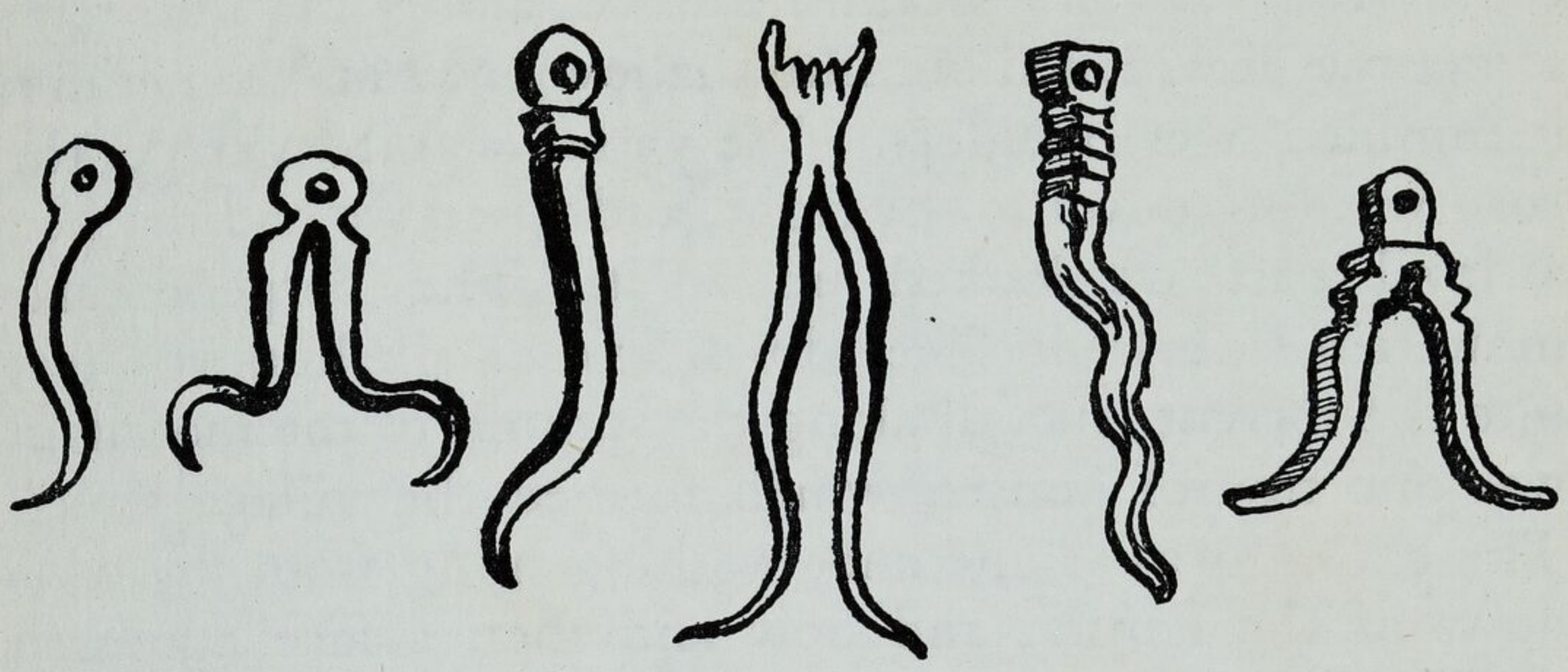
PLATE XXI.] [To face page 278.

I. Clay Peacock Whistle.
II. Silver Cross, covered with Mother of Pearl and Ebony Cross.
III. Types of Crosses decorated with Enamel Rings.


I
IV
III
IV
II
V
V
III

Chapter XVI.

Castel del Sangro.



Metal Horns.

Pane assutte (*asciutto*), *vita longa.* [Dry bread, long life.]

ONE morning we got into a little cart and left Scanno for the valley. We had seen nothing of the road coming up, for it was dark and there was no moon. After we had passed the lake the vegetation came to an end, the way becoming wild and barren. We went by the rocks where most of the serpents are caught for the serpent procession, which also takes place at Scanno, and then we came to the first hamlet. The Scannese had told us that the people there were wild and savage, and that it was not safe to go. Near the village we saw women washing clothes in stagnant water in the middle of the stony waste. The village was a short distance beyond, and it was irregular and tumbledown like all the other hamlets, and, like them also, it was built of the stone of the country, so that it looked as though it were part of the stony desert. Some way off there was another village on

the top of a ridge, and at first it seemed as if it were a part of the mountain. The road gradually narrowed, with the precipitous slopes on either side. The little river which came from beyond Scanno rushed along on our left; sometimes it widened out into shallow pools and sometimes it tumbled over boulders. We passed a third village, the road winding down to the right, and when we had reached a level part we looked up at it. The perpendicular mountain side went sheer down five or six hundred feet into the torrent, and all along the summit of the mountain was one row of houses, which formed the village street. The church was at one end, washing hung from the windows of the houses, and now and then a face appeared gazing down the precipice. There was nothing to keep the children at the windows from falling straight into the torrent. Further on we came to the desert of S. Domenico of Cocullo, a comparatively flat track of land covered with rough boulders in between the mountain sides, and it was here the saint lived for some time in penance and contemplation. There was a cave in the mountain where he used to sleep. The foaming torrent widened out into calm stretches of water on the left, and on the right there were clean deep pools with beautiful brown and green water-weeds waving in their depths. On the left the water reflected the blue sky, and bending over it we saw the sand at the bottom; patches of it were all pebbles, and others were masses of thick green weed. Reeds grew along the edge, except where the boulders went straight down into the water. We passed more towering heights with villages built along their very edge, and the sides of the mountains were so steep that it looked impossible for anyone to mount them, but our driver told us that scarcely a day went by without someone going up or down, and

he added that there was always a little track where a person or a goat could pass, even if a mule could not. He pointed to a narrow path about a foot wide running along the side of the mountain overhanging the torrent, which we could only see in parts, for boulders every now and then blocked it up. "That is the old road," he said, "and we call it the pathway of hell. It goes all along by the torrent, and before the new road was made I often went by it with my dog, and I have even taken a mule, but it was difficult to get over the boulders." Finally we arrived at Anversa, where there was a *festa*. We jumped off the cart to explore. In the doorways round the piazza, copper vessels were for sale. Over one church door there was a good bit of stone carving, Byzantine in character, but the interior of the church was uninteresting. The larger church had also some good carving outside. The doors were open wide. The place was crowded with kneeling peasants in their best clothes, and there was a mass of lighted candles on the high altar.

We did not stay long at Anversa, but we found a friend in the "young tailor" who knew a good deal about the district. He said, close by, Circe Maggiore would be full of interest for us, and we promised to go if we had the opportunity. Meanwhile he told us that in the house of Giarrocco, about one and a half miles from Circe, it is believed that there is a treasure. Gaetana Gesualda, who died near on forty years ago, was anxious to secure it, and went to the house. On her arrival the door suddenly opened itself. She entered, and at the farther end of the house found a staircase, which she descended. At the bottom she found a big room, in which there were three persons, each sitting on a barrel. She recognized them to be Don Marco, Don Tullio, and Don Cesare,—

well-known dead people, condemned on account of their wickedness centuries ago, but she recognised them from the traditional description. Taken by surprise, she exclaimed,—"Oh God!" Immediately flames shot out of their mouths, ears, and from all their bodies. A strange gust of wind and smoke blew Gaetana out of the house. She fainted, and when she recovered went home and was ill for a long time. Everyone is now afraid of passing near the house at mid-day, or during night, because at these times the three damned people come out. Everybody is convinced about the existence of the treasure.

Another time a *pacchiana* (a peasant woman), who is still living, passed near the house and found a *celma* (small sack) filled with blackened silver coins (*scudi*). She put it on her head to take it to the farm, but a well-dressed person appeared and shot out a flame from his mouth, got hold of the silver, and disappeared.

The "young tailor" told us the following story of a buried treasure at Santa Maria al Monte, which is also near Circe, but is now in ruins.

THE BURIED TREASURE.

Near to Circe at Santa Maria al Monte (now in ruins), there is said to be a buried treasure. Four artisans wanted to get this treasure, and went to the church to send away the evil spirits which guarded it. At the church they began their exorcisms, the door opened, and a black bull rushed out and ran away. On entering the church they found a clergyman with his head off saying Mass; one of them, who was a sacristan, served the Mass. The

church gradually became full of water up to their throats. In his fear one man exclaimed,—"Oh God!" At this a cyclone blew the four artisans out of the church along the road of the Calvary (a small road outside the church with a row of crosses). They were followed and pushed by a big barrel of water, until they reached the Palazzo Marchesale. At this point the barrel suddenly disappeared, and each of the artisans found himself in a different place, one on the shaft of a mill, and the other three on the top of three different mountains. Two of them died of fright, and the remaining two reached Circe Maggiore after several days of travelling. The treasure consisted of a hen with twenty golden chicks, and was lost to them because the exclamation "Oh God!" frightened the spirits away.

To get to Castel del Sangro from Anversa, we had a long way to go, and we decided to take the train across country and stop on the way for some hours to see Pescocostanzo. We passed several villages piled up with their church or castle towers at the top, and then we gradually went higher and higher up into the mountains. We went through a mountain desert of stones. Far beneath us was the valley with the villages we had seen, and the green of the sparse fields and trees were changed to blue by the atmosphere. The stony ridges were of every shade of browns, greys, and yellows, and seemed to stretch away for ever. About mid-day we arrived at Pescocostanzo. The stationmaster asked us why we got out, and what we wanted. We said we wished to see the village and the lace for which it is celebrated. "But why do you come here," he said, and then added sarcastically,—"It is a beautiful place, with theatres and music and fish to eat. I would not live in any other place. Rome in

comparison is nothing to it." "We shall find what we seek," we answered, and asked which way to go. He pointed to a kind of covered-up yellow box with a door in it and a horse in the shafts. "That is the *posta* which goes to the village. Get in it and it will take you there, or go down the road in the opposite direction and you will go somewhere else. They are all the same. You can choose." We got in and the driver took us along. We could see some short grass on the ridges, but the background of mountains was blotted out with fast descending clouds, and within ten minutes it was pouring in torrents. It was the only wet day we had the whole time we were away, and the sound of the rain splashing against the windows and the smell of dampness were delicious. To explore the village we had to walk through veritable lakes. Some of the houses were interesting, with deep eaves, carved and painted brackets, gargoyles, and old doors standing back in recesses with steps leading up to them. Then we went to see the bishop. We were shown into a fairly large room with a brick floor and numerous beautiful venetian chairs of different designs, carved, gilded, and painted. I think I counted sixteen in all. There were also other rather good pieces of furniture. The peasant girl who showed us in told us to be seated, and after a few moments brought us two cups of hot coffee, and said that *Monsignore* was just awake and would come. In a few minutes a stout dignified man with a kindly quiet face entered the room. He was simple and without affectation. He shook hands, told my father to remain covered, and asked us to be seated. He was very different from others we had met, and, as he sat there talking in his quiet way, his fine head reminded me of Holbein. We asked him many questions, and he told us all he knew about

Pescocostanzo and Castel del Sangro, and the district round. He described how on Christmas Eve in the plains the peasants cut down all the oaks in the woods which during the year have been struck by lightning. These are drawn by a couple of white oxen yoked together (without a cart) to the entrance of the church. With the wood a fire is made, lighted by striking flints. The fire burns all night, and around it the youths pass the night, singing, dancing, and keeping it alight. At dawn lovers take the brands and put them down before the door of their beloved, and then retire. The girl's mother, who is the first to rise, opens the door, finding the brand. If the young man is not accepted, she takes no notice of it, but, if he is accepted, she takes it and lights her own fire. When the youth passes the house in the morning, if his brand is not before the door he knows all is well; he enters the house, and takes his seat at the fire with his sweetheart and family. The girls are not allowed to speak to the youths, but lovers sing and play serenades in front of their houses, and from this the girls know their admirers.

On Christmas Eve, women are on the alert, for, when midnight strikes, they make a white cross with chalk, or nail crosses, on the doors to keep witches out of their houses.

Monsignore then told us about different church festivals. He said that at Capistrello (Avezzano), on Good Friday, the Crucifixion is represented. A soldier riding a white horse calls, and looks for Christ everywhere. One after the other he is joined by other soldiers. Finally they find Jesus, get hold of Him, tie Him, maltreat and beat Him, crown Him, and give Him the cross, leading Him to the Calvary in the church, where He remains until

resurrection. He is crucified, hands and feet tied, insulted, and tormented. The soldiers take it in turn to guard Him all the time. At the Gloria, the day of *Sabato Santo* (Easter Saturday), after thunder and lightning, the bonds become loose, and the guards fall on the ground as dead, and often hurt themselves.

At Loreto Aprutino on the Monday after Whit-Sunday, the procession of the patron saint, S. Francesco, is held. The procession is headed by an ox, draped in red damask, with horns decorated by twisted coloured ribbons and flowers. A *Bambino*, in white, covered with gold jewellery rides the ox, which is preceded by a piper and followed by peasants and artisans, each carrying a big wax candle with the emblems of his particular calling.

On 2nd July the inhabitants of Castel del Sangro and the neighbouring villages go to the Chapel of the Madonna degli Eremiti, and return crowned with ivy leaves.

On the same day, at Matera, Basilicata, there is also the *festa* of the Madonna Bruna. The statue of the brown Madonna is carried from the cathedral and placed on a richly-carved cart, driven by six draped mules. A procession of the bishop and clergy riding, with music, heralds, standard-bearers, and halberd bearers, arrives at the piazza, which they go round three times. The statue on the cart is then taken into the cathedral, and the cart is broken to pieces by the mob. Each person takes a bit of it to keep as an amulet for his family and his house. All that is left of the cart is its bare frame. In the cathedral there is a Byzantine fresco with the motto,—"*Nigra sum sed formosa.*" (I am black, but comely.)

At the Assumption of the Virgin, on the 15th August, the Confraternity of the Santissimo Sacramento distribute bread and blessed *ricotta* (curds) to everyone from house to

house, with mules decorated and loaded according to the populousness of each place.

I learnt also that at Seminara, Calabria, a processional cart is taken round. It is sixty-five feet high, formed of three tiers, on each tier children and young men. The middle tier revolves in the opposite direction from the other two. Surmounting all is God, with two discs representing the moon and the sun. Round these discs babies are tied. Corpus Domini is celebrated by the peasants taking big *robinia* (acacia) branches in flower, called *suore mejo*, which are arranged in the piazza. The windows and balconies are draped with silk covers, festoons, and flowers, and frankincense is burnt in the streets in braziers. In the piazza *altarini* (small altars) are erected with chandeliers made of different coloured macaroni.

The lace of the district is famous, and *Monsignore* had some made with bobbins carefully put away in a little drawer, wrapped in pink paper, which he was keeping for his niece. He showed it to us and then told us about the legend describing its origin.

A young Venetian girl gave her lover a net made by her own hands as a present on her engagement. The first time her lover used the net he found it full of those petrified weeds with very fine ramifications, which the fishermen call "the lace of the Siren." He offered them to his betrothed, and then left for the war which was raging in the East. The girl in grief passed her time looking at her lover's last present. With her fingers she reproduced the marvellous drawings of the weed, and this was the origin of the lace with three bobbins.

Monsignore then called his niece, a little girl of eleven, with a mass of black curly hair bundled up on to the top of her head. He told her to sing to us. At first she was

shy, but he patted her, took her on his knee, and encouraged her, and she began to sing some little French songs quite charmingly. When she had gained confidence she wriggled down on to the floor, and we gradually got her to sing the peasant songs of the place. She stopped to laugh at them every now and then, but went on again, and, when she forgot the words, *Monsignore* helped her, humming the melody all the time.

He said he would post us the songs, as he had not time to write them out at that moment. Months after, the following songs came, but I was never able to get the music, which he had also promised.

CANZONE CHE SI CANTA LA SERA DI PASQUETTA. (BEFANA).

Doman è la Pasquetta,
La Pasquetta del Signor.
La delizia ancor al letto
Prega, prega, di dolor,
Oh che freddo sento,
E tu al letto dormi.
Bona sera e buon reposo.
Ci vedremo domani, addio.

SONG SUNG ON THE LITTLE EASTER EVE.

[To-morrow is the *Pasquetta*
(little Easter),
The *Pasquetta* of God.
What pleasure still to lie abed!
I beseech (you), I beseech (you)
in my misery,
Oh how cold I feel,
And thou in bed sleepest.
Good evening and good rest.
We will meet to-morrow.
Adieu.]

CASUCCIA MIA.

Casa mia, casuccia mia,
Benché piccola tu sia
Tu mi sembri una badia!
Non ti fece un architetto,
T'innalzaro dei muratori.
Poche tegole hai sul tetto,

MY LITTLE HOUSE.

[My house, my little house,
Though small art thou
Thou lookest to me an abbey!
No architect made thee,
But masons raised thee.
Few tiles hast thou on the roof,

E sei nera dentro e fuori.
Ma mi piace, ognor m'allenta,
La simpatica casetta.
Casa mia, casuccia mia,
Tu mi sembra una badia.

And thou art black without and within,
But thou pleasest me, always rests me,
Thou sympathetic little house.
My house, my little house,
Thou lookest to me an abbey!]

Monsignore then called a girl, and asked her to get the old costume of the village to show us. It is no longer worn, but it must have been good, judging by the fragments which remained. He told his niece to take us to the church and ask the sacristan to show us everything, and, provided with a large umbrella, we took our leave. The clouds were still low over the mountains, and little light came into the church. We could only just see that the beams and panels of the roof were richly painted with designs in gold with pictures let into the panels. There was also a wrought iron gate to one of the altars, which was quite wonderful in showing how finely the metal could be worked, and also some interesting wooden chandeliers. We went up the tower into a little room where the church property was kept, and the sacristan showed us many copes, stoles, and other embroideries. The colours were gorgeous, and some of them were interwoven with gold and silver, while others consisted entirely of gold or silver. There were some beautiful pieces of lace and linen with deep borders, and also some of the good modern lace which is made in the convent. It was getting darker and darker, but we saw a great deal. *Monsignore's* niece went with us as far as the *posta*, and then, taking the umbrella which had been lent to us, she went splashing and jumping through the puddles as she ran home. There

was no shelter, and we sat in the *posta* until the driver came and took us to the station.

By the time we reached Castel del Sangro the weather had cleared and there was a stormy sunset. We found two clean rooms for the night, and then went to see what we could of the small town. All round a fairly large square were buildings with small shops, and at one end was the entrance to the principal narrow street. We went a little way down, but there were few lights, and so we left further exploring until next day. The following morning we went up the narrow streets of cobble steps to the church. There were several women in the costumes of the neighbouring villages going along the church on their knees, licking and kissing the ground as they went to the altar. Afterwards we went up a crooked pathway which led to the top of the mountain, where there was a ruined cyclopic wall and an old chapel. The path was steep, and as we went round its bend we saw the cyclopic walls holding up the banks. They were built of such immense stones that no one knows how it was possible to get them there and build them together. The tradition is that they are "*Mura Ciclopiche*," i.e. walls built by the cyclops, though some say it was the *Etruci* (Etruscans).

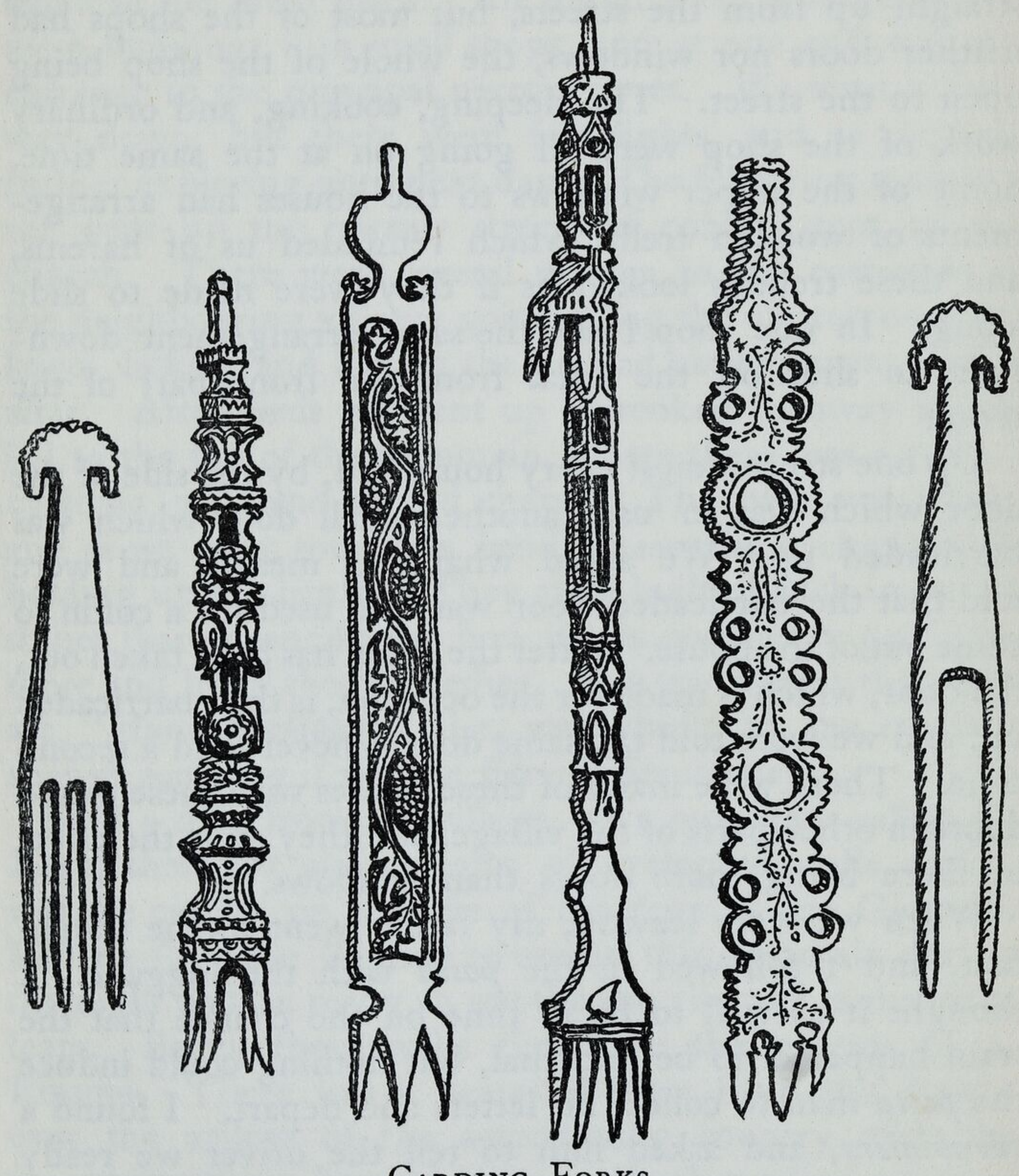
Half a mile from the village, on a mountain called La Praja, there are also remains of cyclopean walls, and it was the custom on the eve of the *festa* of San Giovanni Battista (S. John Baptist) to ascend this mountain during the night and be ready to see the sun rise and make three leaps. Below these walls there are the grottos of S. Erasmo. There was a beautiful view from this height over the valleys of the surrounding country with the mountains rising beyond them, and when clear we were told we could see Vesuvius.

A quiet little cemetery at the back of the chapel was surrounded by low walls, and in it were numerous crosses nearly hidden by cow parsley and weeds. Farther along were the ruins. That afternoon we went down the principal narrow street. Doorways and steep steps led straight up from the streets, but most of the shops had neither doors nor windows, the whole of the shop being open to the street. The sleeping, cooking, and ordinary work of the shop were all going on at the same time. Some of the upper windows to the houses had arrangements of wooden trellis which reminded us of harems, and these trellises looked as if they were made to slide along. In one shop I saw the same arrangement downstairs to shut off the back from the front part of the room.

Up one street almost every house had, by the side of the door which was in use, another small door which was barricaded up. We asked what this meant, and were told that the barricaded door was that used for a coffin to come out of the house. After the coffin has been taken out, the door, which is made for the occasion, is then barricaded up, and we were told the same door is never used a second time. There were many of these houses with these closed doors in other parts of the village, and they gave the effect of there being more doors than windows.

When we were leaving, my father went to the station first, and I followed in the *posta* with the luggage. I thought it as well to be in time on the chance that the train happened to be punctual, but nothing could induce the *posta* man to collect his letters and depart. I found a *carabiniere*, and asked him to tell the driver we really must start. He looked at me, evidently thinking it an odd request that anyone should wish to hurry to catch a

train; he said there was time, although there was only a quarter of an hour before the scheduled hour. The driver did not exert himself, but, finally we set out. We need not have troubled, for the train was an hour and a half late.



Carding Forks.



PROCESSION OF S. DOMENICO.

PLATE XXII.]

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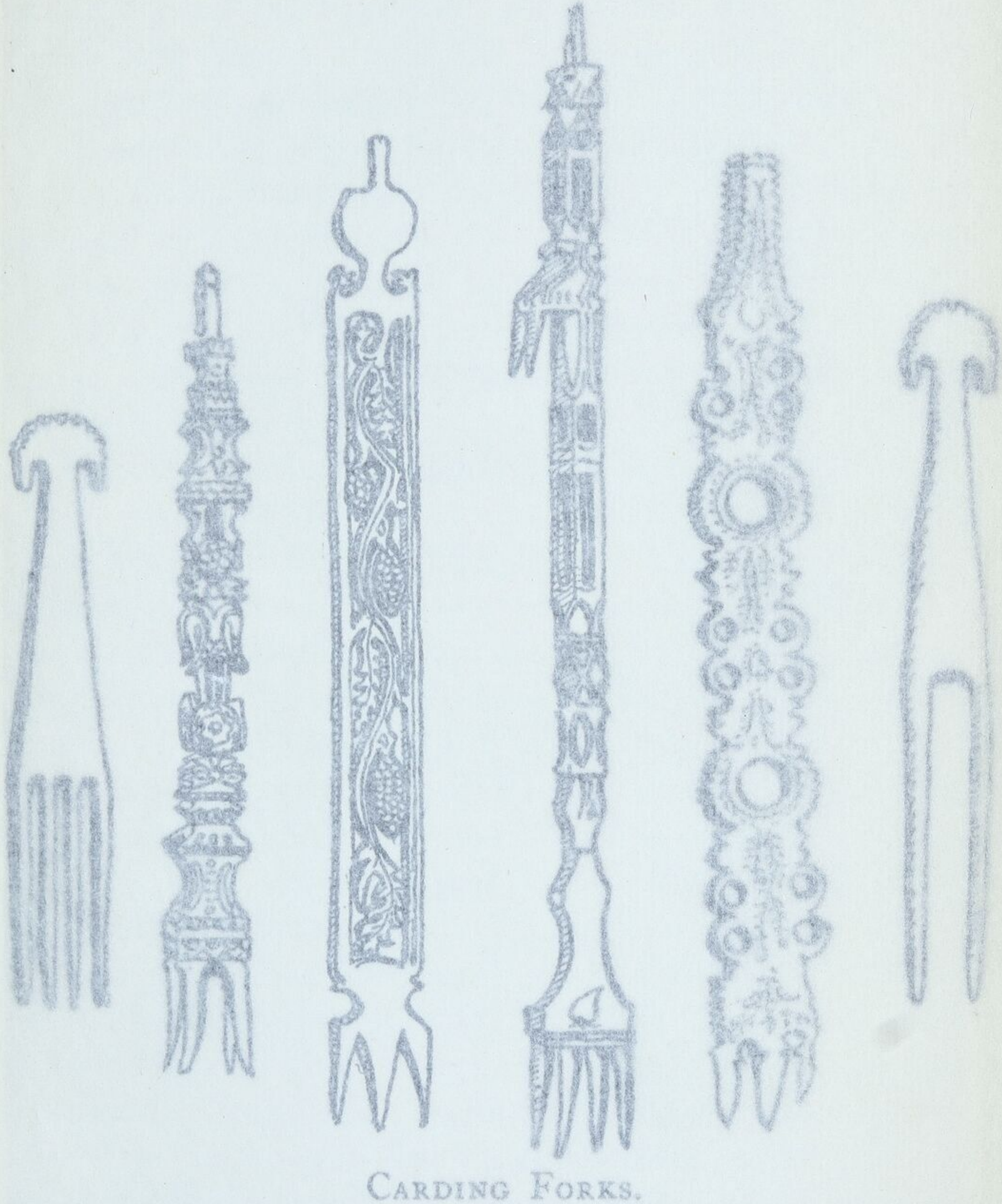


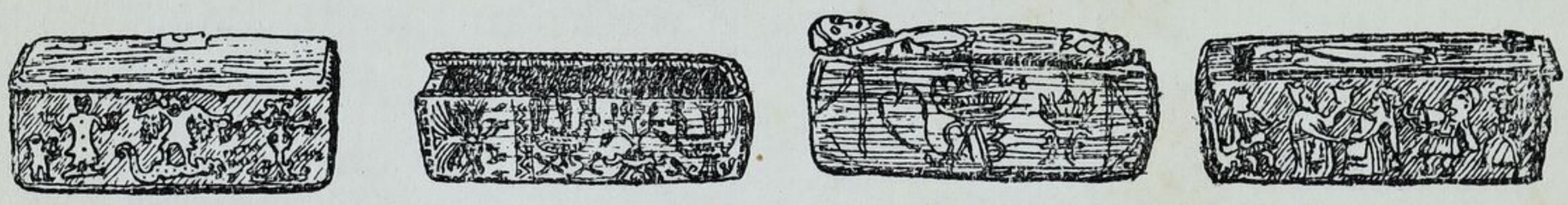
Carding Forks.

Procession of S. Domenico.



Chapter XVII.

San Domenico of Cocullo.



Carved Wooden Boxes.

Io ti inciarme e ti assicuro
Delle bisce morte non aver paura.
Quelle vive non le toccare,
Che ti possono morssicare.

[I charm thee and I assure thee
Of dead serpents have no fear.
Do not touch those alive,
They will bite thee.]

—*Scanno and Cocullo.*

ONE day we went to see the little village of Cocullo, two hours' away by train from Sulmona. Just as we arrived we met a procession of pilgrims who had been on a four days' pilgrimage into the mountains, and on their return had been to visit the image of S. Domenico, the local patron saint who protects from tooth-ache, hydrophobia, and serpent bites. The pilgrims walked along two by two, and all the women had handkerchiefs of every shade of orange and green. They also had *coce* (shoes) (page 189), and each carried a terra-cotta pot or flask for water, sometimes in the shape of a large fish, and sometimes decorated with designs in relief. Each peasant woman must carry a burden, which is represented by bundles slung over their shoulders on sticks. These bundles were wrapped round with rags and contained a few provisions. Some of the women had staves. The bareheaded men also had their bundles. One of them went at the head of the procession carrying an immense crucifix, and some others also had crosses or else had very long staves with a small bit

of wood stuck cross-ways near the top. They all walked slowly, and sang litanies as they went. A tall woman with a very long thick stick for keeping the peasants in order walked at the end of the procession. We were told that they still had three more days to walk, and, that now they sleep on the mountain side "*à la belle étoile*," and that formerly they were allowed to sleep in the churches, but stole so much that this is no longer permitted. We were also told that it is the right thing to wear orange handkerchiefs on a pilgrimage. We went next to the church to see the statue of the saint. In one hand he holds a small mule-shoe, which is the symbol of his power to cure toothache, and when in the procession he has in the other hand a representation of one of the saint's teeth.

The *Archiprete* Loreto Marchione told us that S. Domenico of Cocullo, or of Sora, was born at Foligno in Umbria, A.D. 950, and died at Sora, January 22nd, A.D. 1031. He was of the Order of S. Benedict, and founded several convents in the valleys and mountains of the Abruzzi, but he never remained in them. He used to assemble the monks, elect their chief, and then retire to live the life of an anchorite in a cavern. He founded a monastery at Cocullo, and stayed there some time, performing many miracles. When he left the people entreated him to leave something of himself to protect them from misfortune, venomous serpents, hydrophobia, and toothache. He consented, and, as a gift, he pulled out one of his teeth, and presented it to the inhabitants, together with a shoe from his she-mule.

With the mule-shoe the peasants used to brand their arms, as a preventive of toothache and hydrophobia from the bites of mad dogs. There are also small mule-shoes which are kept only as a *devozione*. With them women

make holes in their clothes,—their ends being made in a point for this purpose. The mule-shoe and the tooth are held to be miraculous up to this day, and the tooth is seen in a glass case on a side altar in the Santuario di S. Domenico, Cocullo. Pilgrims journey practically all the year round to this sanctuary, and on the 15th of August, and 15th of September, great crowds go to the *festa* of S. Domenico for protection from or cure of hydrophobia, serpent bites, and toothache.

Shepherds also lead their sheep and dogs to Cocullo pastures to a certain tree, and this decides their fate. At a certain point, if they make suspicious movements they are doomed, and must be killed. We were also told that no one from the village has ever been bitten by a serpent or mad dog, and that it is impossible for anyone to be harmed in the village; that if anyone is wounded outside the village he has only to enter it to be cured immediately, or to die at once.

There are numerous local legends about the saint.

S. Domenico also went to Scanno, and when he was riding Giulia, his she-mule, on his way back to Cocullo she lost one of her shoes. At Cocullo S. Domenico begged the village farrier to shoe Giulia for God's sake, for he had to leave next day, and had not a farthing. The blacksmith shod Giulia, but afterwards asked to be paid for so doing. S. Domenico, having nothing, entreated him to let him go, for God's sake. "God's sake is no good to me, I want money!" was the reply. S. Domenico turned then to his mule,—"Giulia, leave the shoes. I cannot pay for them. I have nothing!" Giulia left the shoes at once on the ground, and S. Domenico went away with her shoeless.

When the inhabitants of Cocullo were in despair because

every night a she-wolf came to the village and devoured a child, they begged S. Domenico to free their village from the curse. S. Domenico took pity, and one night watched the wolf go over the pass, stopped her, and turned her into stone. This stone is now to be seen on the top of the mountain above Cocullo.

The sacristan of Cocullo told us that on one of his journeys the saint wished to avoid his persecutors, and passed through the fields of Castro Valdo. His enemies, anxious to catch him, came to Castro Valdo and asked the peasants whether they had seen any monk. The peasants, who at that time were sowing beans, answered, "Yes." "How long ago?" asked the persecutors. "Oh! during the sowing of our beans!" answered the peasants. S. Domenico's enemies looked at the beans; they were in flower, and they concluded it was useless to search any more; S. Domenico must have passed a long while before.

When S. Domenico instituted the convent at Villalago, for a time he lived in a grotto about two miles from Villalago, and his food was sent to him by the convent. One day, the cook, as a surprise, sent him some fried fish, fresh from the lake. The boy who took the fishes was so tempted by the delicious smell that on his way to the grotto he hid them in the hole of an oak tree, intending after his visit to S. Domenico to make a good meal off them. He gave S. Domenico the usual brown bread, and returned at once to the oak tree. No sooner did he put his hands in the hole than he got severely bitten, all the fishes attacking him. In fright, with his hands bleeding, he rushed back to S. Domenico, begging his pardon. S. Domenico made him do penance, and pardoned him.

The *festa* of S. Domenico at Villamagna takes place on

the fourth Sunday in August, in commemoration of one of S. Domenico's miracles. Near the church a platform is erected with oak leaves and branches round it to represent a wood. On one side of the platform a big sheet is hung. A procession with bands playing, and people with serpents, carries a statue of S. Domenico and places it behind the sheet. A woodman and his wife and another man bring a baby in a cradle made of twigs. With a hatchet, the woodman begins to chop up the branches, and his wife, leaving the cradle with the baby, goes round to gather the wood and twigs cut by her husband. They are so absorbed in their work that neither pays any attention to the cradle. A man disguised with skins to represent a wolf creeps out of a heap of leaves on all fours, approaching the cradle. He discovers the baby, and with his teeth he seizes the bands in which the baby is wrapped and pulls out the baby, who immediately begins to cry. In dismay the parents look at the cradle. They go as near as possible, and scream,—"S. Domenico! S. Domenico!" Then the sheet falls down, S. Domenico appears, and the wolf frees the baby. The father picks it up and gives it to the mother, who presses it to her bosom, kissing it all over again and again, and weeping with joy. The wolf lies down, and is seized with terrible convulsions, and the woodman, taking advantage, strikes it with a hatchet until it dies. The crowd shout in chorus,—"*Viva S. Domenico! Viva S. Domenico!*" The procession is again formed. The woodman and his wife, carrying the cradle and the baby on her head, follow the statue and enter the church and kneel at the altar's first step. Thanks are offered to the saint for the miracle, the band plays the final march, and everyone goes home to dine, and in honour of the saint drink their best wine. It is said that this miracle

happened at Cocullo, where a wolf, having seized a child, was driven to the woods by S. Domenico, who saved the child.

The festival of S. Domenico is connected with some of the oldest traditions in the Abruzzi. The *serpari*, who are said to be descendants of Circe, and who handle serpents with impunity, make this procession weird and most barbaric. At Cherchio near Cocullo there was formerly a temple dedicated to Circe. When it is time for the procession to begin, the church bell begins to strike, sometimes in jerks, sometimes slowly, and sometimes madly. S. Domenico's image is carried round the village with hysterical peasants following him, and the *serpari* bear hundreds of serpents, which they throw on top of the image. Everyone screams and runs about, getting very excited as the serpents climb up all over him, drop off, and are picked up and again thrown on to him, and the women are very frightened. The serpents are supposed never to climb on to his head or halo, for it is said to be too holy, but they do, and then the peasants are horrified. When we were there the village was crowded with people from all the surrounding villages who had come for this *festa*.

The procession starts from the piazza of Santa Maria. The women of Cocullo, who each bear a rosary, carry large painted candles in front of the statue of the Redeemer, which is borne by men. S. Antonio the Hermit, the Madonna, and S. Rocco and his dog are all in the procession. Peasants and pilgrims from many villages follow singing and chanting. Then comes the statue of S. Domenico, the *serpari*, the Host under a canopy, the clergy, soldiers, and more howling, screaming, and chanting peasants. Crowns of bread are sometimes threaded on the brackets and handles by which the statues of the

saints are carried, and this bread afterwards becomes the property of the bearers. It is a coveted honour to carry the statues, especially the statue of S. Domenico. The procession goes to the church of S. Domenico, where the saint is replaced in his shrine. After Mass the serpents are taken away, counted, and each of the *serpari* is paid so much per head when he has taken them to the fields and killed them. There is a small slit in front of the statue for offerings, and silver hearts, plaits of hair, and other *ex votos* have been hung near it. During the procession the women kneel frequently and touch the ground with their finger tips, and kiss their fingers to the statue.

I painted the end of the procession when the saint had been returned to the church and the last serpents were being taken off him. (Plate XXII.) The *archiprete* stood in front with a tooth of S. Domenico, and a little to the left of the statue there was a fairly large bell hanging on a long chain. During the Mass before the procession the peasants were continually ringing this bell by catching hold of the chain with their teeth. This was to ensure them against tooth-ache and dog bites. After the procession amulets of all sorts were sold, the women having them spread out on stalls, or on trays hanging from their necks. There were chicken feathers dyed red, purple, and green to keep away the evil eye, and sold in bunches of three bound together with wire, and also small square pieces of linen on which the image of S. Domenico was printed and which mothers always hang round the necks of their children to protect them from harm. There were also thin plaits of white thread with red and green frayed knots at intervals. These plaited threads are bound round the wrist and fore-head against the evil eye, to keep away all hurt, or cure

any hurt, and they are also used at Scanno for the same purpose, besides being put on as a *devozione* before going to Mass. Other amulets were rings, crosses, hearts, bells, horns, fish, coral, etc., and most of the peasants bought some of them. In a recess in the church there is a heap of earth (S. Domenico's earth), which is supposed to be the sweepings from the sanctuary. Peasants fill their handkerchiefs with this and take it to sprinkle on their land as a preventive against locusts and plagues, and on the night of Good Friday the walls of chapels are cleaned, the dust collected, put aside, and taken at meals for illness, in small doses with coffee, broth, or water. These scrapings are also put in small bags, and given as *ex votos*. They are also buried with the dead. Sometimes, when anyone is ill, the relations even rasp the image of S. Domenico, and, if the ill person dies, the dust is put in a bag and buried with the corpse.

The serpents for the procession are collected by the *serpari* at the end of April and beginning of May, principally in the Valley Marzia and Cauta and Veècia. They are caught either by the neck or by their tails. The *serpari* irritate them by giving them their hats to bite, and then on suddenly withdrawing the hats all their teeth come out, and they are rendered innocuous. With the serpents' saliva the *serpari* cure bites, and they also kill the serpents to make and sell antidotes to the poison. When the serpents' teeth are out, they are kept cool, and are put in pits and buried, with a small opening. The first serpent is made to enter by its head, the others by their tails, otherwise the first would attack the others. It is not possible to take them out by the tail, because they puff themselves out and would be torn apart. Some serpent-charmers keep the reptiles in warm

pans and boxes with holes, and feed them with milk, and then they acquire a whitish colour; from this they get the name "*Serpi Bianche.*"

They are kept in this fashion at Bolsena, where, in August, for the "mysteries of Santa Caterina" a girl goes round the village, her body surrounded by serpents of every size, which, although deprived of their teeth, bite badly.

At Cocullo the serpents become tame and do not bite, and are easily taken. The biggest are carried to the altar of S. Domenico, and afterwards are let loose in the church and do no harm. *Ciarmatari* are the people who go round to *ciarmare*, i.e. to make serpents bite, applying to the wound S. Domenico's stone, as a cure. If they were to kill the serpents, they would lose their immunity, and when the serpents are loose they need only say "*Fermete, ballucce, nome de sande Domineche de Cucculle* (*Campli*)." (Stop, creatures, in the name of S. Domenico of Cocullo.)

The *archiprete* was most anxious for me to paint the procession, and promised to arrange everything correctly. He also said he knew of an aristocratic (*aristocratiche*) woman who had an aristocratic house where we could stay really aristocratically, and that he would make the *serpari* bring me some aristocratic serpents which took aristocratic curves and shapes when they moved! I was interested by these aristocratic promises, and we left promising to return in two days' time.

A woman who seemed to be a kind of messenger or a porter, and whose name I afterwards found to be Maddalena, insisted on coming with us to the station, which was a little way from the village. As usual, the train was more than an hour late, and we had lots of time to talk. I asked her about the amulets and the evil eye, and she said,

"But why art thou so afraid of the evil eye? What has the evil eye done to thee? Hast thou suffered much harm?" "No," I answered, "I fear not the evil eye, and it has done me no harm. Has it done thee harm, or anyone thou knowest?" "Many people have been hurt by it," she answered, "but have no fear. I will show thee what thou must do to prevent it, poor little one. Do not be so afraid. I have cured many, poor little one. Where is thy mother? Do not be afraid." She then asked me if I had brothers and sisters, why my mother was not with me, and what my father was like. I said I had no brothers nor sisters, and that the *signore* she saw drinking at the pump was my father. "Poor little one," she repeated, "I will tell thee what thou must do, but it must not be overheard by anyone, and thou must not tell thy father. Otherwise, if any man knew, it would lose its power. Come with me behind the wall, where we can be neither seen nor heard, and, if I tell thee, wilt thou ask thy father for a *soldo* for me? Thy father means thee no harm, and thou needst not fear him." She took me behind the wall, unbuttoned her bodice, and drew out the charm of S. Domenico, which was hanging round her neck, and also some other amulets and medals, one of which had the Dove on it. This she gave me to kiss, and she crossed me three times. Then she gave me her rosary to hold, and told me to take the Dove between my thumb and finger, and then she repeated a paternoster, crossed herself, repeated a creed, crossed herself again, and then said something else which I could not make out, as it was in such a queer dialect, and again crossed herself. She refused to repeat the incantation at any other time, and I could not therefore get it written down. This she did three times, and then kissed the medal, saying,—"Do this



I



I



II



III



II



III



IV



POTTERY.

I. FISH PILGRIM BOTTLE.
II. PILGRIM BOTTLES.
III. HOLY WATER STOUPS.
IV. CHURCH TILES.

"But why art thou so afraid of the evil eye? What has the evil eye done to thee? Hast thou suffered much harm?" "No," I answered, "I fear not the evil eye, and it has done me no harm. Has it done thee harm, or anyone thou knowest?" "Many people have been hurt by it," she answered, "but have no fear. I will show thee what thou must do to prevent it, poor little one. Do not be so afraid. I have cured many, poor little one. Where is thy mother? Do not be afraid." She then asked me if I had brothers and sisters, why my mother was not with me, and what my father was like. I said I had no brothers nor sisters, and that the *signore* she saw drinking at the pump was my father. "Poor little one," she repeated, "I will tell thee what thou must do, but it must not be overheard by anyone, and thou must not tell thy father. Otherwise, if any man knew, it would lose its power. Come with me behind the wall, where we can be neither seen nor heard, and, if I tell thee, wilt thou ask thy father for a *soldo* for me? Thy father means thee no harm, and thou needst not fear him." She took me behind the wall, unbuttoned her bodice, and drew out the charm of St. Domenico, which was hanging round her neck, and also some other amulets and medals, one of which had the Dove on it. This she gave me to kiss, and she crossed me three times. Then she gave me her rosary to hold, and told me to take the Dove between my thumb and finger, and then she repeated a paternoster, crossed herself, repeated a creed, crossed herself again, and then said something else which I could not make out, as it was in such a queer dialect, and again crossed herself. She refused to repeat the incantation at any other time, and I could not therefore get it written down. This she did three times, and then kissed the medal, saying,—"Un

POTTERY.

I. FISH PILGRIM BOTTLE.
II. PILGRIM BOTTLES.
III. HOLY WATER STOUPS.
IV. CHURCH TILES.

[PLATE XXIII.]

II



II



I





III



II



III



IV



every night when thou art in bed, and no evil eye will ever harm thee or no ill come to thee, but thou must not miss even a night, and do not let thy father know thou doest it. And a beautiful young boy will come and marry thee." She then said that to make the charm of S. Domenico still more efficacious it should have wrapped in it three grains of pepper, three of wheat, and three of salt; it would then be very powerful, and the same formula must be gone through to prevent a thunderstorm. The woman promised to make me this amulet, and told me she would be my "partner" (*compare*). "Give me thy address, and if thou art afraid, or if any harm comes to thee, thou canst write to me, and someone will read thy letter and answer it for me. I will heal thee, and if thou doest what I have shown thee every night no ill will come, thy potatoes will grow, and thy land will be good." To convince me, she said she had always worn her medals and that they kept away all harm, and she also wore a little bit of iron similar to that which we bought in the square and the piece of cloth stamped with S. Domenico. The sign of the cross is made with the little piece of iron on any hurt place, and it cures it at once. "We had better not stay here longer," she added, "or thy father will wonder what we do, and thou must ask him for much money for me and speak well of me to him." I was amused with the woman, and wondered how much I could believe about the formula and the charms, but I afterwards found all correct. On our way back to the station she told me that she had cured many who had been looked at with the evil eye, and that only a few days ago a child who would not stop crying had been brought to her and that he had stopped at once. She said that when a star falls certain words are said to keep it from coming to

earth, and when a comet is seen there are many earthquakes and words are said to prevent them. She said that there had been many apparitions of the Madonna and S. Caterina, and, as far as I could make out, a special star and a full moon at that time.

The train was long in coming, so I went to the station door and looked down the road. Two girls were walking along, one with a donkey, and the other with a basket. The one with the donkey was dark, but the other had a mass of red-gold hair and was the first fair person I had seen in the Abruzzi. My woman followed me to the door, and when the girls came up she said,—"See the stranger from a country far away. Poor little one, she is afraid of the evil eye. She has no mother, but her father will not harm her. Poor little one, the evil eye has looked at her." The dark girl, whom I afterwards knew as Julia, thereupon gave me a rosebud which she was wearing, and the other girl gave me an apple which she had in her pocket. The girls began talking, and I tried to answer their numerous questions, the woman standing by nodding her head all the time, and repeating,—"Poor little one, the evil eye has looked at her." We went back to a seat in the station, the woman saying to me,—"Hast thou ever been to a witch?" I said "No, dost know of any? Can I see them?" She looked at me horrified, and I could see that she was frightened. She said, "Thou must never go to a witch. They only do much harm. They never do good." "Hast thou been to one? Are there any here?" I asked. "There are some, but I have never been. They do much harm. I know people who have been to them, but they only suffered much harm. Do what I have told thee and have no fear!" She shuddered, "A witch who did much harm was burnt near here, two years ago," she

said. I wondered at this queer mediæval statement, and how it all fitted in with the tone and atmosphere of the surrounding country.

The train was actually signalled, so, bidding good-bye to the woman, I said I should see her again when I returned. "I shall be here to meet thee," she answered. "I am the porter."

Two days after this talk with Maddalena we collected our things and returned to Cocullo by the last train that night. She was at the station, and she hoisted the box on to her head, and took a hold-all in one hand and a valise in another, telling us to follow her to the rooms the *archiprete* had found for us. It was dark when we arrived save for the brilliant moon. We were taken to a small house in the village with a flight of steps leading up to the doorway, which was ajar. Maddalena shouted, "Aow," and the head of a bearded old woman, with white hair hanging over her eyes and carrying a candle, appeared in the doorway. This was the hostess, who welcomed us and told us to mount the steps and come into the kitchen. We went up. There were sticks burning on the hearth, and the whole place was full of chickens, pots, coppers, clothes, and wood. The woman had a pleasant smile, and it was obvious she was going to do all she could for us. She told Julia (the girl who had given me the rosebud) to help Maddalena to bring up the box, and then, turning to us, said she would prepare a meal, and that she had eggs, macaroni, tomatoes, and coffee. We said it was quite enough, and asked to see our rooms. Out of the kitchen there was a small room full of different things, and out of that led another room a little larger. A ray of moonlight came through the window, and we saw that there were two unmade beds in the middle and various things lying

about everywhere. This was to be the bedroom, but we asked if we could move some of the furniture in the first room and drag a bed into it, and this she said we might do. I did not like the feel of the place, but the woman gave me perfectly clean linen out of a chest, and I made the beds. There was another room about the size of a cupboard out of the kitchen, and two children crawled from it; it was here the woman proposed to sleep with the children. Julia, Maddalena, another girl, and a peasant woman who brought water from the fountain all stood round and watched us having our meal. When it was finished, we went out for a moonlight walk. The village was small, and almost in a moment we found ourselves going down a mountain path. We gazed back at the village lighted up by the intense moonlight, and it looked like an Eastern fairy city. There were the church and *campanile* and irregular buildings with their white walls glowing in the strange ghostly light. From the windows a few candles flickered, and falling stars raced across the sky. It was intensely hot, and strange unknown scents were borne along in the night air. I had arranged a full day of hard work for the morrow, and I went to bed early, but I had only been in bed ten minutes when I felt something nibbling my toes, and I caught five large bugs. I got up, and put up the *livinge*, a kind of calico sack one ties oneself in, with a mosquito curtain top with canes to keep it away from one's face, and I got into it and went to bed again. But it was suffocatingly hot, and I spent nearly the whole of the night watching thirty bugs rushing up and down in the moonlight trying to find a hole through which they could get at me. I do not know what happened to my father. I heard him peacefully snoring all night, but next morning he looked as if

he had been feasted upon, and he agreed to my demand that we should leave that day almost without a word. When I had caught the thirty bugs, I dropped all our things into a basin of methylated spirit to finish up the numerous young ones which were all over the *livinge*, and when I told the woman, she made her usual reply, and said they were aristocratic bugs. I told the *archiprete* and the woman we should not be sleeping in the village that night. The only person who understood why we left was the stationmaster, for he had tried to sleep in the village and found it impossible. We did not tell the *archiprete* the reason we left, for he had taken a lot of trouble to find the aristocratic woman with the aristocratic home, and after one day's work we went back to Sulmona, returning to the village every day to finish the work.

The *archiprete* arranged everything in the church for me, and each time Maddalena insisted on meeting me at the station and escorting me in state to the church. I worked there all day, having lunch on the steps outside, and she watched my things while I went to the woman at whose house we had slept, to have coffee. Luckily for me the peasants were mostly in a good temper, and looked upon the proceeding as a *devozione*, but this is not always the case, for on a former occasion, when an Italian artist tried to photograph the procession, they nearly killed him, and he only escaped by flying for his life. They thought the camera lens was the evil eye, because a heavy summer thunderstorm swept up over the mountains and the large hailstones and rain destroyed their crops.

In North Italy I had had experience of the terrific hail-storms,—hail the size of a pigeon's egg,—which suddenly arose apparently from nowhere. Away in the distance, in a clear blue summer sky, I have seen a cloud "the size

of a man's hand." In a quarter of an hour a storm with hail, rain, thunder, and lightning has swept past, leaving behind desolation and ruin; cattle killed, houses struck, and stalls on the market square beaten to shreds. Then all was serene again, with a clear blue sky and summer sun. I have watched these storms from a window, and verily they seem as if magicians and evil spirits were at war, destroying everything in their wake. In South Italy, where the dread of earthquakes is added so much more frequently to the weapons of Nature, the terrified superstitions of the peasants and their charms against Nature's misfortunes are not surprising.

It was Cocullo which was one of the places which suffered most in the earthquake of 1915, and the greater part of the village and most of the church fell with the shocks. Many lost their lives, among those who were killed being some of my friends.

The peasants believe that an eclipse is the sun fighting the moon, and, if the sun lost, the world would come to an end. While they are quarelling the sun throws dung at the moon, and these are the moon spots. When the moon changes, if anyone touches any diseased place which they have, it will be healed, because the moon takes it away, and they say,—

Zite sî jite zzite sî minute
Livime 'stu maler che mm'a cadute.

[Silently you, New Moon, went, and silently you came,
Relieve me of this sore which has befallen me.]

and then recite a Pater, Ave, and Gloria.

Spirits are recognised in the approach of clouds and thunderstorms, and clouds go to the sea to fetch water before rain. Each cloud has a different significance. Black clouds mean pouring rain, lightning, and wind.

Red mean wind, and white mean hail. The biggest cloud is the king, the next is the queen, the small ones are the captain, sergeant, and troops. It is these small clouds which at day break are the forerunners of storm; they are believed to be wolves and flags; on the Majella they are the male spirits, and on the Pallano they are female. In summer they fight. Devils and bad spirits make the hail, and it is believed that the greater the snow on the mountains the more hail there will be, because the bad spirits have more materials with which to make it (Lanciano), Monte Corno's top is nearly always covered in snow and is the devil's favourite place for working, and from there the hurricanes generally start. The damned souls ride the cloud and strike (create) the lightning, while the cloud creates the hail, which runs in the middle of the hurricane.

The *vutuarelle*, *turcinejje*, and *duvuru* are the bad spirits which surround people and assemble where murders were committed, and the souls of unbaptised babies join them, but all have no place to rest. The souls of the murdered also wander, but by prayer and charitable actions they can at last rest in peace. Whirlwinds also form themselves where anyone has been murdered or killed. It is a relief to find that there are also the jolly sort of whirlwinds which are formed by the amusing spirits called *Le mazzemarelle;* they are small and wear red caps, dance in the open, and play with women, raising their petticoats. Children who are innocent can see them. Sometimes they are described as dwarfs, who disappear like will o' the wisps. There is a saying,—"*Inotte mazzamarielle mi s'è jettente 'ncuolle, joje vulaja gridiè e n n'haje puteute; dapuò z'ha fatta una risata e è scumparse.*" (To-night the *mazzemarelle* threw themselves on me. I wanted

to scream, but could not. Then they laughed and disappeared). It is possible to kill the *mazzemarelle* (*mazzamocca*) with a loaded stick.

It is nearly always possible to get protection against these numerous ills. There is a proverb which says,—"*Alberi fulminati non vanno spenti.*" (Trees struck by lightning should not be extinguished.) Danger from lightning may also be averted by putting up at the window a knife or hatchet with the side or point sharpened, or, if in the fields, the implement should be stuck in the ground with its point up. The thunder which strikes straight from the sky forms flint arrow-heads (*saetta*); small thunder strikes zig-zag, making *gocce* (small globules), and the *pietra del fulmine* (thunder stone) protects those who wear it hung round their necks from lightning, betrayals, and all ills. It also protects the seven houses nearest to it (Atri; Teramo), and near where it fell a *canna* (sturdy rush) comes out of the ground each year for seven years; if a girl wants her hair to grow well, she ties a single hair round the *canna*. It will then grow at the same rate as the *canna*, and this is why so many have beautiful hair. There are many other kinds of stones which are protections from ill, and they must never be worked with iron; they must either be worn in their natural shape or corroded by water. The following is told of an old woman who possessed a *legno stregonio*, a piece of wood of the *Ilex Agrifolium* which she kept near the bed of her baby to protect it against witches. After fifty years she was persuaded to sell it, but before parting with it altogether she scraped it with a piece of glass and kept the scrapings, as otherwise witches would have entered her house. This fossilised wood is sold by the monks at Monte Malbe near Perugia, made up in the form of a cross.

It is recorded that the famous painter, Luca Signorelli, at the age of sixty-nine, when painting in a church at Arezzo, was visited by Giorgio Vasari, the well-known historian. During his visit Vasari, through sudden hæmorrhage, fainted and collapsed. Signorelli immediately took from his pocket a *pietra sanguigna*, and put it between Vasari's shoulder blades, and Vasari at once recovered. (*Pietre sanguigne* are small red stones, which on account of their colour are supposed to stop bleeding.)

I found that I had to keep the peasants well in hand, or otherwise it would have been impossible to work. Once a group got excited and threatened an attack, but I sat down on the steps outside the church and ate my bread and eggs and drank their health in water from my flask. They were much interested at these proceedings, and wanted to go and get me wine and coffee; they squatted round me, leaning their elbows and hands on my knees, till the repast was finished.

Peasants and children were always trying to come and see what was happening, and on several occasions, when they got too noisy, I took them by their shoulders and put them out of the church. The *serpari* brought me some splendid serpents, and I let them bite my hands to see how strong they were, but with all their strength the bite was scarcely more than the prick of a pin. One serpent was blind but he was very strong, and when he curled round my arm and waist he could squeeze hard, and it was difficult to get him away. When put on the ground the serpents had a curious swishing movement as they came towards me, with their heads swaying in the air. Their skins were beautiful, varying from creamy yellow with brown markings to markings of greeny brown. I had a good opportunity of watching them, for the

serpari kept them for me for several days, after which they were again let go in the mountains. Maddalena scarcely ever left me. She ran all my messages, and by the end of the week she had learnt that when I said a thing I meant it, and she obeyed without further question. One day, when the sacristan's wife carried my things back to the station while Maddelena was selling amulets, she even controlled her anger so much that she only shook her fist at me, demanding, why had I let that other woman do such a thing as she would not get so much money. I answered,—"*Un poco per uno fa male a nessuno.*" (A little for everyone harms no one.) I added too, that it would make no difference to the money she got, and that she must not be jealous. She again shook her fist, and told me to be quiet, for fear that the sacristan's wife who was walking in front should hear.

In one of our walks to the station she told me that, when the bride goes from the church to the bridegroom's house, on the threshold she meets her mother-in-law bearing a plate of corn and cakes in her hands. The mother-in-law takes a handful to put in the bride's bosom, or in a handkerchief held by her, and says,—"*Ecco il grano, e portami la pace.*" (Here is the corn, and bring me peace.) "*Ecco i confetti, e portami rispetto.*" (Here are the cakes, have for me respect.) She then throws down the plate, smashing it, and says,—"*Maschi e femminine!*" (Boys and girls.) The corn and confetti are always kept by the bride.

She also said that at Easter a Benediction is given through an opening in the sky, through which the Almighty passes His arm to bless. The people put their dresses, crowns, and images outside on the windows for this blessing, and the girls at Easter burn olive branches to know their luck,—

Pasqua Blufanije cha vví 'na vota l'anne,
Dimme che ssort'ajja' vè ogg-i-a ll'anne.

[Easter which comes for next year,
Tell me what will happen in the year.]

If their olive leaves burn quietly, it is a good omen, but if they creak, turn, or jump, it is bad.

It is round S. Giovanni's Eve that there are the most interesting traditions. On that night the waters of the rivers and fountains have special virtues, and the sun and moon bathe in them. The dew is also beneficial. Invalids are wrapped in sheets wet with it, and women with a headache comb their hair amongst the rushes at dawn, for, where there is much dew, their hair will grow. They also wash their faces in it, and this is why they are so beautiful. Next morning, the moment the sun rises, many bathe in the sea at Pescara, or in the rivers, because, as the sun washes itself three times in the ocean, people must do it likewise. Each time a little cloud like cotton wool dries its face, and the sun dances out. Everyone looks at the rising sun from the highest point to see it wash in the sea ; it is a solemn moment ! Flowers gathered on S. Giovanni's Day are sacred, and the small bunches (*ramajette*) sent by friends are replaced by others on S. Pietro's Day. Sometimes, however, they are also replaced on the same day (Castiglione). Two who send flowers to each other become *comare* or *compari;* this is the meaning of the dialect saying,—"He is my S. Giovanni." (S. Giovanni is the patron saint of the *comparatico*, or *compare*, which means good spiritual relationship.) The breaking of this relationship is sacrilege, and is as awful as breaking the sacraments of baptism and marriage, and is subject to terrible punishments. There are other ways of becoming *compari;* a child may pull hair from another child, or one calls the other *compare* three times.

Two boys or two girls may exchange flowers, then join their little fingers one with the other, and go round the principal altar of the church, where the feast is held, three times, singing,—

"*Cummar 'e coumbare,*	[Partner, let us be partners,
Nghe ssan Guivanne care,	Here is dear S. Giovanni's Day,
La féda che tt'attoche	The faith attached to it
Nné la huastà ca vije a la morte	Saves me from death,
Catenella, Catenelle,	Catenella, Catenelle,
Nné la huastà ca vije a le mbèrne."	Saves me from destruction.]

(At Lanciano the last line instead is: '*Chi le stucche va a lu mbèrne.*)

Another interesting variation at Isernia is on the eve of Carnival. A big wooden cross is erected covered with myrtle, boxwood, and rosemary, on which are hung small glass lamps, which remain lighted all night. In the evening those who wish to become *comare* join and take each other's hand, and go round the cross three times. Then one of them pulls out one of his or her companion's hairs and puts it on his or her forehead, saying,—

"*Tiriamoci un capello a mano a mano,*	[Let us pull one hair step by step,
E non ci guastiamo più a comare."	And let us not quarrel any more as *comare*.]

Afterwards they go to the fountain, and one washes the other's right foot, after which, holding each other's little finger, they say,—

"*Comare, comarella,*	[Partner, little partner,
Spartiamoci l'anello,	Let us divide the ring,
L'anello si a spartito,	The ring is divided,
Le comare son finite."	Partnership is completed.]

They remain *comare* for ever, but generally they do not marry each other.

Another way for two persons to unite themselves together for life and death, is the well-known one of blood brotherhood, to transfuse their blood respectively into each other by scratching or pricking with a thorn and pressing the drops together, or each swallowing the drop of blood from the other person.

During S. Giovanni's Eve the flowers of *sambuco* (elder-berry), of *malva* (mallow), the *absinthe*, mint, and other herbs are gathered for drying, to be used against all kinds of diseases, and to make children strong. Lazy trees are frightened into bearing fruit quicker by striking their trunks, with the words,—*O me djie, o te djienghe*. (Bear, or be beaten), and going round three times repeating the words. The cattle are expected to feed during S. Giovanni's Eve on practically nothing; therefore very little is put in the manger compared with what is put in other nights. On this same magical eve the *felce* (fern) blooms, which is never seen before, and at the moment it flowers it goes into seed and drops the seed (*fiurisce e sfurisce*). It would be *bad* to look at it at that moment. Those who put a handkerchief under it, go to the crossing of the ways and stand leaning their chins on a fork to see all the witches, magicians, and devils jeering them. They also see, first the good spirit, next the bad, and then the spirits of the murdered. On the other hand, they may be fortunate enough to find their handkerchief full of seed, and this would be a most powerful talisman to obtaining whatever they wished, because the seed has an irresistible power to bend the will of anybody. Young people collect the galls (*gallozze*) of the elm trees, because at that time they contain the oil of S. Giovanni, for anointing their hair to make it grow strong and quickly.

One day, just as I was finishing work, the *archiprete*

rushed over to the church and said the pilgrims were coming. I went to the side door, and, looking towards the mountain path in the distance, saw the pilgrims arriving in a procession carrying a crucifix at their head. They chanted litanies as they came. At first the singing was faint and distant, but it grew in intensity as the procession came over the last bend on the mountain side, and the singing continued until the peasants reached the church door. I had just time to bundle my things together while the *archiprete* threw open the large door, and then the pilgrims arrived. Then the singing stopped and they all knelt, kissing the church steps before they entered. The *archiprete* took the crucifix from them, and they entered two by two on their knees and again began singing litanies. Various peasants from the village had by this time assembled, and they knelt or sat round the church door. When the last men of the procession were going in on their knees, one of the women who were with them put down her child, who was about five years old, to follow also on his knees. He was dressed like a little girl. The woman then lay flat on her face, and came into the church crawling along on her hands and knees and licking the rough dirty pavement. The procession went to the statue of S. Domenico, and there each peasant knelt and kissed some part of the figure, or rubbed it with their hands and then kissed them, repeating prayers as they did so. They then knelt or stood in an irregular semi-circle until the crawling woman arrived. When she sat up her tongue was bleeding. She kissed the saint, repeated her oraison, and, with the peasants still kneeling and standing round her, she undressed her boy. When she had taken everything off, her husband gave her a clumsy knife, and she cut all the child's toe nails and finger

nails, and also cut off a large tuft of hair. These, together with all the old clothes she had taken off the child, she gave to the *archiprete* as an offering for the saint. The child sat on the stone steps without anything on while the mother again kissed the statue. She rubbed her fingers on it, and then touched the child with them and also made him cross himself. He seemed to enjoy the whole process, and when at last after much struggling she got him into knickerbockers and a little shirt, he stood up and laughed. The father then took a pair of boots out of his bundle. They were as new and stiff as could possibly be. The boy was promptly made to sit down, the mother trying to get his foot into a boot. After a great deal of banging of the half-booted foot on the floor, she could not get it on very far, and the child stood up and tried to jump it on. But is was not much good, and the busband came to the rescue and forced the foot in. It was evidently the first time the child had had boots on, and he was delighted and began to jump. The mother pulled him down on the ground again, and tried to put on the other boot, but it was useless. The child struggled and banged his foot on the ground, the husband tried all he could, and other peasants came to help, but the boot would not go on. Finally the boy trotted out of church waving his cap, with one foot in a boot and the other bare, whilst the husband put the impossible boot back in his bundle. Then everyone wandered round to look at the painted serpent and other designs in relief round the frieze and over the altar, and to ring the bell with their teeth to prevent themselves having toothache. Men and boys also ring the bells in the *campanile*. Gradually they all left the church to buy amulets from the peasants who were standing outside selling them. The *archiprete* told us

that every year this woman comes to perform the same ceremony to fulfil a vow which she made, because the boy, who was now five, was bitten by a dog when he was a year old. As he did not die, she came on a pilgrimage, walking four days to visit the saint. I asked if the child always wore a silk handkerchief on his head, and was dressed like a girl when he entered the church, but this the *archiprete* said he had not noticed. When we asked the parents if their child was always dressed as a girl, they said, "Yes, to deceive the devil until after the ceremony." Otherwise, the devil would know it was their little boy, and would do something to prevent their vow from being fulfilled. One man said that he had been on many of these pilgrimages, going through the mountains to the different saints one after the other, and that sometimes all the pilgrims licked the church floors to fulfil vows they had made. Sometimes they arranged to meet at a certain place, but he said that several times he and his wife had lost their way in the mountains and with their children had wandered about for days without any food. That night the pilgrims were to sleep in the village, and some of them were to be allowed in the other church at the end of the village, which was nearly empty.



Fountain at Aquila

See page 167.

ON THE WAY TO ISERNIA.



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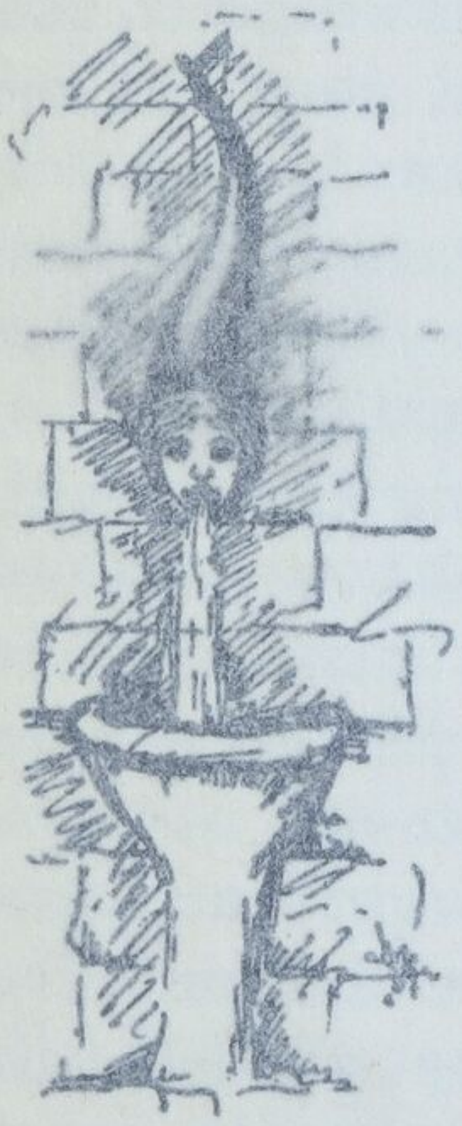

Fountain at Aquila
See page 167.



Chapter XVIII.

Isernia and the 'little old woman.'



On Pilgrimage.

"*Voio nzegnià la fratta a ru lúpe?*" [Wantest thou to follow the wolf over the hedge?]

WE next went to Isernia, where we arrived late at night. Our baggage was put down by the road-side. I walked up and down beside it while my father went to see if he could find rooms. These he secured, and also a semi-raw steak floating in warm oil. I peered into the darkness, but could only just distinguish olive orchards and what looked like stone-pines, and in the distance the mountains. Next morning was a *festa*, and early I saw the peasants passing beneath my window in the costumes of their different villages. Both men and women wore thick white knitted stockings with *coce* the thongs of which were bound up their legs as far as the knee. The one narrow street of the place was crowded with peasants coming and going from market. When we went to the

piazza we found it full of peasants and goods, and even the church steps were covered with crockery which was for sale. There was also a small merry-go-round, swings, and other entertainments. We went down the street, and found parts of it so narrow that one could shake hands across it. Most of the peasants wore immense elongated heart-shaped silver clasps five or six inches in length, with complicated designs, which were fastened to their shoulders to hold up their richly-embroidered, gold and silver lace-covered bodices. These bodices were very brilliant, and they also had rosettes and bows of different coloured ribbons all down the sleeves. The peasants wore two or three rows of gold and silver beads, and they had gold earrings hanging right down on to their shoulders. Most of the earrings were large crescents and stars, and I saw one woman with a big triangle of gold hanging under the crescent. They wore rings on their fingers, and altogether they gave one the impression of being covered with gold and silver and colour. The headdresses were quite small, white handkerchiefs with wide borders of rich lace. Some of them were a deep cream colour, but I saw one blue one with orange stripes. Later on in the day, just before Mass, the market place became even more crowded with peasants buying and selling and amusing themselves at the different swings and other entertainments. After a time a queer dark man in a long old brown coat set up a broken chair on a stand. On the ground in front of it he put a small cardboard box. He said his wife was a clairvoyant and called her. She mounted the platform, sat on the chair, and the man blindfolded her eyes with a handkerchief. A crowd of peasants encircled the platform, and then the man hypnotised her, or pretended to do so, and she began muttering

and shouting what was going to happen to the various peasants. The man got out a reed pipe, and, almost squatting on his heels, he began piping strange long drawn-out notes to the cardboard box as he bent over it. He swayed with this music, and said that a little animal was underneath and that when it heard the sound of the piping it would move the box and come out. We watched this curious crowd for some time, until the box moved, and the hat was passed round and coins put in. The bell then rang for Mass, and a great number of the peasants went into the church, chattering and gesticulating as they went.

We wandered down the narrow village street to the open country. It was the hottest time of day, and we sat down on the edge of a vineyard. There was a trickle of water down a steep bank, the side of which was overgrown with tall bamboos. To the left were olive orchards, and in front, close by us, were groups of large stone-pines. All round us were the mountains, with here and there a village perched on the steepest slopes. It was refreshing to be in the quiet after the stuffiness and noise of the market-place. Curious clouds like the most beautiful plumes and delicate net-work, and others looking like thin white witches with pointed wands and lances, rose behind the olives, and for a long time we lay and watched them change their shapes and melt away. The sound of distant voices and the tread of feet reached us, and we looked down the road between the stone-pines. Families of peasants were slowly coming along. Women in white head-dresses rode on mules and donkeys with children and babies, and their husbands, armed or carrying long poles and coloured umbrellas, walked by their sides. The women who walked carried their babies in a kind of sling,

and the husbands rode; other children were learning to ride, sitting on the haunches of the animals. They were all going to market to buy or sell goods, and had come from far away in the mountains. Men folk will not let their women folk come alone, and, as the latter also will not let their husbands come alone, the result is that the whole family comes together. We followed them, and presently came to a bank by the roadside with steps leading to a piece of dried-up grass on top. There was a high cross on a stone pedestal, and steps round its base, and beyond were the cream and white plaster walls which encircled the convent garden. A door opened in this wall, and the Mother Superior, who was so old and bent that she could scarcely walk, tottered out. She was followed by nuns in white caps and grey gowns. They brought a chair and a table, and the Mother Superior sat down, bottles and bandages were put on the table, and the nuns stood round. Then the sick and the crippled, who had been sitting and lying by the roadside waving their broken and diseased limbs towards us and asking for alms, struggled up the steps to her to be attended to. Their silent, pathetic appeal, the Eastern character of the country with the hot sun beating down, and the gentle way in which the Mother Superior bandaged their limbs and gave medicine, made me think of the Healer of long ago, wandering amongst the peasants of Palestine. Gratefully the peasants went on their way, but some stopped to rest in the shadow on the steps of the cross. There was one old blind woman, covered with sores and wrapped in a brown cloak and led by her old husband, who sat there a very long time. Other women with sores had cotton wool on their foreheads stuck on with sticking plaster, always in the shape of a cross, one arm of which came down

the nose. The families of peasants nearly all brought offerings for the Mother Superior,—eggs, fruit, or whatever they had. The mother of the family took them to her, or sent one of the children. At the flight of steps they crossed themselves, bobbed, and then took their offerings, when they again crossed themselves before running off after their animals. Some had no offerings, and they just bobbed and crossed themselves at the steps and then went on. There was one family of most extraordinary people, a man and two women. They had evidently come from a village very far away, and were more frightened and shy of us than any of the others. Their faces were rather thin and pointed and a deep olive, and quite different from any other types we had seen. The women had thick black hair parted neatly, and a white Eastern-looking material bound round a little above their foreheads and hanging down their backs in two long streamers. They had very coarse bulky skirts and bodices of brown woollen material, cut rather low, with standing-out pointed flaps and cuffs lined with scarlet, which they used as pockets. They had narrow, coloured aprons in front, and small aprons behind, also of some Eastern-looking stuff woven in coloured stripes. The whole costume, including the streamers of the head-dress, was bound down below the hips with a thick piece of a light blue kind of flannel. The women also had short trousers, white stockings, and the thongs of the *coce* wound up their legs. The man had baggy purple velvet trousers, *coce*, and white stockings, a blue shirt, brown waistcoat, and deep leather belt with red, green, and yellow tabs and laces, and a brown slouchy hat. We tried to make friends with them, but they kept turning their backs to us and looking on the ground, and finally

they went off to the market. They were from Gallo, and tradition tells how the origin of their costume was because a great sinking took place in the middle of the village, threatening its destruction. The population in despair made a vow henceforward to dress with the same cloth as that of the friars, but, as they did not fulfil their vow, the sinking came again, and stopped only when the vow was kept.

On our way we passed a chapel with prints of hands on the plaster walls. They were all left hands, and only on one side of the chapel. I had noticed this in several villages. It was explained to me that men and boys dip their hand in something black and then put it flat on the wall, to leave a print of the whole hand. They do this for luck when they grow up, or before going on a journey, or before marriage. In some cases some of the fingers were missing, and one or two had only the palm and the thumb. I believe occasionally they make a print of the left hand before marriage, and then add the right hand after marriage, but the peasant who told me this did not want to say much about it, and was rather indefinite. He said that at the village of S. Cosimo dolls are sold in the saint's honour, and all draw their hands on the church walls and on the entrance pavement, with pencil, chalk, or a nail, and they also write their names and the date.

We went out into the country at the other end of the village, and wandered through the olive orchards. From the road we heard the continual shout of "Ah, Ah," as the peasants and their animals returned to the mountains.

Looking towards the sunset, the road led away into the mountains, which were already becoming purple, for the sun was sinking. The mountain ranges formed an amethyst rampart cutting off the magic country of the

Abruzzi from the world beyond. Twilight was descending, and then we met the "little old woman" (*vecchiarella*) who had promised us the stories. She greeted us with,—"When thou hearest words of hope, say,—'Let the angel pass, Amen,' but if wrong is expected, cry out 'Let God's angel not hear it.'"

The "little old woman" invited us to her house to hear what she had to tell us. We went up her creaky wooden stairs by the light of a dim old lamp of Roman shape to a small dark room in an upper storey. The street which it looked out on was so narrow, one could shake hands with one's neighbour in the opposite window. The "little old woman" was keen to tell all she knew. She sat down, drew her chair close up to me, put a hand on each of my knees, and talked as hard and as fast as she could, and almost as if she were reciting a lesson. She described how, at Lent, a puppet is made up of black rags about twenty inches high, with a ring inside the skirt on which are hung samples of the food eaten during Easter,—cod, bloaters, crowns of dried figs, chestnuts, nuts, and a small bottle of oil. An orange or a potato is hung in the centre, with seven feathers stuck in it. These are pulled out on each consecutive Sunday. In its hand the puppet holds a distaff and hemp, which is taken away on *Sabbato Santo* (Easter Saturday). Carnival is also represented by a woman doll cut out of paper with seven feet, one of which is taken away every Sunday. It is put under the chimney with a basket of fish over its head and a distaff at the side (S. Pelino). Sometimes a doll with seven feathers is hung from a rope between two houses. In some villages the puppet is made of an orange, a doll's head, and forty feathers stuck in for the skirt. Each day in Lent a feather is pulled out, and finally the orange is taken right away and

thrown into the Tiber. I was told there was more of this custom, but could not trace it, and I could not definitely make out to which villages in the Abruzzi it belonged. At mid-Carnival, when the bells are rung, there is a tradition that the old woman is being sawn.

On the last day of Carnival, the Carnival figure is dressed as a shepherd in sheepskin and large hat, with a stick. The Easter figure is dressed in old worn-out clothes with a frying pan. They go round with the figure singing,—

"*Mi sono impegnato il catenaccio*	[I have pawned the door bolt
Per comperarmi un gallinaccio."	To buy a turkey.]

Easter answers,—

"*Io son tanto poverella*	[I am so poor
Ho impegnato la padella	I have pawned the door bolt
Per comprar una sardella."	To buy a sardine.]

Finally a straw puppet is made, put on a ladder, or a bar, and carried round, a mock Requiem Mass said upon it with lighted candles (*moccoletti*), and "*E morto il Carnevale*" (Carnival is dead) is sung.

At Easter the priest comes to bless the different houses and the *pizza* (a kind of tart of eggs) is made, which he blesses, together with *salami* (sausages), eggs, and sheep. On Easter Day, before eating the *pizza* and the other food, a paternoster is said. At S. Biagio, wine bottles, bread, and salt are blessed during Mass.

On *Giovedi Santo* (Holy Thursday), pots of corn, lentils, flax, and lupins are taken to the Easter Sepulchre in the church. The plants are grown in boxes and kept in the dark to make them pale, and heated by braziers to quicken their growth. They are tied in bunches with coloured ribbons and are left in the church from Wednesday evening

until Good Friday evening, when they are carried in procession, by the women and the children sing "Stabat Mater Dolorosa, Juxta Crucem lacrymosa." Shops are open and show their wares. The butchers have a large quantity of lambs and kids killed for the occasion, the carcases being decorated with ribbons. The windows of the village are illuminated, the shops are full of sugar lambs and chocolate eggs, and all cradles, basins, *conche*, glasses, pails, *amphore* (jars), and other utensils are decorated. The plants which have been blessed are kept religiously, and then left in the middle of the fields, because they bring good fortune and ensure good crops.

The following day, Good Friday, the Easter Sepulchre in the church is guarded by two or four guards in armour, with swords or spears, representing the Jews. They begin to go to sleep and suddenly fall with a great noise (*bocconi*), flat on their faces, until the priest, when taking the Sacrament, sings the "Vexilla." Then they rise, look into the Sepulchre, and not finding Our Saviour come away, following the procession with the points of their swords and spears pointing downwards.

On the Saturday of the Resurrection, guns and mortars are fired, bells rung, and peasants scream and sing and make a great noise to expel the devil from the houses, where on the death of Our Saviour he has taken refuge. On this same morning many do not light the fire unless the priest lights it in solemn ceremony. Neighbours bring firewood, which is kindled from the priest's fire. Some of the ashes are put in a hole outside the wall of the house, and the rest put in a tree to keep misfortune away from the house and fields. The ashes of the last fire lighted are put in the fireplace and in the water for the *minestra*. They are a protection against sore throats, and

if three drops of wax from the three candles lit by the priest for the new fire drop on anyone's hat, that person is safe against lightning, provided he keeps his hat on.

On the eve of Ascension Day an egg is put on the window-sill outside. When it is blessed by the passing of the Madonna it remains for ever sound.

Finally, on Ascension Day all the owners of animals, (cows and goats), compliment each other by exchanging their milk. With this they bake their *minestra* of paste or rice. This is in honour of the festivity, because our Saviour ascended to heaven distributing milk. During the procession a large pail of milk is kept in the piazza, and the clergy and others drink it from a ladle, wishing good luck to the cattle and the sheep returning from Apulia.

The light in the little room became more uncertain, for the oil from the small lamp was burning low. I hoped it would last, for I felt the least disturbance would check the talk. Several peasants, who had heard we were up in this little room, had climbed the rickety wooden stairs, which creaked in spite of their care not to disturb us. They stood in the doorway, smoking and listening, then they entered and also joined in the conversation; they had lost their fear of the stranger, and were so interested, and themselves intent on what they were saying, that they continued regardless of time or surroundings, and we sat on listening long into the night. One of them was from Chieti, and another from Ortona. They had come for the market, and it was fortunate for me that they were in Isernia just at this time. Giuseppe of Accumoli said that in the time of King Ferdinand of Bourbon there was a schoolroom facing the Municipality, where the Satan ball was danced at the Carnival. All

danced in their shirts, and when the clock struck midnight every light was put out. A certain Valegnani, when the clock struck twelve, went from the room, leaving his partner alone. The following evening he again went to the ball; when the lights went out, the woman who was his partner the previous evening had him put into a sack and rolled down the steps of the entrance. The same man was afterwards accused, tried, and shot under a tree, in the wood of Difesa Vecchi (1860). During the night his children hid his body, first burying it under a manure heap, and then in the *carnajo* (common grave).

Carlo, one of the peasants, asked if we knew how the peasants on 1st May make the *lessata* (stock-pot) with Indian corn, oats, peas, beans, big beans, wheat, etc., and distribute it among their neighbours for a pledge of abundance. Those who ask for it say,—

"*Padrona, dammi la lessata di majo,*
Possa far piei grano che paglia.
Se tu non me la vuoi dar,
Possa fare tutta paglia."

[Mistress, give me the *lessata* of May,
Mayest thou make more corn than straw.
If thou wishest not to give it me,
Mayest thou make only straw.]

At Pescocostanzo, on the 1st May, children carry on their heads baskets, in the centre of which there is an old onion in flower. They stop at each house singing,—

"*O cute majo,*
Fiore di cavallo,
Fiore di montone,
Se saluto alla padrona."

[O May,
Flower of the horse,
Flower of the sheep,
Salutation to the mistress.]

and the mistress then gives them a plate of grain.

Carlo also said that, when sowing in October, peasants give their embers to light other people's fires, as otherwise

their wheat would suffer from the *befana* and their maize from the *tizzone* (two diseases, *tizzone* meaning "brand").

From October to May, nearly all the men of Capracotta take their flocks to Apulia. Others go to Latium or Calabria to make charcoal in the woods or to sell their speciality, saddles made with hooks for carrying things. Their wives complain of their absence in song, "*Marito me'nce pozzi ariveni, Vuo'bene chiu all' aino che no a mi.*" (Husband, canst thou not return, Thou lovest more the lamb than me.) The husband answers,—"*Mogliera me', te puozze consula, senza dell' aino non se po' campa.*" (My wife, thou canst console thyself, without the lamb we cannot live.) Winter is very hard at Capracotta, which is 5000 feet above the sea and is the highest village of the Abruzzi. The houses are often blocked by snow or ice, and the only way to get out is to climb through the windows. The women wear their stockings over their boots, so as not to slip, and sing,—"*La luna di Jennaio*" or "*La campana di Maggio.*" ("The moon of January" or "The bell of May.") The "bell" means the "din don" of the return of flocks.

In Capracotta the church (Chiesa Madra) and the small chapel of the Madonna di Loreto are a mile from the village. Behind the altar of the chapel there is a Madonna in a blue gown, with diadem and necklaces covered with jewellery, and silver and gold *ex votos*. She is hidden by a curtain, which is pulled aside for her to be seen. Her body is the upper part of the trunk of a tree cut down in the forest, the pedestal being the lower part of the trunk, the Madonna having appeared on this tree in the wood. When the rumour of her apparition spread, the trunk was taken to Chiesa Madra, but the Madonna herself again returned to the wood. The feast of this Madonna is

every three years on the 8th September, and at the same time as that of the mules. The Madonna is taken round the village, escorted by draped mules, to the Chiesa Madre in procession. In the evening of the third and last day of the feast, the mules, mounted by their masters, form a semi-circle before the church, and follow the procession, with lighted torches, carrying the Madonna and stopping at the houses, in front of which small tables are arranged with lighted candles for the donations and *ex votos* which are given to the Madonna on her return to the chapel.

It grew very late. The oil lamp had flickered out. A brilliant square patch of moonlight fell on the floor, its reflected light dimly illuminating the faces of the peasants, who still puffed away at their pipes. My "little old woman" had drawn her ancient shawl closely round her, for there was a freshness in the night air blowing from the distant hills. There were queer noises in the loft overhead, from rats. But I was accustomed to rats running along beams and rafters while I slept, and I scarcely noticed them. They too were part of the world of legend. I looked up at the little patch of sky visible between the roofs of the opposite house. In spite of the bright moonlight the stars were brilliant. "It is bright as the night of Christmas," said "the little old woman," "and those rats, they make a noise, but thou knowest before Christ all animals spoke; now, they speak only at Christmas and Whitsuntide nights, and both animals who speak and those who listen to them die, and the stables and bed of the animals are therefore made ready before the Ave Maria. It is at the moment when the *Bambino* was born they talk, and all donkeys kneel and the ends of the horns of the cattle become luminous, but no visits are paid at Christmas, because only witches born on that night go about."

"What happens when the stars fall?" I asked. "Everyone has their star," she answered, "and the strong have the bright ones. Falling stars are departing souls; when anyone dies a star is extinguished, and where they fall they bring misfortune. Children, when they die, are innocent, and go 'to marry God' (*sposare Dio*), and from the windows we throw confetti on to the coffin." I was still looking at the stars,—"When thou praisest or admirest, mention God (*Ddi l'abbendiche*) or there will be misfortune," she said.

Next day we were leaving for North Italy and home,—London. The modern world was a far-away dream, and my thoughts dwelt on our present mediæval surroundings, the amethyst hills, and the crimson sunset, and these simple peasants whose confidence we had gained and who were now our friends. Outside in the moonlight was the distant range of mountains, the faint whisper of the night breeze in the stone-pines, and beyond?

* * * * * *

Just as I had finished this book a young Abruzzese, now tall and sunburnt, who was a child at the time of the earthquake in 1915, sleeping out on the mountain side, came to see me. He has settled in England, and has married. He brought me a piece of wedding cake, some silver sugar bells, and sugar confetti with almonds to wish me "Good Luck."

APPENDIX.

The following song is in Marchi dialect (Marchigiano), the Marche being the province next to the Abruzzi on the North side, and this song was given me in London by an Italian from the Marche, as a very welcome appendix.

LE DISGRAZIE DE JAMPA.	GIAMPIETRO'S MISFORTUNE.
Ma dicetimi 'mpò se se pò dà	[But tell me if you can find
N'omu più sfortunato de Jampa!	A more unfortunate man than Giampietro!
C'ia n'agnilittu che adera un jojéllu,	He had a lamb which looked like a jewel,
Bianco como la nea, tumittu e bellu:	White as snow, rather fat and beautiful.
Me lu'lleava pe'rrecallu in donu	I missed carrying it as an offering
A Jesu mamminellu ch'è scì bonu.—	To Jesus, little Babe, who is so good.
Ma a quistu munnu 'nse pò fa 'na pigna,	But in this world one cannot make a pot,
Che te la soccia lu momò per tigna.	But it is broken for revenge by the devil.
Um jornu me te scappa de la stalla,	One day from the stable the lamb escaped,
E me se 'ttacca fugghì pe'na valla.	And began to run down the valley, jumping like a kid.
Sardia como un caprittu. Li frichì	
Non pensa como se po ghi a firnè. .	The children do not know how it will end.
Rvaco a pigliallu, non me crédete!	I go to fetch it, you won't believe it,
Corre l'agnellu, Jampa corre arréte;	The lamb runs, and Giampietro runs after it,
Currimo dumeddù me pare gglià	We two run,—I thought already
D'aellu co la coda tra le mà.	To have its tail in my hands!
Quann'ecco da'nsitàcciu niru e cupu	When from a nasty dark hole
Te scappa fora un virbacciò d'un lupu.—	Flies out a rascal of a wolf.
Me se jelò lo sango pé la vita:	My blood froze in my breast:
Desse,—"Poru Jampà, mo scì e furnita!	I said,—"Poor Giampietro now it is finished!
Poru agnellitu mio! quillo virbò,	My poor lamb, that rascal

Lu pappa su como un fico vordò,
Will eat it up like a ripe fig,

Te se pozza rremponne, te se pozza,
I wish it would stick in his throat!

Lupaccio maledittu, che te strozza!"
Cursed ugly wolf, be thou strangled!"

Ma le disgrazie ecco, non ha fì;
But misfortunes in this world never end;

M'era natu un parittu de gaglì;
A pair of hens had been hatched (in my pen);

Non me te vrentra, unnì jà lu puglià.
You won't believe it, but one day enters the fox.

La gorba, che se pozza scortega.
Mayest thou be skinned,

Ce'rvidima gagli dentro la coa
Good-bye, hens, inside the den,

Dù piumme sole e un biccu, ce se'rtroa!
Two feathers only and one beak are found!

E intanto so dovuta vinì quà
And meanwhile I was obliged to come here

Como un salamu, sciuza cosa in mà.
Like a sausage with empty hands.

Ma, quist'annu che vene, se Dio vò,
But another year, if it pleases God,

Agghio pensato de 'lleà du'bò.
I will breed two oxen,

Cuscì, forba e lupu, che se'mpicca!
And so, wolf and fox, let them be hung!

Lu musu certu che non ce lu ficca!
Certainly they will not their muzzles introduce!

Se Sant'Antò li guarda dumedù,
If S. Antonio protects them both,

Voglio 'ngrassalli como du marrù,
I will fatten them like to *marri* (a special kind of oxen),

E pò a Jesù mammì li recherò
And to Jesus the Babe I will take them

Pè rrenfrancamme de quist' anno ancò.
To make up for this year.

Non ce credete vù? Eh! sci per crillu
Won't you believe it? Yes, per Bacco,

Jampà la dittu, e Jampà è sempre quillo!
Giampietro has said so, and Giampietro is always the same.]



Lit F. Rinaldini Napoli Vico Figurari N.° 8

S. DOMENICO ABBATE

Protettore di Cocullo

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