

At last Giavanna and I stood before the completed picture. "It is perfect" she said with a deep sigh of satisfaction. "I knew you could do it." "Yes it is like you" I answered "It is almost more beautiful, for you are so very pale and the portrait is warm with color. I am glad that so much beauty has been restored to the world and yet—and yet, I cannot account for the agony I feel. I—" "Ah, that will pass" she answered lightly, but with a remorseful glance at me. "Dear Nicolo,—Guido Reni tried to paint that portrait but it was beyond his power. You are greater than he. Does not that suffice you? Think how the world will praise you." "Reni," I cried, with a sudden gasp, "has been dead for centuries child." "I should have said," she answered with a sudden start, "that his picture was similar to yours. Do you remember that tradition they tell to this day about us, Nicole; how years and years and years ago I sat as your model for the Beatrice which Guido Reni afterward painted? And his portrait was not equal to yours in merit although yours was still unfinished when you disappeared. Ah I see you remember." "But what has that to do with us now?" I asked, while a dull horror began to freeze the blood in my veins. "Only this," she answered evasively: "It was beyond even his talent—to you, now an unknown artist, it has brought immortal fame. You have gained for the world the beauty of the lost Beatrice. Your highest ambition has been granted you. Are you still unsatisfied?" "What is the beauty of the Beatrice to me? Why should I care for the acclamations of the universe. When you are slipping from me. The burden on my heart tells me that you are going from me soon—forever." She came close to me with a rush of sudden emotion and caught my hands. "Oh I have wronged you," she said with a sob; I did not mean it. I thought the fame would pay you. My bitter mistake—my pride—has ruined you. Forgive! Oh dearest Nicoli, forgive!"

My brain was on fire. Almost blind with hopeless sorrow. I stopped to kiss her but staggered and fell. I was dimly conscious that she moaned when she leaned over me, tenderly brushed back my hair with her cold fingers. I saw her indistinctly when she passed down the path for the last time, pause, waver and then pass on again with bowed head. Torpidly I watched her until she became a shapeless purple object among the trees. Almost inaudible was the song of her gay gondolier as they floated past to the far beyond. Then life went out.

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At dawn a cold, damp breeze awoke me. I arose bewildered. All things had changed. My new summer house was two hundred and fifty years old, black, rotten, falling in decay. A few shreds in the corner showed all that was left of my hammock. A peach tree which had been in full bloom lay across the threshold in rotten fragments. Every living thing on the path to the marble landing was sere and dead. I alone remained unchanged. With a bitter cry of pain I turned to go but my eyes met those of a pictured face which were gazing out from a heap of debris in the corner. With a heavy heart I noticed that the canvas was covered with dust and mould and worm eaten at the corners. Then in a rush of wild despair I realized that before me stood the original Beatrice completed and that I had gained immortal fame.

MAY L. ROBERTS.

Do not fail to send for catalogue and specimens of penmanship to the Lincoln Business College and Institute of Penmanship, Short-Hand and Typewriting, Lincoln, Neb.

LITERARY.

Charles Dudley Warner is publishing a story in the Harper's which bids fair to be very interesting. It is called "A Little Journey in the World," and to judge from a very brief glance at one number is fully in keeping with the high standard of this author's other works. Warner, while he has probably not so many readers as some writers, yet can count on the sincerity of those who do read his books.

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The author of "Ben Hur" has written or compiled a tale which he calls a story of "The Boyhood of Christ." This was a year or two ago, and now the story is published in book form by Harper Bros. It is too soon for the book to be in general circulation in the West, but one thing is certain, it will have a wide circulation on account of the fame of its writer. "The Fair God" and "Ben Hur" are very good introductions to the reading public.

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While Mr. Howells did not set the world afire by his "Rise of Silas Lapham," yet he probably did enough in that production to entitle him to consideration now that he has written something else. "Annie Kilburn" is a book announced from this author's pen. Whatever people may say about the lack of interest in Howell's writings, or however much one may feel exasperated with his carelessness of incident, the fact remains that he is extraordinarily successful. And so long as he is that he can afford to laugh at critics and criticism.

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J. Fenimore Cooper was one of those men who are fated not to see the full success of their work, or who are destined to be forever misunderstood. Be this the result of what it may, ill luck, or lack of ability, it is certain that not much of it has remained to his relative, Constance Fenimore Woolson, the author of "Anne," "East Angels" and "For the Major." "Jupiter Lights" will not diminish her popularity in the least, and will in all probability tend to increase it. It is certainly improbable, but not entirely impossible that the works of Miss Woolson may revive interest enough in Cooper's writings to give that author the place to which his genius entitles him.

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Albion W. Tourgee in the *North American Review*, in an exceedingly clear article, discusses the "Claim of Realism." According to him the "realist" is one who seeks to depict truth by defining it, one who would arbitrarily say "that is false," or "this is true." He is "like one who goes in the middle of a street, refusing to see what is in the gutter." He lays down a plan, calls it "truth," and expect everything to conform to it. On the other hand says Judge Tourgee, the "naturalist" shows things as they exist, and if they are sometimes shocking in their grossness, it is the fault of the portrayed, not the portrayer. Good is shown to be better, and evil to be worse, by the very contrast between them. Altogether the argument (that the realist tries to define indefinable truth) is very well written.

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This century is to Americans the century of centennials. And now nearly the last of the great anniversaries is coming and will soon be past. A hundred years of successful government seems a great blessing, and so the nation offers thanks. The 30th of April, 1889, will be the anniversary of the inauguration of the first president of the United States. Now in all probability all information that can be gathered on the subject of that first inauguration will be valuable, so THE HESPERIAN recommends to its readers the April Cent-