

of St. John, now called the Baptistery, because their opponents had once held meetings there. A beautiful tower stood at the commencement of the street of the Adimari, and this they endeavored to make fall upon the temple by placing rufflers against the opposite part, cutting away the other side, and then setting fire to the props. Happily, however, the tower fell in another direction. For a series of years, the arms of the Florentines were constantly exercised, with various success, in wars against the Pisans, Luchese, Arentines, etc., but, ever and anon, this original and fierce civil feud usurped all their energies. Its history is one of the remarkable illustrations of the spirit of that age, and, hereafter, as the sounds of warfare and violence die away into the past, before the mild influences of Christianity, it will be reverted to by the philosopher as a fertile source of illustrations. Its consequences and incidental results are numerous and interesting. The Ghibbelines were generally triumphant in Florence. In 1261, when Count Guido Novella was elected mayor, in order to introduce his people more easily from Casentino, into the city and palace, he opened a new gate in the nearest walls, and the avenue leading thence, is still called the street of the Ghibbelines. In the annals of these celebrated factions, we find now one, and now another invoking foreign aid. Sometimes a respite occurs of so long a continuance, as to induce a belief that the demon of discord is at length laid asleep, and anon it breaks forth with tenfold fury. At one moment, the Pope's interposition procures peace, and the next, some incident, trifling in itself, suddenly revives the flame of party rage. After a solemn reconciliation had apparently settled the dissension at Florence, it was again renewed in Pistoia, a few miles off. A certain Ser Cancelliere of that city was the father of a very numerous family, the progeny of two wives, both of whom belonged to noble houses. Between the descendants of these rival mothers, a strong jealousy existed; and under the name of Black and White chancellors, (*Bianci and Neri*) more than a hundred individuals were included in the quarrel, among whom, not less than eighteen, were chevaliers or knights of the golden spur. Some young men of both parties, having quarrelled over their wine, one of the Neri received a blow from Charles Walfred, of the opposite faction. In the evening, the aggrieved individual way-laid the brother of his insulter, and having beaten him, so mutilated one of his hands, that only the forefinger remained. This aggression roused an universal spirit of resentment on the part of the Bianci. The opposite party vainly attempted to make peace; and the indicator of the injury, on repairing to Walfred's house, to apologize, was seized and taken into the stables, when one of his hands was cut off by way of retaliation, and he was sent back to his partizans. This act rendered all further attempts at treaty vain. Thenceforth, street-broils, of the fiercest character, were of constant occurrence. Some of the most guilty repaired to Florence, and there fomented the old feud, the Bianci inciting the Ghibbelines, and the Neri the Guelphs. In 1301, Charles of Valois, invited by Boniface VIII., into Italy, secretly concerted with him the ruin of the Bianci party.

The Neri were then dominant. In consequence of the violence committed under Corso Donati, the Pope had sent one of his cardinals to Florence to bring about peace, but the efforts of the prelate were vain. On Christmas day, the son of Corso Donati, being on horseback in the square of Santa Croce, and seeing Nicholas of the Cerchia family pass by, ran after him out of one of the gates. A contest ensued, in which both were killed, and, in consequence, civil war once more kindled. At length, on the second of April, the remainder of the Bianci party, among whom were Dante and Petrucco of Parengo, the father of Patrarck, were banished. The Neri threw fireworks upon the houses and shops of their discomfited opponents, near the Mercato Nuovo, which, taking fire, produced extensive destruction, and reduced many to poverty. In 1310, the New German Emperor, Henry VII., prepared to descend into Italy. Many cities invited him. In Tuscany, Pisa and Arezzo, alone desired his arrival. The following year, Dante, in behalf of the Ghibbeline party, wrote him, earnestly, to come down upon Florence. This letter sealed the poet's fate; and four years after, his exile was again confirmed. Received openly at Pisa, and crowned at Rome, Henry approached and besieged Florence, but after a wearisome delay before the walls, and several fruitless skirmishes, he fell sick, and on the last night of October, 1313, abandoned the attempt to the glory of the city. He soon after died at St. Salvi, and these eras of violence and war were soon succeeded by a brilliant period of literature and art.

To be continued.

Original.

THE FIRST STATUET.

BY MRS. SERA SMITH.

It slumbers there, that hidden form
Of all but breathing life,
And every moulded outline swells,
With its own beauty rife.
Expression lurks within the stone,
And waits the Master's hand alone.
Oh, touch it not—thou shouldst not dare
Creative power to try,
Or with thy weak, earth-daring hand,
With God's own skill to vie,
To wake the form from its long rest,
Its slumber in the marble's breast.
Yet go, bring forth the rounded limb,
The bending grace reveal,
The form that shrinks within itself
As if the stone might feel,
The drooping of the soft fring'd lid,
The lip where passion's fire is hid.
Bring all to life, then bow thee down
In hopelessness of heart,
And thine Ideal worship thou,
Thy god-like child of art.
It lives, it smiles, for thee alone,
Thy bride is of the chiselled stone.