

Perceiving this to be Miss Alexander's constant method of design, and that therefore, the historic <sup>causes</sup> ~~value~~ of the drawings was not less than their religious favour, I asked her to furnish me, for what use I might be able to make of them, with such particulars as she knew or ~~thought~~ might with little pains remember of the <sup>real lives</sup> ~~circumstances~~ and character of the <sup>peasants</sup> people whom she had taken for her principal models. The request was fortunate; since in a very few weeks after it had been presented, Miss Alexander sent me a little white book stamped with the red Florentine lily, containing, in the prettiest conceivable manuscript, a series of <sup>rough</sup> sketches of her favourites which are to me in some ways, more valuable than the book which they illustrate, or rather, form <sup>now</sup> an essential part of it, without which many of its highest qualities and greatest lessons would remain unacknowledged and unaccepted.

I take upon myself therefore unhesitatingly what blame the reader may think I <sup>may due</sup> ~~deserve~~, for commencing to him the <sup>quantity of</sup> ~~substance~~ of these <sup>selected</sup> ~~without~~ reserve. & I permit them, as in Francesco's <sup>own</sup> ~~own~~ colloquial or familiarly epistolary terms, adding to as the best <sup>interpretation</sup> ~~free~~ of the legends for which she has found these lives revised, <sup>by us by her</sup> in these breathing images of existent human souls.

Of the literary value of the songs themselves, it is not necessary for me to express any opinion, since Miss Alexander claims for them only the interest of having been practically useful to the persons whom they were so composed. and in her own translation aims only at rendering their meaning clear with a ~~certain degree of~~ pleasant <sup>order and propriety</sup> ~~accuracy~~ of cadence.