

he would rather be sent to hell after his death, than go to Paradise; because he should find nobody in Heaven but a parcel of beggars, Monks, Hermits and Apostles: but in Hell he should live with Cardinals, Popes, Princes, and Kings [o].

Besides the Comedy of Clitia above-mentioned, Machiavel composed two others which never were printed, but are to be seen in manuscript in the grand Duke of Tuscany's Library; one of them is entitled *the Mask*, a very satirical piece, and the other, *the Secretary*: and he may in some measure be called the author of another very humorous one, entitled *la Sporta*, or *the Basket*, as he sketched out the plan and wrote the best Scenes in it, though it is commonly attributed to Giovanni Baptista Gelli [p]. There is a fifth likewise entirely of his own composing, and printed amongst his other works, called *Mandragola* [q], which la Fontaine has travestied into a tale under the same title. He is said to have composed several other theatrical pieces which are not now to be met with; and some tales in the manner of Boccace: one of which, viz. the Marriage of Belphegor [r], Giovanni Breccio published as his own; but the theft was discovered by Giovanni Cinelli, who takes notice of it in his *Bibliotheca Volante*. Monsieur le Fevre de Saumur had it printed 1664 from Machiavel's own manuscript, which was the first time it appeared under the name of the true Author. This also was seized upon by

[o] Francis Hotman, in his 99th Epistle, dated, Dec. 25, 1580, amongst other curious particulars, says, this account is to be met with in Wolfius's Comment upon Cicero's Tusculan Disputations.

[p] Gelli, in his dedicatory Letter, and in the Prologue, says, that he copied the greatest part of this Comedy from Plautus and Terence: but Giacompo Gaddi, and Giuliano Ricci, affirm, that it was written by Machiavel; and that Gelli, into whose hands the manuscript fell, adding a little to it, published it as his own work. Lafca before them had said of Gelli,

E fece anch' egli una comedia nova,
Che l'avea prima fatta il Machiavelli.

See Barretti's *Italian Library*, p. 106.

[q] Voltaire speaking of the State of the Polite Arts in the Sixteenth Century, says, "Italy had its Thucydides in Guicciardine, who wrote the History of the wars of his own time, as Thucydides wrote the war of Peloponnesus. There were, indeed, no Orators like Demosthenes, Pericles, and Æschines, in any of the Italian Provinces: the government in most places, being inconsistent with that kind of merit. Their stage, however, though far short of that degree of perfection, to which the French Theatre afterwards attained, might be compared to the Greek Drama, which they began to revive; and Machiavel's *Mandragola* alone, is preferable perhaps to all Aristophanes's Comedies. Machiavel was an excellent Historian, and a man of fine genius; so that there can be no manner of comparison betwixt him and Aristophanes." *Gen. Hist. of Europe*, vol. ii. part. iv. c. 1. But with submission to so great a judge, the Comedy of Clitia seems to some others, much the better of the two.

[r] It is inserted at the end of the second volume of this work.