philosopher: -

GALLED.

The London Saturday Review, in a review

principally from his correspondence with his

eldest daughter, Sister Maria Celeste, which

has just been published by Macmillan & Co.,

gives the following interesting sketch of the

Prefixed to this volume is a carefully drawn-

up pedigree of the Bonajuti family, who, as

is well known, changed their name to that of Galileo at the end of the fourteenth or be-

ginning of the afteenth century. The object of this change is said to have been to per-

petuate the name of a member of the family, Galileo, a son of Tomasso de' Bonajuti, one

of the Twelve Buonomini in 1343. From

Tommaso Bonajuti ten generations in this

family record bring us down to its extinction

in two great-great-grandchildren of the phi-

losopher, who took the vows of religion, the lest, Cosimo, dying May 18, 1779. The family stock, originally noble, produced rany scions of eminence. Galileo de Bonajuti,

grandson of Tommaso, a celebrated physician,

was sent in 1438, by the Republic of Piom-bino, to undertake the cure of its ward, the

young Giovanni d'Appiano, Lord of Piom-bino. His full-length effigy in marble is still to be seen in the church of Santa Croce,

Florence, in which city he was twice elected one of the Priori, and in 1445 Gon-

faloniere, besides filling the office of Lecturer

in Medicine in the University. His nephew, Giovanni de' Bonajuti de' Galilei, captain of

the Borgo S. Sepolero, had a grandson, Vin-cenzio, born in 1520, who has been called the

founder of the modern musical drama. He

was the author of works of scientific merit on

mathematics and counterpoint, some of which have been published, others reposing in MS.

in the Palatine Library. A passage in his "Dialogue on Ancient and Modern Music,"

published in 1581, cited by the compiler

before us, is worthy of note for the principles

which Vincenzio lays down in directing his son's education. "It appears to me," says one of the speakers in the "Dialogue," "that

they who in proof of any assertion rely simply

on the weight of authority, without adducing

any argument in support of it, act very ab-supply." In his stipulation for "freedom to

question and freely to answer," the father

anticipates sentiments which are clearly laid

down in the famous letter to the Grand

Duchess Christina on the Copernican system, and in the no less famous Dialogue on the

Two Systems of the World. Vincenzio's eldest

son, Galileo, was born at Pisa, February 18,

1564. Straitened circumstances, says Gher-

ardini, had almost condemned the youth to

become a trader in wool, had not his early

talent induced the hope of his rising to higher

pursuits. From his father he learned both

the theory and practice of music; even ex-

celling him, it was thought, in charm and

delicacy of touch upon the organ and lute.

In these he found a solace in the last days

of his life, when blindness was added to the

old man's other sorrows. In the sister art

his talent was equally great. Had he had the choice, he used in later life to tell his friends,

he would have been a painter. His critical judgment was invited by masters like Bron-

zino, Passignano, and Jacopo da Empoli, while Cigoli, whom Galileo pronounced to be

the first painter of his time, owned to having

derived from him his knowledge of perspec-

tive. At the Benedictine monastery of Val-

lombrosa—as we learn from a letter of Diego

Frouchi, a brother-Galileo was grounded in

removed before the end of his novitiate

owing to an attack of ophthalmia. At the

age of seventeen, when already well versed

in Latin and Greek, an excellent artist, and

hilosophy, we are told, the student's spirit

was at that time utterly neglected in Italy,

fore us, but our task lies rather with the phi-

losopher in his home. By his father's death, in July, 1591, Galileo had become the head

of his family, a position of no little burden

and responsibility in Italian society at that

out of his brother Michelangelo in life. He

is denounced and even threatened with arrest

by his brother-in-law, Benedetto Landucci,

for the balance of dowry due on the marriage

of his sister Virginia. So writes his mother,

Madonna Giulia, in a curious letter, May .29,

1593, "Al Molto Magnifico e Fidelissimo Sig-

nore Galileo Galilei mio sempre Osservand,

in Padova." Livia, a novice sorely against her will, and intended for the veil in the con-

vent of St. Giuliano, badgers her brother for

'some stuff to make a dress." The girl

plaguing her mother to find her a husband,

Galileo has of course to come down with a

dowry befitting one of the Galilei. Pompeo

Baldi, he hears, August 7, 1600, is a "good

sort of man," but has no more than 100

ducats yearly. Trusting for help from his brother, Galileo makes up a match with a Pisan gentleman, Taddeo Galetti, promising

1800 ducats, of which 800 were paid down.

Of these he had to borrow 600, his whole

professional stipend then amounting to no

more than 320 ducats a year. Michelangelo

meanwhile had got a post in the train of some

Polish nobleman on excellent terms—"his table and dress similar to that worn by the

gentlemen of his household, two servants, a

coach and four, and a salary of 200 Hunga-

rian ducats, which make about 300 crowns of

our money, besides perquisites." He is

started with clothes and money in hand by Galileo, who, after sending four letters to Cracow in ten months without an answer,

writes to insist on a proper deed being given

to Signor Taddeo. The ungrateful fellow

never paid his brother a farthing. In 1605

he is back in Padna, living at Gali-

Bayaria. "Good heavens," writes back the ne'er do weel, "the idea of toiling all one's

life just to put by a few farthings to give one's sisters!" Michelangelo had picked up

a wife himself in the meantime, and given a

grand wedding dinner to eighty persons of distinction, including four ambassadors, and

he asks for a case of lutes, having in view the

showing off his musical talents in some concerted music next Lent. Fragments of Gali-leo's letters speak of a present to Vir-ginia of silk bed-hangings and velvet and

court of the Duke

expense till he

the

It was for him to see to the setting

time.

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damask dresses, and his memorandum book | a letter of Galileo to Elia Diodati, July 28, gives a long list of sums laid out on gold bracelets and rich attire for Livia's trousseau. The dignity of the Galilei must be kept up at of "The Private Life of Galileo," compiled

Galileo never married. By his mistress, Marina Gamba, a Venetian of the lower class, he had three children. Vincenzio, born in August, 1606, was legitimated by the Grand Duke of Tuscany in 1619. His daughter Polissene was born in 1601, Virginia probably somewhat later. The boy remained with his mother till October, 1612, when Galileo had him brought to Florence. Marina shortly afterwards married a man well to do in her Clation of life, one Giovanni Bartoluzzi, Galileo behaving with his wonted liberality on the occasion. Galileo's two girls were placed for a while under the care of his mother, but the old lady's temper being "terrible," as it appears from a letter of Galileo's brother Michelangelo, the father was minded to remove them into a convent for life. Here a threefold difficulty met him. Pope Leo XI (Alessandro Ottaviano de' Medici) when Cardinal, had obtained a bull forbidding two sisters to take the veil in the same con vent in Florence. Secondly, the convent chosen by Galileo being already full, the dowry must be doubled for such an excepadmission. In the third place, the eldest girl was six years below the canonical age of sixteen. Cardinal Del Monte, in a letter to Galileo, November 11, 1611, promises every exertion to get a relaxation of this rule, which he declares at the same time to be insuperable. The good offices of Cardinal Bandini proved more effectual, and by means of a dispensation as to age Galileo was enabled, in October, 1613, to place the unfortunate children in the Franciscan convent of St. Matthew, at Arcetri. There they took the veil a year later, Polissena—hence-forth Sister Maria Celeste—being but thirteen years of age. Her letters to her father, beginning from the year 1623, become our chief materials for following the domestic life of Galileo, his illnesses and private sorrows; furnishing at the same time graphic and instructive details of the interior life of convents. His letters to her, though we are told that she kept them carefully and was in the habit of perusing them during such leisure moments as her special duties in the pharmacy and the still-room left to her, have perished. They were in all probability de-stroyed by the abbess for fear of the house being compromised by their heretical author-Her own simple effusious are spoken of as breathing throughout sound sense and sober judgment, without a trace of mysticism. "She does not pass her nights in the church, kneeling on the cold stones, expecting a vision. She goes to bed like a sensible woman, and takes her seven hours' sleep." One of her crosses was the selfishness of her sister Virginia, Sister Arcangela in religion, who was subject to hypochondria, and a perpetual invalid. Ill health was indeed the rule, not the exception, at St. Matthew's. Rheumatism was prevalent. In winter the nuns were starved with the cold, in summer they were melted with the heat. Sister Maria Celeste herself was scarcely ever well. Her father's visits alone kept her from finding convent life insupportably dull. What she pined for was home life. Her yearning is to penetrate within the dwelling which her father's pre-sence renders sacred, but which she can never enter. "Discreet dame Piera his housekeeper, careless unloving brother Vincenzio, good Signor Rondinelli the gardener, the boy Geppo, may all go in and out, may all serve her Devoto, sit by him when he is ill, help to tend the vines, run the errands; only she is debarred from the daily interlanguages, grammar, and logic, but he was course which would be her supreme delight. Little presents perpetually passed between father and daughter. She becomes his secre-tary, copying in a clear and delicate hand his an accomplished musician, he was sent to the more important letters or papers. She works University of Pisa, following the usual for him shirts and dinner napkins, mends the course in philosophy and medicine, being desapron "as well as she possibly can," and asks tined by his father for the latter profession. In "any collars that want getting up." In turn she begs ten braccia of stuff for a dress, of contradiction and preference for proof not wide or fine or expensive cloth. Galileo, over authority found him no favor in his at this time settled at Rome, and in favor for teachers' eyes. The study of mathematics the while, asks his daughter what boon would be most acceptable to the convent. The abbess despite the exertions of Comandino and thinks it wiser to ask for alms than anything Maurolico. Even Vincenzio Galileo discouelse, the house being so poor. Sister Maria, raged it in his son, as so much waste in the taking counsel with a nun of higher feeling, practical pursuit of medicine. From a cerbegs that the Pope will grant the favor of tain Messer Ostilio Ricci he got lessons in choosing for confessor to the convent a regu-Euclid by stealth. His father's opposition to lar or brother of some order, changing him his scientific tastes gave way at length to the every three years. Her paper of reasons proofs of the youth's mathematical and methrows much light upon the habits of the chanical genius. It lies beyond our present clergy of the period. The parish priests have scope to follow the development of Galileo's the scantiest knowledge of nuns, their rules scientific powers, or to trace the splendid and requirements. The fees they expect series of his discoveries in physics. The outrun the convent purse, and they make a chief stages in his public career are practice of dropping in to take out their arrears by dining and "getting friendly with indicated in outline in the brief memoir be-

> tower, hemmed in by quarantine, he has enough-"his telescope, his thoughts." His daughter's anxiety culminates with his journey to Rome, and with the news of his citation before the Inquisition. We are enabled, by means of the minute touches contributed in the narrative before us, to realize with a force and vividness never before attainable the struggles and the suspense of that crowning episode in the life of Galilao. There may be nothing very weighty or novel in these details. They seem, however, to heighten our interest in the last scenes of the philosopher's career, and to extenuate what might otherwise be set down to unbecoming weakness, vacillation, or want of candor. It is a comfort to be assured, on evidence which no longer admits of reasonable doubt, that bodily torture was escaped by Galileo, wrung as his lofty and truth-loving spirit must have been by the concession, in however ambiguous terms, which he yielded to an unjust and ignorant demand. The accusing spirit might equally blush to hand in the record of a "pious fraud" of minor degree by which Galileo keeps from his daughter the truth of his failing health. Agony enough seems to have fallen upon her in having to yield the keys of the library when fears of a domiciliary visit from the familiars of the Inquisition induced Galileo's family to burn masses of his papers. Her last prayer was granted, that she might

embrace her father again, as it appears from

one or other of the nuns. And what is worse,

they make a common talk of us, so that we

are become the laughing-stock of the whole

Casentino, from whence these confessors

come, who are more apt at chasing hares than

at guiding souls." Later on Galileo is called

upon to set to rights the convent clock, which

no one has made to go well before. In 1628

Michelangelo died, throwing upon Galileo the charge of his widow and

family. Next year Vincenzio marries Sestilia,

a sister of Luisa Bocchineri, Maria Celeste's

bosom friend in the convent, and the young

couple have to be set up out of the Profes-

sor's slender income. In the throes of writing

the famous Dialogue leisure is snatched for a

memorable family dinner in the convent par-

lor. Then the plague breaks out, and Vincen-

zio runs away with his bride, leaving his father

to face the danger unmoved, against which

Sister Maria Celeste seeks to fortify him with

a wondrous elixir made by Abbess Ursula, a

Pistoian nun of great sanctity. Alone in his

1634. While under restraint in his Florentine villa, he was at liberty to pay frequent visite to the convent where, he says, "the two daughters whom I loved dearly, the eldest in particular, who was a woman of exquisite mind, singular goodness, and most tenderly attached to me." She had before this died on the 1st of April of the same year. Her father's words well sum up her character and the tener of her life, which gives its most pleasing tone to what is recorded here for the first time of the private life of Galileo. Volumes have been devoted to enumerating the works and measuring the intellect of the great philosopher. This little volume has done much within its slender compass to probe the depth and tenderness

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