

protruding from under their rude doors and mules' noses poking out of their windows ; and in one place I passed a beautiful carved fountain, just such as one might see in an old town in Italy. The castle turned out to be an oblong, irregular building, with out-works facing the town ; so that it, if the town were taken, would still remain defensible. Nowhere externally was there any trace of a window. There was nothing but straight blind walls and squat bulging towers. The only detail by which the eye was arrested was a square white patch directly above the gateway : it was the lion of St. Mark, which had been let into the wall by the Venetians. And now let me tell the reader that this dark and forbidding building, in which perhaps his fancy detects little to interest him, is really connected with a set of names and with a story almost as familiar to everyone of us as if they had been facts of our own lives ; for in this castle is a tower still named by tradition *Torre del Moro*, from having once been the lodging of one of the Venetian generals, Christofero Moro, the original of the Othello of Shakespeare ; and it was to this castle, if anywhere, that Othello must have brought Desdemona.

As I passed in through the long dark entrance the figure of Iago seemed to lurk in the shadow. As I climbed to the battlements by an external staircase Othello himself came with me, speaking familiar language, and all the place was filled with a well-known company, which the reader can imagine