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MEMOIRS
OF
JACQUES CASANOVA

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THE MEMOIRS OF JACQUES CASANOVA
WRITTEN BY HIMSELF NOW FOR
THE FIRST TIME TRANSLATED INTO
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MEMOIRS
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CHAPTER I

MISS BETTY—THE COMTE DE L'ETOILE—SIR B * + *
M i i * REASSURED

THIS was the fourth adventure I had had of this kind. There is nothing particularly out of the common in having a fellow-traveller in one's carriage; this time, however, the affair had something decidedly romantic about it.

I was forty-five, and my purse contained two hundred sequins. I still loved the fair sex, though my ardour had decreased, my experience had ripened, and my caution increased. I was more like a heavy father than a young lover, and I

limited myself to pretensions of the most modest character.

The young person beside me was pretty and gentle-looking, she was neatly though simply dressed in the English fashion, she was fair and small, and her budding breast could be seen outlined beneath the fine muslin of her dress. She had all the appearances of modesty and noble birth, and something of virginal innocence, which inspired one with attachment and respect at the same time.

"I hope you can speak French, madam?" I began.

"Yes, and a little Italian too."

"I congratulate myself on having you for my travelling companion."

"I think you should congratulate me."

"I heard you came to Sienna on horseback."

"Yes, but I will never do such a foolish thing again."

"I think your husband would have been wise to sell his horse and buy a carriage."

"He hired it, it does not belong to him. From Rome we are going to drive to Naples."

"You like travelling?"

"Very much, but with greater comfort."

With these words the English girl, whose white skin did not look as if it could contain a drop of blood, blushed most violently.

I guessed something of her secret, and begged

pardon; and for more than an hour I remained silent, pretending to gaze at the scenery, but in reality thinking of her, for she began to inspire me with a lively interest.

Though the position of my young companion was more than equivocal, I determined to see my way clearly before I took any decisive step; and I waited patiently till we got to Bon Couvent, where we expected to dine and meet the husband.

We got there at ten o'clock.

In Italy the carriages never go faster than a walk, a man on foot can outstrip them, as they rarely exceed three miles an hour. The tedium of a journey under such circumstances is something dreadful, and in the hot months one has to stop five or six hours in the middle of the day to avoid falling ill.

My coachman said he did not want to go beyond St. Quirico, where there was an excellent inn, that night, so he proposed waiting at Bon Couvent till four o'clock. We had therefore six hours wherein to rest.

The English girl was astonished at not finding her husband, and looked for him in all directions. I noticed her, and asked the landlord what had become of him. He informed us that he had breakfasted and baited his horse, and had then gone on, leaving word that he would await us at St. Quirico and order supper there.

I thought it all very strange, but I said nothing.

The poor girl begged me to excuse her husband's behaviour.

"He has given me a mark of his confidence, madam, and there is nothing to be offended at."

The landlord asked me if the *vetturino* paid my expenses, and I answered in the negative; and the girl then told him to ask the *vetturino* if he was paying for her.

The man came in, and to convince the lady that providing her with meals was not in the contract, he gave her a paper which she handed to me to read. It was signed "Comte de l'Etoile."

When she was alone with me my young companion begged me only to order dinner for myself.

I understood her delicacy, and this made her all the dearer to me.

"Madam," said I, "you must please look upon me as an old friend. I guess you have no money about you, and that you wish to fast from motives of delicacy. Your husband shall repay me, if he will have it so. If I told the landlord to only prepare dinner for myself I should be dishonouring the count, yourself possibly, and myself most of all."

"I feel you are right sir. Let dinner be served for two, then; but I cannot eat, for I feel ill, and I hope you will not mind my lying on the bed for a moment."

"Pray do not let me disturb you. This is a pleasant room, and they can lay the table in the

next. Lie down, and sleep if you can, and I will order dinner to be ready by two. I hope you will be feeling better by then."

I left her without giving her time to answer, and went to order dinner.

I had ceased to believe the Frenchman to be the beautiful Englishwoman's husband, and began to think I should have to fight him.

The case, I felt certain, was one of elopement and seduction; and, superstitious as usual, I was sure that my good genius had sent me in the nick of time to save her and care for her, and in short to snatch her from the hands of her infamous deceiver.

Thus I fondled my growing passion.

I laughed at the absurd title the rascal had given himself, and when the thought struck me that he had possibly abandoned her to me altogether, I made up my mind that he deserved hanging. Nevertheless, I resolved never to leave her.

I lay down on the bed, and as I built a thousand castles in the air I fell asleep.

The landlady awoke me softly, saying that three o'clock had struck.

"Wait a moment before you bring in the dinner. I will go and see if the lady is awake."

I opened the door gently, and saw she was still asleep, but as I closed the door after me the noise awoke her, and she asked if I had dined.

"I shall not take any dinner, madam, unless you do me the honour to dine with me. You have

had a five hours' rest, and I hope you are better."

"I will sit down with you to dinner, as you wish it."

"That makes me happy, and I will order dinner to be served forthwith."

She ate little, but what little she did eat was taken with a good appetite. She was agreeably surprised to see the beefsteaks and plum pudding, which I had ordered for her.

When the landlady came in, she asked her if the cook was an Englishman, and when she heard that I had given directions for the preparation of her national dishes, she seemed full of gratitude. She cheered up, and congratulated me on my appetite, while I encouraged her to drink some excellent Montepulciano and Montefiascone. By dessert she was in good spirits, while I felt rather excited. She told me, in Italian, that she was born in London, and I thought I should have died with joy, when, in reply to my question whether she knew Madame Cornells, she replied that she had known her daughter as they had been at school together.

"Has Sophie grown tall?"

"No, she is quite small, but she is very pretty, and *so* clever."

"She must now be seventeen."

"Exactly. We are of the same age."

As she said this she blushed and lowered her eyes.

“Are you ill?”

“Not at all. I scarcely like to say it, but Sophie is the very image of you.”

“Why should you hesitate to say so? It has been remarked to me before. No doubt it is a mere coincidence. How long ago is it since you have seen her?”

“Eighteen months; she went back to her mother’s, to be married as it was said, but I don’t know to whom.”

“Your news interests me deeply.”

The landlord brought me the bill, and I saw a note of three pounds which her husband had spent on himself and his horse.

“He said you would pay,” observed the landlord.

The Englishwoman blushed. I paid the bill, and we went on.

I was delighted to see her blushing, it proved she was not a party to her husband’s proceedings.

I was burning with the desire to know how she had left London and had met the Frenchman, and why they were going to Rome, but I did not want to trouble her by my questions, and I loved her too well already to give her any pain.

We had a three hours’ drive before us, so I turned the conversation to Sophie, with whom she had been at school.

“Was Miss Nancy Steyne there when you left?” said I.

The reader may remember how fond I had been of this young lady, who had dined with me, and whom I had covered with kisses, though she was only twelve.

My companion sighed at hearing the name of Nancy, and told me that she had left.

“Was she pretty when you knew her?”

“She was a beauty, but her loveliness was a fatal gift to her. Nancy was a close friend of mine, we loved each other tenderly; and perhaps our sympathy arose from the similarity of the fate in store for us. Nancy, too loving and too simple, is now, perhaps, even more unhappy than myself.”

“More unhappy? What do you mean?”

“Alas!”

“Is it possible that fate has treated you harshly? Is it possible that you can be unhappy with such a letter of commendation as nature has given you?”

“Alas! let us speak of something else.”

Her countenance was suffused with emotion. I pitied her in secret, and led the conversation back to Nancy.

“Tell me why you think Nancy is unhappy.”

“She ran away with a young man she loved; they despaired of gaining the parents’ consent to the match. Since her flight nothing has been heard of her, and you see I have some reason to fear that she is unhappy.”

“You are right. I would willingly give my life if it could be the saving of her.”

“Where did you know her?”

“In my own house. She and Sophie dined with me, and her father came in at the end of the meal.”

“Now I know who you are. How often have I heard Sophie talking of you. Nancy loved you as well as her father. I heard that you had gone to Russia, and had fought a duel with a general in Poland. Is this true? How I wish I could tell dear Sophie all this, but I may not entertain such hopes now.”

“You have heard the truth about me; but what should prevent you writing what you like to England? I take a lively interest in you, trust in me, and I promise you that you shall communicate with whom you please.”

“I am vastly obliged to you.”

With these words she became silent, and I left her to her thoughts.

At seven o'clock we arrived at St. Quirico, and the so-called Comte de l'Etoile came out and welcomed his wife in the most loving fashion, kissing her before everybody, no doubt with the object of giving people to understand that she was his wife, and I her father.

The girl responded to all his caresses, looking as if a load had been lifted off her breast, and without a word of reproach she went upstairs with

him, having apparently forgotten my existence. I set that down to love, youth, and the forgetfulness natural to that early age.

I went upstairs in my turn with my carpet bag, and supper was served directly, as we had to start very early the next morning if we wished to reach Radicofani before the noonday heat.

We had an excellent supper, as the count had preceded us by six hours, and the landlord had had plenty of time to make his preparations. The English girl seemed as much in love with de l'Etoile as he with her, and I was left completely out in the cold. I cannot describe the high spirits, the somewhat risky sallies, and the outrageous humours of the young gentleman, the girl laughed with all her heart, and I could not help laughing too.

I considered that I was present at a kind of comedy, and not a gesture, not a word, not a laugh did I allow to escape me.

“He may be merely a rich and feather-brained young officer,” I said to myself, “who treats everything in this farcical manner. He won’t be the first of the species I have seen. They are amusing, but frivolous, and sometimes dangerous, wearing their honour lightly, and too apt to carry it at the sword’s point.”

On this hypothesis I was ill pleased with my position. I did not much like his manner towards myself, he seemed to be making a dupe of me, and

behaved all the while as if he were doing me an honour.

On the supposition that the Englishwoman was his wife, his treatment of myself was certainly not warranted, and I was not the man to play zero. I could not disguise the fact, however, that any onlooker would have pronounced me to be playing an inferior part.

There were two beds in the room where we had our supper. When the chambermaid came to put on the sheets, I told her to give me another room. The count politely begged me to sleep in the same room with them, and the lady remained neutral, but I did not much care for their company, and insisted on leaving them alone.

I had my carpet bag taken to my room, wished them a good night, and locked myself in. My friends had only one small trunk, whence I concluded that they had sent on their luggage by another way; but they did not even have the trunk brought up to their room. I went to bed tranquilly, feeling much less interested about the lady than I had been on the journey.

I was roused early in the morning, and made a hasty toilette. I could hear my neighbours dressing, so I half opened my door, and wished them good day without going into their room.

In a quarter of an hour I heard the sound of a dispute in the court-yard, and on looking out, there were the Frenchman and the *vetturino* arguing

hotly. The *vetturino* held the horse's bridle, and the pretended count did his best to snatch it away from him.

I guessed the bone of contention: the Frenchman had no money, and the *vetturino* asked in vain for his due. I knew that I should be drawn into the dispute, and was making up my mind to do my duty without mercy, when the Count de l'Etoile came in and said,—

“This blockhead does not understand what I say to him; but as he may have right on his side, I must ask you to give him two sequins. I will return you the money at Rome. By an odd chance I happen to have no money about me, but the fellow might trust me as he has got my trunk. However, he says he must be paid, so will you kindly oblige me? You shall hear more of me at Rome.”

Without waiting for me to reply, the rascal went out and ran down the stairs. The *vetturino* remained in the room. I put my head out of the window, and saw him leap on horseback and gallop away.

I sat down on my bed, and turned the scene over in my mind, rubbing my hands gently. At last I went off into a mad roar of laughter; it struck me as so whimsical and original an adventure.

“Laugh too,” said I to the lady, “laugh or I will never get up.”

"I agree with you that it's laughable enough, but I have not the spirit to laugh."

"Well, sit down at all events."

I gave the poor devil of a *vetturino* two sequins, telling him that I should like some coffee and to start in a quarter of an hour.

I was grieved to see my companion's sadness.

"I understand your grief," said I, "but you must try to overcome it. I have only one favour to ask of you, and if you refuse to grant me that, I shall be as sad as you, so we shall be rather a melancholy couple."

"What can I do for you?"

"You can tell me on your word of honour whether that extraordinary character is your husband, or only your lover."

"I will tell you the simple truth; he is not my husband, but we are going to be married at Rome."

"I breathe again. He never shall be your husband, and so much the better for you. He has seduced you, and you love him, but you will soon get over all that."

"Never, unless he deceives me."

"He has deceived you already. I am sure he has told you that he is rich, that he is a man of rank, and that he will make you happy; and all that is a lie."

"How can you know all this?"

"Experience—experience is my great teacher."

Your lover is a young feather-brain, a man of no worth. He might possibly marry you, but it would be only to support himself by the sale of your charms."

"He loves me ; I am sure of it."

"Yes, he loves you, but not with the love of a man of honour. Without knowing my name, or my character, or anything about me, he delivered you over to my tender mercies. A man of any delicacy would never abandon his loved one thus."

"He is not jealous. You know Frenchmen are not."

"A man of honour is the same in France, and England, and Italy, and all the world over. If he loved you, would he have left you penniless in this fashion ? What would you do, if I were inclined to play the brutal lover ? You may speak freely."

"I should defend myself."

"Very good ; then I should abandon you here, and what would you do then ? You are pretty, you are a woman of sensibility, but many men would take but little account of your virtue. Your lover has left you to me ; for all he knew I might be the vilest wretch ; but as it is, cheer up, you have nothing to fear.

"How can you think that adventurer loves you ? He is a mere monster. I am sorry that what I say makes you weep, but it must be said. I even dare tell you that I have taken a great liking to you ; but you may feel quite sure that I shall not

ask you to give me so much as a kiss, and I will never abandon you. Before we get to Rome I shall convince you that the count, as he calls himself, not only does not love you, but is a common swindler as well as a deceiver."

"You will convince me of that?"

"Yes, on my word of honour! Dry your eyes, and let us try to make this day pass as pleasantly as yesterday. You cannot imagine how glad I feel that chance has constituted me your protector. I want you to feel assured of my friendship, and if you do not give me a little love in return, I will try and bear it patiently."

The landlord came in and brought the bill for the count and his mistress as well as for myself. I had expected this, and paid it without a word, and without looking at the poor wandering sheep beside me. I recollected that too strong medicines kill, and do not cure, and I was afraid I had said almost too much.

I longed to know her history, and felt sure I should hear it before we reached Rome. We took some coffee and departed, and not a word passed between us till we got to the inn at La Scala, where we got down.

The road from La Scala to Radicofani is steep and troublesome. The *vetturino* would require an extra horse, and even then would have taken four hours. I decided, therefore, to take two post horses, and not to begin the journey till ten o'clock.

"Would it not be better to go on now?" said the English girl; "it will be very hot from ten till noon."

"Yes, but the Comte de l'Etoile, whom we should be sure to meet at Radicofani, would not like to see me."

"Why not? I am sure he would." „

If I had told her my reason she would have wept anew, so in pity I spared her. I saw that she was blinded by love, and could not see the true character of her lover. It would be impossible to cure her by gentle and persuasive argument; I must speak sharply, the wound must be subjected to the actual cautery. But was virtue the cause of all this interest? Was it devotion to a young and innocent girl that made me willing to undertake so difficult and so delicate a task? Doubtless these motives went for something, but I will not attempt to strut in borrowed plumes, and must freely confess that if she had been ugly and stupid I should probably have left her to her fate. In short, selfishness was at the bottom of it all, so let us say no more about virtue.

My true aim was to snatch this delicate morsel from another's hand that I might enjoy it myself. I did not confess as much to myself, for I could never bear to calmly view my own failings, but afterwards I came to the conclusion that I acted a part throughout. Is selfishness, then, the universal motor of our actions? I am afraid it is.

I made Betty (such was her name) take a country walk with me, and the scenery there is so beautiful that no poet nor painter could imagine a more delicious prospect. Betty spoke Tuscan with English idioms and an English accent, but her voice was so silvery and clear that her Italian was delightful to listen to. I longed to kiss her lips as they spoke so sweetly, but I respected her and restrained myself.

We were walking along engaged in agreeable converse, when all at once we heard the church bells peal out. Betty said she had never seen a Catholic service, and I was glad to give her that pleasure. It was the feast day of some local saint, and Betty assisted at high mass with all propriety, imitating the gestures of the people, so that no one would have taken her for a Protestant. After it was over, she said she thought the Catholic rite was much more adapted to the needs of loving souls than the Anglican. She was astonished at the southern beauty of the village girls, whom she pronounced to be much handsomer than the country lasses in England. She asked me the time, and I replied without thinking that I wondered she had not got a watch. She blushed and said the count had asked her to give it him to leave in pawn for the horse he hired.

I was sorry for what I had said, for I had put Betty, who was incapable of a lie, to great pain.

We started at ten o'clock with three horses,

and as a cool wind was blowing we had a pleasant drive, arriving at Radicofani at noon.

The landlord, who was also the postmaster, asked if I would pay three pauls which the Frenchman had expended for his horse and himself, assuring the landlord that his friend would pay.

For Betty's sake I said I would pay; but this was not all.

"The gentleman," added the man, "has beaten three of my postillions with his naked sword. One of them was wounded in the face, and he has followed his assailant, and will make him pay dearly for it. The reason of the assault was that they wanted to detain him till he had paid."

"You were wrong to allow violence to be used; he does not look like a thief, and you might have taken it for granted that I should pay."

"You are mistaken; I was not obliged to take anything of the sort for granted; I have been cheated in this sort many times before. Your dinner is ready if you want any."

Poor Betty was in despair. She observed a distressed silence; and I tried to raise her spirits, and to make her eat a good dinner, and to taste the excellent Muscat, of which the host had provided an enormous flask.

All my efforts were in vain, so I called the *vetturino* to tell him that I wanted to start directly

after dinner. This order acted on Betty like magic.

"You mean to go as far as Centino, I suppose," said the man. "We had better wait there till the heat is over."

"No, we must push on, as the lady's husband may be in need of help. The wounded postillion has followed him, and as he speaks Italian very imperfectly, there's no knowing what may happen to him."

"Very good; we will go off."

Betty looked at me with the utmost gratitude; and by way of proving it, she pretended to have a good appetite. She had noticed that this was a certain way of pleasing me.

While we were at dinner I ordered up one of the beaten postillions, and heard his story. He was a frank rogue; he said he had received some blows with the flat of the sword, but he boasted of having sent a stone after the Frenchman which must have made an impression on him.

I gave him a paul, and promised to make it a crown if he would go to Centino to bear witness against his comrade, and he immediately began to speak up for the count, much to Betty's amusement. He said the man's wound in the face was a mere scratch, and that he had brought it on himself, as he had no business to oppose a traveller as he had done. By way of comfort he told us that the Frenchman had only been hit by two or three

stones. Betty did not find this very consoling, but I saw that the affair was more comic than tragic, and would end in nothing. The postillion went off, and we followed him in half an hour.

Betty was tranquil enough till we got there, and heard that the count had gone on to Acquapendente with the two postillions at his heels; she seemed quite vexed. I told her that all would be well; that the count knew how to defend himself; but she only answered me with a deep sigh.

I suspected that she was afraid we should have to pass the night together, and that I would demand some payment for all the trouble I had taken.

"Would you like us to go on to Acquapendente?" I asked her.

At this question her face beamed all over, she opened her arms, and I embraced her.

I called the *vetturino*, and told him I wanted to go on to Acquapendente immediately.

The fellow replied that his horses were in the stable, and that he was not going to put them in; but that I could have post horses if I liked.

"Very good. Get me two horses immediately."

It is my belief that, if I had liked, Betty would have given me everything at that moment, for she let herself fall into my arms. I pressed her tenderly and kissed her, and that was all. She seemed grateful for my self-restraint.

The horses were put in, and after I had paid

the landlord for the supper, which he swore he had prepared for us, we started.

We reached Acquapendente in three quarters of an hour, and we found the madcap count in high spirits. He embraced his Dulcinea with transports, and Betty seemed delighted to find him safe and sound. •He told us triumphantly that he had beaten the rascally postillions, and had warded their stones off.

“Where’s the slashed postillion?” I asked.

“He is drinking to my health with his comrade; they have both begged my pardon.”

“Yes,” said Betty, “this gentleman gave him a crown.”

“What a pity! You shouldn’t have given them anything.”

Before supper the Comte de l’Etoile shewed us the bruises on his thighs and side; the rascal was a fine well-made fellow. However, Betty’s adoring airs irritated me, though I was consoled at the thought of the earnest I had received from her.

Next day, the impudent fellow told me that he would order us a good supper at Viterbo, and that of course I would lend him a sequin to pay for his dinner at Montefiascone. So saying, he shewed me in an off-hand way a bill of exchange on Rome for three thousand crowns.

I did not trouble to read it, and gave him the sequin, though I felt sure I should never see it again.

Betty now treated me quite confidentially, and I felt I might ask her almost any questions.

When we were at Montefiascone she said,—

“You see my lover is only without money by chance; he has a bill of exchange for a large amount.”

“I believe it to be a forgery.”

“You are really too cruel.”

“Not at all; I only wish I were mistaken, but I am sure of the contrary. Twenty years ago I should have taken it for a good one, but now it's another thing, and if the bill is a good one, why did he not negotiate it at Sienna, Florence, or Leghorn?”

“It may be that he had not the time; he was in such a hurry to begone. Ah! if you knew all!”

“I only want to know what you like to tell me, but I warn you again that what I say is no vague suspicion but hard fact.”

“Then you persist in the idea that he does not love me.”

“Nay, he loves you, but in such a fashion as to deserve hatred in return.”

“How do you mean?”

“Would you not hate a man who loved you only to traffic in your charms?”

“I should be sorry for you to think that of him.”

“If you like, I will convince you of what I say this evening.”

“You will oblige me; but I must have some positive proof. It would be a sore pain to me, but also a true service.”

“And when you are convinced, will you cease to love him?”

“Certainly; if you prove him to be dishonest, my love will vanish away.”

“You are mistaken, you will still love him, even when you have had proof positive of his wickedness. He has evidently fascinated you in a deadly manner, or you would see his character in its true light before this.”

“All this may be true; but do you give me your proofs, and leave to me the care of shewing that I despise him.”

“I will prove my assertions this evening; but tell me how long you have known him?”

“About a month; but we have only been together for five days.”

“And before that time you never accorded him any favours?”

“Not a single kiss. He was always under my windows, and I had reason to believe that he loved me fondly.”

“Oh, yes! he loves you, who would not? but his love is not that of a man of honour, but that of an impudent profligate.”

“But how can you suspect a man of whom you know nothing?”

“Would that I did not know him! I feel sure

that not being able to visit you, he made you visit him, and then persuaded you to fly with him."

"Yes, he did. He wrote me a letter, which I will shew you. He promises to marry me at Rome."

"And who is to answer for his constancy?"

"His love is my surety."

"Do you fear pursuit?"

"No."

"Did he take you from a father, a lover, or a brother?"

"From a lover, who will not be back at Leghorn for a week or ten days."

"Where has he gone?"

"To London on business; I was under the charge of a woman whom he trusted."

"That's enough; I pity you, my poor Betty. Tell me if you love your Englishman, and if he is worthy of your love."

"Alas! I loved him dearly till I saw this Frenchman, who made me unfaithful to a man I adored. He will be in despair at not finding me when he returns."

"Is he rich?"

"Not very; he is a business man, and is comfortably off."

"Is he young?"

"No. He is a man of your age, and a thoroughly kind and honest person. He was waiting for his consumptive wife to die to marry me."

"Poor man ! Have you presented him with a child ? "

"No. I am sure God did not mean me for him, for the count has conquered me completely."

"Everyone whom love leads astray says the same thing."

"Now you have heard everything, and I am glad I told you, for I am sure you are my friend."

"I will be a better friend to you, dear Betty, in the future than in the past. You will need my services, and I promise not to abandon you. I love you, as I have said ; but so long as you continue to love the Frenchman I shall only ask you to consider me as your friend."

"I accept your promise, and in return I promise not to hide anything from you."

"Tell me why you have no luggage."

"I escaped on horseback, but my trunk, which is full of linen and other effects, will be at Rome two days after us. I sent it off the day before my escape, and the man who received it was sent by the count."

"Then good-bye to your trunk !"

"Why, you foresee nothing but misfortune !"

"Well, dear Betty, I only wish my prophecies may not be accomplished. Although you escaped on horseback I think you should have brought a cloak and a carpet bag with some linen."

"All that is in the small trunk ; I shall have it taken into my room to-night."

We reached Viterbo at seven o'clock, and found the count very cheerful.

In accordance with the plot I had laid against the count, I began by shewing myself demonstratively fond of Betty, envying the fortunate lover, praising his heroic behaviour in leaving her to me, and so forth.

The silly fellow proceeded to back me up in my extravagant admiration. He boasted that jealousy was utterly foreign to his character, and maintained that the true lover would accustom himself to see his mistress inspire desires in other men.

He proceeded to make a long dissertation on this theme, and I let him go on, for I was waiting till after supper to come to the conclusive point.

During the meal I made him drink, and applauded his freedom from vulgar prejudices. At dessert he enlarged on the duty of reciprocity between lovers.

"Thus," he remarked, "Betty ought to procure me the enjoyment of Fanny, if she has reason to think I have taken a fancy to her, and *per contra*, as I adore Betty, if I found that she loved you I should procure her the pleasure of sleeping with you."

Betty listened to all this nonsense in silent astonishment.

"I confess, my dear count," I replied, "that, theoretically speaking, your system strikes me as sublime, and calculated to bring about the return of

the Golden Age ; but I am afraid it would prove absurd in practice. No doubt you are a man of courage, but I am sure you would never let your mistress be enjoyed by another man. Here are twenty-five sequins. I will wager that amount that you will not allow me to sleep with your wife."

"Ha ! ha ! You are mistaken in me, I assure you. I'll bet fifty sequins that I will remain in the room a calm spectator of your exploits. My dear Betty, we must punish this sceptic ; go to bed with him."

"You are joking."

"Not at all ; to bed with you, I shall love you all the more."

"You must be crazy, I shall do nothing of the kind."

The count took her in his arms, and caressing her in the tenderest manner begged her to do him this favour, not so much for the twenty-five louis, as to convince me that he was above vulgar prejudices. His caresses became rather free, but Betty repulsed him gently though firmly, saying that she would never consent, and that he had already won the bet, which was the case ; in fine the poor girl besought him to kill her rather than oblige her to do a deed which she thought infamous.

Her words, and the pathetic voice with which they were uttered, should have shamed him, but

they only put him into a furious rage. He repulsed her, calling her the vilest names, and finally telling her that she was a hypocrite, and he felt certain she had already granted me all a worthless girl could grant.

Betty grew pale as death, and, furious in my turn, I ran for my sword. I should probably have run him through, if the infamous scoundrel had not fled into the next room, where he locked himself in.

I was in despair at seeing Betty's distress, of which I had been the innocent cause, and I did my best to soothe her.

She was in an alarming state. Her breath came with difficulty, her eyes seemed ready to start out of her head, her lips were bloodless and trembling, and her teeth shut tight together. Everyone in the inn was asleep. I could not call for help, and all I could do was to dash water in her face, and speak soothing words.

At last she fell asleep, and I remained beside her for more than two hours, attentive to her least movements, and hoping that she would awake strengthened and refreshed.

At day-break I heard l'Etoile going off, and I was glad of it. The people of the inn knocked at our door, and then Betty awoke.

"Are you ready to go, my dear Betty?"

"I am much better, but I should so like a cup of tea."

The Italians cannot make tea, so I took what she gave me, and went to prepare it myself.

When I came back I found her inhaling the fresh morning air at the window. She seemed calm, and I hoped I had cured her. She drank a few cups of tea (of which beverage the English are very fond), and soon regained her good looks.

She heard some people in the room where we had supped, and asked me if I had taken up the purse which I had placed on the table. I had forgotten it completely. I found my purse and a piece of paper bearing the words, "bill of exchange for three thousand crowns." The impostor had taken it out of his pocket in making his bet, and had forgotten it. It was dated at Bordeaux, drawn on a wine merchant at Paris to l'Etoile's order. It was payable at sight, and was for six months. The whole thing was utterly irregular.

I took it to Betty, who told me she knew nothing about bills, and begged me to say nothing more about that infamous fellow. She then said, in a voice of which I can give no idea,—

"For pity's sake do not abandon a poor girl, more worthy of compassion than blame!"

I promised her again to have all a father's care for her, and soon after we proceeded on our journey.

The poor girl fell asleep, and I followed her example. We were awoke by the *vetturino* who informed us, greatly to our astonishment, that we

were at Monterosi. We had slept for six hours, and had done eighteen miles.

We had to stay at Monterosi till four o'clock, and we were glad of it, for we needed time for reflection.

In the first place I asked about the wretched deceiver, and was told that he had made a slight meal, paid for it, and said he was going to spend the night at La Storta.

We made a good dinner, and Betty plucking up a spirit said we must consider the case of her infamous betrayer, but for the last time.

"Be a father to me," said she; "do not advise but command; you may reckon on my obedience. I have no need to give you any further particulars, for you have guessed all except the horror with which the thought of my betrayer now inspires me. If it had not been for you, he would have plunged me into an abyss of shame and misery."

"Can you reckon on the Englishman forgiving you?"

"I think so."

"Then we must go back to Leghorn. Are you strong enough to follow this counsel? I warn you that if you approve of it, it must be put into execution at once. Young, pretty, and virtuous as you are, you need not imagine that I shall allow you to go by yourself, or in the company of strangers. If you think I love you, and find me worthy of your esteem, that is sufficient reward for me. I will live

with you like a father, if you are not in a position to give me marks of a more ardent affection. Be sure I will keep faith with you, for I want to redeem your opinion of men, and to shew you that there are men as honourable as your seducer was vile."

Betty remained for a quarter of an hour in profound silence, her head resting on her elbows, and her eyes fixed on mine. She did not seem either angry or astonished, but as far as I could judge was lost in thought. I was glad to see her reflective, for thus she would be able to give me a decided answer. At last she said:

"You need not think, my dear friend, that my silence proceeds from irresolution. If my mind were not made up already I should despise myself. I am wise enough at any rate to appreciate the wisdom of your generous counsels. I thank Providence that I have fallen into the hands of such a man who will treat me as if I were his daughter."

"Then we will go back to Leghorn, and start immediately."

"My only doubt is how to manage my reconciliation with Sir B—— M——. I have no doubt he will pardon me eventually; but though he is tender and good-hearted he is delicate where a point of honour is concerned, and subject to sudden fits of violence. This is what I want to avoid; for he might possibly kill me, and then I should be the cause of his ruin."

"You must consider it on the way, and tell me any plans you may think of."

"He is an intelligent man, and it would be hopeless to endeavour to dupe him by a lie. I must make a full confession in writing without hiding a single circumstance, for if he thought he was being duped his fury would be terrible. If you will write to him you must not say that you think me worthy of forgiveness; you must tell him the facts and leave him to judge for himself. He will be convinced of my repentance when he reads the letter I shall bedew with my tears, but he must not know of my whereabouts till he has promised to forgive me. He is a slave to his word of honour, and we shall live together all our days without my ever hearing of this slip. I am only sorry that I have behaved so foolishly."

"You must not be offended if I ask you whether you have ever given him like cause for complaint before."

"Never."

"What is his history?"

"He lived very unhappily with his first wife; and he was divorced from his second wife for sufficient reasons. Two years ago he came to our school with Nancy's father, and made my acquaintance. My father died, his creditors seized everything, and I had to leave the school, much to Nancy's distress and that of the other pupils. At this period Sir B—— M—— took charge of me,

and gave me a sum which placed me beyond the reach of want for the rest of my days. I was grateful, and begged him to take me with him when he told me he was leaving England. He was astonished; and, like a man of honour, said he loved me too well to flatter himself that we could travel together without his entertaining more ardent feelings for me than those of a father. He thought it out of the question for me to love him, save as a daughter.

“This declaration, as you may imagine, paved the way for a full agreement.

“‘However you love me,’ I said, ‘I shall be well pleased, and if I can do anything for you I shall be all the happier.’

“He then gave me of his own free will a written promise to marry me on the death of his wife. We started on our travels, and till my late unhappy connection I never gave him the slightest cause for complaint.”

“Dry your eyes, dear Betty, he is sure to forgive you. I have friends at Leghorn, and no one shall find out that we have made acquaintance. I will put you in good hands, and I shall not leave the town till I hear you are back with Sir B——M——. If he prove inexorable I promise never to abandon you, and to take you back to England if you like.”

“But how can you spare the time?”

“I will tell you the truth, my dear Betty. I

have nothing particular to do at Rome, or anywhere else. London and Rome are alike to me."

"How can I shew my gratitude to you?"

I summoned the *vetturino*, and told him we must return to Viterbo. He objected, but I convinced him with a couple of piastres, and by agreeing to use the post horses and to spare his own animals.

We got to Viterbo by seven o'clock, and asked anxiously if no one had found a pocket-book which I pretended I had lost. I was told no such thing had been found, so I ordered supper with calmness, although bewailing my loss. I told Betty that I acted in this sort to obviate any difficulties which the *vetturino* might make about taking us back to Sienna, as he might feel it his duty to place her in the hands of her supposed husband.

I had up the small trunk, and after we had forced the lock Betty took out her cloak and the few effects she had in it, and we then inspected the adventurer's properties, most likely all he possessed in the world. A few tattered shirts, two or three pairs of mended silk stockings, a pair of breeches, a hare's foot, a pot of grease, and a score of little books—plays or comic operas, and lastly a packet of letters; such were the contents of the trunk.

We proceeded to read the letters, and the first thing we noted was the address: "To M. l'Etoile,

Actor, at Marseilles, Bordeaux, Bayonne, Montpellier, etc."

I pitied Betty. She saw herself the dupe of a vile actor, and her indignation and shame were great.

"We will read it all to-morrow," said I; "to-day we have something else to do."

The poor girl seemed to breathe again.

We got over our supper hastily, and then Betty begged me to leave her alone for a few moments for her to change her linen and go to bed.

"If you like," said I, "I will have a bed made up for me in the next room."

"No, dear friend, ought I not to love your society? What would have become of me without you?"

I went out for a few minutes, and when I returned and came to her bedside to wish her good night, she gave me such a warm embrace that I knew my hour was come.

Reader, you must take the rest for granted. I was happy, and I had reason to believe that Betty was happy also.

In the morning, we had just fallen asleep, when the *vetturino* knocked at the door.

I dressed myself hastily to see him.

"Listen," I said, "it is absolutely necessary for me to recover my pocket-book, and I hope to find it at Acquapendente."

"Very good, sir, very good," said the rogue,

a true Italian, "pay me as if I had taken you to Rome, and a sequin a day for the future, and if you like, I will take you to England on those terms."

The *vetturino* was evidently what is called wide awake. I gave him his money, and we made a new agreement. At seven o'clock we stopped at Montefiascone to write to Sir B—— M——, she in English, and I in French.

Betty had now an air of satisfaction and assurance which I found charming. She said she was full of hope, and seemed highly amused at the thought of the figure which the actor would cut when he arrived at Rome by himself. She hoped that we should come across the man in charge of her trunk, and that we should have no difficulty in getting it back.

"He might pursue us."

"He dare not do so."

"I expect not, but if he does I will give him a warm welcome. If he does not take himself off I will blow out his brains."

Before I began my letter to Sir B—— M—— Betty again warned me to conceal nothing from him.

"Not even the reward you gave me?"

"Oh, yes! That is a little secret between ourselves."

In less than three hours the letters were composed and written. Betty was satisfied with my

letter ; and her own, which she translated for my benefit, was a perfect masterpiece of sensibility, which seemed to me certain of success.

I thought of posting from Sienna, to ensure her being in a place of safety before the arrival of her lover.

The only thing that troubled me was the bill of exchange left behind by l'Etoile, for whether it were true or false, I felt bound to deal with it in some way, but I could not see how it was to be done.

We set out again after dinner in spite of the heat, and arrived at Acquapendente in the evening and spent the night in the delights of mutual love.

As I was getting up in the morning I saw a carriage in front of the inn, just starting for Rome. I imagined that amidst the baggage Betty's trunk might be discovered, and I told her to get up, and see if it were there. We went down, and Betty recognized the trunk she had confided to her seducer.

We begged the *vetturino* to restore it to us, but he was inflexible ; and as he was in the right we had to submit. The only thing he could do was to have an embargo laid on the trunk at Rome, the said embargo to last for a month. A notary was called, and our claim properly drawn up. The *vetturino*, who seemed an honest and intelligent fellow, assured us he had received nothing else belonging to the Comte de l'Etoile, so we were

assured that the actor was a mere beggar on the look-out for pickings, and that the rags in the small trunk were all his possessions.

After this business had been dispatched Betty brightened up amazingly.

"Heaven," she exclaimed, "is arranging everything. My mistake will serve as a warning to me for the future, for the lesson has been a severe one, and might have been much worse if I had not had the good fortune of meeting you."

"I congratulate you," I replied, "on having cured yourself so quickly of a passion that had deprived you of your reason."

"Ah! a woman's reason is a fragile thing. I shudder when I think of the monster; but I verily believe that I should not have regained my senses if he had not called me a hypocrite, and said that he was certain I had already granted you my favours. These infamous words opened my eyes, and made me see my shame. I believe I would have helped you to pierce him to the heart if the coward had not run away. But I am glad he did run away, not for his sake but for ours, for we should have been in an unpleasant position if he had been killed."

"You are right; he escaped my sword because he is destined for the rope."

"Let him look to that himself, but I am sure he will never dare to shew his face before you or me again."

We reached Radicofani at ten o'clock, and proceeded to write postscripts to our letters to Sir B—— M——.

We were sitting at the same table, Betty opposite to the door and I close to it, so that any one coming in could not have seen me without turning round.

Betty was dressed with all decency and neatness, but I had taken off my coat on account of the suffocating heat. Nevertheless, though I was in shirt sleeves, I should not have been ashamed of my attire before the most respectable woman in Italy.

All at once I heard a rapid step coming along the passage, and the door was dashed open. A furious-looking man came in, and, seeing Betty, cried out,—

“Ah ! there you are.”

I did not give him time to turn round and see me, but leapt upon him and seized him by the shoulders. If I had not done so he would have shot me dead on the spot.

As I leapt upon him I had involuntarily closed the door, and as he cried, “Let me go, traitor!” Betty fell on her knees before him, exclaiming,—

“No, no ! he is my preserver.”

Sir B—— M—— was too mad with rage to pay any attention to her, and kept on

“Let me go, traitor !”

As may be imagined, I did not pay much

attention to this request so long as the loaded pistol was in his hand.

In our struggles he at last fell to the ground and I on top of him.

The landlord and his people had heard the uproar, and were trying to get in; but as we had fallen against the door they could not do so.

Betty had the presence of mind to snatch the pistol from his hand, and I then let him go, calmly observing,—

“Sir, you are labouring under a delusion.”

Again Betty threw herself on her knees, begging him to calm himself, as I was her preserver not her betrayer.

“What do you mean by ‘preserver’?” said B—— M——.

Betty gave him the letter, saying,—

“Read that.”

The Englishman read the letter through without rising from the ground, and as I was certain of its effect I opened the door and told the landlord to send his people away, and to get dinner for three, as everything had been settled.

CHAPTER II

ROME—THE ACTOR'S PUNISHMENT—LORD BALTIMORE
—NAPLES—SARA GOUDAR—DEPARTURE OF BETTY
—AGATHA — MEDINA — ALBERGONI — MISS CHUD-
LEIGH — THE PRINCE OF FRANCAVILLA — THE
SWIMMERS

As I fell over the Englishman I had struck my hand against a nail, and the fourth finger of my left hand was bleeding as if a vein had been opened. Betty helped me to tie a handkerchief around the wound, while Sir B—— M—— read the letter with great attention. I was much pleased with Betty's action; it shewed she was confident, and sure of her lover's forgiveness.

I took up my coat and carpet-bag, and went into the next room to change my linen, and dress for dinner. Any distress at the termination of my intrigue with Betty was amply compensated for by my joy at the happy ending of a troublesome affair which might have proved fatal for me.

I dressed myself, and then waited for half an

hour, as I heard Betty and Sir B—— M—— speaking in English calmly enough, and I did not care to interrupt them. At last the Englishman knocked at my door, and came in looking humble and mortified. He said he was sure I had not only saved Betty, but had effectually cured her of her folly.

“You must forgive my conduct, sir,” said he, “for I could not guess that the man I found with her was her saviour and not her betrayer. I thank Heaven which inspired you with the idea of catching hold of me from behind, as I should certainly have killed you the moment I set eyes on you, and at this moment I should be the most wretched of men. You must forgive me, sir, and become my friend.”

I embraced him cordially, telling him that if I had been in his place I should have acted in a precisely similar manner.

We returned to the room, and found Betty leaning against the bed, and weeping bitterly.

The blood continuing to flow from my wound, I sent for a surgeon who said that a vein had been opened, and that a proper ligature was necessary.

Betty still wept, so I told Sir B—— M—— that in my opinion she deserved his forgiveness.

“Forgiveness?” said he, “you may be sure I have already forgiven her, and she well deserves it. Poor Betty repented directly you shewed her the path she was treading, and the tears she is shedding

now are tears of sorrow at her mistake. I am sure she recognizes her folly, and will never be guilty of such a slip again."

Emotion is infectious. Betty wept, Sir B—— M—— wept, and I wept to keep them company. At last nature called a truce, and by degrees our sobs and tears ceased and we became calmer.

Sir B—— M——, who was evidently a man of the most generous character, began to laugh and jest, and his caresses had great effect in calming Betty. We made a good dinner, and the choice Muscat put us all in the best of spirits.

Sir B—— M—— said we had better rest for a day or two; he had journeyed fifteen stages in hot haste, and felt in need of repose.

He told us that on arriving at Leghorn, and finding no Betty there, he had discovered that her trunk had been booked to Rome, and that the officer to whom it belonged had hired a horse, leaving a watch as a pledge for it. Sir B—— M—— recognized Betty's watch, and feeling certain that she was either on horseback with her seducer or in the waggon with her trunk, he immediately resolved to pursue.

"I provided myself," he added, "with two good pistols, not with the idea of using one against her, for my first thought about her was pity, and my second forgiveness; but I determined to blow out the scoundrel's brains, and I mean

to do it yet. We will start for Rome to-morrow."

Sir B—— M——'s concluding words filled Betty with joy, and I believe she would have pierced her perfidious lover to the heart if he had been brought before her at that moment.

"We shall find him at Roland's," said I.

Sir B—— M—— took Betty in his arms, and gazed at me with an air of content, as if he would have shewn me the greatness of an English heart—a greatness which more than atones for its weakness.

"I understand your purpose," I said, "but you shall not execute your plans without me. Let me have the charge of seeing that justice is done you. If you will not agree, I shall start for Rome directly, I shall get there before you, and shall give the wretched actor warning of your approach. If you had killed him before I should have said nothing, but at Rome it is different, and you would have reason to repent of having indulged your righteous indignation. You don't know Rome and priestly justice. Come, give me your hand and your word to do nothing without my consent, or else I shall leave you directly."

Sir B—— M—— was a man of my own height but somewhat thinner, and five or six years older; the reader will understand his character without my describing it.

My speech must have rather astonished him, but he knew that my disposition was benevolent,

and he could not help giving me his hand and his pledge.

"Yes, dearest," said Betty, "leave vengeance to the friend whom Heaven has sent us."

"I consent to do so, provided everything is done in concert between us."

After this we parted, and Sir B—— M——, being in need of rest, I went to tell the *vetturino* that we should start for Rome again on the following day.

"For Rome! Then you have found your pocket-book? It seems to me, my good sir, that you would have been wiser not to search for it."

The worthy man, seeing my hand done up in lint, imagined I had fought a duel, and indeed everybody else came to the same conclusion.

Sir B—— M—— had gone to bed, and I spent the rest of the day in the company of Betty, who was overflowing with gratitude. She said we must forget what had passed between us, and be the best of friends for the rest of our days, without a thought of any further amorous relations. I had not much difficulty in assenting to this condition.

She burned with the desire for vengeance on the scoundrelly actor who had deceived her; but I pointed out that her duty was to moderate Sir B—— M——'s passions, as if he attempted any violence in Rome it might prove a very serious matter for him, besides its being to the

disadvantage of his reputation to have the affair talked of.

"I promise you," I added, "to have the rogue imprisoned as soon as we reach Rome, and that ought to be sufficient vengeance for you. Instead of the advantages he proposed for himself, he will receive only shame and all the misery of a prison."

Sir B—— M—— slept seven or eight hours, and rose to find that a good deal of his rage had evaporated. He consented to abide by my arrangements, if he could have the pleasure of paying the fellow a visit, as he wanted to know him.

After this sensible decision and a good supper I went to my lonely couch without any regret, for I was happy in the consciousness of having done a good action.

We started at day-break the next morning, and when we reached Acquapendente we resolved to post to Rome. By the post the journey took twelve hours, otherwise we should have been three days on the road.

As soon as we reached Rome I went to the custom-house and put in the document relating to Betty's trunk. The next day it was duly brought to our inn and handed over to Betty.

As Sir B—— M—— had placed the case in my hands I went to the *bargello*, an important person at Rome, and an expeditious officer when he sees a case clearly and feels sure that the plaintiffs do not mind spending their money. The *bargello* is rich,

and lives well ; he has an almost free access to the cardinal-vicar, the governor, and even the Holy Father himself.

He gave me a private interview directly, and I told him the whole story, finally saying that all we asked for was that the rogue should be imprisoned and afterwards expelled from Rome.

" You see," I added, " that our demand is a very moderate one, and we could get all we want by the ordinary channels of the law ; but we are in a hurry, and I want you to take charge of the whole affair. If you care to do so we shall be prepared to defray legal expenses to the extent of fifty crowns."

The *bargello* asked me to give him the bill of exchange and all the effects of the adventurer, including the letters.

I had the bill in my pocket and gave it him on the spot, taking a receipt in exchange. I told him to send to the inn for the rest.

" As soon as I have made him confess the facts you allege against him," said the *bargello*, " we shall be able to do something. I have already heard that he is at Roland's, and has been trying to get the Englishwoman's trunk. If you liked to spend a hundred crowns instead of fifty we could send him to the galleys for a couple of years."

" We will see about that," said I, " for the present we will have him into prison."

He was delighted to hear that the horse was not l'Etoile's property, and said that if I liked to

call at nine o'clock he would have further news for me.

I said I would come. I really had a good deal to do at Rome. I wanted to see Cardinal Bernis in the first place, but I postponed everything to the affair of the moment.

I went back to the inn and was told by a *valet de place*, whom Sir B—— M—— had hired, that the Englishman had gone to bed.

We were in need of a carriage, so I summoned the landlord and was astonished to find myself confronted by Roland in person.

"How's this?" I said. "I thought you were still at the Place d'Espagne."

"I have given my old house to my daughter who has married a prosperous Frenchman, while I have taken this palace where there are some magnificent rooms."

"Has your daughter many foreigners staying at her house now?"

"Only one Frenchman, the Comte de l'Etoile, who is waiting for his equipage to come on. He has an excellent horse, and I am thinking of buying it from him."

"I advise you to wait till to-morrow, and to say nothing about the advice I have given you."

"Why should I wait?"

"I can't say any more just now."

This Roland was the father of the Thérèse whom I had loved nine years before, and whom my

brother Jean had married in 1762, a year after my departure. Roland told me that my brother was in Rome with Prince Beloselski, the Russian ambassador to the Court of Saxony.

"I understood that my brother could not come to Rome."

"He came with a safe-conduct which the Dowager Electress of Saxony obtained for him from the Holy Father. He wants his case to be re-tried, and there he makes a mistake, for if it were heard a hundred times the sentence would continue the same. No one will see him, everyone avoids him, even Mengs will have nothing to say to him."

"Menges is here, is he? I thought he had been at Madrid."

"He has got leave of absence for a year, but his family remains in Spain."

After hearing all this news which was far from pleasant to me, as I did not wish to see Mengs or my brother, I went to bed, leaving orders that I was to be roused in time for dinner.

In an hour's time I was awakened by the tidings that some one was waiting to give me a note. It was one of the *bargello's* men, who had come to take over l'Etoile's effects.

At dinner I told Sir B—— M—— what I had done, and we agreed that he should accompany me to the *bargello's* in the evening.

In the afternoon we visited some of the principal palaces, and after taking Betty back to the inn we

went to the *bargello*, who told us our man was already in prison, and that it would cost very little to send him to the galleys.

"Before making up my mind I should like to speak to him," said Sir B—— M——.

"You can do so to-morrow. He confessed everything without any trouble, and made a jest of it, saying he was not afraid of any consequences, as the young lady had gone with him of her own free will. I shewed him the bill of exchange, but he evinced no emotion whatever. He told me that he was an actor by profession, but also a man of rank. As to the horse, he said he was at perfect liberty to sell it, as the watch he had left in pledge was worth more than the beast."

I had forgotten to inform the *bargello* that the watch aforesaid belonged to Betty.

We gave the worthy official fifty crowns, and supped with Betty, who had, as I have remarked, recovered her trunk, and had been busying herself in putting her things to rights.

She was glad to hear that the rascal was in prison, but she did not seem to wish to pay him a visit.

We went to see him in the afternoon of the next day.

The *bargello* had assigned us an advocate, who made out a document demanding payment by the prisoner of the expenses of the journey, and of his arrest, together with a certain sum as compensation

to the person whom he had deceived, unless he could prove his right to the title of count in the course of six weeks.

We found l'Etoile with this document in his hand; someone was translating it for him into French.

As soon as the rascal saw me, he said, with a laugh, that I owed him twenty-five louis as he had left Betty to sleep with me.

The Englishman told him he lied; it was he that had slept with her.

"Are you Betty's lover?" asked l'Etoile.

"Yes, and if I had caught you with her I should have blown out your brains, for you have deceived her doubly, you're only a beggarly actor."

"I have three thousand crowns."

"I will pay six thousand if the bill proves to be a good one. In the meanwhile you will stay here, and if it be false, as I expect it is, you will go to the galleys."

"Very good."

"I shall speak to my counsel."

We went out and called on the advocate, for Sir B—— M—— had a lively desire to send the impudent rascal to the galleys. However, it could not be done, for l'Etoile said he was quite ready to give up the bill, but that he expected Sir B—— M—— to pay a crown a day for his keep while he remained in prison.

Sir B—— M—— thought he would like to see

something of Rome, as he was there, and was obliged to buy almost everything as he had left his belongings behind him, while Betty was well provided for as her trunk was of immense capacity. I went with them everywhere ; it was not exactly the life I liked, but there would be time for me to please myself after they had gone. I loved Betty without desiring her, and I had taken a liking to the Englishman who had an excellent heart. At first he wanted to stay a fortnight at Rome, and then to return to Leghorn ; but his friend Lord Baltimore, who had come to Rome in the meanwhile, persuaded him to pay a short visit to Naples.

This nobleman, who had with him a very pretty Frenchwoman and two servants, said he would see to the journey, and that I must join the party. I had made his acquaintance at London.

I was glad to have the opportunity of seeing Naples again. We lodged at the "Crocicelles" at Chiaggia, or Chiaja, as the Neapolitans call it.

The first news I heard was the death of the Duke of Matalone and the marriage of his widow with Prince Caramanica.

This circumstance put an end to some of my hopes, and I only thought of amusing myself with my friends, as if I had never been at Naples before. Lord Baltimore had been there several times, but his mistress, Betty, and Sir B—— M——, were strangers, and wanted to see everything. I accordingly acted as cicerone, for which part I and my

lord, too, were much better qualified than the tedious and ignorant fellows who had an official right to that title.

The day after our arrival I was unpleasantly surprised to see the notorious Chevalier Goudar, whom I had known at London. He called on Lord Baltimore.,

This famous *roué* had a house at Pausilippo, and his wife was none other than the pretty Irish girl Sara, formerly a drawer in a London tavern. The reader has been already introduced to her. Goudar knew I had met her, so he told me who she was, inviting us all to dine with him the next day.

Sara shewed no surprise nor confusion at the sight of me, but I was petrified. She was dressed with the utmost elegance, received company admirably, spoke Italian with perfect correctness, talked sensibly, and was exquisitely beautiful; I was stupefied; the metamorphosis was so great.

In a quarter of an hour five or six ladies of the highest rank arrived, with ten or twelve dukes, princes, and marquises, to say nothing of a host of distinguished strangers.

The table was laid for thirty, but before dinner Madame Goudar seated herself at the piano, and sang a few airs with the voice of a syren, and with a confidence that did not astonish the other guests as they knew her, but which astonished me extremely, for her singing was really admirable.

Goudar had worked this miracle. He had

been educating her to be his wife for six or seven years.

After marrying her he had taken her to Paris, Vienna, Venice, Florence, Rome, etc., everywhere seeking fortune, but in vain. Finally he had come to Naples, where he had brought his wife into the fashion by obliging her to renounce in public the errors of the Anglican heresy. She had been received into the Catholic Church under the auspices of the Queen of Naples. The amusing part in all this was that Sara, being an Irish-woman, had been born a Catholic, and had never ceased to be one.

All the nobility, even the Court, went to see Sara, while she went nowhere, for no one invited her. This kind of thing is a characteristic of nobility all the world over.

Goudar told me all these particulars, and confessed that he only made his living by gaming. Faro and biribi were the only pillars of his house; but they must have been strong ones, for he lived in great style.

He asked me to join with him, and I did not care to refuse; my purse was fast approaching total depletion, and if it were not for this resource I could not continue living in the style to which I had been accustomed.

Having taken this resolution I declined returning to Rome with Betty and Sir B—— M——, who wanted to repay me all I had spent on her account.

I was not in a position to be ostentatious, so I accepted his generous offer.

Two months later I heard that l'Etoile had been liberated by the influence of Cardinal Bernis, and had left Rome. Next year I heard at Florence that Sir B—— M—— had returned to England, where no doubt he married Betty as soon as he became a widower.

As for the famous Lord Baltimore he left Naples a few days after my friends, and travelled about Italy in his usual way. Three years later he paid for his British bravado with his life. He committed the wild imprudence of traversing the Maremma in August, and was killed by the poisonous exhalations.

I stopped at "Crocicelles," as all the rich foreigners came to live there. I was thus enabled to make their acquaintance, and put them in the way of losing their money at Goudar's. I did not like my task, but circumstances were too strong for me.

Five or six days after Betty had left I chanced to meet the Abbé Gama, who had aged a good deal, but was still as gay and active as ever. After we had told each other our adventures he informed me that, as all the differences between the Holy See and the Court of Naples had been adjusted, he was going back to Rome. Before he went, however, he said he should like to present

me to a lady whom he was sure I should be very glad to see again.

The first persons I thought of were Donna Leonilda, or Donna Lucrezia, her mother; but what was my surprise to see Agatha, the dancer with whom I had been in love at Turin after abandoning the Corticelli.

Our delight was mutual, and we proceeded to tell each other the incidents of our lives since we had parted.

My tale only lasted a quarter of an hour, but Agatha's history was a long one.

She had only danced a year at Naples. An advocate had fallen in love with her, and she shewed me four pretty children she had given him. The husband came in at supper-time, and as she had often talked to him about me he rushed to embrace me as soon as he heard my name. He was an intelligent man, like most of the *pagletti* of Naples. We supped together like old friends, and the Abbé Gama going soon after supper I stayed with them till midnight, promising to join them at dinner the next day.

Although Agatha was in the very flower of her beauty, the old fires were not rekindled in me. I was ten years older. My coolness pleased me, for I should not have liked to trouble the peace of a happy home.

After leaving Agatha I proceeded to Goudar's, in whose bank I took a strong interest. I found a

dozen gamesters round the table, but what was my surprise to recognize in the holder of the bank Count Medini.

Three or four days before this Medini had been expelled from the house of M. de Choiseul, the French ambassador; he had been caught cheating at cards. • I had also my reason to be incensed against him; and, as the reader may remember, we had fought a duel.

On glancing at the bank I saw that it was at the last gasp. It ought to have held six hundred ounces, and there were scarcely a hundred. I was interested to the extent of a third.

On examining the face of the punter who had made these ravages I guessed the game. It was the first time I had seen the rascal at Goudar's.

At the end of the deal Goudar told me that this punter was a rich Frenchman who had been introduced by Medini. He told me I should not mind his winning that evening, as he would be sure to lose it all and a good deal more another time.

"I don't care who the punter is," said I, "it is not of the slightest consequence to me, as I tell you plainly that as long as Medini is the banker I will have nothing to do with it."

"I have told Medini about it and wanted to take a third away from the bank, but he seemed offended and said he would make up any loss to you, but that he could not have the bank touched."

"Very good, but if he does not bring me my

money by to-morrow morning there will be trouble. Indeed, the responsibility lies with you, for I have told you that as long as Medini deals I will have nothing to do with it."

"Of course you have a claim on me for two hundred ounces, but I hope you will be reasonable; it would be rather hard for me to lose two-thirds."

Knowing Goudar to be a greater rascal than Medini, I did not believe a word he said; and I waited impatiently for the end of the game.

At one o'clock it was all over. The lucky punter went off with his pockets full of gold, and Medini, affecting high spirits, which were very much out of place, swore his victory should cost him dear.

"Will you kindly give me my two hundred ounces," said I, "for, of course, Goudar told you that I was out of it?"

"I confess myself indebted to you for that amount, as you absolutely insist, but pray tell me why you refuse to be interested in the bank when I am dealing."

"Because I have no confidence in your luck."

"You must see that your words are capable of a very unpleasant interpretation."

"I can't prevent your interpreting my words as you please, but I have a right to my own opinion. I want my two hundred ounces, and I am quite willing to leave you any moneys you propose to make out of the conqueror of to night.

You must make your arrangements with M. Goudar, and by noon to-morrow, you, M. Goudar, will bring me that sum."

"I can't remit you the money till the count gives it me, for I haven't got any money."

"I am sure you will have some money by twelve o'clock to-morrow morning. Good night."

I would not listen to any of their swindling arguments, and went home without the slightest doubt that they were trying to cheat me. I resolved to wash my hands of the whole gang as soon as I had got my money back by fair means or foul.

At nine the next morning I received a note from Medini, begging me to call on him and settle the matter. I replied that he must make his arrangements with Goudar, and I begged to be excused calling on him.

In the course of an hour he paid me a visit, and exerted all his eloquence to persuade me to take a bill for two hundred ounces, payable in a week. I gave him a sharp refusal, saying that my business was with Goudar and Goudar only, and that unless I received the money by noon I should proceed to extremities. Medini raised his voice, and told me that my language was offensive; and forthwith I took up a pistol and placed it against his cheek, ordering him to leave the room. He turned pale, and went away without a word.

At noon I went to Goudar's without my sword,

but with two good pistols in my pocket. Medini was there, and began by reproaching me with attempting to assassinate him in my own house.

I took no notice of this, but told Goudar to give me my two hundred ounces.

Goudar asked Medini to give him the money.

There would undoubtedly have been a quarrel, if I had not been prudent enough to leave the room, threatening Goudar with ruin if he did not send on the money directly.

Just as I was leaving the house, the fair Sara put her head out of the window, and begged me to come up by the back stairs and speak to her.

I begged to be excused, so she said she would come down, and in a moment she stood beside me.

“ You are in the right about your money,” she said, “ but just at present my husband has not got any ; you really must wait two or three days, I will guarantee the payment.”

“ I am really sorry,” I replied, “ not to be able to oblige such a charming woman, but the only thing that will pacify me is my money, and till I have had it, you will see me no more in your house, against which I declare war.”

Thereupon she drew from her finger a diamond ring, worth at least four hundred ounces, and begged me to accept it as a pledge.

I took it, and left her after making my bow. She was doubtless astonished at my behaviour, for in

her state of *déshabille* she could not have counted on my displaying such firmness.

I was very well satisfied with my victory, and went to dine with the advocate, Agatha's husband. I told him the story, begging him to find someone who would give me two hundred ounces on the ring.

"I will do it myself," said he; and he gave me an acknowledgement and two hundred ounces on the spot. He then wrote in my name a letter to Goudar, informing him that he was the depositary of the ring.

This done, I recovered my good temper.

Before dinner Agatha took me into her boudoir and shewed me all the splendid jewels I had given her when I was rich and in love.

"Now I am a rich woman," said she, "and my good fortune is all your making; so take back what you gave me. Don't be offended; I am so grateful to you, and my good husband and I agreed on this plan this morning."

To take away any scruples I might have, she shewed me the diamonds her husband had given her; they had belonged to his first wife and were worth a considerable sum.

My gratitude was too great for words, I could only press her hand, and let my eyes speak the feelings of my heart. Just then her husband came in.

It had evidently been concerted between them,

for the worthy man embraced me, and begged me to accede to his wife's request.

We then joined the company which consisted of a dozen or so of their friends, but the only person who attracted my attention was a very young man, whom I set down at once as in love with Agatha. His name was Don Pasqual Latilla; and I could well believe that he would be successful in love, for he was intelligent, handsome, and well-mannered. We became friends in the course of the meal.

Amongst the ladies I was greatly pleased with one young girl. She was only fourteen, but she looked eighteen. Agatha told me she was studying singing, intending to go on the stage as she was so poor.

“So pretty, and yet poor?”

“Yes, for she will have all or nothing; and lovers of that kind are rare in Naples.”

“But she must have some lover?”

“If she has, no one has heard of him. You had better make her acquaintance and go and see her. You will soon be friends.”

“What's her name?”

“Callimena. The lady who is speaking to her is her aunt, and I expect they are talking about you.”

We sat down to the enjoyment of a delicate and abundant meal. Agatha, I could see, was happy, and delighted to shew me how happy she

was. The old Abbé Gama congratulated himself on having presented me. Don Pascal Latilla could not be jealous of the attentions paid me by his idol, for I was a stranger, and they were my due, while her husband prided himself on his freedom from those vulgar prejudices to which so many Neapolitans are subject.

In the midst of all this gaiety I could not help stealing many a furtive glance towards Callimena. I addressed her again and again, and she answered me politely but so briefly as to give me no opportunity of displaying my powers in the way of persiflage.

I asked if her name was her family name or a pseudonym.

"It is my baptismal name."

"It is Greek; but, of course, you know what it means?"

"No."

"Mad beauty, or fair moon."

"I am glad to say that I have nothing in common with my name."

"Have you any brothers or sisters?"

"I have only one married sister, with whom you may possibly be acquainted."

"What is her name, and who is her husband?"

"Her husband is a Piedmontese, but she does not live with him."

"Is she the Madame Slopis who travels with Aston?"

"Exactly."

"I can give you good news of her."

After dinner I asked Agatha how she came to know Callimena.

"My husband is her godfather."

"What is her exact age?"

"Fourteen."

"She's a simple prodigy! What loveliness!"

"Her sister is still handsomer."

"I have never seen her."

A servant came in and said M. Goudar would like to have a little private conversation with the advocate.

The advocate came back in a quarter of an hour, and informed me that Goudar had given him the two hundred ounces, and that he had returned him the ring.

"Then that's all settled, and I am very glad of it. I have certainly made an eternal enemy of him, but that doesn't trouble me much."

We began playing, and Agatha made me play with Callimena, the freshness and simplicity of whose character delighted me.

I told her all I knew about her sister, and promised I would write to Turin to enquire whether she were still there. I told her that I loved her, and that if she would allow me, I would come and see her. Her reply was extremely satisfactory.

The next morning I went to wish her good day. She was taking a music lesson from her

master. Her talents were really of a moderate order, but love made me pronounce her performance to be exquisite.

When the master had gone, I remained alone with her. The poor girl overwhelmed me with apologies for her dress, her wretched furniture, and for her inability to give me a proper breakfast.

"All that makes you more desirable in my eyes, and I am only sorry that I cannot offer you a fortune."

As I praised her beauty, she allowed me to kiss her ardently, but she stopped my further progress by giving me a kiss as if to satisfy me.

I made an effort to restrain my ardour, and told her to tell me truly whether she had a lover.

"Not one."

"And have you never had one?"

"Never."

"Not even a fancy for anyone?"

"No, never."

"What, with your beauty and sensibility, is there no man in Naples who has succeeded in inspiring you with desire?"

"No one has ever tried to do so. No one has spoken to me as you have, and that is the plain truth."

"I believe you, and I see that I must make haste to leave Naples, if I would not be the most unhappy of men."

"What do you mean?"

"I should love you without the hope of possessing you, and thus I should be most unhappy."

"Love me then, and stay. Try and make me love you. Only you must moderate your ecstasies, for I cannot love a man who cannot exercise self-restraint."

"As just now, for instance?"

"Yes. If you calm yourself I shall think you do so for my sake, and thus love will tread close on the heels of gratitude."

This was as much as to tell me that though she did not love me yet I had only to wait patiently, and I resolved to follow her advice. I had reached an age which knows nothing of the impatient desires of youth.

I gave her a tender embrace, and as I was getting up to go I asked her if she were in need of money.

This question made her blush, and she said I had better ask her aunt, who was in the next room.

I went in, and was somewhat astonished to find the aunt seated between two worthy Capuchins, who were talking small talk to her while she worked at her needle. At a little distance three young girls sat sewing.

The aunt would have risen to welcome me, but I prevented her, asked her how she did, and smilingly congratulated her on her company. She

smiled back, but the Capuchins sat as firm as two stocks, without honouring me with as much as a glance.

I took a chair and sat down beside her.

She was near her fiftieth year, though some might have doubted whether she would ever see it again; her manner was good and honest, and her features bore the traces of the beauty that time had ruined.

Although I am not a prejudiced man, the presence of the two evil-smelling monks annoyed me extremely. I thought the obstinate way in which they stayed little less than an insult. True they were men like myself, in spite of their goats' beards and dirty frocks, and consequently were liable to the same desires as I, but for all that I found them wholly intolerable. I could not shame them without shaming the lady, and they knew it; monks are adepts at such calculations.

I have travelled all over Europe, but France is the only country in which I saw a decent and respectable clergy.

At the end of a quarter of an hour I could contain myself no longer, and told the aunt that I wished to say something to her in private. I thought the two satyrs would have taken the hint, but I counted without my host. The aunt arose, however, and took me into the next room.

I asked my question as delicately as possible, and she replied,—

"Alas ! I have only too great a need of twenty ducats (about eighty francs) to pay my rent."

I gave her the money on the spot, and I saw that she was very grateful, but I left her before she could express her feelings.

Here I must tell my readers (if I ever have any) of an event which took place on that same day.

As I was dining in my room by myself, I was told that a Venetian gentleman who said he knew me wished to speak to me.

I ordered him to be shewn in, and though his face was not wholly unknown to me I could not recollect who he was.

He was tall, thin and wretched, misery and hunger shewing plainly in his every feature; his beard was long, his head shaven, his robe a dingy brown, and bound about him with a coarse cord, whence hung a rosary and a dirty handkerchief. In the left hand he bore a basket, and in the right a long stick; his form is still before me, but I think of him not as a humble penitent, but as a being in the last state of desperation, almost an assassin.

"Who are you?" I said at length. "I think I have seen you before, and yet . . ."

"I will soon tell you my name and the story of my woes; but first give me something to eat, for I am dying of hunger. I have had nothing but bad soup for the last few days."

"Certainly; go downstairs and have your

dinner, and then come back to me; you can't eat and speak at the same time."

My man went down to give him his meal, and I gave instructions that I was not to be left alone with him as he terrified me.

I felt sure that I ought to know him, and longed to hear his story.

In three quarters of an hour he came up again, looking like some one in a high fever.

"Sit down," said I, "and speak freely."

"My name is Albergoni."

"What!"

Albergoni was a gentleman of Padua, and one of my most intimate friends twenty-five years before. He was provided with a small fortune, but an abundance of wit, and had a great leaning towards pleasure and the exercise of satire. He laughed at the police and the cheated husbands, indulged in Venus and Bacchus to excess, sacrificed to the god of pederasty, and gamed incessantly. He was now hideously ugly, but when I knew him first he was a very Antinous.

He told me the following story:

"A club of young rakes, of whom I was one, had a casino at the Zuecca, we passed many a pleasant hour there without hurting anyone. Some one imagined that these meetings were the scenes of unlawful pleasures, the engines of the law were secretly directed against us, and the casino was shut up, and we were ordered to be arrested. All

escaped except myself and a man named Branzandi. We had to wait for our unjust sentence for two years, but at last it appeared. My wretched fellow was condemned to lose his head, and afterwards to be burnt, while I was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment *in carcere duro*. In 1765 I was set free, and went to Padua hoping to live in peace, but my persecutors gave me no rest, and I was accused of the same crime. I would not wait for the storm to burst, so I fled to Rome, and two years afterwards the Council of Ten condemned me to perpetual banishment.

"I might bear this if I had the wherewithal to live, but a brother-in-law of mine has possessed himself of all I have, and the unjust Tribunal winks at his misdeeds."

"A Roman attorney made me an offer of an annuity of two pauls a day on the condition that I should renounce all claims on my estate. I refused this iniquitous condition, and left Rome to come here and turn hermit. I have followed this sorry trade for two years, and can bear it no more."

"Go back to Rome; you can live on two pauls a day."

"I would rather die."

I pitied him sincerely, and said that though I was not a rich man he was welcome to dine every day at my expense while I remained in Naples, and I gave him a sequin.

Two or three days later my man told me that the poor wretch had committed suicide.

In his room were found five numbers, which he bequeathed to Medini and myself out of gratitude for our kindness to him. These five numbers were very profitable to the Lottery of Naples, for everyone, myself excepted, rushed to get them. Not a single one proved a winning number, but the popular belief that numbers given by a man before he commits suicide are infallible is too deeply rooted among the Neapolitans to be destroyed by such a misadventure.

I went to see the wretched man's body, and then entered a café. Someone was talking of the case, and maintaining that death by strangulation must be most luxurious as the victim always expires with a strong erection. It might be so, but the erection might also be the result of an agony of pain, and before anyone can speak dogmatically on the point he must first have had a practical experience.

As I was leaving the café I had the good luck to catch a handkerchief thief in the act; it was about the twentieth I had stolen from me in the month I had spent at Naples. Such petty thieves abound there, and their skill is something amazing.

As soon as he felt himself caught, he begged me not to make any noise, swearing he would return all the handkerchiefs he had stolen from

me, which, as he confessed, amounted to seven or eight.

“ You have stolen more than twenty from me.”

“ Not I, but some of my mates. If you come with me, perhaps we shall be able to get them all back.”

“ Is it far off ? ”

“ In the Largo del Castello. Let me go; people are looking at us.”

The little rascal took me to an evil-looking tavern, and shewed me into a room, where a man asked me if I wanted to buy any old things. As soon as he heard I had come for my handkerchiefs, he opened a big cupboard full of handkerchiefs, amongst which I found a dozen of mine, and bought them back for a trifle.

A few days after I bought several others, though I knew they were stolen.

The worthy Neapolitan dealer seemed to think me trustworthy, and three or four days before I left Naples he told me that he could sell me, for ten or twelve thousand ducats, commodities which would fetch four times that amount at Rome or elsewhere.

“ What kind of commodities are they ? ”

“ Watches, snuff-boxes, rings, and jewels, which I dare not sell here.”

“ Aren't you afraid of being discovered ? ”

“ Not much, I don't tell everyone of my business.”

I thanked him, but I would not look at his trinkets, as I was afraid the temptation of making such a profit would be too great.

When I got back to my inn I found some guests had arrived, of whom a few were known to me. Bartoldi had arrived from Dresden with two young Saxons, whose tutor he was. These young noblemen were rich and handsome, and looked fond of pleasure.

Bartoldi was an old friend of mine. He had played Harlequin at the King of Poland's Italian Theatre. On the death of the monarch he had been placed at the head of the opera-buffa by the dowager electress, who was passionately fond of music.

Amongst the other strangers were Miss Chudleigh, now Duchess of Kingston, with a nobleman and a knight whose names I have forgotten.

The duchess recognized me at once, and seemed pleased that I paid my court to her. An hour afterwards Mr. Hamilton came to see her, and I was delighted to make his acquaintance. We all dined together. Mr. Hamilton was a genius, and yet he ended by marrying a mere girl, who was clever enough to make him in love with her. Such a misfortune often comes to clever men in their old age. Marriage is always a folly, but when a man marries a young woman at a time of life when his physical strength is running low, he is bound to pay dearly for his folly; and if his wife is amorous of him she will kill him. Seven years ago

I had a narrow escape myself from the same fate.

After dinner I presented the two Saxons to the duchess; they gave her news of the dowager electress, of whom she was very fond. We then went to the play together. As chance would have it, Madame Goudar occupied the box next to ours, and Hamilton amused the duchess by telling the story of the handsome Irishwoman, but her grace did not seem desirous of making Sara's acquaintance.

After supper the duchess arranged a game at quinze with the two Englishmen and the two Saxons. The stakes were small, and the Saxons proved victorious. I had not taken any part in the game, but I resolved to do so the next evening.

The following day we dined magnificently with the Prince of Francavilla, and in the afternoon he took us to his bath by the seashore, where we saw a wonderful sight. A priest stripped himself naked, leapt into the water, and without making the slightest movement floated on the surface like a piece of deal. There was no trick in it, and the marvel must be assigned to some special quality in his organs of breathing. After this the prince amused the duchess still more pleasantly. He made all his pages, lads of fifteen to seventeen, go into the water, and their various evolutions afforded us great pleasure. They were all the sweethearts of the prince, who preferred Ganymede to Hebe.

The Englishmen asked him if he would give us

the same spectacle, only substituting nymphs for the *amorini*, and he promised to do so the next day at his splendid house near Portici, where there was a marble basin in the midst of the garden.

CHAPTER III

MY AMOURS WITH CALLIMENA—JOURNEY TO SORENTO
— MEDINI — GOUDAR — MISS CHUDLEIGH — THE
MARQUIS PETINA—GAETANO—MADAME CORNELIS'S
SON — AN ANECDOTE OF SARA GOUDAR — THE
FLORENTINES MOCKED BY THE KING—MY JOURNEY
TO SALERNO, RETURN TO NAPLES, AND ARRIVAL
AT ROME

THE Prince of Francavilla was a rich Epicurean, whose motto was *Fovet et favet*.

He was in favour in Spain, but the king allowed him to live at Naples, as he was afraid of his initiating the Prince of Asturias, his brothers, and perhaps the whole Court, into his peculiar vices.

The next day he kept his promise, and we had the pleasure of seeing the marble basin filled with ten or twelve beautiful girls who swam about in the water.

Miss Chudleigh and two other ladies pronounced this spectacle tedious; they no doubt preferred that of the previous day.

In spite of this gay company I went to see Callimena twice a day; she still made me sigh in vain.

Agatha was my confidante; she would gladly have helped me to attain my ends, but her dignity would not allow of her giving me any overt assistance. She promised to ask Callimena to accompany us on an excursion to Sorrento, hoping that I should succeed in my object during the night we should have to spend there.

Before Agatha had made these arrangements, Hamilton had made similar ones with the Duchess of Kingston, and I succeeded in getting an invitation. I associated chiefly with the two Saxons and a charming Abbé Guliani, with whom I afterwards made a more intimate acquaintance at Rome.

We left Naples at four o'clock in the morning, in a felucca with twelve oars, and at nine we reached Sorrento.

We were fifteen in number, and all were delighted with this earthly paradise.

Hamilton took us to a garden belonging to the Duke of Serra Capriola, who chanced to be there with his beautiful Piedmontese wife, who loved her husband passionately.

The duke had been sent there two months before for having appeared in public in an equipage which was adjudged too magnificent. The minister Tanucci called on the king to punish this infringement of the sumptuary laws, and as the king had

not yet learnt to resist his ministers, the duke and his wife were exiled to this earthly paradise. But a paradise which is a prison is no paradise at all; they were both dying of ennui, and our arrival was balm in Gilead to them.

A certain Abbé Bettoni, whose acquaintance I had made nine years before at the late Duke of Matalone's, had come to see them, and was delighted to meet me again.

The abbé was a native of Brescia, but he had chosen Sorrento as his residence. He had three thousand crowns a year, and lived well, enjoying all the gifts of Bacchus, Ceres, Comus, and Venus, the latter being his favourite divinity. He had only to desire to attain, and no man could desire greater pleasure than he enjoyed at Sorrento. I was vexed to see Count Medini with him; we were enemies, and gave each other the coldest of greetings.

We were twenty-two at table, and enjoyed delicious fare, for in that land everything is good; the very bread is sweeter than elsewhere. We spent the afternoon in inspecting the villages, which are surrounded by avenues finer than the avenues leading to the grandest castles in Europe.

Abbé Bettoni treated us to lemon, coffee, and chocolate ices, and some delicious cream cheese. Naples excels in these delicacies, and the abbé had everything of the best. We were waited on by five or six country girls of ravishing beauty, dressed

with exquisite neatness. I asked him whether that were his seraglio, and he replied that it might be so, but that jealousy was unknown, as I should see for myself if I cared to spend a week with him.

I envied this happy man, and yet I pitied him, for he was at least twelve years older than I, and I was by no means young. His pleasures could not last much longer.

In the evening we returned to the duke's, and sat down to a supper composed of several kinds of fish.

The air of Sorento gives an untiring appetite, and the supper soon disappeared.

After supper my lady proposed a game at faro, and Bettoni, knowing Medini to be a professional gamester, asked him to hold the bank. He begged to be excused, saying he had not enough money, so I consented to take his place.

The cards were brought in, and I emptied my poor purse on the table. It only held four hundred ounces, but that was all I possessed.

The game began, and on Medini asking me if I would allow him a share in the bank, I begged him to excuse me on the score of inconvenience.

I went on dealing till midnight, and by that time I had only forty ounces left. Everybody had won except Sir — Rosebury, who had punted in English bank notes, which I had put into my pocket without counting.

When I got to my room I thought I had better look at the bank notes, for the depletion of my purse disquieted me. My delight may be imagined. I found I had got four hundred and fifty pounds—more than double what I had lost.

I went to sleep well pleased with my day's work, and resolved not to tell anyone of my good luck.

The duchess had arranged for us to start at nine, and Madame de Serra Capriola begged us to take coffee with her before going.

After breakfast Medini and Bettoni came in, and the former asked Hamilton whether he would mind his returning with us. Of course, Hamilton could not refuse, so he came on board, and at two o'clock I was back at my inn. I was astonished to be greeted in my ante-chamber by a young lady, who asked me sadly whether I remembered her. She was the eldest of the five Hanoverians, the same that had fled with the Marquis della Petina.

I told her to come in; and ordered dinner to be brought up.

"If you are alone," she said, "I should be glad to share your repast."

"Certainly, I will order dinner for two."

Her story was soon told. She had come to Naples with her husband, whom her mother refused to recognize. The poor wretch had sold all he possessed, and two or three months after he had been arrested on several charges of forgery. His

poor mate had supported him in prison for seven years. She had heard that I was at Naples, and wanted me to help her, not as the Marquis della Petina wished, by lending him money, but by employing my influence with the Duchess of Kingston to make that lady take her to England with her in her service.

“Are you married to the marquis?”

“No.”

“Then how could you keep him for seven years?”

“Alas You can think of a hundred ways, and they would all be true.”

“I see.”

“Can you procure me an interview with the duchess?”

“I will try, but I warn you that I shall tell her the simple truth.”

“Very good.”

“Come again to-morrow.”

At six o'clock I went to ask Hamilton how I could exchange the English notes I had won, and he gave me the money himself.

Before supper I spoke to the duchess about the poor Hanoverian. My lady said she remembered seeing her, and that she would like to have a talk with her before coming to any decision. I brought the poor creature to her the next day, and left them alone. The result of the interview was that the duchess took her into her service in the

place of a Roman girl, and the Hanoverian went to England with her. I never heard of her again, but a few days after Petina sent to beg me to come and see him in prison, and I could not refuse. I found him with a young man whom I recognized as his brother, though he was very handsome and the marquis very ugly; but the distinction between beauty and ugliness is often hard to point out.

This visit proved a very tedious one, for I had to listen to a long story which did not interest me in the least.

As I was going out I was met by an official, who said another prisoner wanted to speak to me.

“What’s his name?”

“His name is Gaetano, and he says he is a relation of yours.”

My relation and Gaetano! I thought it might be the abbé.

I went up to the first floor, and found a score of wretched prisoners sitting on the ground roaring an obscene song in chorus.

Such gaiety is the last resource of men condemned to imprisonment on the galleys; it is nature giving her children some relief.

One of the prisoners came up to me and greeted me as “gossip.” He would have embraced me, but I stepped back. He told me his name, and I recognized in him that Gaetano who had married a pretty woman under my auspices as her

godfather. The reader may remember that I afterwards helped her to escape from him.

"I am sorry to see you here, but what can I do for you?"

"You can pay me the hundred crowns you owe me, for the goods supplied to you at Paris by me."

This was a lie, so I turned my back on him, saying I supposed imprisonment had driven him mad.

As I went away I asked an official why he had been imprisoned, and was told it was for forgery, and that he would have been hanged if it had not been for a legal flaw. He was sentenced to imprisonment for life.

I dismissed him from my mind, but in the afternoon I had a visit from an advocate who demanded a hundred crowns on Gaetano's behalf, supporting his claim by the production of an immense ledger, where my name appeared as debtor on several pages.

"Sir," said I, "the man is mad; I don't owe him anything, and the evidence of this book is utterly worthless."

"You make a mistake, sir," he replied; "this ledger is good evidence, and our laws deal very favourably with imprisoned creditors. I am retained for them, and if you do not settle the matter by to-morrow I shall serve you with a summons."

I restrained my indignation and asked him

politely for his name and address. He wrote it down directly, feeling quite certain that his affair was as good as settled.

I called on Agatha, and her husband was much amused when I told my story.

He made me sign a power of attorney, empowering him to act for me, and he ~~then~~ advised the other advocate that all communications in the case must be made to him alone.

The *paglietti* who abound in Naples only live by cheating, and especially by imposing on strangers.

Sir — Rosebury remained at Naples, and I found myself acquainted with all the English visitors. They all lodged at "Crocielles," for the English are like a flock of sheep; they follow each other about, always go to the same place, and never care to shew any originality. We often arranged little trips in which the two Saxons joined, and I found the time pass very pleasantly. Nevertheless, I should have left Naples after the fair if my love for Callimena had not retained me. I saw her every day and made her presents, but she only granted me the slightest of favours.

The fair was nearly over, and Agatha was making her preparations for going to Sorento as had been arranged. She begged her husband to invite a lady whom he had loved before marrying her while she invited Pascal Latilla for herself, and Callimena for me.

There were thus three couples, and the three gentlemen were to defray all expenses.

Agatha's husband took the direction of everything.

A few days before the party I saw, to my surprise, Joseph, son of Madame Cornelis and brother of my dear Sophie.

"How did you come to Naples? Whom are you with?"

"I am by myself. I wanted to see Italy, and my mother gave me this pleasure. I have seen Turin, Milan, Genoa, Florence, Venice, and Rome; and after I have done Italy I shall see Switzerland and Germany, and then return to England by way of Holland."

"How long is this expedition to take?"

"Six months."

"I suppose you will be able to give a full account of everything when you go back to London?"

"I hope to convince my mother that the money she spent was not wasted."

"How much do you think it will cost you?"

"The five hundred guineas she gave me, no more."

"Do you mean to say you are only going to spend five hundred guineas in six months? I can't believe it."

"Economy works wonders."

"I suppose so. How have you done as to

letters of introduction in all these countries of which you now know so much ? ”

“ I have had no introductions. I carry an English passport, and let people think that I am English.”

“ Aren’t you afraid of getting into bad company ? ”

“ I don’t give myself the chance. I don’t speak to anyone, and when people address me I reply in monosyllables. I always strike a bargain before I eat a meal or take a lodging. I only travel in public conveyances.”

“ Very good. Here you will be able to economize ; I will pay all your expenses, and give you an excellent cicerone, one who will cost you nothing.”

“ I am much obliged, but I promised my mother not to accept anything from anybody.”

“ I think you might make an exception in my case.”

“ No. I have relations in Venice, and I would not take so much as a single dinner from them. When I promise, I perform.”

Knowing his obstinacy, I did not insist. He was now a young man of twenty-three, of a delicate order of prettiness, and might easily have been taken for a girl in disguise if he had not allowed his whiskers to grow.

Although his grand tour seemed an extravagant

project, I could not help admiring his courage and desire to be well informed.

I asked him about his mother and daughter, and he replied to my questions without reserve.

He told me that Madame Cornelis was head over ears in debts, and spent about half the year in prison. She would then get out by giving fresh bills and making various arrangements with her creditors, who knew that if they did not allow her to give her balls, they could not expect to get their money.

My daughter, I heard, was a pretty girl of seventeen, very talented, and patronised by the first ladies in London. She gave concerts, but had to bear a good deal from her mother.

I asked him to whom she was to have been married, when she was taken from the boarding school. He said he had never heard of anything of the kind.

“Are you in any business?”

“No. My mother is always talking of buying a cargo and sending me with it to the Indies, but the day never seems to come, and I am afraid it never will come. To buy a cargo one must have some money, and my mother has none.”

In spite of his promise, I induced him to accept the services of my man, who shewed him all the curiosities of Naples in the course of a week.

I could not make him stay another week. He set out for Rome, and wrote to me from there that

he had left six shirts and a great coat behind him. He begged me to send them on, but he forgot to give me his address.

He was a hare-brained fellow, and yet with the help of two or three sound maxims he managed to traverse half Europe without coming to any grief.

I had an unexpected visit from Goddar, who knew the kind of company I kept, and wanted me to ask his wife and himself to dinner to meet the two Saxons and my English friends.

I promised to oblige him on the understanding that there was to be no play at my house, as I did not want to be involved in any unpleasantness. He was perfectly satisfied with this arrangement, as he felt sure his wife would attract them to his house, where, as he said, one could play without being afraid of anything.

As I was going to Sorrento the next day, I made an appointment with him for a day after my return.

This trip to Sorrento was my last happy day.

The advocate took us to a house where we were lodged with all possible comfort. We had four rooms; the first was occupied by Agatha and her husband, the second by Callimena and the advocate's old sweetheart, the third by Pascal Latilla, and the fourth by myself.

After supper we went early to bed, and rising with the sun we went our several ways; the advocate with his old sweetheart, Agatha with

Pascal, and I with Callimena. At noon we met again to enjoy a delicious dinner, and then the advocate took his siesta, while Pascal went for a walk with Agatha and her husband's sweetheart, and I wandered with Callimena under the shady alleys where the heat of the sun could not penetrate. Here it was that Callimena consented to gratify my passion. She gave herself for love's sake alone, and seemed sorry she had made me wait so long.

On the fourth day we returned to Naples in three carriages, as there was a strong wind. Callimena persuaded me to tell her aunt what had passed between us, that we might be able to meet without any restraint for the future.

I approved of her idea, and, not fearing to meet with much severity from the aunt, I took her apart and told her all that had passed, making her reasonable offers.

She was a sensible woman, and heard what I had to say with great good humour. She said that as I seemed inclined to do something for her niece, she would let me know as soon as possible what she wanted most. I remarked that as I should soon be leaving for Rome, I should like to sup with her niece every evening. She thought this a very natural wish on my part, and so we went to Callimena, who was delighted to hear the result of our interview.

I lost no time, but supped and passed that night with her. I made her all my own by the

power of my love, and by buying her such things as she most needed, such as linen, dresses, etc. It cost me about a hundred louis, and in spite of the smallness of my means I thought I had made a good bargain. Agatha, whom I told of my good luck, was delighted to have helped me to procure it.

Two or three days after I gave a dinner to my English friends, the two Saxons, Bartoldi their governor, and Goudar and his wife.

We were all ready, and only waiting for M. and Madame Goudar, when I saw the fair Irishwoman come in with Count Medini. This piece of insolence made all the blood in my body rush to my head. However, I restrained myself till Goudar came in, and then I gave him a piece of my mind. It had been agreed that his wife should come with him. The rascally fellow prevaricated, and tried hard to induce me to believe that Medini had not plotted the breaking of the bank, but his eloquence was in vain.

Our dinner was a most agreeable one, and Sara cut a brilliant figure, for she possessed every pleasing quality that can make a woman attractive. In good truth, this tavern girl would have filled a throne with any queen ; but Fortune is blind.

When the dinner was over, M. de Buturlin, a distinguished Russian, and a great lover of pretty women, paid me a visit. He had been attracted by the sweet voice of the fair Sara, who was singing a Neapolitan air to the guitar. I shone

only with a borrowed light, but I was far from being offended. Buturlin fell in love with Sara on the spot, and a few months after I left he got her for five hundred louis, which Goudar required to carry out the order he had received, namely, to leave Naples in three days.

This stroke came from the queen, who found out that the king met Madame Goudar secretly at Procida. She found her royal husband laughing heartily at a letter which he would not shew her.

The queen's curiosity was excited, and at last the king gave in, and her majesty read the following.

"Ti aspetterò nel medesimo luogo, ed alla stessa ora, coll' impazienza medesima che ha una vacca che desidera l'avvicinamento del toro."

These words are unfit for chaste ears.

"*Chè infama !*" cried the queen, and her majesty gave the cow's husband to understand that in three days he would have to leave Naples, and look for bulls in other countries.

If these events had not taken place, M. de Buturlin would not have made so good a bargain.

After my dinner, Goudar asked all the company to sup with him the next evening. The repast was a magnificent one, but when Medini sat down at the end of a long table behind a heap of gold and a pack of cards, no punters came forward. Madame Goudar tried in vain to make the gentlemen take a hand. The Englishmen and the Saxons

said politely that they should be delighted to play if she or I would take the bank, but they feared the count's extraordinary fortune.

Thereupon Goudar had the impudence to ask me to deal for a fourth share.

"I will not deal under a half share," I replied, "though I have no confidence in my luck."

Goudar spoke to Medini, who got up, took away his share, and left me the place.

I had only two hundred ounces in my purse. I placed them beside Goudar's two hundred, and in two hours my bank was broken, and I went to console myself with my Callimena.

Finding myself penniless I decided to yield to the pressure of Agatha's husband, who continued to beg me to take back the jewellery I had given his wife. I told Agatha I would never have consented if fortune had been kinder to me. She told her husband, and the worthy man came out of his closet and embraced me as if I had just made his fortune.

I told him I should like to have the value of the jewels, and the next day I found myself once more in possession of fifteen thousand francs.

From that moment I decided to go to Rome, intending to stop there for eight months; but before my departure the advocate said he must give me a dinner at a casino which he had at Portici.

I had plenty of food for thought when I found

myself in the house where I had made a small fortune by my trick with the mercury five-and-twenty years ago.

The king was then at Portici with his Court, and our curiosity attracting us we were witnesses of a most singular spectacle.

The king was only nineteen and loved all kinds of frolics. He conceived a desire to be tossed in a blanket! Probably few crowned heads have wished to imitate Sancho Panza in this manner.

His majesty was tossed to his heart's content; but after his aerial journeys he wished to laugh at those whom he had amused. He began by proposing that the queen should take part in the game; on her replying by shrieks of laughter, his majesty did not insist.

The old courtiers made their escape, greatly to my regret, for I should have liked to see them cutting capers in the air, especially Prince Paul Nicander, who had been the king's tutor, and had filled him with all his own prejudices.

When the king saw that his old followers had fled, he was reduced to asking the young nobles present to play their part.

I was not afraid for myself, as I was unknown, and not of sufficient rank to merit such an honour.

After three or four young noblemen had been tossed, much to the amusement of the queen and her ladies, the king cast his eyes on two young Florentine nobles who had lately arrived at Naples.

They were with their tutor, and all three had been laughing heartily at the disport of the king and his courtiers.

The monarch came up and accosted them very pleasantly, proposing that they should take part in the game.

The wretched Tuscans had been baked in a bad oven ; they were undersized, ugly, and hump-backed.

His majesty's proposal seemed to put them on thorns. Everybody listened for the effects of the king's eloquence ; he was urging them to undress, and saying that it would be unmannerly to refuse ; there could be no humiliation in it, he said, as he himself had been the first to submit.

The tutor felt that it would not do to give the king a refusal, and told them that they must give in, and thereupon the two Florentines took off their clothes.

When the company saw their figures and doleful expressions, the laughter became general. The king took one of them by the hand, observing in an encouraging manner that there would be no danger ; and as a special honour he held one of the corners of the blanket himself. But, for all that, big tears rolled down the wretched young man's cheeks.

After three or four visits to the ceiling, and amusing everyone by the display of his long thin legs, he was released, and the younger brother

went to the torture smilingly, for which he was rewarded by applause.

The governor, suspecting that his majesty destined him for the same fate, had slipped out ; and the king laughed merrily when he heard of his departure.

Such was the extraordinary spectacle we enjoyed—a spectacle in every way unique.

Don Pascal Latilla, who had been lucky enough to avoid his majesty's notice, told us a number of pleasant anecdotes about the king ; all shewed him in the amiable light of a friend of mirth and an enemy to all pomp and stateliness, by which kings are hedged in generally. He assured us that no one could help liking him, because he always preferred to be treated as a friend rather than a monarch.

“He is never more grieved,” said Pascal, “than when his minister Tanucci shews him that he must be severe, and his greatest joy is to grant a favour.”

Ferdinand had not the least tincture of letters, but as he was a man of good sense he honoured lettered men most highly, indeed anyone of merit was sure of his patronage. He revered the minister Marco, he had the greatest respect for the memory of Lelio Caraffa, and of the Dukes of Matalone, and he had provided handsomely for a nephew of the famous man of letters Genovesi, in consideration of his uncle's merits.

Games of chance were forbidden ; and one day he surprised a number of the officers of his guard playing at faro. The young men were terrified at the sight of the king, and would have hidden their cards and money.

“Don’t put yourselves out,” said the kindly monarch, “take care that Tanucci doesn’t catch you, but don’t mind me.”

His father was extremely fond of him up to the time when he was obliged to resist the paternal orders in deference to State reasons.

Ferdinand knew that though he was the King of Spain’s son, he was none the less king of the two Sicilies, and his duties as king had the prerogative over his duties as son.

Some months after the suppression of the Jesuits, he wrote his father a letter, beginning :

“There are four things which astonish me very much. The first is that though the Jesuits were said to be so rich, not a penny was found upon them at the suppression ; the second, that though the *Scrivani* of Naples are supposed to take no fees, yet their wealth is immense ; the third, that while all the other young couples have children sooner or later, we have none ; and the fourth, that all men die at last, except Tanucci, who, I believe, will live on *in sæcula sæculorum*.”

The King of Spain shewed this letter to all the ministers and ambassadors, that they might see that his son was a clever man, and he was right ;

for a man who can write such a letter must be clever.

Two or three days later, the Chevalier de Morosini, the nephew of the procurator, and sole heir of the illustrious house of Morosini, came to Naples accompanied by his tutor Stratico, the professor of mathematics at Padua, and the same that had given me a letter for his brother, the Pisan professor. He stayed at the "Crocielles," and we were delighted to see one another again.

Morosini, a young man of nineteen, was travelling to complete his education. He had spent three years at the Turin academy, and was now under the superintendence of a man who could have introduced him to the whole range of learning, but unhappily the will was wanting in the pupil. The young Venetian loved women to excess, frequented the society of young rakes, and yawned in good company. He was a sworn foe to study, and spent his money in a lavish manner, less from generosity than from a desire to be revenged on his uncle's economies. He complained of being still kept in tutelage; he had calculated that he could spend eight hundred sequins a month, and thought his allowance of two hundred sequins a month an insult. With this notion, he set himself to sow debts broadcast, and only laughed at his tutor when he mildly reproached him for his extravagance, and pointed out that if he were saving for the present, he would be able to be all the more magnificent on

his return to Venice. His uncle had made an excellent match for him; he was to marry a girl who was extremely pretty, and also the heiress of the house of Grimani de Servi.

The only redeeming feature in the young man's character was that he had a mortal hatred of all kinds of play.

Since my bank had been broken I had been at Goudar's, but I would not listen to his proposal that I should join them again. Medini had become a sworn foe of mine. As soon as I came, he would go away, but I pretended not to notice him. He was at Goudar's when I introduced Morosini and his mentor, and thinking the young man good game he became very intimate with him. When he found out that Morosini would not hear of gaming, his hatred of me increased, for he was certain that I had warned the rich Venetian against him.

Morosini was much taken with Sara's charms, and only thought of how he could possess her. He was still a young man, full of romantic notions, and she would have become odious in his eyes if he could have guessed that she would have to be bought with a heavy price.

He told me several times that if a woman proposed payment for her favours, his disgust would expel his love in a moment. As he said, and rightly, he was as good a man as Madame Goudar was a woman.

This was distinctly a good point in his character; no woman who gave her favours in exchange for presents received could hope to dupe him. Sara's maxims were diametrically opposed to his; she looked on her love as a bill of exchange.

Stratico was delighted to see him engaged in this intrigue, for the chief point in dealing with him was to keep him occupied. If he had no distractions he took refuge in bad company or furious riding. He would sometimes ride ten or twelve stages at full gallop, utterly ruining the horses. He was only too glad to make his uncle pay for them, as he swore he was an old miser.

After I had made up my mind to leave Naples, I had a visit from Don Pascal Latilla, who brought with him the Abbé Galiani, whom I had known at Paris.

It may be remembered that I had known his brother at St. Agatha's, where I had stayed with him, and left him Donna Lucrezia Castell.

I told him that I had intended to visit him, and asked if Lucrezia were still with him.

"She lives at Salerno," said he, "with her daughter the Marchioness C——."

I was delighted to hear the news; if it had not been for the abbé's visit, I should never have heard what had become of these ladies.

I asked him if he knew the Marchioness C——.

"I only know the marquis," he replied, "he is old and very rich."

That was enough for me.

A couple of days afterwards Morosini invited Sara, Goudar, two young gamesters, and Medini, to dinner. The latter had not yet given up hopes of cheating the chevalier in one way or another.

Towards the end of dinner it happened that Medini differed in opinion from me, and expressed his views in such a peremptory manner that I remarked that a gentleman would be rather more choice in his expressions.

"Maybe," he replied, "but I am not going to learn manners from you."

I constrained myself, and said nothing, but I was getting tired of his insolence; and as he might imagine that my resentment was caused by fear, I determined on disabusing him.

As he was taking his coffee on the balcony overlooking the sea, I came up to him with my cup in my hand, and said that I was tired of the rudeness with which he treated me in company.

"You would find me ruder still," he replied, "if we could meet without company."

"I think I could convince you of your mistake if we could have a private meeting."

"I should very much like to see you do it."

"When you see me go out, follow me, and don't say a word to anyone."

"I will not fail."

I rejoined the company, and walked slowly towards Pausilippo. I looked back and saw him

following me; and as he was a brave fellow, and we both had our swords, I felt sure the thing would soon be settled.

As soon as I found myself in the open country, where we should not be interrupted, I stopped short.

As he drew near I attempted a parley, thinking that we might come to a more amicable settlement; but the fellow rushed on me with his sword in one hand and his hat in the other.

I lunged out at him, and instead of attempting to parry he replied in quart. The result was that our blades were caught in each other's sleeves; but I had slit his arm, while his point had only pierced the stuff of my coat.

I put myself on guard again to go on, but I could see he was too weak to defend himself, so I said if he liked I would give him quarter.

He made no reply, so I pressed on him, struck him to the ground, and trampled on his body.

He foamed with rage, and told me that it was my turn this time, but that he hoped I would give him his revenge.

"With pleasure, at Rome, and I hope the third lesson will be more effectual than the two I have already given you."

He was losing a good deal of blood, so I sheathed his sword for him and advised him to go to Goudar's house, which was close at hand, and have his wound attended to.

I went back to "Crocielles" as if nothing had happened. The chevalier was making love to Sara, and the rest were playing cards.

I left the company an hour afterwards without having said a word about my duel, and for the last time I supped with Callimena. Six years later I saw her at Venice, displaying her beauty and her talents on the boards of St. Benedict's Theatre.

I spent a delicious night with her, and at eight o'clock the next day I went off in a post-chaise without taking leave of anyone.

I arrived at Salerno at two o'clock in the afternoon, and as soon as I had taken a room I wrote a note to Donna Lucrezia Costelli at the Marquis C——'s.

I asked her if I could pay her a short visit, and begged her to send a reply while I was taking my dinner.

I was sitting down to table when I had the pleasure of seeing Lucrezia herself come in. She gave a cry of delight and rushed to my arms.

This excellent woman was exactly my own age, but she would have been taken for fifteen years younger.

After I had told her how I had come to hear about her I asked for news of our daughter.

"She is longing to see you, and her husband too; he is a worthy old man, and will be so glad to know you."

"How does he know of my existence?"

"Leonilda has mentioned your name a thousand times during the five years they have been married. He is aware that you gave her five thousand ducats. We shall sup together."

"Let us go directly ; I cannot rest till I have seen my Leonilda and the good husband God has given her: Have they any children?"

"No, unluckily for her, as after his death the property passes to his relations. But Leonilda will be a rich woman for all that ; she will have a hundred thousand ducats of her own."

"You have never married."

"No."

"You are as pretty as you were twenty-six years ago, and if it had not been for the Abbé Galiani I should have left Naples without seeing you."

I found Leonilda had developed into a perfect beauty. She was at that time twenty-three years old.

Her husband's presence was no constraint upon her ; she received me with open arms, and put me completely at my ease.

No doubt she was my daughter, but in spite of our relationship and my advancing years I still felt within my breast the symptoms of the tenderest passion for her.

She presented me to her husband, who suffered dreadfully from gout, and could not stir from his arm-chair.

He received me with smiling face and open arms, saying,—

“My dear friend, embrace me.”

I embraced him affectionately, and in our greeting I discovered that he was a brother mason. The marquis had expected as much, but I had not; for a nobleman of sixty who could boast that he had been enlightened was a *rara avis* in the domains of his Sicilian majesty thirty years ago.

I sat down beside him and we embraced each other again, while the ladies looked on amazed, wondering to see us so friendly to each other.

Donna Leonilda fancied that we must be old friends, and told her husband how delighted she was. The old man burst out laughing, and Lucrezia suspecting the truth bit her lips and said nothing. The fair marchioness reserved her curiosity for another season.

The marquis had seen the whole of Europe. He had only thought of marrying on the death of his father, who had attained the age of ninety. Finding himself in the enjoyment of thirty thousand ducats a year he imagined that he might yet have children in spite of his advanced age. He saw Leonilda, and in a few days he made her his wife, giving her a dowry of a hundred thousand ducats. Donna Lucrezia went to live with her daughter. Though the marquis lived magnificently, he found it difficult to spend more than half his income.

He lodged all his relations in his immense

palace; there were three families in all, and each lived apart.

Although they were comfortably off they were awaiting with impatience the death of the head of the family, as they would then share his riches. The marquis had only married in the hope of having an heir; and these hopes he could no longer entertain. However, he loved his wife none the less, while she made him happy by her charming disposition.

The marquis was a man of liberal views like his wife, but this was a great secret, as free thought was not appreciated at Salerno. Consequently, any outsider would have taken the household for a truly Christian one, and the marquis took care to adopt in appearance all the prejudices of his fellow-countrymen.

Donna Lucrezia told me all this three hours after as we walked in a beautiful garden, where her husband had sent us after a long conversation on subjects which could not have been of any interest to the ladies. Nevertheless, they did not leave us for a moment, so delighted were they to find that the marquis had met a congenial spirit.

About six o'clock the marquis begged Donna Lucrezia to take me to the garden and amuse me till the evening. His wife he asked to stay, as he had something to say to her.

It was in the middle of August and the heat was great, but the room on the ground floor

which we occupied was cooled by a delicious breeze.

I looked out of the window and noticed that the leaves on the trees were still, and that no wind was blowing; and I could not help saying to the marquis that I was astonished to find his room as cool as spring in the heats of summer.

"Your sweetheart will explain it to you," said he.

We went through several apartments, and at last reached a closet, in one corner of which was a square opening.

From it rushed a cold and even violent wind. From the opening one could go down a stone staircase of at least a hundred steps, and at the bottom was a grotto where was the source of a stream of water as cold as ice. Donna Lucrezia told me it would be a great risk to go down the steps without excessively warm clothing.

I have never cared to run risks of this kind. Lord Baltimore, on the other hand, would have laughed at the danger, and gone, maybe, to his death. I told my old sweetheart that I could imagine the thing very well from the description, and that I had no curiosity to see whether my imagination were correct.

Lucrezia told me I was very prudent, and took me to the garden.

It was a large place, and separated from the garden common to the three other families who

inhabited the castle. Every flower that can be imagined was there, fountains threw their glittering sprays, and grottoes afforded a pleasing shade from the sun.

The alleys of this terrestrial paradise were formed of vines, and the bunches of grapes seemed almost as numerous as the leaves.

Lucrezia enjoyed my surprise, and I told her that I was not astonished at being more moved by this than by the vines of Tivoli and Frascati. The immense rather dazzles the eyes than moves the heart.

She told me that her daughter was happy, and that the marquis was an excellent man, and a strong man except for the gout. His great grief was that he had no children. Amongst his dozen of nephews there was not one worthy of succeeding to the title.

“They are all ugly, awkward lads, more like peasants than noblemen; all their education has been given them by a pack of ignorant priests; and so it is not to be wondered that the marquis does not care for them much.”

“But is Leonilda really happy?”

“She is, though her husband cannot be quite so ardent as she would like at her age.”

“He doesn’t seem to me to be a very jealous man.”

“He is entirely free from jealousy, and if Leonilda would take a lover I am sure he would

be his best friend. And I feel certain he would be only too glad to find the beautiful soil which he cannot fertilise himself fertilised by another."

"Is it positively certain that he is incapable of begetting a child?"

"No, when he is well he does his best; but there seems no likelihood of his ardour having any happy results. There was some ground to hope in the first six months of the marriage, but since he has had the gout so badly there seems reason to fear lest his amorous ecstasies should have a fatal termination. Sometimes he wants to approach her, but she dare not let him, and this pains her very much."

I was struck with a lively sense of Lucrezia's merits, and was just revealing to her the sentiments which she had re-awakened in my breast, when the marchioness appeared in the garden, followed by a page and a young lady.

I affected great reverence as she came up to us; and as if we had given each other the word, she answered me in a tone of ceremonious politeness.

"I have come on an affair of the highest importance," she said, "and if I fail I shall for ever lose the reputation of a diplomatist."

"Who is the other diplomatist with whom you are afraid of failing?"

"'Tis yourself."

"Then your battle is over, for I consent before

I know what you ask. I only make a reserve on one point."

"So much the worse, as that may turn out to be just what I want you to do. Tell me what it is."

"I was going to Rome, when the Abbé Galiani told me that Donna Lucrezia was here with you."

"And can a short delay interfere with your happiness? Are you not your own master?"

"Smile on me once more; your desires are orders which must be obeyed. I have always been my own master, but I cease to be so from this moment, since I am your most humble servant."

"Very good. Then I command you to come and spend a few days with us at an estate we have at a short distance. My husband will have himself transported there. You will allow me to send to the inn for your luggage?"

"Here, sweet marchioness, is the key of my room. Happy the mortal whom you deign to command."

Leonilda gave the key to the page, a pretty boy, and told him to see that all my belongings were carefully taken to the castle.

Her lady-in-waiting was very fair. I said so to Leonilda in French, not knowing that the young lady understood the language, but she smiled and told her mistress that we were old acquaintances.

"When had I the pleasure of knowing you, mademoiselle?"

"Nine years ago. You have often spoken to me and teased me."

"Where, may I ask?"

"At the Duchess of Matalone's."

"That may be, and I think I do begin to remember, but I really cannot recollect having teased you."

The marchioness and her mother were highly amused at this conversation, and pressed the girl to say how I had teased her. She confined herself, however, to saying that I had played tricks on her. I thought I remembered having stolen a few kisses, but I left the ladies to think what they liked.

I was a great student of the human heart, and felt that these reproaches of Anastasia's (such was her name) were really advances, but unskilfully made, for if she had wanted more of me, she should have held her peace and bided her time.

"It strikes me," said I, "that you were much smaller in those days."

"Yes, I was only twelve or thirteen. You have changed also."

"Yes, I have aged."

We began talking about the late Duke of Matalone, and Anastasia left us.

We sat down in a charming grotto, and began styling each other papa and daughter, and allowing

ourselves liberties which threatened to lead to danger.

The marchioness tried to calm my transports by talking of her good husband.

Donna Lucrezia remarked our mutual emotion as I held Leonilda in my arms, and warned us to be careful. She then left us to walk in a different part of the garden.

Her words had the contrary effect to what was intended, for as soon as she left us in so opportune a manner, although we had no intention of committing the double crime, we approached too near to each other, and an almost involuntary movement made the act complete.

We remained motionless, looking into one another's eyes, in mute astonishment, as we confessed afterwards, to find neither guilt nor repentance in our breasts.

We rearranged our position, and the marchioness sitting close to me called me her dear husband, while I called her my dear wife.

The new bond between us was confirmed by affectionate kisses. We were absorbed and silent, and Lucrezia was delighted to find us so calm when she returned.

We had no need to warn each other to observe secrecy. Donna Lucrezia was devoid of prejudice, but there was no need to give her a piece of useless information.

We felt certain that she had left us alone so as

not to be a witness of what we were going to do.

After some further conversation we went back to the palace with Anastasia, whom we found in the alley by herself.

The marquis received his wife with joy, congratulating her on the success of her negotiations. He thanked me for my compliance, and assured me I should have a comfortable apartment in his country house.

"I suppose you will not mind having our friend for a neighbour?" he said to Lucrezia.

"No," said she; "but we will be discreet, for the flower of our lives has withered."

"I shall believe as much of that as I please."

The worthy man dearly loved a joke.

The long table was laid for five, and as soon as dinner was served an old priest came in and sat down. He spoke to nobody, and nobody spoke to him.

The pretty page stood behind the marchioness, and we were waited on by ten or twelve servants.

I had only had a little soup at dinner, so I ate like an ogre, for I was very hungry, and the marquis's French cook was a thorough artist.

The marquis exclaimed with delight as I devoured one dish after another. He told me that the only fault in his wife was that she was a very poor eater like her mother. At dessert the wine began to take effect, and our conversation, which was conducted in French, became somewhat free.

The old priest took no notice, as he only understood Italian, and he finally left us after saying the *agimus*.

The marquis told me that this ecclesiastic had been a confessor to the palace for the last twenty years, but had never confessed anybody. He warned me to take care what I said before him if I spoke Italian, but he did not know a word of French.

Mirth was the order of the day, and I kept the company at table till an hour after midnight.

Before we parted for the night the marquis told me that we would start in the afternoon, and that he should arrive an hour before us. He assured his wife that he was quite well, and that he hoped to convince her that I had made him ten years younger. Leonilda embraced him tenderly, begging him to be careful of his health.

"Yes, yes," said he, "but get ready to receive me."

I wished them a good night, and a little marquis at nine months from date.

"Draw the bill," said he to me, "and to-morrow I will accept it."

"I promise you," said Leonilda, "to do my best to ensure your meeting your obligations."

Donna Lucrezia took me to my room, where she handed me over to the charge of an imposing-looking servant, and wished me a good night.

I slept for eight hours in a most comfortable

bed, and when I was dressed Lucrezia took me to breakfast with the marchioness, who was at her toilette.

"Do you think I may draw my bill at nine months?" said I.

"It will very probably be met," said she.

"Really?"

"Yes, really; and it will be to you that my husband will owe the happiness he has so long desired. He told me so when he left me an hour ago."

"I shall be delighted to add to your mutual happiness."

She looked so fresh and happy that I longed to kiss her, but I was obliged to restrain myself as she was surrounded by her pretty maids.

The better to throw any spies off the scent I began to make love to Anastasia, and Leonilda pretended to encourage me.

I feigned a passionate desire, and I could see that I should not have much trouble in gaining my suit. I saw I should have to be careful if I did not want to be taken at my word; I could not bear such a surfeit of pleasures.

We went to breakfast with the marquis, who was delighted to see us. He was quite well, except the gout which prevented his walking.

After breakfast we heard mass, and I saw about twenty servants in the chapel. After the service I kept the marquis company till dinner-time.

He said I was very good to sacrifice the company of the ladies for his sake.

After dinner we set out for his country house ; I in a carriage with the two ladies, and the marquis in a litter borne by two mules.

In an hour and a half we arrived at his fine and well-situated castle.

The first thing the marchioness did was to take me into the garden, where my ardour returned and she once more abandoned herself to me.

We agreed that I should only go to her room to court Anastasia, as it was necessary to avoid the slightest suspicion.

This fancy of mine for his wife's maid amused the marquis, for his wife kept him well posted in the progress of our intrigue.

Donna Lucrezia approved of the arrangement, as she did not want the marquis to think that I had only come to Salerno for her sake. My apartments were next to Leonilda's, but before I could get into her room I should be obliged to pass through that occupied by Anastasia, who slept with another maid still prettier than herself.

The marquis came an hour later, and he said he would get his people to carry him in an arm-chair round the gardens, so that he might point out their beauties to me. After supper he felt tired and went to bed, leaving me to entertain the ladies.

After a few moments' conversation, I led the marchioness to her room, and she said I had better

go to my own apartment through the maids' room, telling Anastasia to shew me the way.

Politeness obliged me to shew myself sensible of such a favour, and I said I hoped she would not be so harsh as to lock her door upon me.

"I shall lock my door," said she, "because it is my duty to do so. This room is my mistress's closet, and my companion would probably make some remark if I left the door open contrary to my usual custom."

"Your reasons are too good for me to overcome, but will you not sit down beside me for a few minutes and help me to recollect how I used to tease you?"

"I don't want you to recollect anything about it; please let me go."

"You must please yourself," said I; and after embracing her and giving her a kiss, I wished her good night.

My servant came in as she went out, and I told him that I would sleep by myself for the future.

The next day the marchioness laughingly repeated the whole of my conversation with Anastasia.

"I applauded her virtuous resistance, but I said she might safely assist at your toilette every evening."

Leonilda gave the marquis a full account of my talk with Anastasia. The old man thought I was

really in love with her, and had her in to supper for my sake, so I was in common decency bound to play the lover. Anastasia was highly pleased at my preferring her to her charming mistress, and at the latter's complaisance towards our love-making.

The marquis in his turn was equally pleased as he thought the intrigue would make me stay longer at his house.

In the evening Anastasia accompanied me to my room with a candle, and seeing that I had no valet she insisted on doing my hair. She felt flattered at my not presuming to go to bed in her presence, and kept me company for an hour; and as I was not really amorous of her, I had no difficulty in playing the part of the timid lover. When she wished me good night she was delighted to find my kisses as affectionate but not so daring as those of the night before.

The marchioness said, the next morning, that if the recital she had heard were true, she was afraid Anastasia's company tired me, as she very well knew that when I really loved I cast timidity to the winds.

"No, she doesn't tire me at all; she is pretty and amusing. But how can you imagine that I really love her, when you know very well that the whole affair is only designed to cast dust in everyone's eyes?"

"Anastasia fully believes that you adore her,

and indeed I am not sorry that you should give her a little taste for gallantry."

"If I can persuade her to leave her door open I can easily visit you, for she will not imagine for a moment that after leaving her I go to your room instead of my own."

"Take care how you set about it."

"I will see what I can do this evening."

The marquis and Lucrezia had not the slightest doubt that Anastasia spent every night with me, and they were delighted at the idea.

The whole of the day I devoted to the worthy marquis, who said my company made him happy. It was no sacrifice on my part, for I liked his principles and his way of thinking.

On the occasion of my third supper with Anastasia I was more tender than ever, and she was very much astonished to find that I had cooled down when I got to my room.

"I am glad to see you so calm," said she, "you quite frightened me at supper."

"The reason is that I know you think yourself in danger when you are alone with me."

"Not at all; you are much more discreet than you were nine years ago."

"What folly did I commit then?"

"No folly, but you did not respect my childhood."

"I only gave you a few caresses, for which I

am now sorry, as you are frightened of me, and persist in locking your door."

"I don't mistrust you, but I have told you my reasons for locking the door. I think that you must mistrust me, as you won't go to bed while I am in the room."

"You must think me very presumptuous. I will go to bed, but you must not leave me without giving me a kiss."

"I promise to do so."

I went to bed, and Anastasia spent half an hour beside me. I had a good deal of difficulty in controlling myself, but I was afraid of her telling the marchioness everything.

As she left me she gave me such a kind embrace that I could bear it no longer, and guiding her hand I shewed her the power she exercised over me. She then went away, and I shall not say whether my behaviour irritated or pleased her.

The next day I was curious to know how much she had told the marchioness, and on hearing nothing of the principal fact I felt certain she would not lock her door that evening.

When the evening came I defied her to shew the same confidence in me as I had shewn in her. She replied that she would do so with pleasure, if I would blow out my candle and promise not to put my hand on her. I easily gave her the required promise, for I meant to keep myself fresh for Leonilda.

I undressed hastily, followed her with bare feet, and laid myself beside her.

She took my hands and held them, to which I offered no resistance. We were afraid of awaking her bed-fellow, and kept perfect silence. Our lips however gave themselves free course, and certain motions, natural under the circumstances, must have made her believe that I was in torments. The half hour I passed beside her seemed extremely long to me, but it must have been delicious to her, as giving her the idea that she could do what she liked with me.

When I left her after we had shared an ecstatic embrace, I returned to my room, leaving the door open. As soon as I had reason to suppose that she was asleep, I returned, and passed through her room to Leonilda's. She was expecting me, but did not know of my presence till I notified it with a kiss.

After I had given her a strong proof of my love, I told her of my adventure with Anastasia, and then our amorous exploits began again, and I did not leave her till I had spent two most delicious hours. We agreed that they should not be the last, and I returned to my room on tiptoe as I had come.

I did not get up till noon, and the marquis and his wife jested with me at dinner on the subject of my late rising. At supper it was Anastasia's turn, and she seemed to enjoy the

situation. She told me in the evening that she would not lock her door, but that I must not come into her room, as it was dangerous. It would be much better, she said, for us to talk in my room, where there would be no need of putting out the light. She added that I had better go to bed, as then she would feel certain that she was not tiring me in any way.

I could not say no, but I flattered myself that I would keep my strength intact for Leonilda.

I reckoned without my host, as the proverb goes.

When I held Anastasia between my arms in bed, her lips glued to mine, I told her, as in duty bound, that she did not trust in me enough to lie beside me with her clothes off.

Thereupon she asked me if I would be very discreet.

If I had said no, I should have looked a fool. I made up my mind, and told her yes, determined to satisfy the pretty girl's desires.

In a moment she was in my arms, not at all inclined to keep me to my promise.

Appetite, it is said, comes in eating. Her ardour made me amorous, and I rendered homage to her charms till I fell asleep with fatigue.

Anastasia left me while I was asleep, and when I awoke I found myself in the somewhat ridiculous position of being obliged to make a full confession to the marchioness as to why I had failed in my duties to her.

When I told Leonilda my tale, she began to laugh and agreed that further visits were out of the question. We made up our minds, and for the remainder of my visit our amorous meetings only took place in the summer-houses in the garden.

I had to receive Anastasia every night, and when I left for Rome and did not take her with me she considered me as a traitor.

The worthy marquis gave me a great surprise on the eve of my departure. We were alone together, and he began by saying that the Duke of Matalone had told him the reason which had prevented me marrying Leonilda, and that he had always admired my generosity in making her a present of five thousand ducats, though I was far from rich.

"These five thousand ducats," he added, "with seven thousand from the duke, composed her dower, and I have added a hundred thousand, so that she is sure of a comfortable living, even if I die without a successor.

"Now, I want you to take back the five thousand ducats you gave her, and she herself is as desirous of your doing so as I am. She did not like to ask you herself; she is too delicate."

"Well, I should have refused Leonilda if she had asked me, but I accept this mark of your friendship. A refusal would have borne witness to nothing but a foolish pride, as I am a poor man.

I should like Leonilda and her mother to be present when you give me the money."

"Embrace me; we will do our business after dinner."

Naples has always been a temple of fortune to me, but if I went there now I should starve. Fortune flouts old age.

Leonilda and Lucrezia wept with joy when the good marquis gave me the five thousand ducats in bank notes, and presented his mother-in-law with an equal sum in witness of his gratitude to her for having introduced me to him.

The marquis was discreet enough not to reveal his chief reason. Donna Lucrezia did not know that the Duke of Matalone had told him that Leonilda was my daughter.

An excess of gratitude lessened my high spirits for the rest of the day, and Anastasia^{*} did not spend a very lively night with me.

I went off at eight o'clock the next morning. I was sad, and the whole house was in tears.

I promised that I would write to the marquis from Rome, and I reached Naples at eleven o'clock.

I went to see Agatha, who was astonished at my appearance as she had thought I was at Rome. Her husband welcomed me in the most friendly manner, although he was suffering a great deal.

I said I would dine with them and start directly afterwards, and I asked the advocate to get me a

bill on Rome for five thousand ducats, in exchange for the bank notes I gave him.

Agatha saw that my mind was made up, and without endeavouring to persuade me to stay went in search of Callimena.

She too had thought I was in Rome, and was in an ecstasy of delight to see me again.

My sudden disappearance and my unexpected return were the mystery of the day, but I did not satisfy anyone's curiosity.

I left them at three o'clock, and stopped at Montecasino, which I had never seen. I congratulated myself on my idea, for I met there Prince Xaver de Saxe, who was travelling under the name of Comte de Lusace with Madame Spinucci, a lady of Fermo, with whom he had contracted a semi-clandestine marriage. He had been waiting for three days to hear from the Pope, for by St. Benedict's rule women are not allowed in monasteries; and as Madame Spinucci was extremely curious on the subject, her husband had been obliged to apply for a dispensation to the Holy Father.

I slept at Montecasino after having seen the curiosities of the place, and I went on to Rome, and put up with Roland's daughter in the Place d'Espagne.

CHAPTER IV

MARGARITA—MADAME BUONACORSI—THE DUCHESS
OF FIANO—CARDINAL BERNIS—THE PRINCESS
SANTA CROCE—MENICUCCIO AND HIS SISTER

I had made up my mind to spend a quiet six months at Rome, and the day after my arrival I took a pleasant suite of rooms opposite the Spanish ambassador, whose name was d'Aspura. It happened to be the same rooms as were occupied twenty-seven years ago by the teacher of languages, to whom I had gone for lessons while I was with Cardinal Acquaviva. The landlady was the wife of a cook who only slept with his better half once a week. The woman had a daughter of sixteen or seventeen years old, who would have been very pretty if the small-pox had not deprived her of one eye. They had provided her with an ill-made artificial eye, of a wrong size and a bad colour, which gave a very unpleasant expression to her face. Margarita, as she was called, made no impression on me, but I made her a present

which she valued very highly. There was an English oculist named Taylor in Rome at that time, and I got him to make her an eye of the right size and colour. This made Margarita imagine that I had fallen in love with her, and the mother, a devotee, was in some trouble as to whether my intentions were strictly virtuous.

I made arrangements with the mother to supply me with a good dinner and supper without any luxury. I had three thousand sequins, and I had made up my mind to live in a quiet and respectable manner.

The next day I found letters for me in several post-offices, and the banker Belloni, who had known me for several years, had been already advised of my bill of exchange. My good friend Dandolo sent me two letters of introduction, of which one was addressed to M. Erizzo, the Venetian ambassador. He was the brother of the ambassador to Paris. This letter pleased me greatly. The other was addressed to the Duchess of Fiano, by her brother M. Zuliani.

I saw that I should be free of all the best houses, and I promised myself the pleasure of an early visit to Cardinal Bernis.

I did not hire either a carriage or a servant. At Rome both these articles are procurable at a moment's notice.

My first call was on the Duchess of Fiano. She was an ugly woman, and though she was

really very good-natured, she assumed the character of being malicious so as to obtain some consideration.

Her husband, who bore the name of Ottoboni, had only married her to obtain an heir, but the poor devil turned out to be what the Romans call *babilano*, and we impotent. The duchess told me as much on the occasion of my third visit. She did not give me the information in a complaining tone, or as if she was fain to be consoled, but merely to defy her confessor, who had threatened her with excommunication if she went on telling people about her husband's condition, or if she tried to cure him of it.

The duchess gave a little supper every evening to her select circle of friends. I was not admitted to these reunions for a week or ten days, by which time I had made myself generally popular. The duke did not care for company and supped apart.

The Prince of Santa Croce was the duchess's *cavaliere servante*, and the princess was served by Cardinal Bernis. The princess was a daughter of the Marquis Falconieri, and was young, pretty, lively, and intended by nature for a life of pleasure. However, her pride at possessing the cardinal was so great that she did not give any hope to other competitors for her favour.

The prince was a fine man of distinguished manners and great capability, which he employed in business speculations, being of opinion, and

rightly, that it was no shame for a nobleman to increase his fortune by the exercise of his intelligence. He was a careful man, and had attached himself to the duchess because she cost him nothing, and he ran no risk of falling in love with her.

Two or three weeks after my arrival he heard me complaining of the obstacles to research in the Roman libraries, and he offered to give me an introduction to the Superior of the Jesuits. I accepted the offer, and was made free of the library; I could not only go and read when I liked, but I could, on writing my name down, take books away with me. The keepers of the library always brought me candles when it grew dark, and their politeness was so great that they gave me the key of a side door, so that I could slip in and out as I pleased.

The Jesuits were always the most polite of the regular clergy, or, indeed, I may say the only polite men amongst them; but during the crisis in which they were then involved, they were simply cringing.

The King of Spain had called for the suppression of the order, and the Pope had promised that it should be done; but the Jesuits did not think that such a blow could ever be struck, and felt almost secure. They did not think that the Pope's power was superhuman so far as they were concerned. They even intimated to him by indirect channels that his authority did not extend to the

suppression of the order ; but they were mistaken. The sovereign pontiff delayed the signature of the bull, but his hesitation proceeded from the fact that in signing it he feared lest he should be signing his own sentence of death. Accordingly he put it off till he found that his honour was threatened. The King of Spain, the most obstinate tyrant in Europe, wrote to him with his own hand, telling him that if he did not suppress the order he would publish in all the languages of Europe the letters he had written when he was a cardinal, promising to suppress the order when he became Pope. On the strength of these letters Ganganelli had been elected.

Another man would have taken refuge in casuistry and told the king that it was not for a pope to be bound to the cardinal's promises, in which contention he would have been supported by the Jesuits. However, in his heart Ganganelli had no liking for the Jesuits. He was a Franciscan, and not a gentleman by birth. He had not a strong enough intellect to defy the king and all his threats, or to bear the shame of being exhibited to the whole world as an ambitious and unscrupulous man.

I am amused when people tell me that Ganganelli poisoned himself by taking so many antidotes. It is true that having reason, and good reason, to dread poison, he made use of antidotes which, with his ignorance of science, might have injured his health ; but I am morally certain that he

died of poison which was given by other hands than his own.

My reasons for this opinion are as follows :

In the year of which I am speaking, the third of the Pontificate of Clement XIV., a woman of Viterbo was put in prison on the charge of making predictions. She obscurely prophesied the suppression of the Jesuits, without giving any indication of the time; but she said very clearly that the company would be destroyed by a pope who would only reign five years three months and three days—that is, as long as Sixtus V., not a day more and not a day less.

Everybody treated the prediction with contempt, as the product of a brain-sick woman. She was shut up and quite forgotten.

I ask my readers to give a dispassionate judgment, and to say whether they have any doubt as to the poisoning of Ganganelli when they hear that his death verified the prophecy.

In a case like this, moral certainty assumes the force of scientific certainty. The spirit which inspired the Pythia of Viterbo took its measures to inform the world that if the Jesuits were forced to submit to being suppressed, they were not so weak as to forego a fearful vengeance. The Jesuit who cut short Ganganelli's days might certainly have poisoned him before the bull was signed, but the fact was that they could not bring themselves to believe it till it took place. It is clear that if the

Pope had not suppressed the Jesuits, they would not have poisoned him, and here again the prophecy could not be taxed with falsity. We may note that Clement XIV., like Sixtus V., was a Franciscan, and both were of low birth. It is also noteworthy that after the Pope's death the prophetess was liberated, and, though her prophecy had been fulfilled to the letter, all the authorities persisted in saying that His Holiness had died from his excessive use of antidotes.

It seems to me that any impartial judge will scout the idea of Ganganelli having killed himself to verify the woman of Viterbo's prediction. If you say it was a mere coincidence, of course I cannot absolutely deny your position, for it may have been chance; but my thoughts on the subject will remain unchanged.

This poisoning was the last sign the Jesuits gave of their power. It was a crime, because it was committed after the event, whereas, if it had been done before the suppression of the order, it would have been a stroke of policy, and might have been justified on politic grounds. The true politician looks into the future, and takes swift and certain measures to obtain the end he has in view.

The second time that the Prince of Santa Croce saw me at the Duchess of Fiano's, he asked me *ex abrupta* why I did not visit Cardinal Bernis.

"I think of paying my suit to him to-morrow," said I.

"Do so, for I have never heard his eminence speak of anyone with as much consideration as he speaks of yourself."

"He has been very kind to me, and I shall always be grateful to him."

The cardinal received me the next day with every sign of delight at seeing me. He praised the reserve with which I had spoken of him to the prince, and said he need not remind me of the necessity for discretion as to our old Venetian adventures.

"Your eminence," I said, "is a little stouter, otherwise you look as fresh as ever and not at all changed."

"You make a mistake. I am very different from what I was then. I am fifty-five now, and then I was thirty-six. Moreover, I am reduced to a vegetable diet."

"Is that to keep down the lusts of the flesh?"

"I wish people would think so; but no one does, I am afraid."

He was glad to hear that I bore a letter to the Venetian ambassador, which I had not yet presented. He said he would take care to give the ambassador a prejudice in my favour, and that he would give me a good reception.

"We will begin to break the ice to-morrow," added this charming cardinal. "You shall dine with me, and his excellence shall hear of it."

He heard with pleasure that I was well pro-

vided for as far as money was concerned, and that I had made up my mind to live simply and discreetly so long as I remained in Rome.

"I shall write about you to M—— M——," he said. "I have always kept up a correspondence with that delightful nun."

I then amused him by the talk of my adventure with the nun of Chamberi.

"You ought to ask the Prince of Santa Croce to introduce you to the princess. We might pass some pleasant hours with her, though not in our old Venetian style, for the princess is not at all like M—— M——."

"And yet she serves to amuse your eminence?"

"Well, I have to be content with what I can get."

The next day as I was getting up from dinner the cardinal told me that M. Zuhani had written about me to the ambassador, who would be delighted to make my acquaintance, and when I went I had an excellent reception from him.

The Chevalier Erizzo, who is still alive, was a man of great intelligence, common sense, and oratorical power. He complimented me on my travels and on my being protected by the State Inquisitors instead of being persecuted by them. He kept me to dinner, and asked me to dine with him whenever I had no other engagement.

The same evening I met Prince Santa Croce

at the duchess's, and asked him to introduce me to his wife.

"I have been expecting that," he replied, "ever since the cardinal talked to her about you for more than an hour. You can call any day at eleven in the morning or two in the afternoon."

I called the next day at two o'clock. She was taking her siesta in bed, but as I had the privileges allowed to a person of no consequence she let me in directly. She was young, pretty, lively, curious, and talkative; she had not enough patience to wait for my answer to her questions. She struck me as a toy, well adapted to amuse a man of affairs, who felt the need of some distraction. The cardinal saw her regularly three times a day; the first thing in the morning he called to ask if she had had a good night, at three o'clock in the afternoon he took coffee with her, and in the evening he met her at the assembly. He always played at piquet, and played with such talent that he invariably lost six Roman sequins, no more and no less. These losses of the cardinal's made the princess the richest young wife in Rome.

Although the marquis was somewhat inclined to be jealous, he could not possibly object to his wife enjoying a revenue of eighteen hundred francs a month, and that without the least scandal, for everything was done in public, and the game was honestly conducted. Why should not fortune fall in love with such a pretty woman?

The Prince of Santa Croce could not fail to appreciate the friendship of the cardinal for his wife, who gave him a child every year, and sometimes every nine months, in spite of the doctor's warnings to beware of results. It was said that to make up for his enforced abstinence during the last few days of his wife's pregnancy, the prince immediately set to again when the child was being baptized.

The friendship of the cardinal for the prince's wife also gave him the advantage of getting silks from Lyons without the Pope's treasurer being able to say anything, as the packets were addressed to the French ambassador. It must also be noted that the cardinal's patronage kept other lovers from the house. The High Constable Colonna was very much taken with her. The prince had surprised this gentleman talking to the princess in a room of the palace and at an hour when she was certain that the cardinal would not be in the way. Scarcely had the Colonna gone when the prince told his wife that she would accompany him into the country the next day. She protested, saying that this sudden order was only a caprice and that her honour would not allow of her obeying him. The prince, however, was very determined, and she would have been obliged to go if the cardinal had not come in and heard the story from the mouth of the innocent princess. He shewed the husband that it was to his own interests to go into the country by himself, and to let his wife remain in

Rome. He spoke for her, assuring the prince that she would take more care for the future and avoid such meetings, always unpleasant in a house.

In less than a month I became the shadow of the three principal persons in the play. I listened and admired and became as necessary to the personages as a marker at billiards. When any of the parties were afflicted I consoled them with tales or amusing comments, and, naturally, they were grateful to me. The cardinal, the prince, and his fair wife amused each other and offended no one.

The Duchess of Fiano was proud of being the possessor of the prince who left his wife to the cardinal, but no one was deceived but herself. The good lady wondered why no one acknowledged that the reason why the princess never came to see her was mere jealousy. She spoke to me on the subject with so much fire that I had to suppress my good sense to keep her good graces.

I had to express my astonishment as to what the cardinal could see in the princess, who, according to her, was skinny in person and silly in mind, altogether a woman of no consequence. I agreed to all this, but I was far from thinking so, for the princess was just the woman to amuse a voluptuous and philosophic lover like the cardinal.

I could not help thinking now and again that the cardinal was happier in the possession of this treasure of a woman than in his honours and dignities.

I loved the princess, but as I did not hope for success I confined myself strictly to the limits of my position.

I might, no doubt, have succeeded, but more probably I should have raised her pride against me, and wounded the feelings of the cardinal, who was no longer the same as when we shared M—— M—— in common. He had told me that his affection for her was of a purely fatherly character, and I took that as a hint not to trespass on his preserves.

I had reason to congratulate myself that she observed no more ceremony with me than with her maid. I accordingly pretended to see nothing, while she felt certain I saw all.

It is no easy matter to win the confidence of such a woman, especially if she be served by a king or a cardinal.

My life at Rome was a tranquil and happy one. Margarita had contrived to gain my interest by the assiduity of her attentions. I had no servant, so she waited on me night and morning, and her false eye was such an excellent match that I quite forgot its falsity. She was a clever, but a vain girl, and though at first I had no designs upon her I flattered her vanity by my conversation and the little presents I bestowed upon her, which enabled her to cut a figure in church on Sundays. So before long I had my eyes opened to two facts ; the one that she was sure of my love, and wondered why I did not declare

it ; the other, that if I chose I had an easy conquest before me.

I guessed the latter circumstance one day when, after I had asked her to tell me her adventures from the age of eleven to that of eighteen, she proceeded to tell me tales, the telling of which necessitated her throwing all modesty to the winds.

I took the utmost delight in these scandalous narrations, and whenever I thought she had told the whole truth I gave her a few pieces of money ; while whenever I had reason to suppose that she had suppressed some interesting circumstances I gave her nothing.

She confessed to me that she no longer possessed that which a maid can lose but once, that a friend of hers named Buonacorsi was in the same case, and finally she told me the name of the young man who had relieved them both of their maidenheads.

We had for neighbour a young Piedmontese abbé named Ceruti, on whom Margarita was obliged to wait when her mother was too busy. I jested with her about him, but she swore there was no love-making between them.

This abbé was a fine man, learned and witty, but he was overwhelmed with debt and in very bad odour at Rome on account of an extremely unpleasant story of which he was the hero.

They said that he had told an Englishman, who was in love with Princess Lanti, that she was in want of two hundred sequins, that the English-

man had handed over the money to the abbé, and that the latter had appropriated it.

This act of meanness had been brought to light by an explanation between the lady and the Englishman. On his saying to the princess that he was ready to do anything for her, and that the two hundred sequins he had given her were as nothing in comparison with what he was ready to do, she indignantly denied all knowledge of the transaction. Everything came out. The Englishman begged pardon, and the abbé was excluded from the princess's house and the Englishman's also.

This Abbé Ceruti was one of those journalists employed to write the weekly news of Rome by Bianconi; he and I had in a manner become friends since we were neighbours. I saw that he loved Margarita, and I was not in the least jealous, but as he was a handsome young fellow I could not believe that Margarita was cruel to him. Nevertheless, she assured me that she detested him, and that she was very sorry that her mother made her wait on him at all.

Ceruti had already laid himself under obligations to me. He had borrowed a score of crowns from me, promising to repay them in a week, and three weeks had gone by without my seeing the money. However, I did not ask for it, and would have lent him as much more if he had requested me. But I must tell the story as it happened.

Whenever I supped with the Duchess of Fiano I came in late, and Margarita waited up for me. Her mother would go to bed. For the sake of amusement I used to keep her up for an hour or two without caring whether our pleasantries disturbed the abbé, who could hear everything we said.

One evening I came home at midnight and was surprised to find the mother waiting for me.

"Where is your daughter?" I enquired.

"She's asleep, and I really cannot allow you to pass the whole night with her any longer."

"But she only stays with me till I get into bed. This new whim wounds my feelings. I object to such unworthy suspicions. What has Margarita been telling you? If she has made any complaints of me, she has lied, and I shall leave your house to-morrow."

"You are wrong; Margarita has made no complaints; on the contrary she says that you have done nothing to her."

"Very good. Do you think there is any harm in a little joking?"

"No, but you might be better employed."

"And these are your grounds for a suspicion of which you should be ashamed, if you are a good Christian."

"God save me from thinking evil of my neighbour, but I have been informed that your laughter and your jests are of such a nature as to be offensive to people of morality."

"Then it is my neighbour the abbé who has been foolish enough to give you this information?"

"I cannot tell you how I heard it, but I *have* heard it."

"Very good. To-morrow I shall seek another lodging, so as to afford your tender conscience some relief."

"Can't I attend on you as well as my daughter?"

"No; your daughter makes me laugh, and laughing is beneficial to me, whereas you would not make me laugh at all. You have insulted me, and I leave your house to-morrow."

"I shall have to tell my husband the reason of your departure, and I do not want to do that."

"You can do as you like; that's no business of mine. Go away; I want to get into bed."

"Allow me to wait on you."

"Certainly not; if you want anybody to wait on me, send Margarita."

"She's asleep."

"Then wake her up."

The good woman went her way, and two minutes later, the girl came in with little on but her chemise. She had not had time to put in her false eye, and her expression was so amusing that I went off into a roar of laughter.

"I was sleeping soundly," she began, "and my mother woke me up all of a sudden, and told me to come and wait on you, or else you would

leave, and my father would think we had been in mischief."

"I will stay, if you will continue to wait on me."

"I should like to come very much, but we mustn't laugh any more, as the abbé has complained of us."

"Oh! it is the abbé, is it?"

"Of course it is. Our jests and laughter irritate his passions."

"The rascal! We will punish him rarely. If we laughed last night, we will laugh ten times louder to-night."

Thereupon we began a thousand tricks, accompanied by shouts and shrieks of laughter, purposely calculated to drive the little priest desperate. When the fun was at its height, the door opened and the mother came in. I had Margarita's night-cap on my head, and Margarita's face was adorned with two huge moustaches, which I had stuck on with ink. Her mother had probably anticipated taking us in the fact, but when she came in she was obliged to re-echo our shouts of mirth.

"Come now," said I, "do you think our amusements criminal?"

"Not a bit; but you see your innocent orgies keep your neighbour awake."

"Then he had better go and sleep somewhere else; I am not going to put myself out for him. I will even say that you must choose between

him and me ; if I consent to stay with you, you must send him away, and I will take his room."

"I can't send him away before the end of the month, and I am afraid he will say things to my husband which will disturb the peace of the house."

"I promise you he shall go to-morrow and say nothing at all. Leave him to me, the abbé shall leave of his own free will, without giving you the slightest trouble. In future be afraid for your daughter when she is alone with a man and you don't hear them laughing. When one does not laugh, one does something serious."

After this the mother seemed satisfied and went off to bed. Margarita was in such high spirits over the promised dismissal of the abbé that I could not resist doing her justice. We passed an hour together without laughing, and she left me very proud of the victory she had gained.

Early the next day I paid the abbé a visit, and after reproaching him for his behaviour I gave him his choice between paying me the money he owed me and leaving the house at once. He did his best to get out of the dilemma, but seeing that I was pitiless he said that he could not leave without paying a few small sums he owed the landlord, and without the wherewithal to obtain another lodging.

"Very good," said I, "I will present you with another twenty crowns ; but you must go to-day, and not say a word to anyone, unless you wish me to become your implacable enemy."

I thus got rid of him and entered into possession of the two rooms. Margarita was always at my disposal, and after a few days so was the fair Buonacorsi, who was much the prettier of the two.

The two girls introduced me to the young man who had seduced them.

He was a lad of fifteen or sixteen, and very handsome though short. Nature had endowed him with an enormous symbol of virility, and at Lampsacus he would no doubt have had an altar erected to him beside that of Priapus, with which divinity he might well have contended.

He was well-mannered and agreeable, and seemed much above a common workman. He did not love Margarita or Mdle. Buonacorsi; he had merely satisfied their curiosity. They saw and admired, and wished to come to a nearer acquaintance; he read their minds and offered to satisfy them. Thereupon the two girls held a consultation, and pretending to submit out of mere complaisance; the double deed was done. I liked this young man, and gave him linen and clothes. So before long he had complete confidence in me. He told me he was in love with a girl, but unhappily for him she was in a convent, and not being able to win her he was becoming desperate. The chief obstacle to the match lay in the fact that his earnings only amounted to a paul a day, which was certainly an insufficient sum to support a wife on.

He talked so much about her that I became curious, and expressed a desire to see her. But before coming to this I must recite some other incidents of my stay at Rome.

One day I went to the Capitol to see the prizes given to the art students, and the first face I saw was the face of Mengs. He was with Battoni and two or three other painters, all being occupied in adjudging the merits of the various pictures.

I had not forgotten his treatment of me at Madrid, so I pretended not to see him; but as soon as he saw me, he came up and addressed me as follows :

“My dear Casanova, let us forget what happened at Madrid and be friends once more.”

“So be it, provided no allusion is made to the cause of our quarrel; for I warn you that I cannot speak of it and keep my head cool.”

“I dare say; but if you had understood my position at Madrid you would never have obliged me to take a course which gave me great pain.”

“I do not understand you.”

“I dare say not. You must know, then, that I was strongly suspected of being a Protestant; and if I had shewn myself indifferent to your conduct, I might possibly have been ruined. But dine with me to-morrow; we will make up a party of friends, and discuss our quarrel in a good bottle of wine. I know that you do not receive your brother, so he shall not be there. Indeed, I do not

receive him myself, for if I did all honest people would give me the cold shoulder."

I accepted his friendly invitation, and was punctual to the appointment.

My brother left Rome a short time afterwards with Prince Beloselski, the Russian ambassador to Dresden, with whom he had come; but his visit was unsuccessful, as Rezzonico proved inexorable. We only saw each other two or three times at Rome.

Three or four days after he had gone I had the agreeable surprise of seeing my brother the priest, in rags as usual. He had the impudence to ask me to help him.

"Where do you come from?"

"From Venice; I had to leave the place, as I could no longer make a living there."

"Then how do you think of making a living at Rome?"

"By saying masses and teaching French."

"You a teacher of languages! Why, you do not know your native tongue."

"I know Italian and French too, and I have already got two pupils."

"They will no doubt make wonderful progress under your fostering care. Who are they?"

"The son and daughter of the inn-keeper, at whose house I am staying, But that's not enough to keep me, and you must give me something while I am starting."

"You have no right to count on me. Leave the room."

I would not listen to another word, and told Margarita to see that he did not come in again.

The wretched fellow did his best to ruin me with all my friends, including the Duchess of Fiano and the Abbé Gama. Everybody told me that I should either give him some help, or get him out of Rome; I got heartily sick of the sound of his name. At last the Abbé Ceruti came and told me that if I did not want to see my brother begging his bread in the streets I must give him some assistance.

"You can keep him out of Rome," he said, "and he is ready to go if you will allow him three pauls a day."

I consented, and Ceruti hit on a plan which pleased me very much. He spoke to a priest who served a convent of Franciscan nuns. This priest took my brother into his service, and gave him three pauls for saying one mass every day. If he could preach well he might earn more.

Thus the Abbé Casanova passed away, and I did not care whether he knew or not where the three pauls had come from. As long as I stayed at Rome the nine piastres a month came in regularly, but after my departure he returned to Rome, went to another convent, and died there suddenly thirteen or fourteen years ago.

Medini had also arrived in Rome, but we had not seen each other. He lived in the street of the

Ursulines at the house of one of the Pope's light-cavalry men, and subsisted on the money he cheated strangers of.

The rascal had done well and had sent to Mantua for his mistress, who came with her mother and a very pretty girl of twelve or thirteen. Thinking it would be to his advantage to take handsome furnished apartments he moved to the Place d'Espagne, and occupied a house four or five doors from me, but I knew nothing of all this at the time.

Happening to dine one day with the Venetian ambassador, his excellency told me that I should meet a certain Count Manucci who had just arrived from Paris, and had evinced much delight on learning that I was at Rome.

"I suppose you know him well," said the ambassador, "and as I am going to present him to the Holy Father to-morrow, I should be much obliged if you could tell me who he really is."

"I knew him at Madrid, where he lived with Mocenigo our ambassador; he is well mannered, polite, and a fine-looking young man, and that's all I know about him."

"Was he received at the Spanish Court?"

"I think so, but I cannot be positive."

"Well, I think he was not received; but I see that you won't tell me all you know about him. It's of no consequence; I shall run no risk in presenting him to the Pope. He says he is descended

from Manucci, the famous traveller of the thirteenth century, and from the celebrated printers of the same name who did so much for literature. He shewed me the Aldine anchor on his coat of arms which has sixteen quarters."

I was astonished beyond measure that this man who had plotted my assassination should speak of me as an intimate friend, and I determined to conceal my feelings and await events. I did not shew the least sign of anger, and when after greeting the ambassador he came up to me with open arms, I received him cordially and asked after Mocenigo.

Manucci talked a great deal at dinner, telling a score of lies, all in my honour, about my reception at Madrid. I believe his object was to force me to lie too, and to make me do the same for him another time.

I swallowed all these bitter pills, for I had no choice in the matter, but I made up my mind I would have a thorough explanation the next day.

A Frenchman, the Chevalier de Neuville by name, who had come with Manucci, interested me a great deal. He had come to Rome to endeavour to obtain the annulment of marriage of a lady who was in a convent at Mantua. He had a special recommendation to Cardinal Galli.

His conversation was particularly agreeable, and when we left the ambassador's I accepted the

offer to come into his carriage with Manucci, and we drove about till the evening.

As we were returning at nightfall he told us that he was going to present us to a pretty girl with whom we would sup and where we should have a game of faro.

The carriage stopped at the Place d'Espagne, at a short distance from my lodging, and we went up to a room on the second floor. When I went in I was surprised to see Count Medini and his mistress, the lady whom the chevalier had praised, and whom I found not at all to my taste. Medini received me cordially, and thanked the Frenchman for having made me forget the past, and having brought me to see him.

M. de Neuville looked astonished, and to avoid any unpleasant explanations I turned the conversation.

When Medini thought a sufficient number of punters were present he sat down at a large table, placed five or six hundred crowns in gold and notes before him, and began to deal. Manucci lost all the gold he had about him, Neuville swept away half the bank, and I was content with the humble part of spectator.

After supper, Medini asked the chevalier to give him his revenge, and Manucci asked me to lend him a hundred sequins. I did so, and in an hour he had not one left. Neuville, on the other hand, brought down Medini's bank to twenty or

thirty sequins, and after that we retired to our several homes.

Manucci lodged with my sister-in-law, Roland's daughter, and I had made up my mind to give him an early call; but he did not leave me the opportunity, as he called on me early in the morning.

After returning me the hundred sequins he embraced me affectionately, and, shewing me a large letter of credit on Bettoni, said that I must consider his purse as mine. In short, though he said nothing about the past, he gave me to understand that he wished to initiate a mutual policy of forget and forgive.

On this occasion my heart proved too strong for my brain; such has often been the case with me. I agreed to the articles of peace he offered and required.

Besides, I was no longer at that headstrong age which only knows one kind of satisfaction, that of the sword. I remembered that if Manucci had been wrong, so had I, and I felt that my honour ran no danger of being compromised.

The day after, I went to dinner with him. The Chevalier de Neuville came in towards the close of the meal, and Medini a few moments later. The latter called on us to hold a bank, each in his turn, and we agreed. Manucci gained double what he had lost; Neuville lost four hundred sequins, and I only lost a trifle. Medini who had only lost about

fifty sequins was quite desperate, and would have thrown himself out of the window.

A few days later Manucci set out for Naples, after giving a hundred louis to Medini's mistress, who used to sup with him; but this windfall did not save Medini from being imprisoned for debt, his liabilities amounting to more than a thousand crowns.

The poor wretch wrote me doleful epistles, entreating me to come to his assistance; but the sole effect of his letters was to make me look after what he called his family, repaying myself with the enjoyment of his mistress's young sister. I did not feel called upon to behave generously to him for nothing.

About this time the Emperor of Germany came to Rome with his brother, the Grand Duke of Tuscany. One of the noblemen in their suite made the girl's acquaintance, and gave Medini enough to satisfy his creditors. He left Rome soon after recovering his liberty, and we shall meet him again in a few months.

I lived very happily amongst the friends I had made for myself. In the evenings I visited the Duchess of Fiano, in the afternoons the Princess of Santa Croce. The rest of my time I spent at home, where I had Margarita, the fair Buonacorsi, and young Menicuccio, who told me so much about his lady-love that I felt quite curious to see her

The girl was in a kind of convent where she had been placed out of charity. She could only leave it to get married, with the consent of the cardinal who superintended the establishment. When a girl went out and got married, she received a dower of two hundred Roman crowns.

Menicuccio had a sister in the same convent, and was allowed to visit her on Sundays; she came to the grating, followed by her governess. Though Menicuccio was her brother, she was not permitted to see him alone.

Five or six months before the date of which I am writing his sister had been accompanied to the grating by another girl, whom he had never seen before, and he immediately fell in love with her.

The poor young man had to work hard all the week, and could only visit the convent on holidays; and even then he had rarely the good luck to see his lady-love. In five or six months he had only seen her seven or eight times.

His sister knew of his love, and would have done all in her power for him, but the choice of a companion did not rest with her, and she was afraid of asking for this particular girl for fear of exciting suspicion.

As I have said, I had made up my mind to pay the place a visit, and on our way Menicuccio told me that the women of the convent were not nuns, properly speaking, as they had never taken any vow and did not wear a monastic dress. In spite of

that they had few temptations to leave their prison house, as they would only find themselves alone in the world with the prospect of starvation or hard work before them. The young girls only came out to get married, which was uncommon, or by flight, which was extremely difficult.

We reached a vast ill-built house, near one of the town gates—a lonely and deserted situation, as the gate led to no highway. When we went into the parlour I was astonished to see the double grating with bars so thick and close together that the hand of a girl of ten could scarce have got through. The grating was so close that it was extremely difficult to make out the features of the persons standing on the inner side, especially as this was only lighted by the uncertain reflection from the outer room. The sight of these arrangements made me shudder.

“How and where have you seen your mistress?” I asked Menicuccio; “for there I see nothing but darkness.”

“The first time the governess chanced to have a candle, but this privilege is confined, under pain of excommunication, to relations.”

“Then she will have a light to-day?”

“I expect not, as the portress will have sent up word that there was a stranger with me.”

“But how could you see your sweetheart, as you are not related to her?”

“By chance; the first time she came my

sister's governess—a good soul—said nothing about it. Ever since there has been no candle when she has been present.”

Soon after, the forms of three or four women were dimly to be seen ; but there was no candle, and the governess would not bring one on any consideration. She was afraid of being found out and excommunicated.

I saw that I was depriving my young friend of a pleasure, and would have gone, but he told me to stay. I passed an hour which interested me in spite of its painfulness. The voice of Menicuccio's sister sent a thrill through me, and I fancied that the blind must fall in love through their sense of hearing. The governess was a woman under thirty. She told me that when the girls attained their twenty-fifth year they were placed in charge of the younger ones, and at thirty-five they were free to leave the convent if they liked, but that few cared to take this step, for fear of falling into misery.

“ Then there are a good many old women here ? ”

“ There are a hundred of us, and the number is only decreased by death and by occasional marriages.”

“ But how do those who go out to get married succeed in inspiring the love of their husbands ? ”

“ I have been here for twenty years, and in that time only four have gone out, and they did not know

their husbands till they met at the altar. As might be expected, the men who solicit the cardinal for our hands are either madmen, or fellows of desperate fortunes who want the two hundred piastres. However, the cardinal-superintendent refuses permission unless the postulant can satisfy him that he is capable of supporting a wife."

"How does he choose his bride?"

"He tells the cardinal what age and disposition he would prefer, and the cardinal informs the mother-superior."

"I suppose you keep a good table, and are comfortably lodged."

"Not at all. Three thousand crowns a year are not much to keep a hundred persons. Those who do a little work and earn something are the best off."

"What manner of people put their daughters in such a prison?"

"Either poor people or bigots who are afraid of their children falling into evil ways. We only receive pretty girls here."

"Who is the judge of their prettiness?"

"The parents, the priest, and on the last appeal the cardinal-superintendent, who rejects plain girls without pity, observing that ugly women have no reason to fear the seductions of vice. So you may imagine that, wretched as we are, we curse those who pronounced us pretty."

"I pity you, and I wonder why leave is not

given to see you openly; you might have some chance of getting married then."

"The cardinal says that it is not in his power to give permission, as anyone transgressing the foundation is excommunicated."

"Then I should imagine that the founder of this house is now consumed by the flames of hell."

"We all think so, and hope he may stay there. The Pope ought to take some order with the house."

I gave her ten crowns, saying that as I could not see her I could not promise a second visit, and then I went away with Menicuccio, who was angry with himself for having procured me such a tedious hour.

"I suppose I shall never see your mistress or your sister," said I, "your sister's voice went to my heart."

"I should think your ten piastres ought to work miracles."

"I suppose there is another parlour."

"Yes; but only priests are allowed to enter it under pain of excommunication, unless you get leave from the Holy Father."

I could not imagine how such a monstrous establishment could be tolerated, for it was almost impossible, under the circumstances, for the poor girls to get a husband. I calculated that as two hundred piastres were assigned to each as a dowry in case of marriage, the founder must have calculated on two marriages a year at least, and it seemed

probable that these sums were made away with by some scoundrel.

I laid my ideas before Cardinal Bernis in the presence of the princess, who seemed moved with compassion for these poor women, and said I must write out a petition and get it signed by all of them, entreating the Holy Father to allow them the privileges customary in all other convents.

The cardinal told me to draft the supplication, to obtain the signatures, and to place it in the hands of the princess. In the mean time he would get the ear of the Holy Father, and ascertain by whose hands it was most proper for the petition to be presented.

I felt pretty sure of the signatures of the greater number of the recluses, and after writing out the petition I left it in the hands of the governess to whom I had spoken before. She was delighted with the idea, and promised to give me back the paper when I came again, with the signatures of all her companions in misfortune.

As soon as the Princess Santa Croce had the document she addressed herself to the Cardinal-Superintendent Orsini, who promised to bring the matter before the Pope. Cardinal Bernis had already spoken to His Holiness.

The chaplain of the institute was ordered to warn the superior that for the future visitors were to be allowed to see girls in the large parlour, provided they were accompanied by a governess.

Menicuccio brought me this news, which the princess had not heard, and which she was delighted to hear from my lips.

The worthy Pope did not stop there. He ordered a rigid scrutiny of the accounts to be made, and reduced the number from a hundred to fifty, doubling the dower. He also ordered that all girls who reached the age of twenty-five without getting married should be sent away with their four hundred crowns apiece; that twelve discreet matrons should have charge of the younger girls, and that twelve servants should be paid to do the hard work of the house.

CHAPTER V

I SUP AT THE INN WITH ARMELLINE AND EMILIE

THESE innovations were the work of some six months. The first reform was the abolition of the prohibition on entering the large parlour and even the interior of the convent ; for as the inmates had taken no vows and were not cloistered nuns, the superior should have been at liberty to act according to her discretion. Menicuccio had learnt this from a note his sister wrote him, and which he brought to me in high glee, asking me to come with him to the convent, according to his sister's request, who said my presence would be acceptable to her governess. I was to ask for the governess.

I was only too glad to lend myself to this pleasant arrangement, and felt curious to see the faces of the three recluses, as well as to hear what they had to say on these great changes.

When we got into the large parlour I saw two grates, one occupied by the Abbé Guasco, whom I had known in Paris in 1751, the other by

a Russian nobleman, Ivan Ivanovitch Schuvaloff, and by Father Jacquier, a friar minim of the Trinita dei Monti, and a learned astronomer. Behind the grate I saw three very pretty girls.

When our friends came down we began a very interesting conversation, which had to be conducted in a low tone for fear of our being overheard. We could not talk at our ease till the other visitors had taken their leave. My young friend's mistress was a very pretty girl, but his sister was a ravishing beauty. She had just entered on her sixteenth year, but she was tall and her figure well developed; in short, she enchanted me. I thought I had never seen a whiter skin or blacker hair and eyebrows and eyes, but still more charming was the sweetness of her voice and expression, and the naive simplicity of her expressions. Her governess who was ten or twelve years older than she was, was a woman of an extremely interesting expression; she was pale and melancholy-looking, no doubt from the fires which she had been forced to quench within her. She delighted me by telling me of the confusion which the new regulations had caused in the house.

"The mother-superior is well pleased," she said, "and all my young companions are overjoyed; but the older ones whom circumstance has made into bigots are scandalized at everything. The superior has already given orders for windows to be made in the dark parlours, though the old women

say that she cannot go beyond the concessions she has already received. To this the superior answered that as free communication had been allowed, it would be absurd to retain the darkness. She has also given orders for the alteration of the double grating, as there was only a single one in the large parlour."

I thought the superior must be a woman of intelligence, and expressed a desire to see her. Emilie obtained this pleasure for me the following day.

Emilie was the friend of Armelline, Menicuccio's sister.

This first visit lasted two hours, and seemed all too short. Menicuccio spoke to his well-beloved at the other grating.

I went away, after having given them ten Roman crowns as before. I kissed Armelline's fair hands, and as she felt the contact of my lips her face was suffused by a vivid blush. Never had the lips of man touched more dainty hands before, and she looked quite astounded at the ardour with which I kissed them.

I went home full of love for her, and without heeding the obstacles in my path I gave reins to my passion, which seemed to me the most ardent I had ever experienced.

My young friend was in an ocean of bliss. He had declared his love, and the girl had said that she would gladly become his wife if he could get the

cardinal's consent. As this consent only depended on his ability to keep himself, I promised to give him a hundred crowns and my patronage. He had served his time as a tailor's apprentice, and was in a position to open a shop of his own.

"I envy your lot," said I, "for your happiness is assured, while I, though I love your sister, despair of possessing her."

"Are you married, then?" he asked.

"Alas, yes! Keep my counsel, for I propose visiting her every day, and if it were known that I was married, my visits would be received with suspicion."

I was obliged to tell this lie to avoid the temptation of marrying her, and to prevent Armelline thinking that I was courting her with that intention.

I found the superioress a polite and clever woman, wholly free from prejudices. After coming down to the grate to oblige me, she sometimes came for her own pleasure. She knew that I was the author of the happy reform in the institution, and she told me that she considered herself under great obligations to me. In less than six weeks three of her girls made excellent marriages, and six hundred crowns had been added to the yearly income of the house.

She told me that she was ill pleased with one of their confessors. He was a Dominican, and made it a rule that his penitents should approach

the holy table every Sunday and feast day ; he kept them for hours in the confessional, and imposed penances and fastings which were likely to injure the health of young girls.

“All this,” said she, “cannot improve them from a moral point of view, and takes up a lot of their time, so that they have none left for their work, by the sale of which they procure some small comforts for themselves.”

“How many confessors have you ? ”

“Four.”

“Are you satisfied with the other three ? ”

“Yes, they are sensible men, and do not ask too much of poor human nature.”

“I will carry your just complaint to the cardinal ; will you write out your petition ? ”

“Kindly give me a model.”

I gave her a rough draft, which she copied out and signed, and I laid it before his eminence. A few days after the Dominican was removed, and his penitents divided amongst the three remaining confessors. The younger members of the community owed me a great debt of gratitude on account of this change.

Menicuccio went to see his sweetheart every holiday, while I, in my amorous ardour, visited his sister every morning at nine o'clock. I breakfasted with her and Emilie, and remained in the parlour till eleven. As there was only one grating I could lock the door behind me, but we could be seen from

the interior of the convent, as the door was left open to admit light, there being no window. This was a great annoyance for me; recluses, young or old, were continually passing by, and none of them failed to give a glance in the direction of the grate, thus my fair Armelline could not stretch out her hand to receive my amorous kisses.

Towards the end of December the cold became intense, and I begged the superior to allow me to place a screen in front of the door, as I feared I should catch cold otherwise. The worthy woman granted my request without any difficulty, and we were at our ease for the future, though the desires with which Armelline inspired me had become dreadful torment.

On the 1st day of January, 1771, I presented each of them with a good winter dress, and sent the superior a quantity of chocolate, sugar, and coffee, all of which were extremely welcome.

Emilie often came by herself to the grating, as Armelline was not ready, and in the same way Armelline would come by herself when her governess happened to be busy. It was in these quarters of an hour that she succeeded in captivating me, heart and soul.

Emilie and Armelline were great friends, but their prejudices on the subject of sensual enjoyment were so strong that I could never get them to listen to licentious talk, to allow certain small liberties which I would gladly have taken, or to afford me

those pleasures of the eyes that we accept in default of better things.

One day they were petrified by my asking them whether they did not sometimes sleep in the same bed, so as to give each other proofs of the tenderness of their mutual affection

How they blushed !

Emilie asked me with the most perfect innocence what there was in common between affection and the inconvenience of sleeping two in a narrow bed.

I took care not to explain myself, for I saw that I had frightened them. No doubt they were of the same flesh and blood as I, but our educations had differed widely. They had evidently never confided their little secrets to one another, possibly not even to their confessor, either through shame, or with the idea that the liberties they indulged in alone were no sin.

I made them a present of some silk stockings, lined with plush to keep out the cold, and vainly endeavoured to make them try the stockings on before me. I might say as often as I pleased that there was no real difference between a man's legs and a woman's, and that their confessor would laugh at them if they confessed to shewing their legs. They only answered that girls were not allowed to take such a liberty, as they wore petticoats on purpose to conceal their legs.

The manner in which Emilie spoke, always

with Armelline's approbation, convinced me that their modesty was genuine. I penetrated her idea ; she thought that in acceding to my request she would be lowering herself in my eyes, and that I should despise her ever after. Nevertheless Emilie was a woman of twenty-seven, and by no means a devotee.

As for Armelline, I could see that she took Emilie for her model, and would have been ashamed of appearing less precise than her friend. I thought she loved me, and that, contrary to the general rule, she would be more easily won by herself than in company with her friend.

I made the trial one morning when she appeared at the grating by herself, telling me that her governess was busy. I said that I adored her and was the most hapless of men, for being a married man I had no hope of ever being able to clasp her to my arms and to cover her with kisses.

"Can I continue to live, dear Armelline, with no other consolation than that of kissing your fair hands?"

At these words, pronounced with so much passion, she fixed her gaze on me, and after a few moments' reflection she began to kiss my hands as ardently as I had kissed hers.

I begged her to put her mouth to the bars that I might kiss it. She blushed and looked down, and did nothing. I bewailed my fate bitterly, but in

vain. She was deaf and dumb till Emilie came and asked us why we were so dull.

About this time, the beginning of 1771, I was visited by Mariuccia, whom I had married ten years before to a young hairdresser. My readers may remember how I met her at Abbé Momolo's. During the three months I had been in Rome I had enquired in vain as to what had become of her; so that I was delighted when she made her appearance.

"I saw you at St. Peter's," said she, "at the midnight mass on Christmas Eve, but not daring to approach you because of the people with whom I was, I told a friend of mine to follow you and find out where you lived."

"How is it that I have tried to find you out in vain for the last three months?"

"My husband set up at Frascati eight years ago, and we have lived there very happily ever since."

"I am very glad to hear it. Have you any children?"

"Four; and the eldest, who is nine years old, is very like you."

"Do you love her?"

"I adore her, but I love the other three as well."

As I wanted to go to breakfast with Armelline I begged Margarita to keep Mariuccia company till my return.

Mariuccia dined with me, and we spent a pleasant day together without attempting to renew our more tender relationship. We had plenty to talk about, and she told me that Costa, my old servant, had come back to Rome in a splendid coach, three years after I had left, and that he had married one of Momolo's daughters.

"He's a rascal; he robbed me."

"I guessed as much; his theft did him no good. He left his wife two years after their marriage, and no one knows what has become of him."

"How about his wife?"

"She is living miserably in Rome. Her father is dead."

I did not care to go and see the poor woman, for I could not do anything for her, and I could not have helped saying that if I caught her husband I would do my best to have him hanged. Such was indeed my intention up to the year 1785, when I found this runagate at Vienna. He was then Count Erdich's man, and when we come to that period the reader shall hear what I did.

I promised Mariuccia to come and see her in the course of Lent.

The Princess Santa Croce and the worthy Cardinal Bernis pitied me for my hapless love; I often confided my sufferings to their sympathizing ears.

The cardinal told the princess that she could very well obtain permission from Cardinal Orsini to

take Armelline to the theatre, and that if I cared to join the party I might find her less cruel.

"The cardinal will make no objection," said he, "as Armelline has taken no vows, but as you must know our friend's mistress before making your request, you have only to tell the cardinal that you would like to see the interior of the house."

"Do you think he will give me leave?"

"Certainly; the inmates are not cloistered nuns. We will go with you."

"You will come too? that will be a delightful party indeed."

"Ask for leave, and we will arrange the day."

This plan seemed to me a delicious dream. I guessed that the gallant cardinal was curious to see Armelline, but I was not afraid as I knew he was a constant lover. Besides I felt sure that if he took an interest in the fair recluse he would be certain to find her a husband.

In three or four days the princess summoned me to her box in the Alberti Theatre, and shewed me Cardinal Orsini's note, allowing her and her friends to see the interior of the house.

"To-morrow afternoon," said she, "we will fix the day and the hour for the visit."

Next day I paid my usual visit to the recluses, and the superioress came to tell me that the cardinal had told her that the Princess Santa Croce was coming to visit the house with some friends.

"I know it," said I; "I am coming with her."

“When is she coming?”

“I don't know yet, but I will inform you later on.”

“This novelty has turned the house upside down. The devotees scarcely know whether they are awake or dreaming, for with the exception of a few priests, the doctor, and the surgeon, no one has ever entered the house since its foundation.”

“All these restrictions are now removed, and you need not ask the cardinal's permission to receive visits from your friends.”

“I know that, but I don't like to go so far.”

The time for the visit was fixed for the afternoon of the next day, and I let the superioress know early the next morning. The Duchess of Fiano had asked to join us; the cardinal came, of course, dressed as a simple priest, with no indication of his exalted rank. He knew Armeline directly from my description, and congratulated her on having made my acquaintance.

The poor girl blushed to the roots of her hair; and I thought she would have fainted when the princess, after telling her she was the prettiest girl in the house, gave her two affectionate kisses, a mark of friendship strictly forbidden by the rules.

After these caresses, the princess proceeded to compliment the superioress. She said that I had done well to praise her parts, as she could judge of them by the order and neatness which reigned everywhere.

"I shall mention your name to Cardinal Orsini," she added, "and you may be sure I shall do you all the justice you deserve."

When we had seen all the rooms, which contained nothing worth seeing, I presented Emilie to the princess, who received her with great cordiality.

"I have heard of your sadness," she said, "but I know the reason of it. You are a good girl, and pretty too, and I shall get you a husband who will cure you of your melancholy."

The superioress gave a smile of approbation, but I saw a dozen aged devotees pulling wry faces.

Emilie dared not reply, but she took the princess's hand and kissed it, as if to summon her to keep her promise.

As for me, I was delighted to see that though all the girls were really pretty, my Armelline eclipsed them all, as the light of the sun obscures the stars.

When we came down to the parlour, the princess told Armelline that she meant to ask leave of the cardinal to take her two or three times to the theatre before Lent began. This observation seemed to petrify everyone except the superioress, who said that his eminence had now a perfect right to relax any or all of the rules of the establishment.

Poor Armelline was so overwhelmed between joy and confusion that she could not speak. She

seemed unable to find words wherein to thank the princess, who commended her and her friend Emilie to the superioress before she left the house, and gave her a small present to buy necessaries for them.

Not to be outdone, the Duchess of Fiano told the superioress that she would make me the almoner of her bounty towards Armelline and Emilie.

My expressions of gratitude to the princess when we were back in the carriage may be imagined.

I had no need to excuse Armelline, for the princess and the cardinal had gauged her capacities. Her confusion had prevented her shewing her cleverness, but her face shewed her to possess it. Besides, the influence of the education she had received had to be taken into account.

The princess was impatient to take her to the theatre, and afterwards to supper at an inn, according to the Roman custom.

She wrote the names of Armelline and Emilie upon her tablets, so as to remember them on every occasion.

I did not forget the mistress of my poor friend Menicuccio, but the time was not opportune for mentioning her name. The next day, however, I got the cardinal's ear, and told him that I was anxious to do something for the young man. The cardinal saw him, and Menicuccio pleased him so well that the marriage took place before the end of the carnival, the bride having a dowry of five

hundred crowns. With this sum and the hundred crowns I gave him, he was in a position to open a shop for himself.

The day after the princess's visit was a triumphant one for me. As soon as I appeared at the grating the superioress was sent for, and we had an interview.

The princess had given her fifty crowns, which she was going to lay out on linen for Armelline and Emilie.

The recluses were stupefied when I told them that the fat priest was Cardinal Bernis, as they had an idea that a cardinal can never doff the purple.

The Duchess of Fiano had sent a cask of wine, which was an unknown beverage there, and these presents made them hope for others. I was looked upon as the bringer of all this good luck, and gratitude shewed itself so plainly in every word and glance that I felt I might hope for everything.

A few days later, the princess told Cardinal Orsini that she had taken a peculiar interest in two of the young recluses, and desiring to provide them with suitable establishments she wished to take them now and again to the theatre so as to give them some knowledge of the world. She undertook to take them and bring them back herself or only to confide them to sure hands. The cardinal replied that the superioress should receive instructions to oblige her in every particular.

As soon as I heard of this from the princess,

I said that I would ascertain what orders had been actually received at the convent.

The next day the superioress told me that his eminence had instructed her to do what she thought best for the welfare of the young people committed to her charge.

“I have also received orders,” she added, “to send in the names of those who have attained the age of thirty, and wish to leave the convent, that they may receive a warrant for their two hundred crowns. I have not yet published this command, but I haven’t the slightest doubt that we shall get rid of a score at least.”

I told the princess of the cardinal’s orders, and she agreed with me that his behaviour was most generous.

Cardinal Bernis, who was by, advised her that the first time she took the girls to the theatre she had better go in person, and tell the superioress that she would always send her carriage and liveried servants to fetch them.

The princess approved of this advice, and a few days later she called for Emilie and Armeline, and brought them to her palace, where I awaited them with the cardinal, the prince, and the Duchess of Fiano.

They were welcomed warmly, encouraged to reply, to laugh, and to say what was in their minds, but all in vain ; finding themselves for the first time in a splendid apartment surrounded by brilliant

company, they were so confounded that they could not say a word. Emilie persisted in rising from her seat whenever she was addressed, and Armelline shone only by her beauty and the vivid blush which suffused her face whenever she was addressed. The princess might kiss her as much as she pleased, but the novice had not the courage to return her kisses.

At last Armelline mustered up courage to take the princess's hand and kiss it, but when the lady kissed her on the lips the girl remained inactive, seeming to be absolutely ignorant of such a natural and easy matter as the returning of a kiss.

The cardinal and the prince laughed; the duchess said that so much restraint was unnatural. As for me I was on thorns, such awkwardness seemed to me near akin to stupidity, for Armelline had only to do to the princess's lips what she had already done to her hand. No doubt she fancied that to do to the princess what the princess had done to her would shew too much familiarity.

The cardinal took me on one side and said he could not believe that I had not initiated her in the course of two months' intimacy, but I pointed out to him the immense force of long engrained prejudice.

For this first time the princess had made up her mind to take them to the Torre di Nonna Theatre, as comic pieces were played there, and they could not help but laugh.

After the play we went to sup at an inn, and at table the good cheer and my exhortations began to take some effect on her. We persuaded them to drink a little wine, and their spirits improved visibly. Emilie ceased to be sad, and Armelline gave the princess some real kisses. We applauded their efforts to be gay, and our applause convinced them that they had done nothing wrong.

Of course the princess charged me with the pleasant trust of taking the two guests back to the convent. Now, I thought, my time has come; but when we were in the carriage I saw that I had reckoned without my host. When I would have kissed, heads were turned aside; when I would have stretched forth an indiscreet hand, dresses were wrapped more tightly; when I would have forced my way, I was resisted by force; when I complained, I was told that I was in the wrong; when I got in a rage, I was allowed to say on, and when I threatened to see them no more, they did not believe me.

When we got to the convent a servant opened the side door, and noticing that she did not shut it after the girls, I went in too, and went with them to see the superioress, who was in bed, and did not seem at all astonished to see me. I told her that I considered it my duty to bring back her young charges in person. She thanked me, asked them if they had had a pleasant evening, and bade me good night, begging me to make

as little noise as possible on my way downstairs.

I wished them all happy slumbers, and after giving a sequin to the servant who opened the door, and another to the coachman, I had myself set down at the door of my lodging. Margarita was asleep on a sofa and welcomed me with abuse, but she soon found out by the ardour of my caresses that I had not been guilty of infidelity.

I did not get up till noon, and at three o'clock I called on the princess and found the cardinal already there.

They expected to hear the story of my triumph, but the tale I told and my apparent indifference in the matter came as a surprise.

I may as well confess that my face was by no means the index of my mind. However, I did my best to give the thing a comic turn, saying that I did not care for Pamelas, and that I had made up my mind to give up the adventure.

"My dear fellow," said the cardinal, "I shall take two or three days before I congratulate you on your self-restraint."

His knowledge of the human heart was very extensive.

Armelline thought I must have slept till late as she did not see me in the morning as usual; but when the second day went by without my coming she sent her brother to ask if I were ill, for I had never let two days pass without paying her a visit.

Menicuccio came accordingly, and was delighted to find me in perfect health.

"Go and tell your sister," I said, "that I shall continue to interest the princess on her behalf, but that I shall see her no more."

"Why not?"

"Because I wish to cure myself of an unhappy passion. Your sister does not love me; I am sure of it. I am no longer a young man, and I don't feel inclined to become a martyr to her virtue. Virtue goes rather too far when it prevents a girl giving the man who adores her a single kiss."

"Indeed, I would not have believed that of her."

"Nevertheless it is the fact, and I must make an end of it. Your sister cannot understand the danger she runs in treating a lover in this fashion. Tell her all that, my dear Menicuccio, but don't give her any advice of your own."

"You can't think how grieved I am to hear all this; perhaps it's Emilie's presence that makes her so cold."

"No; I have often pressed her when we have been alone together, but all in vain. I want to cure myself, for if she does not love me I do not wish to obtain her either by seduction or by any feeling of gratitude on her part. Tell me how your future bride treats you."

"Very well, ever since she has been sure of my marrying her."

I felt sorry then that I had given myself out as a married man, for in my state of irritation I could even have given her a promise of marriage without deliberately intending to deceive her.

Menicuccio went on his way distressed, and I went to the meeting of the "Arcadians," at the Capitol, to hear the Marchioness d'Août recite her reception piece. This marchioness was a young Frenchwoman who had been at Rome for the last six months with her husband, a man of many talents, but inferior to her, for she was a genius. From this day I became her intimate friend, but without the slightest idea of an intrigue, leaving all that to a French priest who was hopelessly in love with her, and had thrown up his chances of preferment for her sake.

Every day the Princess Santa Croce told me that I could have the key of her box at the theatre whenever I liked to take Armelline and Emilie, but when a week passed by without my giving any sign she began to believe that I had really broken off the connection.

The cardinal, on the other hand, believed me to be still in love, and praised my conduct. He told me that I should have a letter from the superioress, and he was right; for at the end of the week she wrote me a polite note begging me to call on her, which I was obliged to obey.

I called on her, and she began by asking me plainly why my visits had ceased.

"Because I am in love with Armelline."

"If that reason brought you here every day, I do not see how it can have suddenly operated in another direction."

"And yet it is all quite natural; for when one loves one desires, and when one desires in vain one suffers, and continual suffering is great unhappiness. And so you see that I am bound to act thus for my own sake."

"I pity you, and see the wisdom of your course; but allow me to tell you that, esteeming Armelline, you have no right to lay her open to a judgment being passed upon her which is very far from the truth."

"And what judgment is that?"

"That your love was only a whim, and that as soon as it was satisfied you abandoned her."

"I am sorry indeed to hear of this, but what can I do? I must cure myself of this unhappy passion. Do you know any other remedy than absence? Kindly advise me."

"I don't know much about the affection called love, but it seems to me that by slow degrees love becomes friendship, and peace is restored."

"True, but if it is to become friendship, love must be gently treated. If the beloved object is not very tender, love grows desperate and turns to indifference or contempt. I neither wish to grow desperate nor to despise Armelline, who is a miracle of beauty and goodness. I shall do my utmost for

her, just as if she had made me happy, but I will see her no more."

"I am in complete darkness on the matter. They assure me that they have never failed in their duty towards you, and that they cannot imagine why you have ceased coming here."

"Whether by prudence, or timidity, or a delicate wish not to say anything against me, they have told you a lie; but you deserve to know all, and my honour requires that I should tell you the whole story."

"Please do so; you may count on my discretion."

I then told my tale, and I saw she was moved.

"I have always tried," she said, "never to believe evil except on compulsion, nevertheless, knowing as I do the weakness of the human heart, I could never have believed that throughout so long and intimate an acquaintance you could have kept yourself so severely within bounds. In my opinion there would be much less harm in a kiss than in all this scandal."

"I am sure that Armeline does not care about it."

"She does nothing but weep."

"Her tears probably spring from vanity, or from the cause her companions assign for my absence."

"No, I have told them all that you are ill."

"What does Emilie say?"

"She does not weep, but she looks sad, and says over and over again that it is not her fault if you do not come, thereby hinting that it is Armelline's fault. Come to-morrow to oblige me. They are dying to see the opera at the Aliberti, and the comic opera at the Capronica."

"Very good, then I will breakfast with them to-morrow morning, and to-morrow evening they shall see the opera."

"You are very good; I thank you. Shall I tell them the news?"

"Please tell Armelline that I am only coming after hearing all that you have said to me."

The princess skipped for joy when she heard of my interview with the superioress, and the cardinal said he had guessed as much. The princess gave me the key of her box, and ordered that her carriage and servants should be at my orders.

The next day when I went to the convent Emilie came down by herself to reproach me on my cruel conduct. She told me that a man who really loved would not have acted in such a manner, and that I had been wrong to tell the superioress everything.

"I would not have said anything if I had had anything important to say."

"Armelline has become unhappy through knowing you."

"Why so?"

"Because she does not want to fail in her duty,

and she sees that you only love her to turn her from it."

"But her unhappiness will cease when I cease troubling her."

"Do you mean you are not going to see her any more?"

"Exactly. Do you think that it costs me no pain? But I must make the effort for the sake of my peace of mind."

"Then she will be sure that you do not love her."

"She must think what she pleases. In the meanwhile I feel sure that if she loved me as I loved her, we should be of one mind."

"We have duties which seem to press lightly on you."

"Then be faithful to your duties, and permit a man of honour to respect them by visiting you no more."

Armeline then appeared. I thought her changed.

"Why do you look so grave and pale?"

"Because you have grieved me."

"Come then, be gay once more, and allow me to cure myself of a passion, the essence of which is to induce you to fail in your duty. I shall be still your friend, and I shall come to see you once a week while I remain in Rome."

"Once a week! You needn't have begun by coming once a day."

"You are right ; it was your kind expression which deceived me, but I hope you will allow me to become rational again. For this to happen, I must try not to see you more than I can help. Think over it, and you will see that I am doing all for the best."

"It's very hard that you can't love me as I love you."

"You mean calmly, and without desires."

"I don't say that ; but holding your desires in check, if they are contrary to the voice of duty."

"I'm too old to learn this method, and it does not seem to me an attractive one. Kindly tell me whether the restraint of your desires gives you much pain ? "

"I don't repress my desires when I think of you, I cherish them ; I wish you were the Pope, I wish you were my father, that I might caress you in all innocence ; in my dreams I wish you could become a girl, so that we might always live happily together."

At this true touch of native simplicity, I could not help smiling.

I told them that I should come in the evening to take them to the Aliberti, and felt in a better humour after my visit, for I could see that there was no art or coquetry in what Armelline said. I saw that she loved me, but would not come to a parley with her love, hence her repugnance to granting me her favours ; if she once did so, her

eyes would be opened. All this was pure nature, for experience had not yet taught her that she ought either to avoid me or to succumb to my affection.

In the evening I called for the two friends to take them to the opera, and I had not long to wait. I was by myself in the carriage, but they evinced no surprise. Emilie conveyed to me the compliments of the superioress, who would be obliged by my calling on her the following day. At the opera I let them gaze at the spectacle which they saw for the first time, and answered whatever questions they put to me. As they were Romans, they ought to have known what a *castrato* was, nevertheless, Armelline took the wretched individual who sang the prima donna's part for a woman, and pointed to his breast, which was really a fine one.

"Would you dare to sleep in the same bed with him?" I asked.

"No; an honest girl ought always to sleep by herself."

Such was the severity of the education they had received. Everything connected with love was made a mystery of, and treated with a kind of superstitious awe. Thus Armelline had only let me kiss her hands after a long contest, and neither she nor Emilie would allow me to see whether the stockings I had given them fitted well or not. The severe prohibition that was laid on sleeping with another girl must have made them think that to shew their nakedness to a companion would be

a great sin, and to let a man see their beauties a hideous crime. The very idea of such a thing must have given them a shudder.

Whenever I had attempted to indulge in conversation which was a little free, I had found them deaf and dumb.

Although Emilie was a handsome girl in spite of her pallor, I did not take sufficient interest in her to try to dissipate her melancholy ; but loving Armelline to desperation I was cut to the quick to see her look grave when I asked her if she had any idea of the difference between the physical conformation of men and women.

As we were leaving Armelline said she was hungry, as she had scarcely eaten anything for the last week on account of the grief I had given her.

"If I had foreseen that," I answered, "I would have ordered a good supper, whereas I have now only pot-luck to offer you."

"Never mind. How many shall we be?"

"We three."

"So much the better ; we shall be more at liberty."

"Then you don't like the princess?"

"I beg your pardon, but she wants me to kiss her in a way I don't like."

"Nevertheless, you kissed her ardently enough."

"I was afraid she would take me for a simpleton if I did not do so."

"Then do you think you committed a sin in kissing her like that?"

"Certainly not, for it was very unpleasant for me."

"Then why won't you make the same effort on my behalf?"

She said nothing, and when we got to the inn I ordered them to light a fire and to get a good supper ready.

The waiter asked me if I would like some oysters, and noticing the curiosity of my guests on the subject I asked him how much they were.

"They are from the arsenal at Venice," he replied, "and we can't sell them under fifty pauls a hundred."

"Very good, I will take a hundred, but you must open them here."

Armeline was horrified to think that I was going to pay five crowns for her whim, and begged me to revoke the order; but she said nothing when I told her that no pleasure of hers could be bought too dearly by me.

At this she took my hand and would have carried it to her lips, but I took it away rather roughly, greatly to her mortification.

I was sitting in front of the fire between them, and I was sorry at having grieved her.

"I beg pardon, Armeline," I said, "I only took my hand away because it was not worthy of being carried to your fair lips."

In spite of this excuse she could not help two big tears coursing down her blushing cheeks. I was greatly pained.

Armelline was a tender dove, not made to be roughly treated. If I did not want her to hate me I felt that I must either not see her at all or treat her more gently for the future.

Her tears convinced me that I had wounded her feelings terribly, and I got up and went out to order some champagne.

When I came back I found that she had been weeping bitterly. I did not know what to do; I begged her again and again to forgive me, and to be gay once more, unless she wished to subject me to the severest of all punishments.

Emilie backed me up, and on taking her hand and covering it with kisses, I had the pleasure of seeing her smile once more.

The oysters were opened in our presence, and the astonishment depicted on the girls' countenances would have amused me if my heart had been more at ease. But I was desperate with love, and Armelline begged me vainly to be as I was when we first met.

We sat down, and I taught my guests how to suck up the oysters, which swam in their own liquid, and were very good.

Armelline swallowed half a dozen, and then observed to her friend that so delicate a morsel must be a sin.

"Not on account of its delicacy," said Emilie, "but because at every mouthful we swallow half a paul."

"Half a paul!" said Armelline, "and the Holy Father does not forbid such a luxury? If this is not the sin of gluttony, I don't know what is. These oysters are delightful; but I shall speak about the matter to my director."

These simplicities of hers afforded me great mental pleasure, but I wanted bodily pleasure as well.

We ate fifty oysters, and drank two bottles of sparkling champagne, which made my two guests eruct and blush and laugh at the same time.

I would fain have laughed too and devoured Armelline with my kisses, but I could only devour her with my eyes.

I kept the remainder of the oysters for dessert, and ordered the supper to be served. It was an excellent meal, and the two heroines enjoyed it; even Emilie became quite lively.

I ordered up lemons and a bottle of rum, and after having the fifty remaining oysters opened I sent the waiter away. I then made a bowl of punch, pouring in a bottle of champagne as a finishing touch.

After they had swallowed a few oysters and drank one or two glasses of punch, which they liked amazingly, I begged Emilie to give me an oyster with her lips.

"I am sure you are too sensible to find anything wrong in that," I added.

Emilie was astonished at the proposition, and thought it over. Armelline gazed at her anxiously, as if curious as to how she would answer me.

"Why don't you ask Armelline?" she said at length.

"Do you give him one first," said Armelline, "and if you have the courage I will try to do the same."

"What courage do you want? It's a child's game; there's no harm in it."

After this reply, I was sure of victory. I placed the shell on the edge of her lips, and after a good deal of laughing she sucked in the oyster, which she held between her lips. I instantly recovered it by placing my lips on hers.

Armelline clapped her hands, telling Emilie that she would never have thought her so brave; she then imitated her example, and was delighted with my delicacy in sucking away the oyster, scarcely touching her lips with mine. My agreeable surprise may be imagined when I heard her say that it was my turn to hold the oysters. It is needless to say that I acquitted myself of the duty with much delight.

After these pleasant interludes we went on drinking punch and swallowing oysters.

We all sat in a row with our backs to the fire, and our brains began to whirl, but never was there

such a sweet intoxication. However, the punch was not finished and we were getting very hot. I took off my coat, and they were obliged to unlace their dresses, the bodices of which were lined with fur. Guessing at necessities which they did not dare to mention, I pointed out a closet where they could make themselves comfortable, and they went in hand-in-hand. When they came out they were no longer timid recluses, they were shrieking with laughter, and reeling from side to side.

I was their screen as we sat in front of the fire, and I gazed freely on charms which they could no longer conceal. I told them that we must not think of going till the punch was finished, and they agreed, saying, in high glee, that it would be a great sin to leave so good a thing behind.

I then presumed so far as to tell them that they had beautiful legs, and that I should be puzzled to assign the prize between them. This made them gayer than ever, for they had not noticed that their unlaced bodices and short petticoats let me see almost everything.

After drinking our punch to the dregs, we remained talking for half an hour, while I congratulated myself on my self-restraint. Just as we were going I asked them if they had any grounds of complaint against me. Armelline replied that if I would adopt her as my daughter she was ready to follow me to the end of the world.

“Then you are not afraid of my turning you from the path of duty?”

"No, I feel quite safe with you."

"And what do you say, dear Emilie?"

"I shall love you too, when you do for me what the superioress will tell you to-morrow."

"I will do anything, but I shan't come to speak to her till the evening, for it is three o'clock now."

They laughed all the louder, exclaiming,—

"What will the mother say?"

I paid the bill, gave something to the waiter, and took them back to the convent, where the portress seemed well enough pleased with the new rules when she saw two sequins in her palm.

It was too late to see the superioress, so I drove home after rewarding the coachman and the lackey.

Margarita was ready to scratch my eyes out if I could not prove my fidelity, but I satisfied her by quenching on her the fires Armelline and the punch had kindled. I told her I had been kept by a gaming party, and she asked no more questions.

The next day I amused the princess and the cardinal by a circumstantial account of what had happened.

"You missed your opportunity," said the princess.

"I don't think so," said the cardinal, "I believe, on the contrary, that he has made his victory more sure for another time."

In the evening, I went to the convent where the superioress gave me her warmest welcome.

She complimented me on having amused myself with the two girls till three o'clock in the morning without doing anything wrong. They had told her how we had eaten the oysters, and she said it was an amusing idea. I admired her candour, simplicity, or philosophy, whichever you like to call it.

After these preliminaries, she told me that I could make Emilie happy by obtaining, through the influence of the princess, a dispensation to marry without the publication of banns a merchant of Civita Vecchia, who would have married her long ago only that there was a woman who pretended to have claims upon him. If banns were published this woman would institute a suit which might go on for ever.

"If you do this," she concluded, "you will have the merit of making Emilie happy."

I took down the man's name, and promised to do my best with the princess.

"Are you still determined to cure yourself of your love for Armelline?"

"Yes, but I shall not begin the cure till Lent."

"I congratulate you ; the carnival is unusually long this year."

The next day I spoke of the matter to the princess. The first requisite was a certificate from the Bishop of Civita Vecchia, stating that the man was free to marry. The cardinal said that the man must come to Rome, and that the affair could

be managed if he could bring forward two good witnesses who would swear that he was unmarried.

I told the superioress what the cardinal said, and she wrote to the merchant, and a few days after I saw him talking to the superioress and Emilie through the grating.

He commended himself to my protection, and said that before he married he wanted to be sure of having six hundred crowns.

The convent would give him four hundred crowns, so we should have to obtain a grant of two hundred more. I succeeded in getting the grant, but I first contrived to have another supper with Armelline, who asked me every morning when I was going to take her to the comic opera. I said I was afraid of turning her astray from the path of duty, but she replied that experience had taught her to dread me no longer.

CHAPTER VI

THE FLORENTINE — MARRIAGE OF EMILIE — SCHOLASTICA—ARMELLINE AT THE BALL

BEFORE the supper I had loved Armelline to such an extent that I had determined to see her no more, but after it I felt that I must obtain her or die. I saw that she had only consented to my small liberties because she regarded them as mere jokes, of no account, and I resolved to take advantage of this way of looking at it to go as far as I could. I began to play the part of indifferent to the best of my ability, only visiting her every other day, and looking at her with an expression of polite interest. I often pretended to forget to kiss her hand, while I kissed Emilie's and told her that if I felt certain of receiving positive marks of her affection I should stay at Civita Vecchia for some weeks after she was married. I would not see Armelline's horror, who could not bear me to take a fancy to Emilie.

Emilie said that she would be more at liberty when she was married, while Armelline, vexed at

her giving me any hopes, told her sharply that a married woman had stricter duties to perform than a girl.

I agreed with her in my heart, but as it would not have suited my purpose to say so openly I insinuated the false doctrine that a married woman's chief duty is to keep her husband's descent intact, and that everything else is of trifling importance.

With the idea of driving Armeline to an extremity I told Emilie that if she wanted me to exert myself to my utmost for her she must give me good hopes of obtaining her favours not only after but before marriage.

"I will give you no other favours," she replied, "than those which Armeline may give you. You ought to try to get her married also."

In spite of her grief at these proposals, gentle Armeline replied,—

"You are the only man I have ever seen; and as I have no hopes of getting married I will give you no pledges at all, though I do not know what you mean by the word."

Though I saw how pure and angelic she was. I had the cruelty to go away, leaving her to her distress.

It was hard for me to torment her thus, but I thought it was the only way to overcome her prejudices.

Calling on the Venetian ambassador's steward I saw some peculiarly fine oysters, and I got him to

let me have a hundred. I then took a box at the Capronica Theatre, and ordered a good supper at the inn where we had supped before.

"I want a room with a bed," I said to the waiter.

"That's not allowed in Rome, signor," he replied, "but on the third floor we have two rooms with large sofas which might do instead, without the Holy Office being able to say anything."

I looked at the rooms and took them, and ordered the man to get the best supper that Rome could offer.

As I was entering the box with the two girls I saw the Marchioness d'Août was my near neighbour. She accosted me, and congratulated herself on her vicinity to me. She was accompanied by her French abbé, her husband, and a fine-looking young man, whom I had never seen before. She asked who my companions were, and I told her they were in the Venetian ambassador's household. She praised their beauty and began to talk to Armeline, who answered well enough till the curtain went up. The young man also complimented her, and after having asked my permission he gave her a large packet of bonbons, telling her to share them with her neighbour.

I had guessed him to be a Florentine from his accent, and asked him if the sweets came from the banks of the Arno; he told me they were from Naples, whence he had just arrived.

At the end of the first act I was surprised to hear him say that he had a letter of introduction for me from the Marchioness of C——.

“I have just heard your name,” he said, “and to-morrow I shall have the honour of delivering the letter in person, if you will kindly give me your address.”

After these polite preliminaries I felt that I must comply with his request.

I asked after the marquis, his mother-in-law, and Anastasia, saying that I was delighted to hear from the marchioness from whom I had been expecting an answer for the last month.

“The charming marchioness has deigned to entrust me with the answer you speak of.”

“I long to read it.”

“Then I may give you the letter now, though I shall still claim the privilege of calling on you to-morrow. I will bring it to you in your box, if you will allow me.”

“Pray do so.”

He might easily have given it to me from the box where he was, but this would not have suited his plans. He came in, and politeness obliged me to give him my place next to Armelline. He took out an elaborate pocket-book, and gave me the letter. I opened it, but finding that it covered four pages, I said I would read it when I got home, as the box was dark.

“I shall stay in Rome till Easter,” he said, “as

I want to see all the sights ; though indeed I cannot hope to see anything more beautiful than the vision now before me."

Armeline, who was gazing fixedly at him, blushed deeply. I felt that his compliment, though polite, was entirely out of place, and in some sort an insult to myself. However, I said nothing, but decided mentally that the Florentine Adonis must be a fop of the first water.

Finding his compliment created a silence, he saw he had made himself offensive, and after a few disconnected remarks withdrew from the box.

In spite of myself the man annoyed me, and I congratulated Armeline on the rapidity of her conquest, asking her what she thought of him.

"He is a fine man, but his compliment shews he has no taste. Tell me, is it the custom for people of fashion to make a young girl blush the first time they see her?"

"No, dear Armeline, it is neither customary nor polite; and anyone who wishes to mix in good society would never do such a thing."

I lapsed into silence, as though I wanted to listen to the music; but as a matter of fact my heart was a prey to cruel jealousy. I thought the matter over, and came to the conclusion that the Florentine had treated me rudely. He might have guessed that I was in love with Armeline, and to make such an open declaration of love to my very face was nothing more nor less than an insult to me.

After I had kept this unusual silence for a quarter of an hour the simple Armelline made me worse by saying that I must calm myself, as I might be sure that the young man's compliment had not given her the slightest pleasure. She did not see that by saying this she made me feel that the compliment had had the directly opposite effect.

I said that I had hoped he had pleased her.

To finish the matter up, she said by way of soothing me that the young man did not mean to vex me, as he doubtless took me for her father.

What could I reply to this observation, as cruel as it was reasonable? Nothing; I could only take refuge in silence and a fit of childish ill-humour.

At last I could bear it no longer, and begged the two girls to come away with me.

The second act was just over, and if I had been in my right senses I should never have made them such an unreasonable request; but the crassness of my proceedings did not strike me till the following day.

In spite of the strangeness of my request they merely exchanged glances and got ready to go. Not knowing what better excuse to give I told them I did not want the princess's carriage to be noticed as everyone left the theatre, and that I would bring them again to the theatre the following day.

I would not let Armelline put her head inside the Marchioness d'Août's box, and so we went out. I found the man who accompanied the carriage talking to one of his mates at the door of the theatre, and this made me think that the princess had come to the opera.

We got down at the inn, and I whispered to the man to take his horses home and to call for us at three o'clock; for the cold was intense, and both horses and men had to be considered.

We began by sitting down in front of a roaring fire, and for half an hour we did nothing but eat oysters, which were opened in our presence by a clever waiter, who took care not to lose a drop of the fluid. As quick as he opened we ate, and the laughter of the girls, who talked of how we had eaten them before, caused my anger to gradually disappear.

In Armelline's gentleness I saw the goodness of her heart, and I was angry with myself for my absurd jealousy of a man who was much more calculated to please a young girl than I.

Armelline drank champagne, and stole occasional glances in my direction as if to entreat me to join them in their mirth.

Emilie spoke of her marriage, and without saying anything about my projected visit to Civita Vecchia I promised that her future husband should have his plenary dispensation before very long. While I spoke I kissed Armelline's fair hands, and

she looked at me as if thankful for the return of my affection.

The oysters and champagne had their natural effect, and we had a delightful supper. We had sturgeon and some delicious truffles, which I enjoyed not so much for my own sake as for the pleasure with which my companions devoured them.

A man in love is provided with a kind of instinct which tells him that the surest way to success is to provide the beloved object with pleasures that are new to her.

When Armeline saw me become gay and ardent once more she recognized her handiwork, and was doubtless proud of the power she exercised over me. She took my hand of her own accord, and continued gazing into my eyes. Emilie was occupied in the enjoyment of the meal, and did not trouble herself about our behaviour. Armeline was so tender and loving that I made sure of victory after we had had some more oysters and a bowl of punch.

When the dessert, the fifty oysters, and all the materials for making the punch were on the table, the waiter left the room, saying that the ladies would find every requisite in the neighbouring apartment.

The room was small, and the fire very hot, and I bade the two friends arrange their dress more comfortably.

Their dresses fitted their figures, and were trimmed with fur and stiffened with whalebones, so they went into the next room, and came back in white bodices and short dimity petticoats, laughing at the slightness of their attire.

I had sufficient strength of mind to conceal my emotion, and even not to look at their breasts when they complained of having no neckerchiefs or breast-bands to their chemises. I knew how inexperienced they were, and felt certain that when they saw the indifference with which I took their slight attire they themselves would think it was of no consequence.

Armelline and Emilie had both beautiful breasts, and knew it; they were therefore astonished at my indifference, and perhaps thought that I had never seen a fine breast. As a matter of fact a fine figure is much more scarce at Rome than a pretty face.

Thus, in spite of their modesty, their vanity impelled them to shew me that my indifference was ill-placed, but it was my part to put them at their ease, and to make them fling shame to the winds.

They were enchanted when I told them to try their hands at a bowl of punch, and they simply danced for joy when I pronounced it better than my own brew.

Then came the oyster-game, and I scolded Armelline for having swallowed the liquid as I was taking the oyster from her lips. I agreed that it was very hard to avoid doing so, but I offered to

shew them how it could be done by placing the tongue in the way. This gave me an opportunity of teaching them the game of tongues, which I shall not explain because it is well known to all true lovers. Armelline played her part with such evident relish that I could see she enjoyed it as well as I, though she agreed it was a very innocent amusement.

It so chanced that a fine oyster slipped from its shell as I was placing it between Emilie's lips. It fell on to her breast, and she would have recovered it with her fingers; but I claimed the right of regaining it myself, and she had to unlace her bodice to let me do so. I got hold of the oyster with my lips, but did so in such a manner as to prevent her suspecting that I had taken any extraordinary pleasure in the act.

Armelline looked on without laughing; she was evidently surprised at the little interest I had taken in what was before my eye. Emilie laughed and relaced her bodice.

The opportunity was too good to be lost, so taking Armelline on my knee I gave her an oyster and let it slip as Emilie's had slipped, much to the delight of the elder, who wanted to see how her young companion would go through the ordeal.

Armelline was really as much delighted herself, though she tried to conceal her pleasure.

"I want my oyster," said I.

"Take it, then."

There was no need to tell me twice. I unlaced her corset in such a way as to make it fall still lower, bewailing the necessity of having to search for it with my hands.

What a martyrdom for an amorous man to have to conceal his bliss at such a moment !

I did not let Armeline have any occasion to accuse me of taking too much licence, for I only touched her alabaster spheres so much as was absolutely necessary.

When I had got the oyster again I could restrain myself no more, and affixing my lips to one of the blossoms of her breast I sucked it with a voluptuous pleasure which is beyond all description.

She was astonished, but evidently moved, and I did not leave her till my enjoyment was complete.

When she marked my dreamy langourous gaze, she asked me if it had given me much pleasure to play the part of an infant.

"Yes, dearest," I replied, "but it's only an innocent jest."

"I don't think so; and I hope you will say nothing about it to the superioress. It may be innocent for you, but it is not for me, as I experienced sensations which must partake of the nature of sin. We will pick up no more oysters."

"These are mere trifles," said Emilie, "the stain of which will easily be wiped out with a little holy water. At all events we can swear that there has been no kissing between us."

They went into the next room for a moment, I did the same, and we then sat on the sofa before the fire. As I sat between them I observed that our legs were perfectly alike, and that I could not imagine why women stuck so obstinately to their petticoats.

While I talked I touched their legs, saying it was just as if I were to touch my own.

They did not interrupt this examination which I carried up to the knee, and I told Emilie that all the reward I would ask for my services was that I might see her thighs, to compare them with Armelline's.

"She will be bigger than I," said Armelline, "though I am the taller."

"Well, there would be no harm in letting me see."

"I think there would."

"Well, I will feel with my hands."

"No, you would look at the same time."

"I swear I will not."

"Let me bandage your eyes."

"Certainly; but I will bandage yours too."

"Yes; we will play at blindman's buff."

Before the bandaging began I took care to make them swallow a good dose of punch, and then we proceeded to play. The two girls let me span their thighs several times, laughing and falling over me whenever my hands went too high.

I lifted the bandage and saw everything, but they pretended not to suspect anything.

They treated me in the same way, no doubt to see what it was that they felt when they fell upon me.

This delightful game went on till exhausted nature would not allow me to play it any more. I put myself in a state of decency, and then told them to take off their bandages.

They did so and sat beside me, thinking, perhaps, that they would be able to disavow everything on the score of the bandage.

It seemed to me that Emilie had had a lover, though I took good care not to tell her so; but Armelline was a pure virgin. She was meeker than her friend, and her great eyes shone as voluptuously but more modestly.

I would have snatched a kiss from her pretty mouth, but she turned away her head, though she squeezed my hands tenderly. I was astonished at this refusal after the liberties I had taken with her.

We had talked about balls, and they were both extremely anxious to see one.

The public ball was the rage with all the young Romans. For ten long years the Pope Rezzonico had deprived them of this pleasure.

Although Rezzonico forbade dancing, he allowed gaming of every description. Ganganelli, his successor, had other views, and forbade gaming but allowed dancing.

So much for papal infallibility ; what one condemns the other approves. Ganganelli thought it better to let his subjects skip than to give them the opportunity of ruining themselves, of committing suicide, or of becoming brigands ; but Rezzonico did not see the matter in that light.

I promised the girls I would take them to the ball as soon as I could discover one where I was not likely to be recognized.

Three o'clock struck, and I took them back to the convent, well enough pleased with the progress I had made, though I had only increased my passion. I was surer than ever that Armelline was born to exercise an irresistible sway over every man who owed fealty to beauty.

I was amongst her liegemen, and am so still, but the incense is all gone and the censer of no value.

I could not help reflecting on the sort of glamour which made me fall in love with one who seemed all new to me, while I loved her in exactly the same manner as I had loved her predecessor. But in reality there was no real novelty ; the piece was the same, though the title might be altered.

But when I had won what I coveted, did I realize that I was going over old ground ? Did I complain ? Did I think myself deceived ?

Not one whit ; and doubtless for this reason, that whilst I enjoyed the piece I kept my eyes fixed on the title which had so taken my fancy.

If this be so, of what use is title at all? The title of a book, the name of a dish, the name of a town—of what consequence are all these when what one wants is to read the book, to eat the dish, and to see the town.

The comparison is a sophism. Man becomes amorous through the senses, which, touch excepted, all reside in the head. In love a beautiful face is a matter of the greatest moment.

A beautiful female body might well excite a man to carnal indulgence, even though the head were covered, but never to real love. If at the moment of physical delight the covering were taken away, and a face of hideous, revolting ugliness disclosed, one would fly in horror, in spite of all the beauties of the woman's body.

But the contrary does not hold good. If a man has fallen in love with a sweet, enchanting face, and succeeds in lifting the veil of the sanctuary only to find deformities there, still the face wins the day, atones for all, and the sacrifice is consummated.

The face is thus paramount, and hence it has come to be agreed that women's bodies shall be covered and their faces disclosed; while men's clothes are arranged in such a way that women can easily guess at what they cannot see.

This arrangement is undoubtedly to the advantage of women; art can conceal the imperfections of the face, and even make it appear beautiful, but

no cosmetic can dissemble an ugly breast, stomach, or any other part of the human body.

In spite of this, I confess that the *phenomerides* of Sparta were in the right, like all women who, though they possess a fine figure, have a repulsive face; in spite of the beauty of the piece, the title drives spectators away. Still an interesting face is an inseparable accident of love.

Thrice happy are they who, like Armelline, have beauty both in the face and body.

When I got home I was so fortunate as to find Margarita in a deep sleep. I took care not to awake her, and went to bed with as little noise as possible. I was in want of rest, for I no longer enjoyed the vigour of youth, and I slept till twelve.

When I awoke, Margarita told me that a handsome young man had called on me at ten o'clock, and that she had amused him till eleven, not daring to awake me.

"I made him some coffee," said she, "and he was pleased to pronounce it excellent. He would not tell me his name, but he will come again to-morrow. He gave me a piece of money, but I hope you will not mind. I don't know how much it is worth."

I guessed that it was the Florentine. The piece was of two ounces. I only laughed, for not loving Margarita I was not jealous of her. I told her she had done quite right to amuse him

and to accept the piece, which was worth forty-eight pauls.

She kissed me affectionately, and thanks to this incident I heard nothing about my having come home so late.

I felt curious to learn more about this generous Tuscan, so I proceeded to read Leonilda's letter.

HIS name, it appeared, was M——. He was a rich merchant established in London, and had been commended to her husband by a Knight of Malta.

Leonilda said he was generous, good-hearted, and polished, and assured me that I should like him.

After telling me the family news, Leonilda concluded by saying that she was in a fair way to become a mother, and that she would be perfectly happy if she gave birth to a son. She begged me to congratulate the marquis.

Whether from a natural instinct or the effects of prejudice, this news made me shudder. I answered her letter in a few days, enclosing it in a letter to the marquis, in which I told him that the grace of God was never too late, and that I had never been so much pleased by any news as at hearing he was likely to have an heir.

In the following May Leonilda gave birth to a son, whom I saw at Prague, on the occasion of the coronation of Leopold. He called himself Marquis C——, like his father, or perhaps we had better say

like his mother's husband, who attained the age of eighty.

Though the young marquis did not know my name, I got introduced to him, and had the pleasure of meeting him a second time at the theatre. He was accompanied by a priest, who was called his governor, but such an office was a superfluity for him, who was wiser at twenty than most men are at sixty.

I was delighted to see that the young man was the living image of the old marquis. I shed tears of joy as I thought how this likeness must have pleased the old man and his wife, and I admired this chance which seemed to have abetted nature in her deceit.

I wrote to my dear Leonilda, placing the letter in the hands of her son. She did not get it till the Carnival of 1792, when the young marquis returned to Naples; and a short time after I received an answer inviting me to her son's marriage, and begging me to spend the remainder of my days with her.

Who knows? I may eventually do so.

I called on the Princess Santa Croce at three o'clock, and found her in bed, with the cardinal reading to her.

The first question she asked was, why I had left the opera at the end of the second act.

"Princess, I can tell you an interesting history of my six hours of adventures, but you must give

me a free hand, for some of the episodes must be told strictly after nature."

"Is it anything in the style of Sister M—— M——?" asked the cardinal.

"Yes, my lord, something of the kind."

"Princess, will you be deaf?" said his eminence.

"Of course I will," she replied.

I then told my tale almost as I have written it. The slipping oysters and the game of blind man's buff made the princess burst with laughing, in spite of her deafness. She agreed with the cardinal that I had acted with great discretion, and told me that I should be sure to succeed on the next attempt.

"In three or four days," said the cardinal, "you will have the dispensation, and then Emilie can marry whom she likes."

The next morning the Florentine came to see me at nine o'clock, and I found him to answer to the marchioness's description; but I had a bone to pick with him, and I was none the better pleased when he began asking me about the young person in my box at the theatre; he wanted to know whether she were married or engaged, if she had father, mother, or any other relations.

I smiled sardonically, and begged to be excused giving him the required information, as the young lady was masked when he saw her.

He blushed, and begged my pardon.

I thanked him for doing Margarita the honour

of accepting a cup of coffee from her hands, and begged him to take one with me, saying I would breakfast with him next morning. He lived with Roland, opposite St. Charles, where Madame Gabrieli, the famous singer, nicknamed *la Coghetta*, lived.

As soon as the Florentine was gone, I went to St. Paul's in hot haste, for I longed to see what reception I should have from the two vestals I had initiated so well.

When they appeared I noticed a great change. Emilie had become gay, while Armelline looked sad.

I told the former that she should have her dispensation in three days, and her warrant for four hundred crowns in a week.

"At the same time," I added, "you shall have your grant of two hundred crowns."

At this happy tidings she ran to tell the superioress of her good fortune.

As soon as I was alone with Armelline I took her hands and covered them with kisses, begging her to resume her wonted gaiety.

"What shall I do," said she, "without Emilie? What shall I do when you are gone? I am unhappy. I love myself no longer."

She shed tears which pierced me to the heart. I swore I would not leave Rome till I had seen her married with a dowry of a thousand crowns.

"I don't want a thousand crowns, but I hope

you will see me married as you say ; if you do not keep your promise it will kill me."

"I would die rather than deceive you ; but you on your side must forgive my love, which, perhaps, made me go too far the other evening."

"I forgive you everything if you will remain my friend."

"I will ; and now let me kiss your beautiful lips."

After this first kiss, which I took as a pledge of certain victory, she wiped away her tears ; and soon after Emilie reappeared, accompanied by the superioress, who treated me with great cordiality.

"I want you to do as much for Armelline's new friend as you have done for Emilie," said she.

"I will do everything in my power," I replied ; "and in return I hope you will allow me to take these young ladies to the theatre this evening."

"You will find them ready ; how could I refuse you anything ?"

When I was alone with the two friends I apologised for having disposed of them without their consent.

"Our consent !" said Emilie ; "we should be ungrateful indeed if we refused you anything after all you have done for us."

"And you, Armelline, will you withstand my love ?"

"No ; so long as it keeps within due bounds. No more blind man's buff !"

“And it is such a nice game! You really grieve me.”

“Well, invent another game,” said Emilie.

Emilie was becoming ardent, somewhat to my annoyance, for I was afraid Armelline would get jealous. I must not be charged with foppishness on this account. I knew the human heart.

When I left them I went to the Tordinona Theatre and took a box, and then ordered a good supper at the same inn, not forgetting the oysters, though I felt sure I should not require their aid.

I then called on a musician, whom I requested to get me three tickets for a ball, where no one would be likely to know me.

I went home with the idea of dining by myself, but I found a note from the Marchioness d'Août, reproaching me in a friendly manner for not having broken bread with her, and inviting me to dinner. I resolved to accept the invitation, and when I got to the house I found the young Florentine already there.

It was at this dinner that I found out many of his good qualities, and I saw that Donna Leonilda had not said too much in his favour.

Towards the end of the meal the marchioness asked why I had not stayed till the end of the opera.

“Because the young ladies were getting tired.”

“I have found out that they do not belong to the Venetian ambassador's household.”

"You are right, and I hope you will pardon my small fiction."

"It was an impromptu effort to avoid telling me who they are, but they are known."

"Then I congratulate the curious."

"The one I addressed deserves to excite general curiosity; but if I were in your place I should make her use a little powder."

"I have not the authority to do so, and if I had, I would not trouble her for the world."

I was pleased with the Florentine, who listened to all this without saying a word. I got him to talk of England and of his business. He told me that he was going to Florence to take possession of his inheritance, and to get a wife to take back with him to London. As I left, I told him that I could not have the pleasure of calling on him till the day after next, as I was prevented by important business. He told me I must come at dinner-time, and I promised to do so.

Full of love and hope, I went for my two friends, who enjoyed the whole play without any interruption.

When we alighted at the inn I told the coachman to call for me at two, and we then went up to the third floor, where we sat before the fire while the oysters were being opened. They did not interest us as they had done before.

Emilie had an important air; she was about to make a good marriage. Armeline was meek,

smiling, and affectionate, and reminded me of the promise I had given her. I replied by ardent kisses which reassured her, while they warned her that I would fain increase the responsibility I had already contracted towards her. However, she seemed resigned, and I sat down to table in a happy frame of mind.

As Emilie was on the eve of her wedding, she no doubt put down my neglect of her to my respect for the sacrament of matrimony.

When supper was over I got on the sofa with Armelline, and spent three hours which might have been delicious if I had not obstinately endeavoured to obtain the utmost favour. She would not give in; all my supplications and entreaties could not move her; she was sweet, but firm. She lay between my arms, but would not grant what I wanted, though she gave me no harsh or positive refusal.

It seems a puzzle, but in reality it is quite simple.

She left my arms a virgin, sorry, perhaps, that her sense of duty had not allowed her to make me completely happy.

At last nature bade me cease, in spite of my love, and I begged her to forgive me. My instinct told me that this was the only way by which I might obtain her consent another time.

Half merry and half sad, we awoke Emilie who was in a deep sleep, and then we started.

I went home and got into bed, not troubling myself about the storm of abuse with which Margarita greeted me.

The Florentine gave me a delicious dinner, overwhelmed me with protestations of friendship, and offered me his purse if I needed it.

He had seen Armelline, and had been pleased with her. I had answered him sharply when he questioned me about her, and ever since he had never mentioned her name.

I felt grateful to him, and as if I must make him some return.

I asked him to dinner, and had Margarita to dine with us. Not caring for her I should have been glad if he had fallen in love with her; there would have been no difficulty, I believe, on her part, and certainly not on mine; but nothing came of it. She admired a trinket which hung from his watch-chain, and he begged my permission to give it her. I told him to do so by all means, and that should have been enough; but the affair went no farther.

In a week all the arrangements for Emilie's marriage had been made. I gave her her grant, and the same day she was married and went away with her husband to Civita Vecchia. Menicuccio, whose name I have not mentioned for some time, was well pleased with my relations with his sister, foreseeing advantages for himself, and still better pleased with the turn his own affairs were taking,

for three days after Emilie's wedding he married his mistress, and set up in a satisfactory manner.

When Emilie was gone the superioress gave Armelline a new companion. She was only a few years older than my sweetheart, and very pretty; but she did not arouse a strong interest in my breast. When violently in love no other woman has ever had much power over me.

The superioress told me that her name was Scholastica, and that she was well worthy of my esteem, being, as she said, as good as Emilie. She expressed a hope that I would do my best to help Scholastica to marry a man whom she knew and who was in a good position.

This man was the son of a cousin of Scholastica's. She called him her nephew, though he was older than she. The dispensation could easily be got for money, but if it was to be had for nothing I should have to make interest with the Holy Father. I promised I would do my best in the matter.

The carnival was drawing to a close, and Scholastica had never seen an opera or a play. Armelline wanted to see a ball, and I had at last succeeded in finding one where it seemed unlikely that I should be recognized. However, it would have to be carefully managed, as serious consequences might ensue; so I asked the two friends if they would wear men's clothes, to which they agreed very heartily.

I had taken a box at the Aliberti Theatre for the day after the ball, so I told the two girls to obtain the necessary permission from the superioress.

Though Armelline's resistance and the presence of her new friend discouraged me, I procured everything requisite to transform them into two handsome lads.

As Armelline got into the carriage she gave me the bad news that Scholastica knew nothing about our relations, and that we must be careful what we did before her. I had no time to reply, for Scholastica got in, and we drove off to the inn. When we were seated in front of a good fire, I told them that if they liked I would go into the next room in spite of the cold.

So saying, I shewed them their disguises, and Armelline said it would do if I turned my back, appealing to Scholastica to confirm her.

"I will do as you like," said she, "but I am very sorry to be in the way. You are in love with each other, and here am I preventing you from giving one another marks of your affection. Why don't you treat me with confidence? I am not a child, and I am your friend."

These remarks shewed that she had plenty of common sense, and I breathed again.

"You are right, fair Scholastica," I said, "I do love Armelline, but she does not love me, and refuses to make me happy on one pretence or another."

With these words I left the room, and after shutting the door behind me proceeded to make up a fire in the second apartment.

In a quarter of an hour Armelline knocked at the door, and begged me to open it. She was in her breeches, and said they needed my assistance as their shoes were so small they could not get them on.

I was in rather a sulky humour, so she threw her arms round my neck and covered my face with kisses which soon restored me to myself.

While I was explaining the reason of my ill temper, and kissing whatever I could see, Scholastica burst out laughing.

"I was sure that I was in the way," said she; "and if you do not trust me, I warn you that I will not go with you to the opera to-morrow."

"Well, then, embrace him," said Armelline.

"With all my heart."

I did not much care for Armelline's generosity, but I embraced Scholastica as warmly as she deserved. Indeed I would have done so if she had been less pretty, for such kindly consideration deserved a reward. I even kissed her more ardently than I need have done, with the idea of punishing Armelline, but I made a mistake. She was delighted, and kissed her friend affectionately as if in gratitude.

I made them sit down, and tried to pull on their shoes, but I soon found that they were

much too small, and that we must get some more.

I called the waiter who attended to us, and told him to go and fetch a bootmaker with an assortment of shoes.

In the meanwhile I would not be contented with merely kissing Armelline. She neither dared to grant nor to refuse; and as if to relieve herself of any responsibility, made Scholastica submit to all the caresses I lavished on her. The latter seconded my efforts with an ardour that would have pleased me exceedingly if I had been in love with her.

She was exceedingly beautiful, and her features were as perfectly chiselled as Armelline's, but Armelline was possessed of a delicate and subtle charm of feature peculiar to herself.

I liked the amusement well enough, but there was a drop of bitterness in all my enjoyment. I thought it was plain that Armelline did not love me, and that Scholastica only encouraged me to encourage her friend.

At last I came to the conclusion that I should do well to attach myself to the one who seemed likely to give me the completest satisfaction.

As soon as I conceived this idea I felt curious to see whether Armelline would discover any jealousy if I shewed myself really in love with Scholastica, and if the latter pronounced me to be too daring, for hitherto my hands had not crossed the Rubicon of their waistbands.

I was just going to work when the shoemaker arrived, and in a few minutes the girls were well fitted.

They put on their coats, and I saw two handsome young men before me, while their figures hinted their sex sufficiently to make a third person jealous of my good fortune.

I gave orders for supper to be ready at midnight, and we went to the ball. I would have wagered a hundred to one that no one would recognize me there, as the man who got the tickets had assured me that it was a gathering of small tradesmen. But who can trust to fate or chance?

We went into the hall, and the first person I saw was the Marchioness d'Août, with her husband and her inseparable abbé.

No doubt I turned a thousand colours, but it was no good going back, for the marchioness had recognized me, so I composed myself and went up to her. We exchanged the usual compliments of polite society, to which she added some good-natured though ironical remarks on my two young friends. Not being accustomed to company, they remained confused and speechless. But the worst of all was to come. A tall young lady who had just finished a minuet came up to Armelline, dropped a curtsy, and asked her to dance.

In this young lady I recognized the Florentine who had disguised himself as a girl, and looked a very beautiful one.

Armelline thought she would not appear a dupe, and said she recognized him.

"You are making a mistake," said he, calmly. "I have a brother who is very like me, just as you have a sister who is your living portrait. My brother had the pleasure of exchanging a few words with her at the Capronica."

The Florentine's cleverness made the marchioness laugh, and I had to join in her mirth, though I felt little inclination to do so.

Armelline begged to be excused dancing, so the marchioness made her sit between the handsome Florentine and herself. The marquis took possession of Scholastica, and I had to be attentive to the marchioness without seeming to be aware of the existence of Armelline, to whom the Florentine was talking earnestly.

I felt as jealous as a tiger ; and having to conceal my rage under an air of perfect satisfaction, the reader may imagine how well I enjoyed the ball.

However, there was more anxiety in store for me ; for presently I noticed Scholastica leave the marquis, and go apart with a middle-aged man, with whom she conversed in an intimate manner.

The minuets over, the square dances began, and I thought I was dreaming when I saw Armelline and the Florentine taking their places.

I came up to congratulate them, and asked Armelline, gently, if she was sure of the steps.

"This gentleman says I have only to imitate

him, and that I cannot possibly make any mistakes."

I had nothing to say to this, so I went towards Scholastica, feeling very curious to know who was her companion.

As soon as she saw me she introduced me to him, saying timidly that this was the nephew of whom she had spoken, the same that wished to marry her.

I was surprised, but I did not let it appear. I told him that the superioress had spoken of him to me, and that I was thinking over the ways and means of obtaining a dispensation without any costs.

He was an honest-looking man, and thanked me heartily, commending himself to my good offices, as he said he was far from rich.

I left them together, and on turning to view the dance I was astonished to see that Armeline was dancing admirably, and executing all the figures. The Florentine seemed a finished dancer, and they both looked very happy.

I was far from pleased, but I congratulated them both on their performance. The Florentine had disguised himself so admirably that no one would have taken him for a man. It was the Marchioness d'Août who had been his dresser.

As I was too jealous to leave Armeline to her own devices, I refused to dance, preferring to watch her.

I was not at all uneasy about Scholastica, who was with her betrothed. About half-past eleven the Marchioness d'Août, who was delighted with Armelline, and possibly had her *protégé's* happiness in view, asked me, in a tone that amounted to a command, to sup with her in company with my two companions.

"I cannot have the honour," I replied, "and my two companions know the reason."

"That is as much as to say," said the marchioness, "that he will do as you please," turning to Armelline as she spoke.

I addressed myself to Armelline, and observed smilingly that she knew perfectly well that she must be home by half-past twelve at latest.

"True," she replied, "but you can do as you please."

I replied somewhat sadly that I did not feel myself at liberty to break my word, but that she could make me do even that if she chose.

Thereupon the marchioness, her husband, the abbé, and the Florentine, urged her to use her power to make me break my supposed word, and Armelline actually began to presume to do so.

I was bursting with rage; but making up my mind to do anything rather than appear jealous, I said simply that I would gladly consent if her friend would consent also.

"Very well," said she, with a pleased air that cut me to the quick, "go and ask her."

That was enough for me. I went to Scholastica and told her the circumstances in the presence of her lover, begging her to refuse without compromising me.

Her lover said I was perfectly right, but Scholastica required no persuasion, telling me that she had quite made up her mind not to sup with anyone.

She came with me, and I told her to speak to Armelline apart before saying anything to the others.

I led Scholastica before the marchioness, bemoaning my want of success.

Scholastica told Armelline that she wanted to say a few words to her aside, and after a short conversation they came back looking sorry, and Armelline told the marchioness that she found it would be impossible for them to come. The lady did not press us any longer, so we went away.

I told Scholastica's intended to keep what had passed to himself, and asked him to dine with me on the day after Ash Wednesday.

The night was dark, and we walked to the place where I had ordered the carriage to be in waiting.

To me it was as if I had come out of hell, and on the way to the inn I did not speak a word, not even answering the questions which the too-simple Armelline addressed to me in a voice that would have softened a heart of stone. Scholastica avenged

me by reproaching her for having obliged me to appear either rude or jealous, or a breaker of my word.

When we got to the inn Armelline changed my jealous rage into pity; her eyes swam with tears, which Scholastica's home truths had drawn forth.

The supper was ready, so they had no time to change their dress. I was sad enough, but I could not bear to see Armelline sad also. I resolved to do my best to drive away her melancholy, even though I suspected that it arose from love of the Florentine.

The supper was excellent, and Scholastica did honour to it, while Armelline, contrary to her wont, scarcely touched a thing. Scholastica was charming. She embraced her friend, and told her to be merry with her, as I had become the friend of her betrothed, and she was sure I would do as much for her as I had done for Emilie. She blessed the ball and the chance which had brought him there. In short, she did her best to shew Armelline that with my love she had no reason to be sad.

Armelline dared not disclose the true cause of her sadness. The fact was, that she wanted to get married, and the handsome Florentine was the man to her liking.

Our supper came to an end, and still Armelline was gloomy. She only drank one glass of punch, and as she had eaten so little I would not try and make her drink more for fear lest it should do her

harm. Scholastica, on the other hand, took such a fancy to this agreeable fluid, which she tasted for the first time, that she drank deeply, and was amazed to find it mounting to her head instead of descending to her stomach. In this pleasant state, she felt it was her duty to reconcile Armelline and myself, and to assure us that we might be as tender as we liked without minding her presence.

Getting up from table and standing with some difficulty, she carried her friend to the sofa, and caressed her in such a way that Armelline could not help laughing, despite her sadness. Then she called me and placed her in my arms. I caressed her, and Armelline, though she did not repulse me, did not respond as Scholastica had hoped. I was not disappointed, I did not think it likely she would grant now what she had refused to grant when I had held her in my arms for those hours whilst Emilie was fast asleep.

However, Scholastica began to reproach me with my coldness, though I deserved no blame at all on this score.

I told them to take off their men's clothes, and to dress themselves as women.

I helped Scholastica to take off her coat and waistcoat, and then aided Armelline in a similar manner.

When I brought them their chemises, Armelline told me to go and stand by the fire, and I did so.

Before long a noise of kissing made me turn

round, and I saw Scholastica, on whom the punch had taken effect, devouring Armelline's breast with kisses. At last this treatment had the desired result; Armelline became gay, and gave as good as she got.

At this sight the blood boiled in my veins, and running to them I found Scholastica was not ill pleased that I should do justice to her beautiful spheres, while for the nonce I transformed her into a nurse.

Armelline was ashamed to appear less generous than her friend, and Scholastica was triumphant when she saw the peculiar use to which (for the first time) I put Armelline's hands.

Armelline called to her friend to help, and she was not backward; but in spite of her twenty years her astonishment at the catastrophe was great.

After it was over I put on their chemises and took off their breeches with all the decency imaginable, and after spending a few minutes in the next room they came and sat down on my knee of their own accord.

Scholastica, instead of being annoyed at my giving the preference to the hidden charms of Armelline, seemed delighted, watching what I did, and how Armelline took it, with the closest attention. She no doubt longed to see me perform the *magnum opus*, but the gentle Armelline would not allow me to go so far.

After I had finished with Armelline I recollected

I had duties towards Scholastica, and I proceeded to inspect her charms.

It was difficult to decide which of the two deserved to carry off the apple. Scholastica, perhaps, was strictly speaking the more beautiful of the two, but I loved Armelline, and love casts a glamour over the beloved object. Scholastica appeared to me to be as pure a virgin as Armelline, and I saw that I might do what I liked with her. But I would not abuse my liberty, not caring to confess how powerful an ally the punch had been.

However, I did all in my power to give her pleasure without giving her the greatest pleasure of all. Scholastica was gluttoned with voluptuous enjoyment, and was certain that I had only eluded her desires from motives of delicacy.

I took them back to the convent, assuring them that I would take them to the opera on the following evening. I went to bed, doubtful whether I had gained a victory or sustained a defeat; and it was not till I awoke that I was in a position to give a decided opinion.

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[There is here a considerable hiatus in the author's manuscript.]

CHAPTER VII

MADAME DENIS—MEDINI—ZANOVITCH—ZEN—I AM
OBLIGED TO LEAVE—I ARRIVE AT BOLOGNA—
GENERAL ALBERGATI

WITHOUT speaking at any length I asked the young grand duke to give me an asylum in his dominions for as long as I might care to stay. I anticipated any questions he might have asked by telling him the reasons which had made me an exile from my native land.

“As to my necessities,” I added, “I shall ask for help of no one; I have sufficient funds to ensure my independence. I think of devoting the whole of my time to study.”

“So long as your conduct is good,” he replied, “the laws guarantee your freedom; but I am glad you have applied to me. Whom do you know in Florence?”

“Ten years ago, my lord, I had some distinguished acquaintances here; but now I propose to live in retirement, and do not intend renewing any old friendships.”

Such was my conversation with the young sovereign, and after his assurances I concluded that no one would molest me.

My adventures in Tuscany ten years before were in all probability forgotten, or almost forgotten, as the new Government had nothing in common with the old.

After my interview with the grand duke I went to a bookseller's shop and ordered some books. A gentleman in the shop, hearing me making enquiries about Greek works, accosted me, and we got on well together. I told him I was working at a translation of the "Iliad," and in return he informed me that he was making a collection of Greek epigrams, which he wished to publish in Greek and Italian. I told him I should like to see this work, whereupon he asked me where I lived. I told him, learnt his name and address, and called on him the next day. He returned the visit, and we became fast friends, though we never either walked or ate together.

This worthy Florentine was named (or is named, if he be still alive) Everard de Medici.

I was very comfortable with Allegranti; I had the quiet so necessary to literary labours, but nevertheless I made up my mind to change my lodging. Magdalena, my landlord's niece, was so clever and charming, though but a child, that she continually disturbed my studies. She came into my room, wished me good day, asked me what kind

of a night I had spent, if I wanted anything, and the sight of her grace and beauty and the sound of her voice so ravished me, that I determined to seek safety in flight.

A few years later Magdalena became a famous musician.

After leaving Allegranti I took rooms in a tradesman's house; his wife was ugly, and he had no pretty daughters or seductive nieces. There I lived for three weeks like Lafontaine's rat, very discreetly.

About the same time, Count Stratico arrived at Florence with his pupil, the Chevalier Morosini, who was then eighteen. I could not avoid calling on Stratico. He had broken his leg some time before, and was still unable to go out with his pupil, who had all the vices and none of the virtues of youth. Consequently, Stratico was always afraid of something happening to him, and he begged me to make myself his companion, and even to share his pleasures, so that he might not go into bad company and dangerous houses alone and undefended.

Thus my days of calm study vanished away. I had to partake in the debauchery of a young rake, and all out of pure sensibility.

The Chevalier Morosini was a thorough-paced profligate. He hated literature, good society, and the company of sensible people. His daily pleasures were furious riding, hard drinking, and hard dis-

sipation with prostitutes, whom he sometimes almost killed.

This young nobleman paid a man for the sole service of getting him a woman or a girl every day.

During the two months which he passed in Florence I saved his life a score of times. I got very tired of my duty, but I felt bound to persevere.

He was liberal to the verge of recklessness, and would never allow me to pay for anything. Even here, however, disputes often arose between us; as he paid, he wanted me to eat, drink, and dissipate in the same measure as himself. However, I had my own way on most occasions, only giving in when it suited me to do so.

We went to see the opera at Lucca, and brought two of the dancers home to supper. As the chevalier was drunk as usual, he treated the woman he had chosen—a superb creature—very indifferently. The other was pretty enough, but I had done nothing serious with her, so I proceeded to avenge the beauty. She took me for the chevalier's father, and advised me to give him a better education.

After the chevalier was gone I betook myself to my studies again, but I supped every night with Madame Denis, who had formerly been a dancer in the King of Prussia's service, and had retired to Florence.

She was about my age, and therefore not young, but still she had sufficient remains of her beauty to

inspire a tender passion; she did not look more than thirty. She was as fresh as a young girl, had excellent manners, and was extremely intelligent. Besides all these advantages, she had a comfortable apartment on the first floor of one of the largest cafés in Florence. In front of her room was a balcony where it was delicious to sit and enjoy the cool of the evening.

The reader may remember how I had become her friend at Berlin in 1764, and when we met again at Florence our old flames were rekindled.

The chief boarder in the house where she lived was Madame Brigonzi, whom I had met at Memel. This lady, who pretended that she had been my mistress twenty-five years before, often came into Madame Denis's rooms with an old lover of hers named Marquis Capponi.

He was an agreeable and well-educated man; and noticing that he seemed to enjoy my conversation I called on him, and he called on me, leaving his card as I was not at home.

I returned the visit, and he introduced me to his family and invited me to dinner. For the first time since I had come to Florence I dressed myself with elegance and wore my jewels.

At the Marquis Capponi's I made the acquaintance of Corilla's lover, the Marquis Gennori, who took me to a house where I met my fate. I fell in love with Madame —, a young widow, who had been spending a few months in Paris.

This visit had added to her other attractions the charm of a good manner, which always counts for so much.

This unhappy love made the three months longer which I spent in Florence painful to me.

It was at the beginning of October, and about that time Count Medini arrived at Florence without a penny in his pocket, and without being able to pay his *vetturino*, who had arrested him.

The wretched man, who seemed to follow me wherever I went, had taken up his abode in the house of a poor Irishman.

I do not know how Medini found out that I was at Florence, but he wrote me a letter begging me to come and deliver him from the police, who besieged his room and talked of taking him to prison. He said he only wanted me to go bail for him, and protested that I should not run any risk, as he was sure of being able to pay in a few days.

My readers will be aware that I had good reason for not liking Medini, but in spite of our quarrel I could not despise his entreaty. I even felt inclined to become his surety, if he could prove his capability of paying the sum for which he had been arrested. I imagined that the sum must be a small one, and could not understand why the landlord did not answer for him. My surprise ceased, however, when I entered his room.

As soon as I appeared he ran to embrace me, begging me to forget the past, and to extract him

from the painful position in which he found himself.

I cast a rapid glance over the room, and saw three trunks almost empty, their contents being scattered about the floor. There was his mistress, whom I knew, and who had her reasons for not liking me; her young sister, who wept; and her mother, who swore, and called Medini a rogue, saying that she would complain of him to the magistrate, and that she was not going to allow her dresses and her daughter's dresses to be seized for his debts.

I asked the landlord why he did not go bail, as he had these persons and their effects as security.

"The whole lot," he answered, "won't pay the *vetturino*, and the sooner they are out of my house the better I shall be pleased."

I was astonished, and could not understand how the bill could amount to more than the value of all the clothes I saw on the floor, so I asked the *vetturino* to tell me the extent of the debt.

He gave me a paper with Medini's signature; the amount was two hundred and forty crowns.

"How in the world," I exclaimed, "could he contract this enormous debt?"

I wondered no longer when the *vetturino* told me that he had served them for the last six weeks, having conducted the count and the three women from Rome to Leghorn, and from Leghorn to Pisa, and from Pisa to Florence, paying for their board all the way.

"The *vetturino* will never take me as bail for such an amount," I said to Medini, "and even if he would I should never be so foolish as to contract such a debt."

"Let me have a word with you in the next room," said he; "I will put the matter clearly before you."

"Certainly."

Two of the police would have prevented his going into the next room, on the plea that he might escape through the window, but I said I would be answerable for him.

Just then the poor *vetturino* came in and kissed my hand, saying that if I would go bail for the count he would let me have three months wherein to find the money.

As it happened it was the same man who had taken me to Rome with the Englishwoman who had been seduced by the actor l'Etoile. I told him to wait a moment.

Medini who was a great talker and a dreadful liar thought to persuade me by shewing me a number of open letters, commending him in pompous terms to the best houses in Florence. I read the letters, but I found no mention of money in them, and I told him as much.

"I know," said he, "but there is play going on in these houses, and I am sure of gaining immense sums."

“ You may be aware that I have no confidence in your good luck.”

“ Then I have another resource.”

“ What is that ? ”

He shewed me a bundle of manuscript, which I found to be an excellent translation of Voltaire’s “ *Henriade* ” into Italian verse. Tasso himself could not have done it better. He said he hoped to finish the poem at Florence, and to present it to the grand duke, who would be sure to make him a magnificent present, and to constitute him his favourite.

I would not undeceive him, but I laughed to myself, knowing that the grand duke only made a pretence of loving literature. A certain Abbé Fontaine, a clever man, amused him with a little natural history, the only science in which he took any interest. He preferred the worst prose to the best verse, not having sufficient intellect to enjoy the subtle charms of poetry. In reality he had only two passions—women and money.

After spending two wearisome hours with Medin, whose wit was great and his judgment small, after heartily repenting of having yielded to my curiosity and having paid him a visit, I said shortly that I could do nothing for him. Despair drives men crazy ; as I was making for the door, he seized me by the collar.

He did not reflect in his dire extremity that he had no arms, that I was stronger than he, that I had twice drawn his blood, and that the police, the

landlord, the *vetturino*, and the servants, were in the next room. I was not coward enough to call for help ; I caught hold of his neck with both hands and squeezed him till he was nearly choked. He had to let go at last, and then I took hold of his collar and asked him if he had gone mad.

I sent him against the wall, and opened the door and the police came in.

I told the *vetturino* that I would on no account be Medini's surety, or be answerable for him in any way.

Just as I was going out, he leapt forward, crying that I must not abandon him.

I had opened the door, and the police, fearing he would escape, ran forward to get hold of him. Then began an interesting battle. Medini, who had no arms, and was only in his dressing-gown, proceeded to distribute kicks, cuffs, and blows amongst the four cowards, who had their swords at their sides, whilst I held the door to prevent the Irishman going out and calling for assistance.

Medini, whose nose was bleeding and his dress all torn, persisted in fighting till the four policemen let him alone. I liked his courage, and pitied him.

There was a moment's silence, and I asked his two liveried servants who were standing by me why they had not helped their master. One said he owed him six months' wages, and the other said he wanted to arrest him on his own account.

As Medini was endeavouring to stanch the blood in a basin of water, the *vetturino* told him that as I refused to be his surety he must go to prison.

I was moved by the scene that I had witnessed, and said to the *vetturino*,—

“Give him a fortnight’s respite, and if he escapes before the expiration of that term I will pay you.”

He thought it over for a few moments, and then said,—

“Very good, sir, but I am not going to pay any legal expenses.”

I enquired how much the costs amounted to, and paid them, laughing at the policemen’s claim of damages for blows they had received.

Then the two rascally servants said that if I would not be surety in the same manner on their account, they would have Medini arrested. However, Medini called out to me to pay no attention to them whatever.

When I had given the *vetturino* his acknowledgment and paid the four or five crowns charged by the police, Medini told me that he had more to say to me; but I turned my back on him, and went home to dinner.

Two hours later one of his servants came to me and promised if I would give him six sequins to warn me if his master made any preparations for flight.

I told him drily that his zeal was useless to me, as I was quite sure that the count would pay all his debts within the term; and the next morning I wrote to Medini informing him of the step his servant had taken. He replied with a long letter full of thanks, in which he exerted all his eloquence to persuade me to repair his fortunes. I did not answer.

However, his good genius, who still protected him, brought a person to Florence who drew him out of the difficulty. This person was Premislas Zanovitch, who afterwards became as famous as his brother who cheated the Amsterdam merchants, and adopted the style of Prince Scanderbeck. I shall speak of him later on. Both these finished cheats came to a bad end.

Premislas Zanovitch was then at the happy age of twenty-five; he was the son of a gentleman of Budua, a town on the borders of Albania and Dalmatia, formerly subject to the Venetian Republic and now to the Grand Turk. In classic times it was known as Epirus.

Premislas was a young man of great intelligence, and after having studied at Venice, and contracted a Venetian taste for pleasures and enjoyments of all sorts, he could not make up his mind to return to Budua, where his only associates would be dull Sclavs—uneducated, unintellectual, coarse, and brutish. Consequently, when Premislas and his still more talented brother Stephen were

ordered by the Council of Ten to enjoy the vast sums they had gained at play in their own country, they resolved to become adventurers. One took the north and the other the south of Europe, and both cheated and duped whenever the opportunity for doing so presented itself.

I had seen Premislas when he was a child, and had already heard reports of a notable achievement of his. At Naples he had cheated the Chevalier de Morosini by persuading him to become his surety to the extent of six thousand ducats, and now he arrived in Florence in a handsome carriage, bringing his mistress with him, and having two tall lackeys and a valet in his service.

He took good apartments, hired a carriage, rented a box at the opera, had a skilled cook, and gave his mistress a lady-in-waiting. He then shewed himself at the best club, richly dressed, and covered with jewellery. He introduced himself under the name of Count Premislas Zanovitch.

There is a club in Florence devoted to the use of the nobility. Any stranger can go there without being introduced, but so much the worse for him if his appearance fails to indicate his right to be present. The Florentines are ice towards him, leave him alone, and behave in such a manner that the visit is seldom repeated. The club is at once decent and licentious, the papers are to be read there, games of all kinds are played, food and

drink may be had, and even love is available, for ladies frequent the club.

Zanovitch did not wait to be spoken to, but made himself agreeable to everyone, and congratulated himself on mixing in such distinguished company, talked about Naples which he had just left, brought in his own name with great adroitness, played high, lost merrily, paid after pretending to forget all about his debts, and in short pleased everyone. I heard all this the next day from the Marquis Capponi, who said that someone had asked him if he knew me, whereat he answered that when I left Venice he was at college, but that he had often heard his father speak of me in very high terms. He knew both the Chevalier Morosini and Count Medini, and had a good deal to say in praise of the latter. The marquis asked me if I knew him, and I replied in the affirmative, without feeling it my duty to disclose certain circumstances which might not have been advantageous to him; and as Madame Denis seemed curious to make his acquaintance the Chevalier Puzzi promised to bring him to see her, which he did in the course of a few days.

I happened to be with Madame Denis when Puzzi presented Zanovitch, and I saw before me a fine-looking young man, who seemed by his confident manner to be sure of success in all his undertakings. He was not exactly handsome, but he had a perfect manner and an air of gaiety which

seemed infectious, with a thorough knowledge of the laws of good society. He was by no means an egotist, and seemed never at a loss for something to talk about. I led the conversation to the subject of his country, and he gave me an amusing description of it, talking of his fief—part of which was within the domains of the sultan—as a place where gaiety was unknown, and where the most determined misanthrope would die of melancholy.

As soon as he heard my name he began speaking to me in a tone of the most delicate flattery. I saw the makings of a great adventurer in him, but I thought his luxury would prove the weak point in his cuirass. I thought him something like what I had been fifteen years ago, but as it seemed unlikely that he had my resources I could not help pitying him.

Zanovitch paid me a visit, and told me that Medini's position had excited his pity, and that he had therefore paid his debts.

I applauded his generosity, but I formed the conclusion that they had laid some plot between them, and that I should soon hear of the results of this new alliance.

I returned Zanovitch's call the next day. He was at table with his mistress, whom I should not have recognized if she had not pronounced my name directly she saw me.

As she had addressed me as Don Giacomo, I called her Donna Ippolita, but in a voice which

indicated that I was not certain of her identity. She told me I was quite right.

I had supped with her at Naples in company with Lord Baltimore, and she was very pretty then.

Zanovitch asked me to dine with him the following day, and I should have thanked him and begged to be excused if Donna Ippolita had not pressed me to come. She assured me that I should find good company there, and that the cook would excel himself.

I felt rather curious to see the company, and with the idea of shewing Zanovitch that I was not likely to become a charge on his purse, I dressed myself magnificently once more.

As I had expected, I found Medini and his mistress there, with two foreign ladies and their attendant cavaliers, and a fine-looking and well-dressed Venetian, between thirty-five and forty, whom I would not have recognized if Zanovitch had not told me his name, Alois Zen.

Zen was a patrician name, and I felt obliged to ask what titles I ought to give him.

"Such titles as one old friend gives to another, though it is very possible you do not recollect me, as I was only ten years old when we saw each other last."

Zen then told me he was the son of the captain I had known when I was under arrest at St. Andrews.

“That’s twenty-eight years ago; but I remember you, though you had not had the small-pox in those days.”

I saw that he was annoyed by this remark, but it was his fault, as he had no business to say where he had known me, or who his father was.

He was the son of a noble Venetian—a good-for-nothing in every sense of the word.

When I met him at Florence he had just come from Madrid, where he had made a lot of money by holding a bank at faro in the house of the Venetian ambassador, Marco Zen.

I was glad to meet him, but I found out before the dinner was over that he was completely devoid of education and the manners of a gentleman; but he was well content with the one talent he possessed, namely, that of correcting the freaks of fortune at games of chance. I did not wait to see the onslaught of the cheats on the dupes, but took my leave while the table was being made ready.

Such was my life during the seven months which I spent at Florence.

After this dinner I never saw Zen, or Medini, or Zanovitch, except by chance in the public places.

Here I must recount some incidents which took place towards the middle of December.

Lord Lincoln, a young man of eighteen, fell in love with a Venetian dancer named Lamberti, who was a universal favourite. On every night when the opera was given the young Englishman might

be seen going to her *camerino*, and everyone wondered why he did not visit her at her own house, where he would be certain of a good welcome, for he was English, and therefore rich, young, and handsome. I believe he was the only son of the Duke of Newcastle.

Zanovitch marked him down, and in a short time had become an intimate friend of the fair Lamberti. He then made up to Lord Lincoln, and took him to the lady's house, as a polite man takes a friend to see his mistress.

Madame Lamberti, who was in collusion with the rascal, was not niggardly of her favours with the young Englishman. She received him every night to supper with Zanovitch and Zen, who had been presented by the Slav, either because of his capital, or because Zanovitch was not so accomplished a cheat.

For the first few nights they took care to let the young nobleman win. As they played after supper, and Lord Lincoln followed the noble English custom of drinking till he did not know his right hand from his left, he was quite astonished on waking the next morning to find that luck had been as kind to him as love. The trap was baited, the young lord nibbled, and, as may be expected, was finally caught.

Zen won twelve thousand pounds of him, and Zanovitch lent him the money by instalments of three and four hundred louis at a time, as the

Englishman had promised his tutor not to play, on his word of honour.

Zanovitch won from Zen what Zen won from the lord, and so the game was kept up till the young pigeon had lost the enormous sum of twelve thousand guineas.

Lord Lincoln promised to pay three thousand guineas the next day, and signed three bills of exchange for three thousand guineas each, payable in six months, and drawn on his London banker.

I heard all about this from Lord Lincoln himself when we met at Bologna three months later.

The next morning the little gaming party was the talk of Florence. Sasso Sassi, the banker, had already paid Zanovitch six thousand sequins by my lord's orders.

Medini came to see me, furious at not having been asked to join the party, while I congratulated myself on my absence. My surprise may be imagined, when, a few days after, a person came up to my room, and ordered me to leave Florence in three days and Tuscany in a week.

I was petrified, and called to my landlord to witness the unrighteous order I had received.

It was December 28th. On the same date, three years before, I had received orders to leave Barcelona in three days.

I dressed hastily and went to the magistrate to enquire the reason for my exile, and on entering the

room I found it was the same man who had ordered me to leave Florence eleven years before.

I asked him to give me his reasons, and he replied coldly that such was the will of his highness.

"But as his highness must have his reasons, it seems to me that I am within my rights in enquiring what they are."

"If you think so you had better betake yourself to the prince; I know nothing about it. He left yesterday for Pisa, where he will stay three days; you can go there."

"Will he pay for my journey?"

"I should doubt it, but you can see for yourself."

"I shall not go to Pisa, but I will write to his highness if you will promise to send on the letter."

"I will do so immediately, for it is my duty."

"Very good; you shall have the letter before noon to-morrow, and before day-break I shall be in the States of the Church."

"There's no need for you to hurry yourself."

"There is a very great hurry. I cannot breathe the air of a country where liberty is unknown and the sovereign breaks his word: that is what I am going to write to your master."

As I was going out I met Medini, who had come on the same business as myself.

I laughed, and informed him of the results of my interview, and how I had been told to go to Pisa.

"What! have you been expelled, too?"

“ Yes.”

“ What have you done ? ”

“ Nothing.”

“ Nor I. Let us go to Pisa.”

“ You can go if you like, but I shall leave Florence to-night.”

When I got home I told my landlord to get me a carriage and to order four post-horses for nightfall, and I then wrote the following letter to the grand duke :

“ My Lord,—The thunder which Jove has placed in your hands is only for the guilty ; in launching it at me you have done wrong. Seven months ago you promised that I should remain unmolested so long as I obeyed the laws. I have done so scrupulously, and your lordship has therefore broken your word. I am merely writing to you to let you know that I forgive you, and that I shall never give utterance to a word of complaint. Indeed I would willingly forget the injury you have done me, if it were not necessary that I should remember never to set foot in your realms again. The magistrate tells me that I can go and see you at Pisa, but I fear such a step would seem a hardy one to a prince, who should hear what a man has to say before he condemns him, and not afterwards.

“ I am, etc.”

When I had finished the letter I sent it to the magistrate, and then I began my packing.

I was sitting down to dinner when Medini came

in cursing Zen and Zanolitch, whom he accused of being the authors of his misfortune, and of refusing to give him a hundred sequins, without which he could not possibly go.

"We are all going to Pisa," said he, "and cannot imagine why you do not come, too."

"Very good," I said, laughingly, "but please to leave me now as I have to do my packing."

As I expected, he wanted me to lend him some money, but on my giving him a direct refusal he went away.

After dinner I took leave of M. Medici and Madame Denis, the latter of whom had heard the story already. She cursed the grand duke, saying she could not imagine how he could confound the innocent with the guilty. She informed me that Madame Lamberti had received orders to quit, as also a hunchbacked Venetian priest, who used to go and see the dancer but had never supped with her. In fact, there was a clean sweep of all the Venetians in Florence.

As I was returning home I met Lord Lincoln's governor, whom I had known at Lausanne eleven years before. I told him of what had happened to me through his hopeful pupil getting himself fleeced. He laughed, and told me that the grand duke had advised Lord Lincoln not to pay the money he had lost, to which the young man replied that if he were not to pay he should be dishonoured, since the money he had lost had been lent to him.

In leaving Florence I was cured of an unhappy love which would doubtless have had fatal consequences if I had stayed on. I have spared my readers the painful story because I cannot recall it to my mind even now without being cut to the heart. The widow whom I loved, and to whom I was so weak as to disclose my feelings, only attached me to her triumphal car to humiliate me, for she disdained my love and myself. I persisted in my courtship, and nothing but my enforced absence would have cured me.

As yet I had not learnt the truth of the maxim that old age, especially when devoid of fortune, is not likely to prove attractive to youth.

I left Florence poorer by a hundred sequins than when I came there. I had lived with the most careful economy throughout the whole of my stay.

I stopped at the first stage within the Pope's dominions, and by the last day but one of the year I was settled at Bologna, at "St. Mark's Hotel."

My first visit was paid to Count Marulli, the Florentine *chargé d'affaires*. I begged him to write and tell his master, that, out of gratitude for my banishment, I should never cease to sing his praises.

As the count had received a letter containing an account of the whole affair, he could not quite believe that I meant what I said.

"You may think what you like," I observed,

"but if you knew all you would see that his highness has done me a very great service, though quite unintentionally."

He promised to let his master know how I spoke of him.

On January 1st, 1772, I presented myself to Cardinal Braneaforte, the Pope's legate. whom I had known twenty years before at Paris, when he had been sent by Benedict XVI. with the holy swaddling clothes for the newly-born Duke of Burgundy. We had met at the Lodge of Freemasons, for the members of the sacred college were by no means afraid of their own anathemas. We had also some very pleasant little suppers with pretty sinners in company with Don Francesco Sensale and Count Ranucci. In short, the cardinal was a man of wit, and what is called a *bon vivant*.

"Oh, here you are!" cried he, when he saw me; "I was expecting you."

"How could you, my lord? Why should I have come to Bologna rather than to any other place?"

"For two reasons. In the first place because Bologna is better than many other places, and besides I flatter myself you thought of me. But you needn't say anything here about the life we led together when we were young men."

"It has always been a pleasant recollection to me."

“ No doubt. Count Marulli told me yesterday that you spoke very highly of the grand duke, and you are quite right. You can talk to me in confidence; the walls of this room have no ears. How much did you get of the twelve thousand guineas?”

I told him the whole story, and shewed him a copy of the letter which I had written to the grand duke. He laughed, and said he was sorry I had been punished for nothing.

When he heard I thought of staying some months at Bologna he told me that I might reckon on perfect freedom, and that as soon as the matter ceased to become common talk he would give me open proof of his friendship.

After seeing the cardinal I resolved to continue at Bologna the kind of life that I had been leading at Florence. Bologna is the freest town in all Italy; commodities are cheap and good, and all the pleasures of life may be had there at a low price. The town is a fine one, and the streets are lined with arcades—a great comfort in so hot a place.

As to society, I did not trouble myself about it. I knew the Bolognese; the nobles are proud, rude, and violent; the lowest orders, known as the *birichini*, are worse than the *lazzaroni* of Naples, while the tradesmen and the middle classes are generally speaking worthy and respectable people. At Bologna, as at Naples, the two extremes of society are corrupt, while the middle classes are

respectable, and the depositary of virtue, talents, and learning.

However, my intention was to leave society alone, to pass my time in study, and to make the acquaintance of a few men of letters, who are easily accessible everywhere.

At Florence ignorance is the rule and learning the exception, while at Bologna the tincture of letters is almost universal. The university has thrice the usual number of professors; but they are all ill paid, and have to get their living out of the students, who are numerous. Printing is cheaper at Bologna than anywhere else, and though the Inquisition is established there the press is almost entirely free.

All the exiles from Florence reached Bologna four or five days after myself. Madame Lamberti only passed through on her way to Venice. Zanolitch and Zen stayed five or six days, but they were no longer in partnership, having quarrelled over the sharing of the booty.

Zanolitch had refused to make one of Lord Lincoln's bills of exchange payable to Zen, because he did not wish to make himself liable in case the Englishman refused to pay. He wanted to go to England, and told Zen he was at liberty to do the same.

They went to Milan without having patched up their quarrel, but the Milanese Government ordered them to leave Lombardy, and I never

heard what arrangements they finally came to. Later on I was informed that the Englishman's bills had all been settled to the uttermost farthing.

Medini, penniless as usual, had taken up his abode in the hotel where I was staying, bringing with him his mistress, her sister, and her mother, but with only one servant. He informed me that the grand duke had refused to listen to any of them at Pisa, where he had received a second order to leave Tuscany, and so had been obliged to sell everything. Of course he wanted me to help him, but I turned a deaf ear to his entreaties.

I have never seen this adventurer without his being in a desperate state of impecuniosity, but he would never learn to abate his luxurious habits, and always managed to find some way or other out of his difficulties. He was lucky enough to fall in with a Franciscan monk named De Dominis at Bologna, the said monk being on his way to Rome to solicit a brief of laicisation from the Pope. He fell in love with Medini's mistress, who naturally made him pay dearly for her charms.

Medini left at the end of three weeks. He went to Germany, where he printed his version of the "*Henriade*," having discovered a Mæcenas in the person of the Elector Palatin. After that he wandered about Europe for twelve years, and died in a London prison in 1788.

I had always warned him to give England a wide berth, as I felt certain that if he once went

there he would not escape English bolts and bars, and that if he got on the wrong side of the prison doors he would never come out alive. He despised my advice, and if he did so with the idea of proving me a liar, he made a mistake, for he proved me to be a prophet.

Medini had the advantage of high birth, a good education, and intelligence; but as he was a poor man with luxurious tastes he either corrected fortune at play or went into debt, and was consequently obliged to be always on the wing to avoid imprisonment.

He lived in this way for seventy years, and he might possibly be alive now if he had followed my advice.

Eight years ago Count Torino told me that he had seen Medini in a London prison, and that the silly fellow confessed he had only come to London with the hope of proving me to be a liar.

Medini's fate shall never prevent me from giving good advice to a poor wretch on the brink of the precipice. Twenty years ago I told Cagliostro (who called himself Count Pellegrini in those days) not to set his foot in Rome, and if he had followed this counsel he would not have died miserably in a Roman prison.

Thirty years ago a wise man advised me to beware of visiting Spain. I went, but, as the reader knows, I had no reason to congratulate myself on my visit.

A week after my arrival at Bologna, happening to be in the shop of Tartuffi, the bookseller, I made the acquaintance of a cross-eyed priest, who struck me, after a quarter of an hour's talk, as a man of learning and talent. He presented me with two works which had recently been issued by two of the young professors at the university. He told me that I should find them amusing reading, and he was right.

The first treatise contended that women's faults should be forgiven them, since they were really the work of the matrix, which influenced them in spite of themselves. The second treatise was a criticism of the first. The author allowed that the uterus was an animal, but he denied the alleged influence, as no anatomist had succeeded in discovering any communication between it and the brain.

I determined to write a reply to the two pamphlets, and I did so in the course of three days. When my reply was finished I sent it to M. Dandolo, instructing him to have five hundred copies printed. When they arrived I gave a bookseller the agency, and in a fortnight I had made a hundred sequins.

The first pamphlet was called "Lutero Pensante," the second was in French and bore the title "La Force Vitale," while I called my reply "Lana Caprina." I treated the matter in an easy vein, not without some hints of deep learning, and made fun of the lucubrations of the two physicians. My preface

was in French, but full of Parisian idioms which rendered it unintelligible to all who had not visited the gay capital, and this circumstance gained me a good many friends amongst the younger generation.

The squinting priest, whose name was Zacchierdì, introduced me to the Abbé Severini, who became my intimate friend in the course of ten or twelve days.

This abbé made me leave the inn, and got me two pleasant rooms in the house of a retired artiste, the widow of the tenor Carlanì. He also made arrangements with a pastrycook to send me my dinner and supper. All this, plus a servant, only cost me ten sequins a month.

Severini was the agreeable cause of my losing temporarily my taste for study. I put by my "Iliad," feeling sure that I should be able to finish it again.

Severini introduced me to his family, and before long I became very intimate with him. I also became the favourite of his sister, a lady rather plain than pretty, thirty years old, but full of intelligence.

In the course of Lent the abbé introduced me to all the best dancers and operatic singers in Bologna, which is the nursery of the heroines of the stage. They may be had cheaply enough on their native soil.

Every week the good abbé introduced me to a

fresh one, and like a true friend he watched carefully over my finances. He was a poor man himself, and could not afford to contribute anything towards the expenses of our little parties; but as they would have cost me double without his help, the arrangement was a convenient one for both of us.

About this time there was a good deal of talk about a Bolognese nobleman, Marquis Albergati Capacelli. He had made a present of his private theatre to the public, and was himself an excellent actor. He had made himself notorious by obtaining a divorce from his wife, whom he did not like, so as to enable him to marry a dancer, by whom he had two children. The amusing point in this divorce was that he obtained it on the plea that he was impotent, and sustained his plea by submitting to an examination, which was conducted as follows:

Four skilled and impartial judges had the marquis stripped before them, and did all in their power to produce an erection; but somehow or other he succeeded in maintaining his composure, and the marriage was pronounced null and void on the ground of relative impotence, for it was well known that he had had children by another woman.

If reason and not prejudice had been consulted, the procedure would have been very different; for if relative impotence was considered a sufficient

ground for divorce, of what use was the examination?

The marquis should have sworn that he could do nothing with his wife, and if the lady had traversed this statement the marquis might have challenged her to put him into the required condition.

But the destruction of old customs and old prejudices is often the work of long ages.

I felt curious to know this character, and wrote to M. Dandolo to get me a letter of introduction to the marquis.

In a week my good old friend sent me the desired letter. It was written by another Venetian, M. de Zaguri, an intimate friend of the marquis.

The letter was not sealed, so I read it. I was delighted; no one could have commended a person unknown to himself but the friend of a friend in a more delicate manner.

I thought myself bound to write a letter of thanks to M. Zaguri. I said that I desired to obtain my pardon more than ever after reading his letter, which made me long to go to Venice, and make the acquaintance of such a worthy nobleman.

I did not expect an answer, but I got one. M. Zaguri said that my desire was such a flattering one to himself, that he meant to do his best to obtain my recall.

The reader will see that he was successful, but not till after two years of continuous effort.

Albergati was away from Bologna at the time, but when he returned Severini let me know, and I called at the palace. The porter told me that his excellence (all the nobles are excellences at Bologna) had gone to his country house, where he meant to pass the whole of the spring.

In two or three days I drove out to his villa. I arrived at a charming mansion, and finding no one at the door I went upstairs, and entered a large room where a gentleman and an exceedingly pretty woman were just sitting down to dinner. The dishes had been brought in, and there were only two places laid.

I made a polite bow, and asked the gentleman if I had the honour of addressing the Marquis Albergati. He replied in the affirmative, whereupon I gave him my letter of introduction. He took it, read the superscription, and put it in his pocket, telling me I was very kind to have taken so much trouble, and that he would be sure to read it.

"It has been no trouble at all," I replied, "but I hope you will read the letter. It is written by M. de Zaguri, whom I asked to do me this service, as I have long desired to make your lordship's acquaintance."

His lordship smiled and said very pleasantly that he would read it after dinner, and would see what he could do for his friend Zaguri.

Our dialogue was over in a few seconds. Thinking him extremely rude I turned my back

and went downstairs, arriving just in time to prevent the postillion taking out the horses. I promised him a double gratuity if he would take me to some village at hand, where he could bait his horses while I breakfasted.

Just as the postillion had got on horseback a servant came running up. He told me very politely that his excellence begged me to step upstairs.

I put my hand in my pocket and gave the man my card with my name and address, and telling him that that was what his master wanted, I ordered the postillion to drive off at a full gallop.

When we had gone half a league we stopped at a good inn, and then proceeded on our way back to Bologna.

The same day I wrote to M. de Zaguri, and described the welcome I had received at the hands of the marquis. I enclosed the letter in another to M. Dandolo, begging him to read it, and to send it on. I begged the noble Venetian to write to the marquis that having offended me grievously he must prepare to give me due satisfaction.

I laughed with all my heart next day when my landlady gave me a visiting card with the inscription, *General the Marquis of Albergati*. She told me the marquis had called on me himself, and on hearing I was out had left his card.

I began to look upon the whole of his proceedings as pure gasconnade, only lacking the wit of the true Gascon. I determined to await

M. Zaguri's reply before making up my mind as to the kind of satisfaction I should demand.

While I was inspecting the card, and wondering what right the marquis had to the title of general, Severini came in, and informed me that the marquis had been made a Knight of the Order of St. Stanislas by the King of Poland, who had also given him the style of royal chamberlain.

"Is he a general in the Polish service as well?" I asked.

"I really don't know."

"I understand it all," I said to myself. "In Poland a chamberlain has the rank of adjutant-general, and the marquis calls himself general. But general what? The adjective without a substantive is a mere cheat."

I saw my opportunity, and wrote a comic dialogue, which I had printed the next day. I made a present of the work to a bookseller, and in three or four days he sold out the whole edition at a *bajocco* apiece.

CHAPTER VIII

FARINELLO AND THE ELECTRESS DOWAGER OF
SAXONY — MADAME SLOPITZ — NINA — THE MID-
WIFE — MADAME SOAVI — ABBÉ BOLINI — MADAME
VISCIOLETTA — THE SEAMSTRESS — THE SORRY
PLEASURE OF REVENGE — SEVERINI GOES TO
NAPLES — MY DEPARTURE — MARQUIS MOSCA

ANYONE who attacks a proud person in a comic vein is almost sure of success; the laugh is generally on his side.

I asked in my dialogue whether it was lawful for a provost-marshal to call himself simply marshal, and whether a lieutenant-colonel had a right to the title of colonel. I also asked whether the man who preferred titles of honour, for which he had paid in hard cash, to his ancient and legitimate rank, could pass for a sage.

Of course the marquis had to laugh at my dialogue, but he was called the general ever after. He had placed the royal arms of Poland over the gate of his palace, much to the amusement of

Count Mischinski, the Polish ambassador to Berlin, who happened to be passing through Bologna at that time.

I told the Pole of my dispute with the mad marquis, and persuaded him to pay Albergati a visit, leaving his card. The ambassador did so, and the call was returned, but Albergati's cards no longer bore the title of general.

The Dowager Electress of Saxony having come to Bologna, I hastened to pay my respects to her. She had only come to see the famous *castrato* Farinello, who had left Madrid, and now lived at Bologna in great comfort. He placed a magnificent collation before the Electress, and sang a song of his own composition, accompanying himself on the piano. The Electress, who was an enthusiastic musician, embraced Farinello, exclaiming,—

“Now I can die happy.”

Farinello, who was also known as the Chevalier Broschi had reigned, as it were, in Spain till the Parmese wife of Philip V. had laid plots which obliged him to leave the Court after the disgrace of Enunada. The Electress noticed a portrait of the queen, and spoke very highly of her, mentioning some circumstances which must have taken place in the reign of Ferdinand VI.

The famous musician burst into tears, and said that Queen Barbara was as good as Elizabeth of Parma was wicked.

Broschi might have been seventy when I saw

him at Bologna. He was very rich and in the enjoyment of good health, and yet he was unhappy, continually shedding tears at the thought of Spain.

Ambition is a more powerful passion than avarice. Besides, Farinello had another reason for unhappiness.

He had a nephew who was the heir to all his wealth, whom he married to a noble Tuscan lady, hoping to found a titled family, though in an indirect kind of way. But this marriage was a torment to him, for in his impotent old age he was so unfortunate as to fall in love with his niece, and to become jealous of his nephew. Worse than all the lady grew to hate him, and Farinello had sent his nephew abroad, while he never allowed the wife to go out of his sight.

Lord Lincoln arrived in Bologna with an introduction for the cardinal legate, who asked him to dinner, and did me the honour of giving me an invitation to meet him. The cardinal was thus convinced that Lord Lincoln and I had never met, and that the grand duke of Tuscany had committed a great injustice in banishing me. It was on that occasion that the young nobleman told me how they had spread the snare, though he denied that he had been cheated; he was far too proud to acknowledge such a thing. He died of debauchery in London three or four years after.

I also saw at Bologna the Englishman Aston with Madame Slopitz, sister of the charming

Callimena. Madame Slopitz was much handsomer than her sister. She had presented Aston with two babes as beautiful as Raphael's cherubs.

I spoke of her sister to her, and from the way in which I sang her praises she guessed that I had loved her. She told me she would be in Florence during the Carnival of 1773, but I did not see her again till the year 1776, when I was at Venice.

The dreadful Nina Bergonci, who had made a madman of Count Ricla, and was the source of all my woes at Barcelona, had come to Bologna at the beginning of Lent, occupying a pleasant house which she had taken. She had *carte blanche* with a banker, and kept up a great state, affirming herself to be with child by the Viceroy of Catalonia, and demanding the honours which would be given to a queen who had graciously chosen Bologna as the place of her confinement. She had a special recommendation to the legate, who often visited her, but in the greatest secrecy.

The time of her confinement approached, and the insane Ricla sent over a confidential man, Don Martino, who was empowered to have the child baptized, and to recognize it as Ricla's natural offspring.

Nina made a show of her condition, appearing at the theatre and in the public places with an enormous belly. The greatest nobles of Bologna paid court to her, and Nina told them that they might do so, but that she could not guarantee their

safety from the jealous dagger of Ricla. She was impudent enough to tell them what happened to me at Barcelona, not knowing that I was at Bologna.

She was extremely surprised to hear from Count Zini, who knew me, that I inhabited the same town as herself.

When the count met me he asked me if the Barcelona story was true. I did not care to take him into my confidence, so I replied that I did not know Nina, and that the story had doubtless been made up by her to see whether he would encounter danger for her sake.

When I met the cardinal I told him the whole story, and his eminence was astonished when I gave him some insight into Nina's character, and informed him that she was the daughter of her sister and her grandfather.

"I could stake my life," said I, "that Nina is no more with child than you are."

"Oh, come!" said he, laughing, "that is really too strong; why shouldn't she have a child? It is a very simple matter, it seems to me. Possibly it may not be Ricla's child, but there can be no doubt that she is with somebody's child. What object could she have for feigning pregnancy?"

"To make herself famous by defiling the Count de Ricla, who was a model of justice and virtue before knowing this Messalina. If your eminence knew the hideous character of Nina you would not wonder at anything she did."

" Well, we shall see."

" Yes."

About a week later I heard a great noise in the street, and on putting my head out of the window I saw a woman stripped to the waist, and mounted on an ass, being scourged by the hangman, and hooted by a mob of all the *biricchini* in Bologna. Severini came up at the same moment and informed me that the woman was the chief midwife in Bologna, and that her punishment had been ordered by the cardinal archbishop.

" It must be for some great crime," I observed.

" No doubt. It is the woman who was with Nina the day before yesterday."

" What ! has Nina been brought to bed ? "

" Yes ; but of a still-born child."

" I see it all."

Next day the story was all over the town.

A poor woman had come before the archbishop, and had complained bitterly that the midwife Teresa had seduced her, promising to give her twenty sequins if she would give her a fine boy to whom she had given birth a fortnight ago. She was not given the sum agreed upon, and in her despair at hearing of the death of her child she begged for justice, declaring herself able to prove that the dead child said to be Nina's was in reality her own.

The archbishop ordered his chancellor to enquire into the affair with the utmost secrecy,

and then proceeded to instant and summary execution.

A week after this scandal Don Martino returned to Barcelona; but Nina remained as impudent as ever, doubled the size of the red cockades which she made her servants wear, and swore that Spain should avenge her on the insolent archbishop. She remained at Bologna six weeks longer, pretending to be still suffering from the effects of her confinement. The cardinal legate, who was ashamed of having had anything to do with such an abandoned prostitute, did his best to have her ordered to leave.

Count Ricla, a dupe to the last, gave her a considerable yearly income on the condition that she should never come to Barcelona again; but in a year the count died.

Nina did not survive him for more than a year, and died miserably from her fearful debauchery. I met her mother and sister at Venice, and she told me the story of the last two years of her daughter's life; but it is so sad and so disgusting a tale that I feel obliged to omit it.

As for the infamous midwife, she found powerful friends.

A pamphlet appeared in which the anonymous author declared that the archbishop had committed a great wrong in punishing a citizen in so shameful a manner without any of the proper formalities of

justice. The writer maintained that even if she were guilty she had been unjustly punished, and should appeal to Rome.

The prelate, feeling the force of these animadversions, circulated a pamphlet in which it appeared that the midwife had made three prior appearances before the judge, and that she would have been sent to the gallows long ago if the archbishop had not hesitated to shame three of the noblest families in Bologna, whose names appeared in documents in the custody of his chancellor.

Her crimes were procuring abortion and killing erring mothers, substituting the living for the dead, and in one case a boy for a girl, thus giving him the enjoyment of property which did not belong to him.

This pamphlet of the prelate reduced the patrons of the infamous midwife to silence, for several young noblemen whose mothers had been attended by her did not relish the idea of their family secrets being brought to light.

At Bologna I saw Madame Marcucci, who had been expelled from Spain for the same reason as Madame Pelliccia. The latter had retired to Rome, while Madame Marcucci was on her way to Lucca, her native country.

Madame Soavi, a Bolognese dancer whom I had known at Parma and Paris, came to Bologna with her daughter by M. de Marigni. The girl, whose name was Adelaide, was very beautiful, and her natural abilities had been fostered by a careful education.

When Madame Soavi got to Bologna she met her husband whom she had not seen for fifteen years.

"Here is a treasure for you," said she, shewing him her daughter.

"She's certainly very pretty, but what am I to do with her? She does not belong to me."

"Yes she does, as I have given her to you. You must know that she has six thousand francs a year, and that I shall be her cashier till I get her married to a good dancer. I want her to learn character dancing, and to make her appearance on the boards. You must take her out on holidays."

"What shall I say if people ask me who she is?"

"Say she is your daughter, and that you are certain, because your wife gave her to you."

"I can't see that."

"Ah, you have always stayed at home, and consequently your wits are homely."

I heard this curious dialogue which made me laugh then, and makes me laugh now as I write it. I offered to help in Adelaide's education, but Madame Soavi laughed, and said,—

"Fox, you have deceived so many tender pullets, that I don't like to trust you with this one, for fear of your making her too precocious."

"I did not think of that, but you are right."

Adelaide became the wonder of Bologna.

A year after I left the Comte du Barri,

brother-in-law of the famous mistress of Louis XV., visited Bologna, and became so amorous of Adelaide that her mother sent her away, fearing he would carry her off.

Du Barri offered her a hundred thousand francs for the girl, but she refused the offer.

I saw Adelaide five years later on the boards of a Venetian theatre. When I went to congratulate her, she said,—

“My mother brought me into the world, and I think she will send me out of it; this dancing is killing me.”

In point of fact this delicate flower faded and died after seven years of the severe life to which her mother had exposed her.

Madame Soavi who had not taken the precaution to settle the six thousand francs on herself, lost all in losing Adelaide, and died miserably after having rolled in riches. But, alas! I am not the man to reproach anyone on the score of imprudence.

At Bologna I met the famous Afflisio, who had been discharged from the imperial service and had turned manager. He went from bad to worse, and five or six years later committed forgery, was sent to the galleys, and there died.

I was also impressed by the example of a man of a good family, who had once been rich. This was Count Filomarino. He was living in great misery, deprived of the use of all his limbs by a succession of venereal complaints. I often went to

see him to give him a few pieces of money, and to listen to his malevolent talk, for his tongue was the only member that continued active. He was a scoundrel and a slanderer, and writhed under the thought that he could not go to Naples and torment his relations, who were in reality respectable people, but monsters according to his shewing.

Madame Sabatini, the dancer, had returned to Bologna, having made enough money to rest upon her laurels. She married a professor of anatomy, and brought all her wealth to him as a dower. She had with her her sister, who was not rich and had no talents, but was at the same time very agreeable.

At the house I met an abbé, a fine young man of modest appearance. The sister seemed to be deeply in love with him, while he appeared to be grateful and nothing more.

I made some remark to the modest Adonis, and he gave me a very sensible answer. We walked away together, and after telling each other what brought us to Bologna we parted, agreeing to meet again.

The abbé, who was twenty-four or twenty-five years old, was not in orders, and was the only son of a noble family of Novara, which was unfortunately poor as well as noble.

He had a very scanty revenue, and was able to live more cheaply at Bologna than Novara, where everything is dear. Besides, he did not care for

his relations ; he had no friends, and everybody there was more or less ignorant.

The Abbé de Bolini, as he was called, was a man of tranquil mind, living a peaceful and quiet life above all things. He liked lettered men more than letters, and did not trouble to gain the reputation of a wit. He knew he was not a fool, and when he mixed with learned men he was quite clever enough to be a good listener.

Both temperament and his purse made him temperate in all things, and he had received a sound Christian education. He never talked about religion, but nothing scandalized him. He seldom praised and never blamed.

He was almost entirely indifferent to women, flying from ugly women and blue stockings, and gratifying the passion of pretty ones more out of kindness than love, for in his heart he considered women as more likely to make a man miserable than happy. I was especially interested in this last characteristic.

We had been friends for three weeks when I took the liberty of asking him how he reconciled his theories with his attachment to Brigida Sabatini.

He supped with her every evening, and she breakfasted with him every morning. When I went to see him, she was either there already or came in before my call was over. She breathed forth love in every glance, while the abbé was kind, but, in spite of his politeness, evidently bored.

Brigida looked well enough, but she was at least ten years older than the abbé. She was very polite to me and did her best to convince me that the abbé was happy in the possession of her heart, and that they both enjoyed the delights of mutual love.

But when I asked him over a bottle of good wine about his affection for Brigida, he sighed, smiled, blushed, looked down, and finally confessed that this connection was the misfortune of his life.

"Misfortune? Does she make you sigh in vain? If so you should leave her, and thus regain your happiness."

"How can I sigh? I am not in love with her. She is in love with me, and tries to make me her slave."

"How do you mean?"

"She wants me to marry her, and I promised to do so, partly from weakness, and partly from pity; and now she is in a hurry."

"I daresay; all these elderly girls are in a hurry."

"Every evening she treats me to tears, supplications, and despair. She summons me to keep my promise, and accuses me of deceiving her, so you may imagine that my situation is an unhappy one."

"Have you any obligations towards her?"

"None whatever. She has violated me, so to

“speak, for all the advances came from her. She has only what her sister gives her from day to day, and if she got married she would not get that.”

“Have you got her with child?”

“I have taken good care not to do so, and that’s what has irritated her; she calls all my little stratagems detestable treason.”

“Nevertheless, you have made up your mind to marry her sooner or later?”

“I’d as soon hang myself. If I got married to her I should be four times as poor as I am now, and all my relations at Novara would laugh at me for bringing home a wife of her age. Besides, she is neither rich nor well born, and at Novara they demand the one or the other.”

“Then as a man of honour and as a man of sense, you ought to break with her, and the sooner the better.”

“I know, but lacking moral strength what am I to do? If I did not go and sup with her to-night, she would infallibly come after me to see what had happened. I can’t look my door in her face, and I can’t tell her to go away.”

“No, but neither can you go on in this miserable way. You must make up your mind, and cut the Gordian knot, like Alexander.”

“I haven’t his sword.”

“I will lend it you.”

“What do you mean?”

“Listen to me. You must go and live in

another town. She will hardly go after you there, I suppose."

"That is a very good plan, but flight is a difficult matter."

"Difficult? Not at all. Do you promise to do what I tell you, and I will arrange everything quite comfortably. Your mistress will not know anything about it till she misses you at supper."

"I will do whatever you tell me, and I shall never forget your kindness; but Brigida will go mad with grief."

"Well my first order to you is not to give her grief a single thought. You have only to leave everything to me. Would you like to start to-morrow?"

"To-morrow?"

"Yes. Have you any debts?"

"No."

"Do you want any money?"

"I have sufficient. But the idea of leaving to-morrow has taken my breath away. I must have three days delay."

"Why so?"

"I expect some letters the day after to-morrow, and I must write to my relations to tell them where I am going."

"I will take charge of your letters and send them on to you."

"Where shall I be?"

"I will tell you at the moment of your depar-

ture ; trust in me. I will send you at once where you will be comfortable. All you have to do is to leave your trunk in the hands of your landlord, with orders not to give it up to anyone but myself."

"Very good. I am to go without my trunk, then."

"Yes. You must dine with me every day till you go, and mind not to tell anyone whatsoever that you intend leaving Bologna."

"I will take care not to do so."

The worthy young fellow looked quite radiant. I embraced him and thanked him for putting so much trust in me.

I felt proud at the good work I was about to perform, and smiled at the thought of Brigida's anger when she found that her lover had escaped. I wrote to my good friend Dandolo that in five or six days a young abbé would present himself before him bearing a letter from myself. I begged Dandolo to get him a comfortable and cheap lodging, as my friend was so unfortunate as to be indifferently provided with money, though an excellent man. I then wrote the letter of which the abbé was to be the bearer.

Next day Bolini told me that Brigida was far from suspecting his flight, as owing to his gaiety at the thought of freedom he had contented her so well during the night she had passed with him that she thought him as much in love as she was.

"She has all my linen," he added, "but I hope

to get a good part of it back under one pretext or another, and she is welcome to the rest."

On the day appointed he called on me as we had arranged the night before, carrying a huge carpet bag containing necessities. I took him to Modena in a post chaise, and there we dined; afterward I gave him a letter for M. Dandolo, promising to send on his trunk the next day.

He was delighted to hear that Venice was his destination, as he had long wished to go there, and I promised him that M. Dandolo should see that he lived as comfortably and cheaply as he had done at Bologna.

I saw him off, and returned to Bologna. The trunk I dispatched after him the following day.

As I had expected, the poor victim appeared before me all in tears the next day. I felt it my duty to pity her, it would have been cruel to pretend I did not know the reason of her despair. I gave her a long but kindly sermon, endeavouring to persuade her that I had acted for the best in preventing the abbé marrying her, as such a step would have plunged them both into misery.

The poor woman threw herself weeping at my feet, begging me to bring her abbé back, and swearing by all the saints that she would never mention the word "marriage" again. By way of calming her, I said I would do my best to win him over.

She asked where he was, and I said at Venice;

but of course she did not believe me. There are circumstances when a clever man deceives by telling the truth, and such a lie as this must be approved by the most rigorous moralists.

Twenty-seven months later I met Bolini at Venice. I shall describe the meeting in its proper place.

A few days after he had gone, I made the acquaintance of the fair Viscioletta, and fell so ardently in love with her that I had to make up my mind to buy her with hard cash. The time when I could make women fall in love with me was no more, and I had to make up my mind either to do without them or to buy them.

I cannot help laughing when people ask me for advice, as I feel so certain that my advice will not be taken. Man is an animal that has to learn his lesson by hard experience in battling with the storms of life. Thus the world is always in disorder and always ignorant, for those who know are always in an infinitesimal proportion to the whole.

Madame Viscioletta, whom I went to see every day, treated me as the Florentine widow had done, though the widow required forms and ceremonies which I could dispense with in the presence of the fair Viscioletta, who was nothing else than a professional courtesan, though she called herself a *virtuosa*.

I had besieged her for three weeks without any

success, and when I made any attempts she repulsed me laughingly.

Monsignor Buoncompagni, the vice-legate, was her lover in secret, though all the town knew it, but this sort of conventional secrecy is common enough in Italy. As an ecclesiastic he could not court her openly, but the hussy made no mystery whatever of his visits.

Being in need of money, and preferring to get rid of my carriage than of anything else, I announced it for sale at the price of three hundred and fifty Roman crowns. It was a comfortable and handsome carriage, and was well worth the price. I was told that the vice-legate offered three hundred crowns, and I felt a real pleasure in contradicting my favoured rival's desires. I told the man that I had stated my price and meant to adhere to it, as I was not accustomed to bargaining.

I went to see my carriage at noon one day to make sure that it was in good condition, and met the vice-legate who knew me from meeting me at the legate's, and must have been aware that I was poaching on his preserves. He told me rudely that the carriage was not worth more than three hundred crowns, and that I ought to be glad of the opportunity of getting rid of it, as it was much too good for me.

I had the strength of mind to despise his violence, and telling him drily that I did not chaffer I turned my back on him and went my way.

Next day the fair Viscioletta wrote me a note to the effect that she would be very much obliged if I would let the vice-legate have the carriage at his own price, as she felt sure he would give it to her. I replied that I would call on her in the afternoon, and that my answer would depend on my welcome. I went in due course, and after a lively discussion she gave way, and I signified my willingness to sell the carriage for the sum offered by the vice-legate.

The next day she had her carriage, and I had my three hundred crowns, and I let the proud prelate understand that I had avenged myself for his rudeness.

About this time Severini succeeded in obtaining a position as tutor in an illustrious Neapolitan family, and as soon as he received his journey-money he left Bologna. I also had thoughts of leaving the town.

I had kept up an interesting correspondence with M. Zaguri, who had made up his mind to obtain my recall in concert with Dandolo, who desired nothing better. Zaguri told me that if I wanted to obtain my pardon I must come and live as near as possible to the Venetian borders, so that the State Inquisitors might satisfy themselves of my good conduct. M. Zuliani, brother to the Duchess of Fiano, gave me the same advice, and promised to use all his interest in my behalf.

With the idea of following this counsel I

decided to set up my abode at Trieste, where M. Zaguri told me he had an intimate friend to whom he would give me a letter of introduction. As I could not go by land without passing through the States of Venice I resolved to go to Ancona, whence boats sail to Trieste every day. As I should pass through Pesaro I asked my patron to give me a letter for the Marquis Mosca, a distinguished man of letters whom I had long wished to know. Just then he was a good deal talked about on account of a treatise on alms which he had recently published, and which the Roman curia had placed on the "Index."

The marquis was a devotee as well as a man of learning, and was imbued with the doctrine of St. Augustine, which becomes Jansenism if pushed to an extreme point.

I was sorry to leave Bologna, for I had spent eight pleasant months there. In two days I arrived at Pesaro in perfect health and well provided for in every way.

I left my letter with the marquis, and he came to see me the same day. He said his house would always be open to me, and that he would leave me in his wife's hands to be introduced to everybody and everything in the place. He ended by asking me to dine with him the following day, adding that if I cared to examine his library he could give me an excellent cup of chocolate.

I went, and saw an enormous collection of

comments on the Latin poets from Ennius to the poets of the twelfth century of our era. He had had them all printed at his own expense and at his private press, in four tall folios, very accurately printed but without elegance. I told him my opinion, and he agreed that I was right.

The want of elegance which had spared him an outlay of a hundred thousand francs had deprived him of a profit of three hundred thousand.

He presented me with a copy, which he sent to my inn, with an immense folio volume entitled "*Marmora Pisarentia*," which I had no time to examine.

I was much pleased with the marchioness, who had three daughters and two sons, all good-looking and well bred.

The marchioness was a woman of the world, while her husband's interests were confined to his books. This difference in disposition sometimes gave rise to a slight element of discord, but a stranger would never have noticed it if he had not been told.

Fifty years ago a wise man said to me: "Every family is troubled by some small tragedy, which should be kept private with the greatest care. In fine, people should learn to wash their dirty linen in private."

The marchioness paid me great attention during the five days I spent at Pesaro. In the day she drove me from one country house to another, and

at night she introduced me to all the nobility of the town.

The marquis might have been fifty then. He was cold by temperament, had no other passion but that of study, and his morals were pure. He had founded an academy of which he was the president. Its design was a fly, in allusion to his name *Mosca*, with the words *de me ce*, that is to say, take away *c* from *musca* and you have *musa*.

His only failing was that which the monks regard as his finest quality, he was religious to excess, and this excess of religion went beyond the bounds where *nequit consistere rectum*.

But which is the better, to go beyond these bounds, or not to come up to them? I cannot venture to decide the question. Horace says,—

“Nulla est mihi religio,”

and it is the beginning of an ode in which he condemns philosophy for estranging him from religion.

Excess of every kind is bad.

I left Pesaro delighted with the good company I had met, and only sorry I had not seen the marquis's brother who was praised by everyone.

CHAPTER IX

A JEW NAMED MARDOCHEUS BECOMES MY TRAVEL-
LING COMPANION—HE PERSUADES ME TO LODGE
IN HIS HOUSE—I FALL IN LOVE WITH HIS
DAUGHTER LEAH—AFTER A STAY OF SIX WEEKS I
GO TO TRIESTE

SOME time elapsed before I had time to examine the Marquis of Mosca's collection of Latin poets, amongst which the *Priapea* found no place.

No doubt this work bore witness to his love for literature but not to his learning, for there was nothing of his own in it. All he had done was to classify each fragment in chronological order. I should have liked to see notes, comments, explanations, and such like, but there was nothing of the kind. Besides, the type was not elegant, the margins were poor, the paper common, and misprints not infrequent. All these are bad faults, especially in a work which should have become a classic. Consequently, the book was not a profitable one; and as the marquis was not a rich man he was

occasionally reproached by his wife for the money he had expended.

I read his treatise on almsgiving and his apology for it, and understood a good deal of the marquis's way of thinking. I could easily imagine that his writings must have given great offence at Rome, and that with sounder judgment he would have avoided this danger. Of course the marquis was really in the right, but in theology one is only in the right when Rome says yes.

The marquis was a rigorist, and though he had a tincture of Jansenism he often differed from St. Augustine.

He denied, for instance, that almsgiving could annul the penalty attached to sin, and according to him the only sort of almsgiving which had any merit was that prescribed in the Gospel: "Let not thy right hand know what thy left hand doeth."

He even maintained that he who gave alms sinned unless it was done with the greatest secrecy, for alms given in public are sure to be accompanied by vanity.

It might have been objected that the merit of alms lies in the intention with which they are given. It is quite possible for a good man to slip a piece of money into the palm of some miserable being standing in a public place, and yet this may be done solely with the idea of relieving distress without a thought of the on-lookers.

As I wanted to go to Trieste, I might have

crossed the gulf by a small boat from Pesaro ; a good wind was blowing, and I should have got to Trieste in twelve hours. This was my proper way, for I had nothing to do at Ancona, and it was a hundred miles longer ; but I had said I would go by Ancona, and I felt obliged to do so.

I had always a strong tincture of superstition, which has exercised considerable influence on my strange career.

Like Socrates I, too, had a demon to whom I referred my doubtful counsels, doing his will, and obeying blindly when I felt a voice within me telling me to forbear.

A hundred times have I thus followed my genius, and occasionally I have felt inclined to complain that it did not impel me to act against my reason more frequently. Whenever I did so I found that impulse was right and reason wrong, and for all that I have still continued reasoning.

When I arrived at Senegallia, at three stages from Ancona, my *vetturino* asked me, just as I was going to bed, whether I would allow him to accommodate a Jew who was going to Ancona in the chaise.

My first impulse made me answer sharply that I wanted no one in my chaise, much less a Jew.

The *vetturino* went out, but a voice said within me, " You must take this poor Israelite ;" and in spite of my repugnance I called back the man and signified my assent.

"Then you must make up your mind to start at an earlier hour, for it is Friday to-morrow, and you know the Jews are not allowed to travel after sunset."

"I shall not start a moment earlier than I intended, but you can make your horses travel as quickly as you like."

He gave me no answer, and went out. The next morning I found my Jew, an honest-looking fellow, in the carriage. The first thing he asked me was why I did not like Jews.

"Because your religion teaches you to hate men of all other religions, especially Christians, and you think you have done a meritorious action when you have deceived us. You do not look upon us as brothers. You are usurious, unmerciful, our enemies, and so I do not like you."

"You are mistaken, sir. Come with me to our synagogue this evening, and you will hear us pray for all Christians, beginning with our Lord the Pope."

I could not help bursting into a roar of laughter.

"True," I replied, "but the prayer comes from the mouth only, and not from the heart. If you do not immediately confess that the Jews would not pray for the Christians if they were the masters, I will fling you out of the chaise."

Of course I did not carry out this threat, but I completed his confusion by quoting in Hebrew the

passages in the Old Testament, where the Jews are bidden to do all possible harm to the Gentiles, whom they were to curse every day.

After this the poor man said no more. When we were going to take our dinner I asked him to sit beside me, but he said his religion would not allow him to do so, and that he would only eat eggs, fruit, and some foie-gras sausage he had in his pocket. He only drank water because he was not sure that the wine was unadulterated.

"You stupid fellow," I exclaimed, "how can you ever be certain of the purity of wine unless you have made it yourself?"

When we were on our way again he said that if I liked to come and stay with him, and to content myself with such dishes as God had not forbidden, he would make me more comfortable than if I went to the inn, and at a cheaper rate.

"Then you let lodgings to Christians?"

"I don't let lodgings to anybody, but I will make an exception in your case to disabuse you of some of your mistaken notions. I will only ask you six pauls a day, and give you two good meals without wine."

"Then you must get me fish and wine, I paying for them as extras."

"Certainly; I have a Christian cook, and my wife pays a good deal of attention to the cooking."

"You can give me the foie-gras every day, if you will eat it with me."

"I know what you think, but you shall be satisfied."

I got down at the Jew's house, wondering at myself as I did so. However, I knew that if I did not like my accommodation I could leave the next day.

His wife and children were waiting for him, and gave him a joyful welcome in honour of the Sabbath. All servile work was forbidden on this day holy to the Lord; and all over the house, and in the face of all the family, I observed a kind of festal air.

I was welcomed like a brother, and I replied as best I could; but a word from Mardocheus (so he was called) changed their politeness of feeling into a politeness of interest.

Mardocheus shewed me two rooms for me to choose the one which suited me, but liking them both I said I would take the two for another paul a day, with which arrangement he was well enough pleased.

Mardocheus told his wife what we had settled, and she instructed the Christian servant to cook my supper for me.

I had my effects taken upstairs, and then went with Mardocheus to the synagogue.

During the short service the Jews paid no attention to me or to several other Christians who were present. The Jews go to the synagogue to pray, and in this respect I think their conduct worthy of imitation by the Christians.

On leaving the synagogue I went by myself to the Exchange, thinking over the happy time which would never return.

It was in Ancona that I had begun to enjoy life; and when I thought it over, it was quite a shock to find that this was thirty years ago, for thirty years is a long period in a man's life. And yet I felt quite young, in spite of the tenth lustrum so near at hand for me.

What a difference I found between my youth and my middle age! I could scarcely recognize myself. I was then happy, but now unhappy; then all the world was before me, and the future seemed a gorgeous dream, and now I was obliged to confess that my life had been all in vain. I might live twenty years more, but I felt that the happy time was passed away, and the future seemed all dreary.

I reckoned up my forty-seven years, and saw fortune fly away. This in itself was enough to sadden me, for without the favours of the fickle goddess life was not worth living, for me at all events.

My object, then, was to return to my country; it was as if I struggled to undo all that I had done. All I could hope for was to soften the hardships of the slow but certain passage to the grave.

These are the thoughts of declining years and not of youth. The young man looks only to the present, believes that the sky will always smile

upon him, and laughs at philosophy as it vainly preaches of old age, misery, repentance, and, worst of all, abhorred death.

Such were my thoughts twenty-six years ago ; what must they be now, when I am all alone, poor, despised, and impotent. They would kill me if I did not resolutely subdue them, for whether for good or ill my heart is still young. Of what use are desires when one can no longer satisfy them ? I write to kill ennui, and I take a pleasure in writing. Whether I write sense or nonsense, what matters ? I am amused, and that is enough.

*Malo scriptor delirus, inersque videri,
Dum mea delectent mala me vel demque fallunt,
Quam sapere.*

When I came back I found Mardocheus at supper with his numerous family, composed of eleven or twelve individuals, and including his mother—an old woman of ninety, who looked very well. I noticed another Jew of middle age ; he was the husband of his eldest daughter, who did not strike me as pretty ; but the younger daughter, who was destined for a Jew of Pesaro, whom she had never seen, engaged all my attention. I remarked to her that if she had not seen her future husband she could not be in love with him, whereupon she replied in a serious voice that it was not necessary to be in love before one married. The old woman praised the girl for this sentiment,

and said she had not been in love with her husband till the first child was born.

I shall call the pretty Jewess Leah, as I have good reasons for not using her real name.

While they were enjoying their meal I sat down beside her and tried to make myself as agreeable as possible, but she would not even look at me.

My supper was excellent, and my bed very comfortable.

The next day my landlord told me that I could give my linen to the maid, and that Leah could get it up for me.

I told him I had relished my supper, but that I should like the foie gras every day as I had a dispensation.

"You shall have some to-morrow, but Leah is the only one of us who eats it."

"Then Leah must take it with me, and you can tell her that I shall give her some Cyprus wine which is perfectly pure."

I had no wine, but I went for it the same morning to the Venetian consul, giving him M. Dandolo's letter.

The consul was a Venetian of the old leaven. He had heard my name, and seemed delighted to make my acquaintance. He was a kind of clown without the paint, fond of a joke, a regular gourmand, and a man of great experience. He sold me some Scopolò and old Cyprus Muscat, but he began to

exclaim when he heard where I was lodging, and how I had come there.

"He is rich," he said, "but he is also a great usurer, and if you borrow money of him he will make you repent it."

After informing the consul that I should not leave till the end of the month, I went home to dinner, which proved excellent.

The next day I gave out my linen to the maid, and Leah came to ask me how I liked my lace got up.

If Leah had examined me more closely she would have seen that the sight of her magnificent breast, unprotected by any kerchief, had had remarkable effect on me.

I told her that I left it all to her, and that she could do what she liked with the linen.

"Then it will all come under my hands if you are in no hurry to go."

"You can make me stay as long as you like," said I; but she seemed not to hear this declaration.

"Everything is quite right," I continued, "except the chocolate; I like it well frothed."

"Then I will make it for you myself."

"Then I will give out a double quantity, and we will take it together."

"I don't like chocolate."

"I am sorry to hear that; but you like foie gras?"

"Yes, I do; and from what my father tells

me I am going to take some with you to-day."

"I shall be delighted."

"I suppose you are afraid of being poisoned?"

"Not at all; I only wish we could die together."

She pretended not to understand, and left me burning with desire. I felt that I must either obtain possession of her or tell her father not to send her into my room any more.

The Turin Jewess had given me some valuable hints as to the conduct of amours with Jewish girls.

My theory was that Leah would be more easily won than she, for at Ancona there was much more liberty than at Turin.

This was a rake's reasoning, but even rakes are mistaken sometimes.

The dinner that was served to me was very good, though cooked in the Jewish style, and Leah brought in the foie gras and sat down opposite to me with a muslin kerchief over her breast.

The foie gras was excellent, and we washed it down with copious libations of Scopolio, which Leah found very much to her taste.

When the foie gras was finished she got up, but I stopped her, for the dinner was only half over.

"I will stay then," she said, "but I am afraid my father will object."

"Very good. Call your master," I said to the maid who came in at that moment, "I have a word to speak to him."

"My dear Mardocheus," I said when he came,

“your daughter’s appetite doubles mine, and I shall be much obliged if you will allow her to keep me company whenever we have foie gras.”

“It isn’t to my profit to double your appetite, but if you like to pay double I shall have no objection.”

“Very good, that arrangement will suit me.”

In evidence of my satisfaction I gave him a bottle of Scopolio, which Leah guaranteed pure.

We dined together, and seeing that the wine was making her mirthful I told her that her eyes were inflaming me and that she must let me kiss them.

“My duty obliges me to say nay. No kissing and no touching; we have only got to eat and drink together, and I shall like it as much as you.”

“You are cruel.”

“I am wholly dependent on my father.”

“Shall I ask your father to give you leave to be kind?”

“I don’t think that would be proper, and my father might be offended and not allow me to see you any more.”

“And supposing he told you not to be scrupulous about trifles?”

“Then I should despise him and continue to do my duty.”

So clear a declaration shewed me that if I persevered in this intrigue I might go on for ever without success. I also bethought me that I ran a

risk of neglecting my chief business, which would not allow me to stay long in Ancona.

I said nothing more to Leah just then, and when the dessert came in I gave her some Cyprus wine, which she declared was the most delicious nectar she had ever tasted.

I saw that the wine was heating her, and it seemed incredible to me that Bacchus should reign without Venus; but she had a hard head, her blood was hot and her brain cool.

However, I tried to seize her hand and kiss it, but she drew it away, saying pleasantly,—

“It’s too much for honour and too little for love.”

This witty remark amused me, and it also let me know that she was not exactly a neophyte.

I determined to postpone matters till the next day, and told her not to get me any supper as I was supping with the Venetian consul.

The consul had told me that he did not dine, but that he would always be delighted to see me at supper.

It was midnight when I came home, and everyone was asleep except the maid who let me in. I gave her such a gratuity that she must have wished me to keep late hours for the rest of my stay.

I proceeded to sound her about Leah, but she told me nothing but good. If she was to be believed, Leah was a good girl, always at work, loved by all, and fancy free. The maid could

not have praised her better if she had been paid to do so.

In the morning Leah brought the chocolate and sat down on my bed, saying that we should have some fine foie gras, and that she should have all the better appetite for dinner as she had not taken any supper.

“Why didn’t you take any supper?”

“I suppose it was because of your excellent Cyprus wine, to which my father has taken a great liking.”

“Ah! he likes it? We will give him some.”

Leah was in a state of undress as before, and the sight of her half-covered spheres drove me to distraction.

“Are you not aware that you have a beautiful breast?” said I.

“I thought all young girls were just the same.”

“Have you no suspicion that the sight is a very pleasant one for me?”

“If that be so, I am very glad, for I have nothing to be ashamed of, for a girl has no call to hide her throat any more than her face, unless she is in grand company.”

As she was speaking, Leah looked at a golden heart transfixed with an arrow and set with small diamonds which served me as a shirt stud.

“Do you like the little heart?” said I.

“Very much. Is it pure gold?”

“Certainly, and that being so I think I may offer it to you.”

So saying I took it off, but she thanked me politely, and said that a girl who gave nothing must take nothing.

“Take it ; I will never ask any favour of you.”

“But I should be indebted to you, and that’s the reason why I never take anything.”

I saw that there was nothing to be done, or rather that it would be necessary to do too much to do anything, and that in any case the best plan would be to give her up.

I put aside all thoughts of violence, which would only anger her or make her laugh at me. I should either have been degraded, or rendered more amorous, and all for nothing. If she had taken offence she would not have come to see me any more, and I should have had nought to complain of. In fine I made up my mind to restrain myself, and indulge no more in amorous talk.

We dined very pleasantly together. The servant brought in some shell-fish, which are forbidden by the Mosaic law. While the maid was in the room I asked Leah to take some, and she refused indignantly ; but directly the girl was gone she took some of her own accord and ate them eagerly, assuring me that it was the first time she had had the pleasure of tasting shell-fish.

“This girl,” I said to myself, “who breaks the law of her religion with such levity, who likes

pleasure and does not conceal it, this is the girl who wants to make me believe that she is insensible to the pleasures of love; that's impossible, though she may not love me. She must have some secret means of satisfying her passions, which in my opinion are very violent. We will see what can be done this evening with the help of a bottle of good Muscat."

However, when the evening came, she said she could not drink or eat anything, as a meal always prevented her sleeping.

The next day she brought me my chocolate, but her beautiful breast was covered with a white kerchief. She sat down on the bed as usual, and I observed in a melancholy manner that she had only covered her breast because I had said I took a pleasure in seeing it.

She replied that she had not thought of anything, and had only put on her kerchief because she had had no time to fasten her stays.

"You are quite right," I said, smilingly, "for if I were to see the whole breast I might not think it beautiful."

She gave no answer, and I finished my chocolate.

I recollected my collection of obscene pictures, and I begged Leah to give me the box, telling her that I would shew her some of the most beautiful breasts in the world.

"I shan't care to see them," said she; but she

gave me the box, and sat down on my bed as before.

I took out a picture of a naked woman lying on her back and abusing herself, and covering up the lower part of it I shewed it to Leah.

"But her breast is like any other," said Leah. "Take away your handkerchief."

"Take it back; it's disgusting. It's well enough done," she added, with a burst of laughter, "but it's no novelty for me."

"No novelty for you?"

"Of course not; every girl does like that before she gets married."

"Then you do it, too?"

"Whenever I want to."

"Do it now."

"A well-bred girl always does it in private."

"And what do you do after?"

"If I am in bed I go to sleep."

"My dear Leah, your sincerity is too much for me. Either be kind or visit me no more."

"You are very weak, I think."

"Yes, because I am strong."

"Then henceforth we shall only meet at dinner. But shew me some more miniatures."

"I have some pictures which you will not like."

"Let me see them."

I gave her Aretin's figures, and was astonished to see how coolly she examined them, passing from one to the other in the most commonplace way.

"Do you think them interesting?" I said.

"Yes, very; they are so natural. But a good girl should not look at such pictures; anyone must be aware that these voluptuous attitudes excite one's emotions."

"I believe you, Leah, and I feel it as much as you. Look here!"

She smiled and took the book away to the window, turning her back towards me without taking any notice of my appeal.

I had to cool down and dress myself, and when the hairdresser arrived Leah went away, saying she would return me my book at dinner.

I was delighted, thinking I was sure of victory either that day or the next, but I was out of my reckoning.

We dined well and drank better. At dessert Leah took the book out of her pocket and set me all on fire by asking me to explain some of the pictures but forbidding all practical demonstration.

I went out impatiently, determined to wait till next morning.

When the cruel Jewess came in the morning she told me that she wanted explanations, but that I must use the pictures and nothing more as a demonstration of my remarks.

"Certainly," I replied, "but you must answer all my questions as to your sex."

"I promise to do so, if they arise naturally from the pictures."

The lesson lasted two hours, and a hundred times did I curse Aretin and my folly in shewing her his designs, for whenever I made the slightest attempt the pitiless woman threatened to leave me. But the information she gave me about her own sex was a perfect torment to me. She told me the most lascivious details, and explained with the utmost minuteness the different external and internal movements which would be developed in the copulations pictured by Aretin. I thought it quite impossible that she could be reasoning from theory alone. She was not troubled by the slightest tincture of modesty, but philosophized on coition as coolly and much more learnedly than Hedvig. I would willingly have given her all I possessed to crown her science by the performance of the great work. She swore it was all pure theory with her, and I thought she must be speaking the truth when she said she wanted to get married to see if her notions were right or wrong. She looked pensive when I told her that the husband destined for her might be unable to discharge his connubial duties more than once a week.

“Do you mean to say,” said she, “that one man is not as good as another?”

“How do you mean?”

“Are not all men able to make love every day, and every hour, just as they eat, drink and sleep every day?”

"No, dear Leah, they that can make love every day are very scarce."

In my state of chronic irritation I felt much annoyed that there was no decent place at Ancona where a man might appease his passions for his money. I trembled to think that I was in danger of falling really in love with Leah, and I told the consul every day that I was in no hurry to go. I was as foolish as a boy in his calf-love. I pictured Leah as the purest of women, for with strong passions she refused to gratify them. I saw in her a model of virtue; she was all self-restraint and purity, resisting temptation in spite of the fire that consumed her.

Before long the reader will discover how very virtuous Leah was.

After nine or ten days I had recourse to violence, not in deeds but in words. She confessed I was in the right, and said my best plan would be to forbid her to come and see me in the morning. At dinner, according to her, there would be no risk.

I made up my mind to ask her to continue her visits, but to cover her breast and avoid all amorous conversation.

"With all my heart," she replied, laughing; "but be sure I shall not be the first to break the conditions."

I felt no inclination to break them either, for three days later I felt weary of the situation, and told the consul I would start on the first opportunity. My passion for Leah was spoiling my

appetite, and I thus saw myself deprived of my secondary pleasure without any prospect of gaining my primary enjoyment.

After what I had said to the consul I felt I should be bound to go, and I went to bed calmly enough. But about two o'clock in the morning I had, contrary to my usual habit, to get up and offer sacrifice to Cloacina. I left my room without any candle, as I knew my way well enough about the house.

The temple of the goddess was on the ground floor, but as I had put on my soft slippers, and walked very softly, my footsteps did not make the least noise.

On my way upstairs I saw a light shining through a chink in the door of a room which I knew to be unoccupied. I crept softly up, not dreaming for a moment that Leah could be there at such an hour. But on putting my eye to the chink I found I could see a bed, and on it were Leah and a young man, both stark naked, and occupied in working out Aretin's postures to the best of their ability. They were whispering to one another, and every four or five minutes I had the pleasure of seeing a new posture.

These changes of position gave me a view of all the beauties of Leah, and this pleasure was something to set against my rage in having taken such a profligate creature for a virtuous woman.

Every time they approached the completion of

the great work they stopped short, and completed what they were doing with their hands.

When they were doing the Straight Tree, to my mind the most lascivious of them all, Leah behaved like a true Lesbian; for while the young man excited her amorous fury she got hold of his instrument and took it between her lips till the work was complete. I could not doubt that she had swallowed the vital fluid of my fortunate rival.

The Adonis then shewed her the feeble instrument, and Leah seemed to regret what she had done. Before long she began to excite him again; but the fellow looked at his watch, pushed her away, and began to put on his shirt.

Leah seemed angry, and I could see that she reproached him for some time before she began to dress.

When they were nearly clothed I softly returned to my room and looked out of a window commanding the house-door. I had not to wait long before I saw the fortunate lover going out.

I went to bed indignant with Leah; I felt myself degraded. She was no longer virtuous, but a villainous prostitute in my eyes; and I fell to sleep with the firm resolve of driving her from my room the next morning, after shaming her with the story of the scene I had witnessed. But, alas hasty and angry resolves can seldom withstand a few hours' sleep.

As soon as I saw Leah coming in with my

chocolate, smiling and gay as usual, I told her quite coolly all the exploits I had seen her executing, laying particular stress on the Straight Tree, and the curious liquid she had swallowed. I ended by saying that I hoped she would give me the next night, both to crown my love and insure my secrecy.

She answered with perfect calm that I had nothing to expect from her as she did not love me, and as for keeping the secret she defied me to disclose it.

"I am sure you would not be guilty of such a disgraceful action," said she.

With these words she turned her back on me and went out.

I could not help confessing to myself that she was in the right; I could not bring myself to commit such a baseness. She had made me reasonable in a few words: "I don't love you." There was no reply to this, and I felt I had no claim on her.

Rather it was she who might complain of me; what right had I to spy over her? I could not accuse her of deceiving me; she was free to do what she liked with herself. My best course was clearly to be silent.

I dressed myself hastily, and went to the Exchange, where I heard that a vessel was sailing for Fiume the same day.

Fiume is just opposite Ancona on the other side of the gulf. From Fiume to Trieste the distance

is forty miles, and I decided to go by that route.

I went aboard the ship and took the best place, said good-bye to the consul, paid Mardocheus, and packed my trunks.

Leah heard that I was going the same day, and came and told me that she could not give me back my lace and my silk stockings that day, but that I could have them by the next day.

"Your father," I replied coolly, "will hand them all over to the Venetian consul, who will send them to me at Trieste." ' "

Just as I was sitting down to dinner, the captain of the boat came for my luggage with a sailor. I told him he could have my trunk, and that I would bring the rest aboard whenever he liked to go.

"I intend setting out an hour before dusk."

"I shall be ready."

When Mardocheus heard where I was going he begged me to take charge of a small box and a letter he wanted to send to a friend.

"I shall be delighted to do you this small service."

At dinner Leah sat down with me and chattered as usual, without troubling herself about my monosyllabic answers.

I supposed she wished me to credit her with calm confidence and philosophy, while I looked upon it all as brazen impudence.

I hated and despised her. She had inflamed my

passions, told me to my face she did not love me, and seemed to claim my respect through it all. Possibly she expected me to be grateful for her remark that she believed me incapable of betraying her to her father.

As she drank my Scopollo she said there were several bottles left, as well as some Muscat.

"I make you a present of it all," I replied, "it will prime you up for your nocturnal orgies."

She smiled and said I had had a gratuitous sight of a spectacle which was worth money, and that if I were not going so suddenly she would gladly have given me another opportunity.

This piece of impudence made me want to break the wine bottle on her head. She must have known what I was going to do from the way I took it up, but she did not waver for a moment. This coolness of hers prevented my committing a crime.

I contented myself with saying that she was the most impudent slut I had ever met, and I poured the wine into my glass with a shaking hand, as if that were the purpose for which I had taken up the bottle.

After this scene I got up and went into the next room; nevertheless, in half an hour she came to take coffee with me.

This persistence of hers disgusted me, but I calmed myself by the reflection that her conduct must be dictated by vengeance.

"I should like to help you to pack," said she.

"And I should like to be left alone," I replied; and taking her by the arm I led her out of the room and locked the door after her.

We were both of us in the right. Leah had deceived and humiliated me, and I had reason to detest her, while I had discovered her for a monster of hypocrisy and immodesty, and this was good cause for her to dislike me.

Towards evening two sailors came after the rest of the luggage, and thanking my hostess I told Leah to put up my linen, and to give it to her father, who had taken the box of which I was to be the bearer down to the vessel.

We set sail with a fair wind, and I thought never to set face on Leah again. But fate had ordered otherwise.

We had gone twenty miles with a good wind in our quarter, by which we were borne gently from wave to wave, when all of a sudden there fell a dead calm.

These rapid changes are common enough in the Adriatic, especially in the part we were in.

The calm lasted but a short time, and a stiff wind from the west-north-west began to blow, with the result that the sea became very rough, and I was very ill.

At midnight the storm had become dangerous. The captain told me that if we persisted in going in the wind's eye we should be wrecked, and that

the only thing to be done was to return to Ancona.

In less than three hours we made the harbour, and the officer of the guard having recognized me kindly allowed me to land.

While I was talking to the officer the sailors took my trunks, and carried them to my old lodgings without waiting to ask my leave.

I was vexed. I wanted to avoid Leah, and I had intended to sleep at the nearest inn. However, there was no help for it. When I arrived the Jew got up, and said he was delighted to see me again.

It was past three o'clock in the morning, and I felt very ill, so I said I would not get up till late, and that I would dine in my bed without any foie gras. I slept ten hours, and when I awoke I felt hungry and rang my bell.

The maid answered and said that she would have the honour of waiting on me, as Leah had a violent headache.

I made no answer, thanking Providence for delivering me from this impudent and dangerous woman.

Having found my dinner rather spare I told the cook to get me a good supper.

The weather was dreadful. The Venetian consul had heard of my return, and not having seen me concluded I was ill, and paid me a two hours' visit. He assured me the storm would last for a week at least. I was very sorry to hear it ; in the first place, because I did not want to see any more

Leah, and in the second, because I had not got any money. Luckily I had got valuable effects, so this second consideration did not trouble me much.

As I did not see Leah at supper-time I imagined that she was feigning illness to avoid meeting me, and I felt very much obliged to her on this account. As it appeared, however, I was entirely mistaken in my conjectures.

The next day she came to ask for chocolate in her usual way, but she no longer bore upon her features her old tranquillity of expression.

"I will take coffee, mademoiselle," I observed; "and as I do not want foie gras any longer, I will take dinner by myself. Consequently, you may tell your father that I shall only pay seven pauls a day. In future I shall only drink Orvieto wine."

"You have still four bottles of Scopolio and Cyprus."

"I never take back a present; the wine belongs to you. I shall be obliged by your leaving me alone as much as possible, as your conduct is enough to irritate Socrates, and I am not Socrates. Besides, the very sight of you is disagreeable to me. Your body may be beautiful, but knowing that the soul within is a monster it charms me no longer. You may be very sure that the sailors brought my luggage here without my orders, or else you would never have seen me here again, where I dread being poisoned every day."

Leah went out without giving me any answer,

and I felt certain that after my plain-spoken discourse she would take care not to trouble me again.

Experience had taught me that girls like Leah are not uncommon. I had known specimens at Spa, Genoa, London, and at Venice, but this Jewess was the worst I had ever met.

It was Saturday. When Mardocheus came back from the synagogue he asked me gaily why I had mortified his daughter, as she had declared she had done nothing to offend me.

"I have not mortified her, my dear Mardocheus, or at all events, such was not my intention; but as I have to put myself on diet, I shall be eating no more foie gras, and consequently I shall dine by myself, and save three pauls a day."

"Leah is quite ready to pay me out of her private purse, and she wants to dine with you to assure you against being poisoned, as she informs me that you have expressed that fear."

"That was only a jest; I am perfectly aware that I am in the house of an honest man. I don't want your daughter to pay for herself, and to prove that I am not actuated by feelings of economy, you shall dine with me too. To offer to pay for me is an impertinence on her part. In fine, I will either dine by myself and pay you seven pauls a day, or I will pay you thirteen, and have both father and daughter to dine with me."

The worthy Mardocheus went away, saying that he really could not allow me to dine by myself.

At dinner-time I talked only to Mardocheus, without glancing at Leah or paying any attention to the witty sallies she uttered to attract me. I only drank Orvieto.

At dessert Leah filled my glass with Scopolo, saying that if I did not drink it neither would she.

I replied, without looking at her, that I advised her only to drink water for the future, and that I wanted nothing at her hands.

Mardocheus, who liked wine, laughed and said I was right, and drank for three.

The weather continued bad, and I spent the rest of the day in writing, and after supper I retired and went to sleep.

Suddenly I was aroused by a slight noise.

"Who is there?" said I.

I heard Leah's voice, whispering in reply,—

"'Tis I; I have not come to disturb you, but to justify myself."

So saying she lay down on the bed, but on the outside of the coverlet.

I was pleased with this extraordinary visit, for my sole desire was for vengeance, and I felt certain of being able to resist all her arts. I therefore told her politely enough that I considered her as already justified, and that I should be obliged by her leaving me as I wanted to go to sleep.

"Not before you have heard what I have to say."

"Go on; I am listening to you."

Thereupon she began a discourse which I did not interrupt, and which lasted for a good hour.

She spoke very artfully, and after confessing she had done wrong she said that at my age I should have been ready to overlook the follies of a young and passionate girl. According to her it was all weakness, and pardonable at such an age.

"I swear I love you," said she, "and I would have given you good proof before now if I had not been so unfortunate as to love the young Christian you saw with me, while he does not care for me in the least ; indeed I have to pay him.

"In spite of my passion," she continued, "I have never given him what a girl can give but once. I had not seen him for six months, and it was your fault that I sent for him, for you inflamed me with your pictures and strong wines."

The end of it all was that I ought to forget everything, and treat her kindly during the few days I was to remain there.

When she finished I did not allow myself to make any objection. I pretended to be convinced, assuring her that I felt I had been in the wrong in letting her see Aretin's figures, and that I would no longer evince any resentment towards her.

As her explanation did not seem likely to end in the way she wished, she went on talking about the weakness of the flesh, the strength of self-love which often hushes the voice of passion, etc., etc.; her aim being to persuade me that she loved me,

and that her refusals had all been given with the idea of making my love the stronger.

No doubt I might have given her a great many answers, but I said nothing. I made up my mind to await the assault that I saw was impending, and then by refusing all her advances I reckoned on abasing her to the uttermost. Nevertheless, she made no motion; her hands were at rest, and she kept her face at a due distance from mine.

At last, tired out with the struggle, she left me, pretending to be perfectly satisfied with what she had done.

As soon as she had gone, I congratulated myself on the fact that she had confined herself to verbal persuasion; for if she had gone further she would probably have achieved a complete victory, though we were in the dark.

I must mention that before she left me I had to promise to allow her to make my chocolate as usual.

Early the next morning she came for the stick of chocolate. She was in a complete state of *negligé*, and came in on tiptoe, though if she chose to look towards the bed she might have seen that I was wide awake.

I marked her artifices and her cunning, and resolved to be equal to all her wiles. When she brought the chocolate I noticed that there were two cups on the tray, and I said,—

"Then it is not true that you don't like chocolate?"

"I feel obliged to relieve you of all fear of being poisoned."

I noticed that she was now dressed with the utmost decency, while half an hour before she had only her chemise and petticoat, her neck being perfectly bare.

The more resolved she seemed to gain the victory, the more firmly I was determined to humiliate her, as it appeared to me the only other alternative would have been my shame and dishonour; and this turned me to stone.

In spite of my resolves, Leah renewed the attack at dinner, for, contrary to my orders, she served a magnificent foie gras, telling me that it was for herself, and that if she were poisoned she would die of pleasure; Mardocheus said he should like to die too, and began regaling himself on it with evident relish.

I could not help laughing, and announced my wish to taste the deadly food, and so we all of us were eating it.

"Your resolves are not strong enough to withstand seduction," said Leah.

This remark piqued me, and I answered that she was imprudent to disclose her designs in such a manner, and that she would find my resolves strong enough when the time came.

A faint smile played about her lips.

"Try if you like," I said, "to persuade me to drink some Scopolio or Muscat. I meant to have taken some, but your taunt has turned me to steel. I mean to prove that when I make up my mind I never alter it."

"The strong-minded man never gives way," said Leah, "but the good-hearted man often lets himself be over-persuaded."

"Quite so, and the good-hearted girl refrains from taunting a man for his weakness for her."

I called the maid and told her to go to the Venetian consul's and get me some more Scopolio and Muscat. Leah piqued me once more by saying enthusiastically,—

"I am sure you are the most good-hearted of men as well as the firmest."

Mardocheus, who could not make out what we meant, ate, drank, and laughed, and seemed pleased with everything.

In the afternoon I went out to a café in spite of the dreadful weather. I thought over Leah and her designs, feeling certain that she would pay me another nocturnal visit and renew the assault in force. I resolved to weaken myself with some common woman, if I could find one at all supportable.

A Greek who had taken me to a disgusting place a few days before, conducted me to another where he introduced me to a painted horror of a woman from whose very sight I fled in terror.

I felt angry that in a town like Ancona a man of some delicacy could not get his money's worth for his money, and went home, supped by myself, and locked the door after me.

This precaution, however, was useless.

A few minutes after I had shut the door, Leah knocked on the pretext that I had forgotten to give her the chocolate.

I opened the door and gave it her, and she begged me not to lock myself in, as she wanted to have an important and final interview.

"You can tell me now what you want to say."

"No, it will take some time, and I should not like to come till everyone is asleep. You have nothing to be afraid of; you are lord of yourself. You can go to bed in peace."

"I have certainly nothing to be afraid of, and to prove it to you I will leave the door open."

I felt more than ever certain of victory, and resolved not to blow out the candles, as my doing so might be interpreted into a confession of fear. Besides, the light would render my triumph and her humiliation more complete. With these thoughts I went to bed.

At eleven o'clock a slight noise told me that my hour had come. I saw Leah enter my room in her chemise and a light petticoat. She locked my door softly, and when I cried, "Well, what do you want with me?" she let her chemise and petticoat drop, and lay down beside me in a state of nature.

I was too much astonished to repulse her.

Leah was sure of victory, and without a word she threw herself upon me, pressing her lips to mine, and depriving me of all my faculties except one.

I utilised a short moment of reflection by concluding that I was a presumptuous fool, and that Leah was a woman with a most extensive knowledge of human nature.

In a second my caress became as ardent as hers, and after kissing her spheres of rose and alabaster I penetrated to the sanctuary of love, which, much to my astonishment, I found to be a virgin citadel.

There was a short silence, and then I said,—

“Dearest Leah, you oblige me to adore you, why did you first inspire me with hate? Are you not come here merely to humiliate me, to obtain an empty victory? If so, I forgive you; but you are in the wrong, for, believe me, enjoyment is sweeter far than vengeance.”

“Nay, I have not come to achieve a shameful victory, but to give myself to you without reserve, to render you my conqueror and my king. Prove your love by making me happy, break down the barrier which I have kept intact, despite its fragility and my ardour, and if this sacrifice does not convince you of my affection you must be the worst of men.”

I had never heard more energetic opinions, and I had never seen a more voluptuous sight. I began

the work, and while Leah aided me to the best of her ability, I forced the gate, and on Leah's face I read the most acute pain and pleasure mingled. In the first ecstasy of delight I felt her tremble in every limb.

As for me, my enjoyment was quite new ; I was twenty again, but I had the self-restraint of my age, and treated Leah with delicacy, holding her in my arms till three o'clock in the morning. When I left her she was inundated and exhausted with pleasure, while I could do no more.

She left me full of gratitude, carrying the soaking linen away with her. I slept on till twelve o'clock.

When I awoke and saw her standing by my bedside with the gentle love of the day after the wedding, the idea of my approaching departure saddened me. I told her so, and she begged me to stay on as long as I could. I repeated that we would arrange everything when we met again at night.

We had a delicious dinner, for Mardocheus was bent on convincing me that he was no miser.

I spent the afternoon with the consul, and arranged that I should go on a Neapolitan man-of-war which was in quarantine at the time, and was to sail for Trieste.

As I should be obliged to pass another month at Ancona, I blessed the storm that had driven me back.

I gave the consul the gold snuff-box with which the Elector of Cologne had presented me, keeping the portrait as a memento. Three days later he handed me forty gold sequins, which was ample for my needs.

My stay in Ancona was costing me dear; but when I told Mardocheus that I should not be going for another month he declared he would no longer feed at my expense. Of course I did not insist. Leah still dined with me.

It has always been my opinion, though perhaps I may be mistaken, that the Jew was perfectly well aware of my relations with his daughter. Jews are usually very liberal on this article, possibly because they count on the child being an Israelite.

I took care that my dear Leah should have no reason to repent of our connection. How grateful and affectionate she was when I told her that I meant to stay another month! How she blessed the bad weather which had driven me back. We slept together every night, not excepting those nights forbidden by the laws of Moses.

I gave her the little gold heart, which might be worth ten sequins, but that would be no reward for the care she had taken of my linen. She also made me accept some splendid Indian handkerchiefs. Six years later I met her again at Pesaro.

I left Ancona on November 14th, and on the 15th I was at Trieste.

CHAPTER X

PITTONI—ZAGURI—THE PROCURATOR MORCSINI—
THE VENETIAN CONSUL—GORICE—THE FRENCH
CONSUL—MADAME LEO—MY DEVOTION TO THE
STATE INQUISITORS—STRASOLDO—MADAME CRAG-
NOLINE—GENERAL BURGHAUSEN

THE landlord asked me my name, we made our agreement, and I found myself very comfortably lodged. Next day I went to the post-office and found several letters which had been awaiting me for the last month. I opened one from M. Dandolo, and found an open enclosure from the patrician Marco Dona, addressed to Baron Pittoni, Chief of Police. On reading it, I found I was very warmly commended to the baron. I hastened to call on him, and gave him the letter, which he took but did not read. He told me that M. Dona had written to him about me, and that he would be delighted to do anything in his power for me.

I then took Mardocheus's letter to his friend Moses Levi. I had not the slightest idea that the

letter had any reference to myself, so I gave it to the first clerk that I saw in the office.

Levi was an honest and an agreeable man, and the next day he called on me and offered me his services in the most cordial manner. He shewed me the letter I had delivered, and I was delighted to find that it referred to myself. The worthy Mardocheus begged him to give me a hundred sequins in case I needed any money, adding that any politeness shewn to me would be as if shewn to himself.

This behaviour on the part of Mardocheus filled me with gratitude, and reconciled me, so to speak, with the whole Jewish nation. I wrote him a letter of thanks, offering to serve him at Venice in any way I could.

I could not help comparing the cordiality of Levi's welcome with the formal and ceremonious reception of Baron Pittoni. The baron was ten or twelve years younger than I. He was a man of parts, and quite devoid of prejudice. A sworn foe of *meum* and *tuum*, and wholly incapable of economy, he left the whole care of his house to his valet, who robbed him, but the baron knew it and made no objection. He was a determined bachelor, a gallant, and the friend and patron of libertines. His chief defect was his forgetfulness and absence of mind, which made him mismanage important business.

He was reputed, though wrongly, to be a liar.

A liar is a person who tells falsehoods intentionally, while if Pittoni told lies it was because he had forgotten the truth. We became good friends in the course of a month, and we have remained friends to this day.

I wrote to my friends at Venice, announcing my arrival at Trieste, and for the next ten days I kept my room, busied in putting together the notes I had made on Polish events since the death of Elizabeth Petrovna. I meant to write a history of the troubles of unhappy Poland up to its dismemberment, which was taking place at the epoch in which I was writing.

I had foreseen all this when the Polish Diet recognized the dying czarina as Empress of all the Russias, and the Elector of Brandenburg as King of Prussia, and I proceeded with my history; but only the first three volumes were published, owing to the printers breaking the agreement. The four last volumes will be found in manuscript after my death, and anyone who likes may publish them. But I have become indifferent to all this as to many other matters since I have seen Folly crowned king of the earth.

To-day there is no such country as Poland, but it might still be in existence if it had not been for the ambition of the Czartoryski family, whose pride had been humiliated by Count Brühl, the prime minister. To gain vengeance Prince Augustus Czartoryski ruined his country. He was so blinded

by passion that he forgot that all actions have their inevitable results.

Czartoryski had determined not only to exclude the House of Saxony from the succession, but to dethrone the member of that family who was reigning. To do this the help of the Czarina and of the Elector of Brandenburg was necessary, so he made the Polish Diet acknowledge the one as Empress² of all the Russias, and the other as King of Prussia. The two sovereigns would not treat with the Polish Commonwealth till this claim had been satisfied; but the Commonwealth should never have granted these titles, for Poland itself possessed most of the Russias, and was the true sovereign of Prussia, the Elector of Brandenburg being only Duke of Prussia in reality.

Prince Czartoryski, blinded by the desire of vengeance, persuaded the Diet that to give the two sovereigns these titles would be merely a form, and that they would never become anything more than honorary. This might be so, but if Poland had possessed far-seeing statesmen they would have guessed that an honorary title would end in the usurpation of the whole country.

The Russian palatin had the pleasure of seeing his nephew Stanislas Poniatowski on the throne.

I myself told him that these titles gave a right, and that the promise not to make any use of them was a mere delusion. I added jokingly—for I was obliged to adopt a humorous tone—that before long Europe would take pity on Poland, which had to

bear the heavy weight of all the Russias and the kingdom of Prussia as well, and the Commonwealth would find itself relieved of all these charges.

My prophecy has been fulfilled. The two princes whose titles were allowed have torn Poland limb from limb; it is now absorbed in Russia and Prussia.

The second great mistake made by Poland was in not remembering the apologue of the man and the horse when the question of protection presented itself.

The Republic of Rome became mistress of the world by protecting other nations.

Thus Poland came to ruin through ambition, vengeance, and folly—but folly most of all.

The same reason lay at the root of the French Revolution. Louis XVI. paid the penalty of his folly with his life. If he had been a wise ruler he would still be on the throne, and France would have escaped the fury of the Revolutionists. France is sick; in any other country this sickness might be remedied, but I would not wonder if it proved incurable in France.

Certain emotional persons are moved to pity by the emigrant French nobles, but for my part I think them only worthy of contempt. Instead of parading their pride and their disgrace before the eyes of foreign nations, they should have rallied round their king, and either have saved the throne or died under its ruins. What will become of

France? It were hard to say; but it is certain that a body without a head cannot live very long, for reason is situate in the head.

On December 1st Baron Pittoni begged me to call on him as some one had come from Venice on purpose to see me.

I dressed myself hastily, and went to the baron's, where I saw a fine-looking man of thirty-five or forty, elegantly dressed. He looked at me with the liveliest interest.

"My heart tells me," I began, "that your excellence's name is Zaguri?"

"Exactly so, my dear Casanova. As soon as my friend Dandolo told me of your arrival here, I determined to come and congratulate you on your approaching recall, which will take place either this year or the next, as I hope to see two friends of mine made Inquisitors. You may judge of my friendship for you when I tell you that I am an *avogador*, and that there is a law forbidding such to leave Venice. We will spend to-day and to-morrow together."

I replied in a manner to convince him that I was sensible of the honour he had done me; and I heard Baron Pittoni begging me to excuse him for not having come to see me. He said he had forgotten all about it, and a handsome old man begged his excellence to ask me to dine with him, though he had not the pleasure of knowing me.

"What!" said Zaguri, "Casanova has been

here for the last ten days, and does not know the Venetian consul?"

I hastened to speak.

"It's my own fault," I observed, "I did not like calling on this gentleman, for fear he might think me contraband."

The consul answered wittily that I was not contraband but in quarantine, pending my return to my native land; and that in the meanwhile his house would always be open to me, as had been the house of the Venetian consul at Ancona.

In this manner he let me know that he knew something about me, and I was not at all sorry for it.

Marco Monti, such was the consul's name, was a man of parts and much experience; a pleasant companion and a great conversationalist, fond of telling amusing stories with a grave face—in fact, most excellent company.

I was something of a *conteur* myself, and we soon became friendly rivals in telling anecdotes. In spite of his thirty additional years I was a tolerable match for him, and when we were in a room there was no question of gaming to kill the time.

We became fast friends, and I benefited a good deal by his offices during the two years I spent in Trieste, and I have always thought that he had a considerable share in obtaining my recall. That was my great object in those days; I was a victim to nostalgia, or home sickness.

With the Swiss and the Sclavs it is really a fatal disease, which carries them off if they are not sent home immediately. Germans are subject to this weakness also; whilst the French suffer very little, and Italians not much more from the complaint.

No rule, however, lacks its exception, and I was one. I daresay I should have got over my nostalgia if I had treated it with contempt, and then I should not have wasted ten years of my life in the bosom of my cruel stepmother Venice.

I dined with M. Zaguri at the consul's, and I was invited to dine with the governor, Count Auersberg, the next day.

This visit from a Venetian *avogador* made me a person of great consideration. I was no longer looked upon as an exile, but as one who had successfully escaped from illegal confinement.

The day after I accompanied M. Zaguri to Gorice, where he stayed three days to enjoy the hospitality of the nobility. I was included in all their invitations, and I saw that a stranger could live very pleasantly at Gorice.

I met there a certain Count Cobenzl, who may be alive now—a man of wisdom, generosity, and the vastest learning, and yet without any kind of pretension. He gave a State dinner to M. Zaguri, and I had the pleasure of meeting there three or four most charming ladies. I also met Count Torres, a Spaniard whose father was in the Austrian service.

He had married at sixty, and had five children all as ugly as himself. His daughter was a charming girl in spite of her plainness; she evidently got her character from the mother's side. The eldest son, who was ugly and squinted, was a kind of pleasant madman, but he was also a liar, a profligate, a boaster, and totally devoid of discretion. In spite of these defects he was much sought after in society as he told a good tale and made people laugh. If he had been a student, he would have been a distinguished scholar, as his memory was prodigious. He it was who vainly guaranteed the agreement I made with Valerio Valeri for printing my "History of Poland." I also met at Gorice a Count Coronini, who was known in learned circles as the author of some Latin treatises on diplomacy. Nobody read his books, but everybody agreed that he was a very learned man.

I also met a young man named Morelli, who had written a history of the place and was on the point of publishing the first volume. He gave me his MS. begging me to make any corrections that struck me as desirable. I succeeded in pleasing him, as I gave him back his work without a single note or alteration of any kind, and thus he became my friend.

I became a great friend of Count Francis Charles Coronini, who was a man of talents. He had married a Belgian lady, but not being able to agree they had separated and he passed his time

in trifling intrigues, hunting, and reading, the papers, literary and political. He laughed at those sages who declared that there was not one really happy person in the world, and he supported his denial by the unanswerable dictum :

“ I myself am perfectly happy.”

However, as he died of a tumour in the head at the age of thirty-five, he probably acknowledged his mistake in the agonies of death.

There is no such thing as a perfectly happy or perfectly unhappy man in the world. One has more happiness in his life and another more unhappiness, and the same circumstance may produce widely different effects on individuals of different temperaments.

It is not a fact that virtue ensures happiness, for the exercise of some virtues implies suffering, and suffering is incompatible with happiness.

My readers may be aware that I am not inclined to make mental pleasure pre-eminent and all sufficing. It may be a fine thing to have a clear conscience, but I cannot see that it would at all relieve the pangs of hunger.

Baron Pittoni and myself escorted Zaguri to the Venetian border, and we then returned to Trieste together.

In three or four days Pittoni took me everywhere, including the club where none but persons of distinction were admitted. This club was held at the inn where I was staying.

.Amongst the ladies, the most noteworthy was the wife of the merchant, David Riguelin, who was a Swabian by birth.

Pittoni was in love with her and continued so till her death. His suit lasted for twelve years, and like Petrarch, he still sighed, still hoped, but never succeeded. Her name was Zanetta, and besides her beauty she had the charm of being an exquisite singer and a polished hostess. Still more noteworthy, however, was the unvarying sweetness and equability of her disposition.

I did not want to know her long before recognizing that she was absolutely impregnable. I told Pittoni so, but all in vain ; he still fed on empty hope.

Zanetta very poor health, though no one would have judged so from her appearance, but it was well known to be the case. She died at an early age.

A few days after M. Zaguri's departure, I had a note from the consul informing me that the Procurator Morosini was stopping in my inn, and advising me to call on him if I knew him.

I was infinitely obliged for this advice, for M. Morosini was a personage of the greatest importance. He had known me from childhood, and the reader may remember that he had presented me to Marshal Richelieu, at Fontainebleau, in 1750.

I dressed myself as if I had been about to

speak to a monarch, and sent in a note to his room.

I had not long to wait ; he came out and welcomed me most graciously, telling me how delighted he was to see me again.

When he heard the reason of my being at Trieste, and how I desired to return to my country, he assured me he would do all in his power to obtain me my wish. He thanked me for the care I had taken of his nephew at Florence, and kept me all the day while I told him my principal adventures.

He was glad to hear that M. Zaguri was working for me, and said that they must concert the matter together. He commended me warmly to the consul, who was delighted to be able to inform the Tribunal of the consideration with which M. Morosini treated me.

After the procurator had gone I began to enjoy life at Trieste, but in strict moderation and with due regard for economy, for I had only fifteen sequins a month. I abjured play altogether.

Every day I dined with one of the circle of my friends, who were the Venetian consul, the French consul (an eccentric but worthy man who kept a good cook), Pittoni, who kept an excellent table, thanks to his man who knew what was to his own interests, and several others.

As for the pleasures of love I enjoyed them in moderation, taking care of my purse and of my health.

Towards the end of the carnival I went to a masked ball at the theatre, and in the course of the evening a harlequin came up and presented his columbine to me. They both began to play tricks on me. I was pleased with the columbine, and felt a strong desire to be acquainted with her. After some vain researches the French consul, M. de St. Sauveur, told me that the harlequin was a young lady of rank, and that the columbine was a handsome young man.

"If you like," he added, "I will introduce you to the harlequin's family, and I am sure you will appreciate her charms when you see her as a girl."

As they persisted in their jokes I was able, without wounding decency overmuch, to convince myself that the consul was right on the question of sex; and when the ball was over I said I should be obliged by his introducing me as he had promised. He promised to do so the day after Ash Wednesday.

Thus I made the acquaintance of Madame Leo, who was still pretty and agreeable, though she had lived very freely in her younger days. There was her husband, a son, and six daughters, all handsome, but especially the harlequin with whom I was much taken. Naturally I fell in love with her, but as I was her senior by thirty years, and had begun my addresses in a tone of fatherly affection, a feeling of shame prevented my disclosing to her the real state of my heart. Four years later she

told me herself that she had guessed my real feelings, and had been amused by my foolish restraint.

A young girl learns deeper lessons from nature than we men can acquire with all our experience.

At the Easter of 1773 Count Auersperg, the Governor of Trieste, was recalled to Vienna, and Count Wagensberg took his place. His eldest daughter, the Countess Lantieri, who was a great beauty, inspired me with a passion which would have made me unhappy if I had not succeeded in hiding it under a veil of the profoundest respect.

I celebrated the accession of the new governor by some verses which I had printed, and in which, while lauding the father, I paid conspicuous homage to the charms of the daughter.

My tribute pleased them, and I became an intimate friend of the count's. He placed confidence in me with the idea of my using it to my own advantage, for though he did not say so openly I divined his intention.

The Venetian consul had told me that he had been vainly endeavouring for the last four years to get the Government of Trieste to arrange for the weekly diligence from Trieste to Mestre to pass by Udine, the capital of the Venetian Friuli.

"This alteration," he had said, "would greatly benefit the commerce of the two states; but the Municipal Council of Trieste opposes it for a plausible but ridiculous reason."

These councillors, in the depth of their wisdom, said that if the Venetian Republic desired the alteration it would evidently be to their advantage, and consequently to the disadvantage of Trieste.

The consul assured me that if I could in any way obtain the concession it would weigh strongly in my favour with the State Inquisitors, and even in the event of my non-success he would represent my exertions in the most favourable light.

I promised I would think the matter over.

Finding myself high in the governor's favour, I took the opportunity of addressing myself to him on the subject. He had heard about the matter, and thought the objection of the Town Council absurd and even monstrous; but he professed his inability to do anything himself.

"Councillor Rizzi," said he, "is the most obstinate of them all, and has led astray the rest with his sophisms. But do you send me in a memorandum shewing that the alteration will have a much better effect on the large commerce of Trieste than on the comparatively trifling trade of Udine. I shall send it into the Council without disclosing the authorship, but backing it with my authority, and challenging the opposition to refute your arguments. Finally, if they do not decide reasonably I shall proclaim before them all my intention to send the memoir to Vienna with my opinion on it."

I felt confident of success, and wrote out a

memoir full of incontrovertible reasons in favour of the proposed change.

My arguments gained the victory ; the Council were persuaded, and Count Wagensberg handed me the decree, which I immediately laid before the Venetian consul. Following his advice, I wrote to the secretary of the Tribunal to the effect that I was happy to have given the Government a proof of my zeal, and an earnest of my desire to be useful to my country and to be worthy of being recalled.

Out of regard for me the count delayed the promulgation of the decree for a week, so that the people of Udine heard the news from Venice before it had reached Trieste, and everybody thought that the Venetian Government had achieved its ends by bribery. The secretary of the Tribunal did not answer my letter, but he wrote to the consul ordering him to give me a hundred ducats, and to inform me that this present was to encourage me to serve the Republic. He added that I might hope great things from the mercy of the Inquisitors if I succeeded in negotiating the Armenian difficulty.

The consul gave me the requisite information, and my impression was that my efforts would be in vain ; however, I resolved to make the attempt.

Four Armenian monks had left the Convent of St. Lazarus at Venice, having found the abbot's tyranny unbearable. They had wealthy relations at Constantinople, and laughed the excommunication of their late tyrant to scorn. They sought

asylum at Vienna, promising to make themselves useful to the State by establishing an Armenian press to furnish all the Armenian convents with books. They engaged to sink a capital of a million florins if they were allowed to settle in Austria, to found their press, and to buy or build a convent, where they proposed to live in community but without any abbot.

As might be expected the Austrian Government did not hesitate to grant their request ; it did more, it gave them special privileges.

The effect of this arrangement would be to deprive Venice of a lucrative trade, and to place it in the emperor's dominions. Consequently the Viennese Court sent them to Trieste with a strong recommendation to the governor, and they had been there for the past six months.

The Venetian Government, of course, wished to entice them back to Venice. They had vainly induced their late abbot to make handsome offers to them, and they then proceeded by indirect means, endeavouring to stir up obstacles in their way, and to disgust them with Trieste.

The consul told me plainly that he had not touched the matter, thinking success to be out of the question; and he predicted that if I attempted it I should find myself in the dilemma of having to solve the insoluble.

I felt the force of the consul's remark when I reflected that I could not rely on the governor's

assistance, or even speak to him on the subject. I saw that I must not let him suspect my design, for besides his duty to his Government he was a devoted friend to the interests of Trieste, and for this reason a great patron of the monks.

In spite of these obstacles my nostalgia made me make acquaintance with these monks under pretence of inspecting their Armenian types, which they were already casting. In a week or ten days I became quite intimate with them. One day I said that they were bound in honour to return to the obedience of their abbot, if only to annul his sentence of excommunication.

The most obstinate of them told me that the abbot had behaved more like a despot than a father, and had thus absolved them from their obedience.

"Besides," he said, "no rascally priest has any right to cut off good Christians from communion with the Saviour, and we are sure that our patriarch will give us absolution and send us some more monks."

I could make no objection to these arguments; however, I asked on another occasion on what conditions they would return to Venice.

The most sensible of them said that in the first place the abbot must withdraw the four hundred thousand ducats which he had entrusted to the Marquis Serpos at four per cent.

This sum was the capital from which the income of the Convent of St. Lazarus was derived.

The abbot had no right whatever to dispose of it, even with the consent of a majority among the monks. If the marquis became bankrupt the convent would be utterly destitute. The marquis was an Armenian diamond merchant, and a great friend of the abbot's.

I then asked the monks what were the other conditions, and they replied that these were some matters of discipline which might easily be settled; they would give me a written statement of their grievances as soon as I could assure them that the Marquis Serpos was no longer in possession of their funds.

I embodied my negotiations in writing, and sent the document to the Inquisitors by the consul. In six weeks I received an answer to the effect that the abbot saw his way to arranging the money difficulty, but that he must see a statement of the reforms demanded before doing so.

This decided me to have nothing to do with the affair, but a few words from Count Wagensberg made me throw it up without further delay. He gave me to understand that he knew of my attempts to reconcile the four monks with their abbot, and he told me that he had been sorry to hear the report, as my success would do harm to a country where I lived and where I was treated as a friend.

I immediately told him the whole story, assuring him that I would never have begun the negotiation if I had not been certain of failure, for

I heard on undoubted authority that Serpos could not possibly restore the four hundred thousand ducats.

This explanation thoroughly dissipated any cloud that might have arisen between us.

The Armenians bought Councillor Rizzi's house for thirty thousand florins. Here they established themselves, and I visited them from time to time without saying anything more about Venice.

Count Wagensberg gave me another proof of his friendship. Unhappily for me he died during the autumn of the same year, at the age of fifty.

One morning he summoned me, and I found him perusing a document he had just received from Vienna. He told me he was sorry I did not read German, but that he would tell me the contents of the paper.

"Here," he continued, "you will be able to serve your country without in any way injuring Austria.

"I am going to confide in you a State secret (it being understood of course that my name is never to be mentioned) which ought to be greatly to your advantage, whether you succeed or fail; at all hazards your patriotism, your prompt action, and your cleverness in obtaining such information will be made manifest. Remember you must never divulge your sources of information; only tell your Government that you are perfectly sure of the authenticity of the statement you make.

"You must know," he continued, "that all the commodities we export to Lombardy pass through Venice where they have to pay duty. Such has long been the custom, and it may still be so if the Venetian Government will consent to reduce the duty of four per cent to two per cent.

"A plan has been brought before the notice of the Austrian Court, and it has been eagerly accepted. I have received certain orders on the matter, which I shall put into execution without giving any warning to the Venetian Government.

"In future all goods for Lombardy will be embarked here and disembarked at Mezzola without troubling the Republic. Mezzola is in the territories of the Duke of Modena; a ship can cross the gulf in the night, and our goods will be placed in store-houses, which will be erected.

"In this way we shall shorten the journey and decrease the freights, and the Modenese Government will be satisfied with a trifling sum, barely equivalent to a fourth of what we pay to Venice.

"In spite of all this, I feel sure that if the Venetian Government wrote to the Austrian Council of Commerce expressing their willingness to take two per cent. henceforth, the proposal would be accepted, for we Austrians dislike novelties.

"I shall not lay the matter before the Town Council for four or five days, as there is no hurry for us; but you had better make haste, that you may be the first to inform your Government of the matter.

"If everything goes as I should wish I hope to receive an order from Vienna suspending the decree just as I am about to make it public."

I soon saw of what advantage this secret would be to me, for it was the hobby of the State Inquisitors to have the first information of everything. They obtained this by a vast army of well-paid spies.

I expressed my gratitude to the count, and told him that I would write out my report, and send it by express to the State Inquisitors after he had read it.

"I shall be very glad to read it," he replied.

For once in my life I had no dinner, and in four or five hours I had made a rough draft and a fair copy, which I took to his excellence, who was delighted with the promptness I had displayed. He told me I had expressed the matter admirably, and I then went to the consul, and gave him the document to seal without any preliminary explanation.

When he had perused it he looked at me in astonishment.

"Are you quite sure," said he, "that all this is not a myth? I really don't believe in it, for I have not heard a word of this, and nobody in Trieste knows anything about it."

"I will answer for the truth of every word with my life, but I cannot disclose the source of my information."

He thought the matter over for some minutes, and said,—

"If I am to send this letter with official knowledge of what it contains, I must send it to my masters, the Council of Commerce, and not to the State Inquisitors. But what you want is to send it to the Tribunal, so do you seal the letter and give it to me with a polite note, begging me to remit it to the State Inquisitors."

"Why do you wish me to shew this lack of confidence in you?"

"Because if I was supposed to be aware of the contents of your letter, I should have to answer for the truth of it, and this might involve me in trouble with the Board of Trade, whose servant I am. It is to my interest and your own that I should remain in ignorance of the affair till it is brought before me in an official manner. It strikes me that if it be a true report the governor must know of it, and that in a week's time it will not be a secret to anyone. I shall then report it to the board, and my duty will be done."

"Then I may send in my report directly, without placing it in your hands?"

"No, for in the first place you would not be believed, and in the second place it might injure me; I should be blamed for negligence. There's a third reason, and a good one—namely, that my worthy master, the president of the board, would not give you a single sequin; I doubt if he would even thank you. If you are certain of the truth of your information, as I hope you are, you will not

only gain the regard of the Tribunal, but also a considerable pecuniary reward. If, on the other hand, you are mistaken you are undone, for the infallible Tribunal would never forgive anyone who caused it to make a gross blunder. An hour after the Inquisitors have received your report, the President of the Board of Trade will be furnished with a copy."

"Why a copy?"

"Because you name yourself, and none must share the secrets of their infallible high and mightinesses."

"I see."

I followed my good friend's excellent advice. I wrote a note to him, and sealed my report, addressing it to Marc Antony Businello, the secretary of the Tribunal, and brother of the secretary under whom I had been imprisoned seventeen years ago.

Next morning the governor was delighted to hear that everything had been finished before midnight. He assured me that the consul should not have official information before Saturday. In the meanwhile the consul's uneasy state of mind was quite a trouble to me, for I could not do anything to set his mind at ease.

Saturday came and Councillor Rizzi told me the news at the club. He seemed in high spirits over it, and said that the loss of Venice was the gain of Trieste. The consul came in just then, and said that the loss would be a mere trifle for

Venice, while the first shipwreck would cost more to Trieste than ten years' duty. The consul seemed to enjoy the whole thing, but that was the part he had to play. In all small trading towns like Trieste, people make a great account of trifles.

I went to dine with the consul, who privately confessed his doubts and fears on the matter.

I asked him how the Venetians would parry the blow, and he replied,—

“They will have a number of very learned consultations, and then they will do nothing at all, and the Austrians will send their goods wherever they please.”

“But the Government is such a wise one.”

“Or rather has the reputation of wisdom.”

“Then you think it lives on its reputation?”

“Yes; like all your mouldy institutions, they continue to be simply because they have been. Old Governments are like those ancient dykes which are rotten at the base, and only stay in position by their weight and bulk.”

The consul was in the right. He wrote to his chief the same day, and in the course of the next week he heard that their excellencies had received information of the matter some time ago by extraordinary channels. For the present his duties would be confined to sending in any additional information on the same subject.

“I told you so,” said the consul; “now, what do you think of the wisdom of our sages?”

“ I think Bedlam or Charenton were their best lodging.”

In three weeks the consul received orders to give me another grant of a hundred ducats, and to allow me ten sequins a month, to encourage me to deserve well of the State.

From that time I felt sure I should be allowed to return in the course of the year, but I was mistaken, for I had to wait till the year following.

This new present, and the monthly payment of ten sequins put me at my ease, for I had expensive tastes of which I could not cure myself. I felt pleased at the thought that I was now in the pay of the Tribunal which had punished me, and which I had defied. It seemed to me a triumph, and I determined to do all in my power for the Republic.

Here I must relate an amusing incident, which delighted everyone in Trieste.

It was in the beginning of summer. I had been eating sardines by the sea-shore, and when I came home at ten o'clock at night I was astonished to be greeted by a girl whom I recognized as Count Strasoldo's maid.

The count was a handsome young man, but poor like most of that name; he was fond of expensive pleasures, and was consequently heavily in debt. He had a small appointment which brought him in an income of six hundred florins, and he had not the slightest difficulty in spending

a year's pay in three months. He had agreeable manners and a generous disposition, and I had supped with him in company with Baron Pittoni several times. He had a girl in his service who was exquisitely pretty, but none of the count's friends attempted her as he was very jealous. Like the rest, I had seen and admired her, I had congratulated the count on the possession of such a treasure in her presence, but I had never addressed a word to her.

Strasoldo had just been summoned to Vienna by Count Auersperg who liked him, and had promised to do what he could for him. He had got an employment in Poland, his furniture had been sold, he had taken leave of everyone, and nobody doubted that he would take his pretty maid with him. I thought so too, for I had been to wish him a pleasant journey that morning, and my astonishment at finding the girl in my room may be imagined.

"What do you want, my dear?" I asked.

"Forgive me, sir, but I don't want to go with Strasoldo, and I thought you would protect me. Nobody will be able to guess where I am, and Strasoldo will be obliged to go by himself. You will not be so cruel as to drive me away?"

"No, dearest."

"I promise you I will go away to-morrow, for Strasoldo is going to leave at day-break."

"My lovely Leuzica (this was her name), no one would refuse you an asylum, I least of all.

You are safe here, and nobody shall come in without your leave. I am only too happy that you came to me, but if it is true that the count is your lover you may be sure he will not go so easily. He will stay the whole of to-morrow at least, in the hope of finding you again."

"No doubt he will look for me everywhere but here. Will you promise not to make me go with him even if he guesses that I am with you?"

"I swear I will not."

"Then I am satisfied."

"But you will have to share my bed."

"If I shall not inconvenience you, I agree with all my heart."

"You shall see whether you inconvenience me or not. Undress, quick! But where are your things?"

"All that I have is in a small trunk behind the count's carriage, but I don't trouble myself about it."

"The poor count must be raging at this very moment."

"No, for he will not come home till midnight. He is supping with Madame Bissolotti, who is in love with him."

In the mean time Leuzica had undressed and got into bed. In a moment I was beside her, and after the severe regimen of the last eight months I spent a delicious night in her arms, for of late my pleasures had been few.

Leuzica was a perfect beauty, and worthy to be a king's mistress; and if I had been rich I would have set up a household that I might retain her in my service.

We did not awake till seven o'clock. She got up, and on looking out of the window saw Strasoldo's carriage waiting at the door.

I comforted her by saying that as long as she liked to stay with me no one could force her away.

I was vexed that I had no closet in my room, as I could not hide her from the waiter who would bring us coffee. We accordingly dispensed with breakfast, but I had to find out some way of feeding her. I thought I had plenty of time before me, but I was wrong.

At ten o'clock I saw Strasoldo and his friend Pittoni coming into the inn. They spoke to the landlord, and seemed to be searching the whole place, passing from one room to another.

I laughed, and told Leuzica that they were looking for her, and that our turn would doubtless come before long.

"Remember your promise," said she.

"You may be sure of that."

The tone in which this remark was delivered comforted her, and she exclaimed,—

"Well, well, let them come; they will get nothing by it."

I heard footsteps approaching, and went out, closing the door behind me, and begging them to

excuse my not asking them in, as there was a contraband commodity in my room.

"Only tell me that it is not my maid," said Strasoldo, in a pitiable voice. "We are sure she is here, as the sentinel at the gate saw her come in at ten o'clock."

"You are right, the fair Leuzica is at this moment in my room. I have given her my word of honour that no violence shall be used, and you may be sure I shall keep my word."

"I shall certainly not attempt any violence, but I am sure she would come of her own free will if I could speak to her."

"I will ask her if she wishes to see you. Wait a moment."

Leuzica had been listening to our conversation, and when I opened the door she told me that I could let them in.

As soon as Strasoldo appeared she asked him proudly if she was under any obligations to him, if she had stolen anything from him, and if she was not perfectly free to leave him when she liked.

The poor count replied mildly that on the contrary it was he who owed her a year's wages and had her box in his possession, but that she should not have left him without giving any reason.

"The only reason is that I don't want to go to Vienna," she replied. "I told you so a week ago. If you are an honest man you will leave me my trunk, and as to my wages you can send them to

me at my aunt's at Laibach if you haven't got any money now."

I pitied Strasoldo from the bottom of my heart; he 'prayed and entreated, and finally wept like a child. However, Pittoni roused my choler by saying that I ought to drive the slut out of my room.

"You are not the man to tell me what I ought and what I ought not to do," I replied, "and after I have received her in my apartments you ought to moderate your expressions."

Seeing that I stood on my dignity he laughed, and asked me if I had fallen in love with her in so short a time.

Strasoldo here broke in by saying he was sure she had not slept with me.

"That's where you are mistaken," said she, "for there's only one bed, and I did not sleep on the floor."

They found prayers and reproaches alike useless, and left us at noon. Leuzica was profuse in her expressions of gratitude to me.

There was no longer any mystery, so I boldly ordered dinner for two, and promised that she should remain with me till the count had left Trieste.

At three o'clock the Venetian consul came, saying that Count Strasoldo had begged him to use his good offices with me to persuade me to deliver up the fair Leuzica.

"You must speak to the girl herself," I replied ;

"she came here and stays here of her own free will."

When the worthy man had heard the girl's story he went away, saying that we had the right on our side.

In the evening a porter brought her trunk, and at this she seemed touched but not repentant.

Leuzica supped with me and again shared my couch. The count left Trieste at day-break.

As soon as I was sure that he was gone, I took a carriage and escorted the fair Leuzica two stages on her way to Laibach. We dined together, and I left her in the care of a friend of hers.

Everybody said I had acted properly, and even Pittoni confessed that in my place he would have done the same.

Poor Strasoldo came to a bad end. He got into debt, committed peculation, and had to escape into Turkey and embrace Islam to avoid the penalty of death.

About this time the Venetian general, Palmavona, accompanied by the procurator Erizzo, came to Trieste to visit the governor, Count Wagensberg. In the afternoon the count presented me to the patricians who seemed astonished to see me at Trieste.

The procurator asked me if I amused myself as well as I had done at Paris sixteen years ago, and I told him that sixteen years more, and a hundred thousand francs less, forced me to live in a different fashion.

While we were talking, the consul came in to announce that the felucca was ready. Madame de Lantieri as well as her father pressed me to join the party.

I gave a bow, which might mean either no or yes, and asked the consul what the party was. He told me that they were going to see a Venetian man-of-war at anchor in the harbour; his excellence there being the captain I immediately turned to the countess and smilingly professed my regret that I was unable to set foot on Venetian soil.

Everybody exclaimed at me,—

“You have nothing to fear. You are with honest people. Your suspicion is quite offensive.”

“That is all very fine, ladies and gentlemen, and I will come with all my heart, if your excellences will assure me that my joining this little party will not be known to the State Inquisitors possibly by to-morrow.”

This was enough. Everybody looked at me in silence, and no objections could be found to my argument.

The captain of the vessel, who did not know me, spoke a few whispered words to the others, and then they left.

The next day the consul told me that the captain had praised my prudence in declining to go on board, as if anyone had chanced to tell him my name and my case whilst I was on his ship, it would have been his duty to detain me.

When I told the governor of this remark he replied gravely that he should not have allowed the ship to leave the harbour.

I saw the procurator Erizzo the same evening, and he congratulated me on my discretion, telling me he would take care to let the Tribunal know how I respected its decisions.

About this time I had the pleasure of seeing a beautiful Venetian, who visited Trieste with several of her admirers. She was of the noble family of Bon, and had married Count Romili de Bergamo, who left her free to do whatever she liked. She drew behind her triumphal chariot an old general, Count Bourghausen, a famous rake who had deserted Mars for the past ten years in order to devote his remaining days to the service of Venus. He was a delightful man, and we became friends. Ten years later he was of service to me, as my readers will find in the next volume, which may perhaps be the last.

CHAPTER XI

SOME ADVENTURES AT TRIESTE—I AM OF SERVICE
TO THE VENETIAN GOVERNMENT—MY EXPEDITION
TO GORICE AND MY RETURN TO TRIESTE—I FIND
IRENE AS AN ACTRESS AND EXPERT GAMESTER

SOME of the ladies of Trieste thought they would like to act a French play, and I was made stage manager. I had not only to choose the pieces, but to distribute the parts, the latter being a duty of infinite irksomeness.

All the actresses were new to the boards, and I had immense trouble in hearing them repeat their parts, which they seemed unable to learn by heart. It is a well-known fact that the revolution which is really wanted in Italy is in female education. The very best families with few exceptions are satisfied with shutting up their daughters in a convent for several years till the time comes for them to marry some man whom they never see till the eve or the day of their marriage. As a consequence we have the *cicisbeo*, and in Italy as in

France the idea that our nobles are the sons of their nominal fathers is a purely conventional one.

What do girls learn in convents, especially in Italian convents? A few mechanical acts of devotion and outward forms, very little real religion, a good deal of deceit, often profligate habits, a little reading and writing, many useless accomplishments, small music and less drawing, no history, no geography or mythology, hardly any mathematics, and nothing to make a girl a good wife and a good mother.

As for foreign languages, they are unheard of; our own Italian is so soft that any other tongue is hard to acquire, and the *dolce far niente* habit is an obstacle to all assiduous study.

I write down these truths in spite of my patriotism. I know that if any of my fellow-countrywomen come to read me they will be very angry; but I shall be beyond the reach of all anger.

To return to our theatricals. As I could not make my actresses get their parts letter perfect I became their prompter, and found out by experience all the ungratefulness of the position.

The actors never acknowledge their debt to the prompter, and put down to his account all the mistakes they make.

A Spanish doctor is almost as badly off; if his patient recovers, the cure is set down to the credit of one saint or another; but if he dies, the physician is blamed for his unskilful treatment.

A handsome negress, who served the prettiest of my actresses to whom I shewed great attentions, said to me one day,—

“ I can’t make out how you can be so much in love with my mistress, who is as white as the devil.”

“ Have you never loved a white man ? ” I asked.

“ Yes,” said she, “ but only because I had no negro, to whom I should certainly have given the preference.”

Soon after the negress became mine, and I found out the falsity of the axiom, *Sublata lucerna nullum discrimen inter feminas*, for even in the darkness a man would know a black woman from a white one.

I feel quite sure myself that the negroes are a distinct species from ourselves. There is one essential difference, leaving the colour out of account — namely, that an African woman can either conceive or not, and can conceive a boy or a girl. No doubt my readers will disbelieve this assertion, but their incredulity would cease if I instructed them in the mysterious science of the negresses.

Count Rosenberg, grand chamberlain of the emperor, came on a visit to Trieste in company with an Abbé Casti, whose acquaintance I wished to make on account of some extremely blasphemous poems he had written. However, I was disappointed; and instead of a man of parts, I found the abbé to be an impudent worthless fellow,

whose only merit was a knack of versification.

Count Rosenberg took the abbé with him, because he was useful in the capacities of a fool and a pimp—occupations well suited to his morals, though by no means agreeable to his ecclesiastical status. In those days syphilis had not completely destroyed his uvula.

I heard that this shameless profligate, this paltry poetaster, had been named poet to the emperor. What a dishonour to the memory of the great Metastasio, a man free from all vices, adorned with all virtues, and of the most singular ability.

Casti had neither a fine style, nor a knowledge of dramatic requirements, as appears from two or three comic operas composed by him, in which the reader will find nothing but foolish buffooneries badly put together. In one of these comic operas he makes use of slander against King Theodore and the Venetian Republic, which he turns into ridicule by means of pitiful lies.

In another piece called *The Cave of Trophonius*, Casti made himself the laughing-stock of the literary world by making a display of useless learning which contributes nothing towards the plot.

Among the persons of quality who came to Gorice, I met a certain Count Torriano, who persuaded me to spend the autumn with him at a country house of his six miles from Gorice.

If I had listened to the voice of my good genius I should certainly never have gone.

The count was under thirty, and was not married! He could not exactly be called ugly in spite of his hangdog countenance, in which I saw the outward signs of cruelty, disloyalty, treason, pride, brutal sensuality, hatred, and jealousy. The mixture of bad qualities was such an appalling one that I thought his physiognomy was at fault, and the goods better than the sign. He asked me to come and see him so graciously that I concluded that the man gave the lie to his face.

I asked about him before accepting the invitation, and I heard nothing but good. People certainly said he was fond of the fair sex, and was a fierce avenger of any wrong done to him, but not thinking either of these characteristics unworthy of a gentleman I accepted his invitation. He told me that he would expect me to meet him at Gorice on the first day of September, and that the next day we would leave for his estate.

In consequence of Torriano's invitation I took leave of everybody, especially of Count Wagensberg, who had a serious attack of that malady which yields so easily to mercury when it is administered by a skilled hand, but which kills the unfortunate who falls amongst quacks. Such was the fate of the poor count; he died a month after I had left Trieste.

I left Trieste in the morning, dined at Proseco,

and reached Gorice in good time. I called at Count Louis Torriano's mansion, but was told he was out. However, they allowed me to deposit what little luggage I had when I informed them that the count had invited me. I then went to see Count Torres, and stayed with him till supper-time.

When I got back to the count's I was told he was in the country, and would not be back till the next day, and that in the mean time my trunks had been taken to the inn where a room and supper had been ordered.

I was extremely astonished, and went to the inn, where I was served with a bad supper in an uncomfortable room; however, I supposed that the count had been unable to accommodate me in his house, and I excused him though I wished he had forewarned me. I could not understand how a gentleman who has a house and invites a friend can be without a room wherein to lodge him.

Next morning Count Torriano came to see me, thanked me for my punctuality, congratulated himself on the pleasure he expected to derive from my society, and told me he was very sorry we could not start for two days, as a suit was to be heard the next day between himself and a rascally old farmer who was trying to cheat him.

"Well, well," said I, "I will go and hear the pleadings; it will be an amusement for me."

Soon after he took his leave, without asking me

where I intended dining, or apologizing for not having accommodated me himself.

I could not make him out; I thought he might have taken offence at my descending at his doors without having given him any warning.

"Come, come, Casanova," I said to myself, "you may be all abroad. Knowledge of character is an unfathomable gulf. We thought we had studied it deeply, but there is still more to learn; we shall see. He may have said nothing out of delicacy. I should be sorry to be found wanting in politeness, though indeed I am puzzled to know what I have done amiss."

I dined by myself, made calls in the afternoon, and supped with Count Torres. I told him that I promised myself the pleasure of hearing the eloquence of the bar of Gorice the next day.

"I shall be there too," said he, "as I am curious to see what sort of a face Torriano will put on it, if the countryman wins. I know something about the case," he continued, "and Torriano is sure of victory, unless the documents attesting the farmer's indebtedness happen to be forgeries. On the other hand, the farmer ought to win unless it can be shewn that the receipts signed by Torriano are forgeries. The farmer has lost in the first court and in the second court, but he has paid the costs and appealed from both, though he is a poor man. If he loses to-morrow he will not only be a ruined man, but will be sentenced to penal servitude, while

if he wins, Torriano should be sent to the galleys, together with his counsel, who has deserved this fate many times before."

I knew Count Torres passed for somewhat of a scandal-monger, so his remarks made little impression on me beyond whetting my curiosity. The next day I was one of the first to appear in the court, where I found the bench, plaintiff and defendant, and the barristers, already assembled. The farmer's counsel was an old man who looked honest, while the count's had all the impudence of a practised knave. The count sat beside him, smiling disdainfully, as if he was lowering himself to strive with a miserable peasant whom he had already twice vanquished.

The farmer sat by his wife, his son, and two daughters, and had that air of modest assurance which indicates resignation and a good conscience.

I wondered how such honest people could have lost in two courts, I was sure their cause must be a just one.

They were all poorly clad, and from their downcast eyes and their humble looks I guessed them to be the victims of oppression.

Each barrister could speak for two hours.

The farmer's advocate spoke for thirty minutes, which he occupied by putting in the various receipts bearing the count's signature up to the time when he had dismissed the farmer, because he would not prostitute his daughters to him. He then continued,

speaking with calm precision, to point out the anachronisms and contradictions in the count's books (which made his client a debtor), and stated that his client was in a position to prosecute the two forgers who had been employed to compass the ruin of an honest family, whose only crime was poverty. He ended his speech by an appeal for costs in all the suits, and for compensation for loss of time and defamation of character.

The harangue of the count's advocate would have lasted more than two hours if the court had not silenced him. He indulged in a torrent of abuse against the other barrister, the experts in handwriting, and the peasant, whom he threatened with a speedy consignment to the galleys.

The pleadings would have wearied me if I had been a blind man, but as it was I amused myself by a scrutiny of the various physiognomies before me. My host's face remained smiling and impudent through it all.

The pleadings over, the court was cleared, and we awaited the sentence in the adjoining room.

The peasant and his family sat in a corner apart, sad, sorry, and comfortless, with no friend to speak a consoling word, while the count was surrounded by a courtly throng, who assured him that with such a case he could not possibly lose; but that if the judges did deliver judgment against him he should pay the peasant, and force him to prove the alleged forgery.

I listened in profound silence, sympathising with the countryman rather than my host, whom I believed to be a thorough-paced scoundrel, though I took care not to say so.

Count Torres, who was a deadly foe to all prudence and discretion, asked me my opinion of the case, and I whispered that I thought the count should lose, even if he were in the right, on account of the infamous apostrophes of his counsel, who deserved to have his ears cut off or to stand in the pillory for six months.

"And the client too," said Torres aloud; but nobody had heard what I had said.

After we had waited for an hour the clerk of the court came in with two papers, one of which he gave to the peasant's counsel and the other to Torriano's. Torriano read it to himself, burst into a loud laugh, and then read it aloud.

The court condemned the count to recognize the peasant as his creditor, to pay all costs, and to give him a year's wages as damages; the peasant's right to appeal *ad minimum* on account of any other complaints he might have being reserved.

The advocate looked downcast, but Torriano consoled him by a fee of six sequins, and everybody went away.

I remained with the defendant, and asked him if he meant to appeal to Vienna.

"I shall appeal in another sort," said he; but I did not ask him what he meant.

We left Gorice the next morning.

My landlord gave me the bill, and told me he had received instructions not to insist on my paying it if I made any difficulty, as in that case the count would pay himself.

This struck me as somewhat eccentric, but I only laughed. However, the specimens I had seen of his character made me imagine that I was going to spend six weeks with a dangerous original.

In two hours we were at Spessa, and alighted at a large house, with nothing distinguished about it from an architectural point of view. We went up to the count's room, which was tolerably furnished, and after shewing me over the house he took me to my own room. It was on the ground floor, stuffy, dark, and ill furnished.

"Ah!" said he, "this is the room my poor old father used to love to sit in; like you, he was very fond of study. You may be sure of enjoying perfect liberty here, for you will see no one."

We dined late, and consequently no supper was served. The eating and the wine were tolerable, and so was the company of a priest, who held the position of the count's steward; but I was disgusted at hearing the count, who ate ravenously, reproach me with eating too slowly.

When we rose from table he told me he had a lot to do, and that we should see each other the next day.

I went to my room to put things in order, and to get out my papers. I was then working at the second volume of the Polish troubles.

In the evening I asked for a light as it was growing dark, and presently a servant came with one candle. I was indignant; they ought to have given me wax lights or a lamp at least. However, I made no complaint, merely asking one of the servants if I was to rely on the services of any amongst them.

"Our master has given us no instructions on the subject, but of course we will wait on you whenever you call us."

This would have been a troublesome task, as there was no bell, and I should have been obliged to wander all over the house, to search the courtyard, and perhaps the road, whenever I wanted a servant.

"And who will do my room?" I asked.

"The maid."

"Then she has a key of her own?"

"There is no need for a key, as your door has no lock, but you can bolt yourself in at night."

I could only laugh, whether from ill humour or amusement I really cannot say. However, I made no remark to the man.

I began my task, but in half an hour I was so unfortunate as to put out the candle whilst snuffing it. I could not roam about the house in the dark searching for a light, as I did not know my way, so

I went to bed in the dark more inclined to swear than to laugh.

Fortunately the bed was a good one, and as I had expected it to be uncomfortable I went to sleep in a more tranquil humour.

In the morning nobody came to attend on me, so I got up, and after putting away my papers I went to say good morning to my host in dressing-gown and night-cap. I found him under the hand of one of his men who served him as a valet. I told him I had slept well, and had come to breakfast with him; but he said he never took breakfast, and asked me, politely enough, not to trouble to come and see him in the morning as he was always engaged with his tenants, who were a pack of thieves. He then added that as I took breakfast he would give orders to the cook to send me up coffee whenever I liked.

"You will also be kind enough to tell your man to give me a touch with his comb after he has done with you."

"I wonder you did not bring a servant."

"If I had guessed that I should be troubling you, I should certainly have brought one."

"It will not trouble me but you, for you will be kept waiting."

"Not at all. Another thing I want is a lock to my door, for I have important papers for which I am responsible, and I cannot lock them up in my trunk whenever I leave my room."

"Everything is safe in my house."

"Of course, but you see how absurd it would be for you to be answerable in case any of my papers were missing. I might be in the greatest distress, and yet I should never tell you of it."

He remained silent for some time, and then ordered his man to tell the priest to put a lock on my door and give me the key.

While he was thinking, I noticed a taper and a book on the table beside his bed. I went up to it, and asked politely if I might see what kind of reading had beguiled him to sleep. He replied as politely, requesting me not to touch it. I withdrew immediately, telling him with a smile that I felt sure that it was a book of prayers, but that I would never reveal his secret.

"You have guessed what it is," he said, laughing.

I left him with a courteous bow, begging him to send me his man and a cup of coffee, chocolate, or broth, it mattered not which.

I went back to my room meditating seriously on his strange behaviour, and especially on the wretched tallow candle which was given me, while he had a wax taper. My first idea was to leave the house immediately, for though I had only fifty ducats in my possession my spirit was as high as when I was a rich man; but on second thoughts I determined not to put myself in the wrong by affronting him in such a signal manner.

The tallow candle was the most grievous wrong, so I resolved to ask the man whether he had not been told to give me wax lights. This was important, as it might be only a piece of knavery or stupidity on the part of the servant.

The man came in an hour with a cup of coffee, sugared according to his taste or that of the cook. This disgusted me, so I let it stay on the table, telling him, with a burst of laughter (if I had not laughed I must have thrown the coffee in his face), that that was not the way to serve breakfast. I then got ready to have my hair done.

I asked him why he had brought me a wretched tallow candle instead of two wax lights.

"Sir," the worthy man replied, humbly, "I could only give you what the priest gave me; I received a wax taper for my master and a candle for you."

I was sorry to have vexed the poor fellow, and said no more, thinking the priest might have taken a fancy to economise for the count's profit or his own. I determined to question him on the subject.

As soon as I was dressed I went out to walk off my bad humour. I met the priest-steward, who had been to the locksmith. He told me that the man had no ready-made locks, but he was going to fit my door with a padlock, of which I should have the key.

"Provided I can lock my door," I said, "I care not how it's done."

I returned to the house to see the padlock fitted, and while the locksmith was hammering away I asked the priest why he had given me a tallow candle instead of one or two wax tapers.

"I should never dare to give you tapers, sir, without express orders from the count."

"I should have thought such a thing would go without saying."

"Yes, in other houses, but here nothing goes without saying. I have to buy the tapers and he pays me, and every time he has one it is noted down."

"Then you can give me a pound of wax lights if I pay you for them?"

"Of course, but I think I must tell the count, for you know. . . ."

"Yes, I know all about it, but I don't care."

I gave him the price of a pound of wax lights, and went for a walk, as he told me dinner was at one. I was somewhat astonished on coming back to the house at half-past twelve to be told that the count had been half an hour at table.

I did not know what to make of all these acts of rudeness; however, I moderated my passion once more, and came in remarking that the abbé had told me dinner was at one.

"It is usually," replied the count, "but to-day I wanted to pay some calls and take you with me, so I decided on dining at noon. You will have plenty of time."

He then gave orders for all the dishes that had been taken away to be brought back.

I made no answer, and sat down to table, and feigning good humour ate what was on the table, refusing to touch those dishes which had been taken away. He vainly asked me to try the soup, the beef, the entrées; I told him that I always punished myself thus when I came in late for a nobleman's dinner.

Still dissembling my ill humour, I got into his carriage to accompany him on his round of visits. He took me to Baron del Mestre, who spent the whole of the year in the country with his family, keeping up a good establishment.

The count spent the whole of the day with the baron, putting off the other visits to a future time. In the evening we returned to Spessa. Soon after we arrived the priest returned the money I had given him for the candles, telling me that the count had forgotten to inform him that I was to be treated as himself.

I took this acknowledgment for what it was worth.

Supper was served, and I ate with the appetite of four, while the count hardly ate at all.

The servant who escorted me to my room asked me at what time I should like breakfast. I told him, and he was punctual; and this time the coffee was brought in the coffee-pot, and the sugar in the sugar basin.

The valet did my hair, and the maid did my room, everything was changed, and I imagined that I had given the count a little lesson, and that I should have no more trouble with him. Here, however, I was mistaken, as the reader will discover.

Three or four days later the priest came to me one morning, to ask when I would like dinner, as I was to dine in my room.

"Why so?" I asked.

"Because the count left yesterday for Gorice, telling me he did not know when he should come back. He ordered me to give you your meals in your room."

"Very good. I will dine at one."

No one could be more in favour of liberty and independence than myself, but I could not help feeling that my rough host should have told me he was going to Gorice. He stayed a week, and I should have died of weariness if it had not been for my daily visits to the Baron del Mestre. Otherwise there was no company, the priest was an uneducated man, and there were no pretty country girls. I felt as if I could not bear another four weeks of such a doleful exile.

When the count came back, I spoke to him plainly.

"I came to Spessa," I said, "to keep you company and to amuse myself; but I see that I am in the way, so I hope you will take me back to

Gorice and leave me there. You must know that I like society as much as you do, and I do not feel inclined to die of solitary weariness in your house."

He assured me that it should not happen again, that he had gone to Gorice to meet an actress, who had come there purposely to see him, and that he had also profited by the opportunity to sign a contract of marriage with a Venetian lady.

These excuses and the apparently polite tone in which they were uttered induced me to prolong my stay with the extraordinary count.

He drew the whole of his income from vineyards, which produced an excellent white wine and a revenue of a thousand sequins a year. However, as the count did his best to spend double that amount, he was rapidly ruining himself. He had a fixed impression that all the tenants robbed him, so whenever he found a bunch of grapes in a cottage he proceeded to beat the occupants, unless they could prove that the grapes did not come from his vineyards. The peasants might kneel down and beg pardon, but they were thrashed all the same.

I had been an unwilling witness of several of these arbitrary and cruel actions, when one day I had the pleasure of seeing the count soundly beaten by two peasants. He had struck the first blow himself, but when he found that he was getting the worst of it he prudently took to his heels.

He was much offended with me for remaining a mere spectator of the fray ; but I told him very

coolly that, being the aggressor, he was in the wrong, and in the second place I was not going to expose myself to be beaten to a jelly by two lusty peasants in another man's quarrel.

These arguments did not satisfy him, and in his rage he dared to tell me that I was a scurvy coward not to know that it was my duty to defend a friend to the death.

In spite of these offensive remarks I merely replied with a glance of contempt, which he doubtless understood.

Before long the whole village had heard what had happened, and the joy was universal, for the count had the singular privilege of being feared by all and loved by none. The two rebellious peasants had taken to their heels. But when it became known that his lordship had announced his resolution to carry pistols with him in all future visits, everybody was alarmed, and two spokesmen were sent to the count informing him that all his tenants would quit the estate in a week's time unless he gave them a promise to leave them in peace in their humble abodes.

The rude eloquence of the two peasants struck me as sublime, but the count pronounced them to be impertinent and ridiculous.

"We have as good a right to taste the vines which we have watered with the sweat of our brow," said they, "as your cook has to taste the dishes before they are served on your table."

The threat of deserting just at the vintage season frightened the count, and he had to give in, and the embassy went its way in high glee at its success.

Next Sunday we went to the chapel to hear mass, and when we came in the priest was at the altar finishing the *Credo*. The count looked furious, and after mass he took me with him to the sacristy, and began to abuse and beat the poor priest, in spite of the surplice which he was still wearing. It was really a shocking sight.

The priest spat in his face and cried help, that being the only revenge in his power.

Several persons ran in, so we left the sacristy. I was scandalised, and I told the count that the priest would be certain to go to Udine, and that it might turn out a very awkward business.

"Try to prevent his doing so," I added, "even by violence, but in the first place endeavour to pacify him."

No doubt the count was afraid, for he called out to his servants and ordered them to fetch the priest, whether he would come or no. His order was executed, and the priest was led in, foaming with rage, cursing the count, calling him excommunicated wretch, whose very breath was poisonous; swearing that never another mass should be sung in the chapel that had been polluted with sacrilege, and finally promising that the archbishop should avenge him.

The count let him say on, and then forced him into a chair, and the unworthy ecclesiastic not only ate but got drunk. Thus peace was concluded, and the abbé forgot all his wrongs.

A few days later two Capuchins came to visit him at noon. They did not go, and as he did not care to dismiss them, dinner was served without any place being laid for the friars. Thereupon the bolder of the two informed the count that he had had no dinner. Without replying, the count had him accommodated with a plateful of rice. The Capuchin refused it, saying that he was worthy to sit, not only at his table, but at a monarch's. The count, who happened to be in a good humour, replied that they called themselves "unworthy brethren," and that they were consequently not worthy of any of this world's good things.

The Capuchin made but a poor answer, and as I thought the count to be in the right I proceeded to back him up, telling the friar he ought to be ashamed at having committed the sin of pride, so strictly condemned by the rules of his order.

The Capuchin answered me with a torrent of abuse, so the count ordered a pair of scissors to be brought, that the beards of the filthy rogues might be cut off. At this awful threat the two friars made their escape, and we laughed heartily over the incident.

If all the count's eccentricities had been of this comparatively harmless and amusing nature, I

should not have minded, but such was far from being the case.

Instead of chyle his organs must have distilled some virulent poison; he was always at his worst in his after dinner hours. His appetite was furious; he ate more like a tiger than a man. One day we happened to be eating woodcock, and I could not help praising the dish in the style of the true gourmand. He immediately took up his bird, tore it limb from limb, and gravely bade me not to praise the dishes I liked as it irritated him.

I felt an inclination to laugh and also an inclination to throw the bottle at his head, which I should probably have indulged in had I been twenty years younger. However, I did neither, feeling that I should either leave him or accommodate myself to his humours.

Three months later Madame Costa, the actress whom he had gone to see at Gorice, told me that she would never have believed in the possibility of such a creature existing if she had not known Count Torriano.

"Though he is a vigorous lover," she continued, "it is a matter of great difficulty with him to obtain the crisis; and the wretched woman in his arms is in imminent danger of being strangled to death if she cannot conceal her amorous ecstasy. He cannot bear to see another's pleasure. I pity his wife most heartily."

I will now relate the incident which put an

end to my relations with this venomous creature.

Amidst the idleness and weariness of Spessa I happened to meet a very pretty and very agreeable young widow. I made her some small presents, and finally persuaded her to pass the night in my room. She came at midnight to avoid observation, and left at day-break by a small door which opened on to the road.

We had amused ourselves in this pleasant manner for about a week, when one morning my sweetheart awoke me that I might close the door after her as usual. I had scarcely done so when I heard cries for help. I quickly opened it again, and I saw the scoundrelly Torriano holding the widow with one hand while he beat her furiously with a stick he held in the other. I rushed upon him, and we fell together, while the poor woman made her escape.

I had only my dressing-gown on, and here I was at a disadvantage; for civilized man is a poor creature without his clothes. However, I held the stick with one hand, while I squeezed his throat with the other. On his side he clung to the stick with his right hand, and pulled my hair with the left. At last his tongue started out and he had to let go.

I was on my feet again in an instant, and seizing the stick I aimed a sturdy blow at his head, which, luckily for him, he partially parried.

I did not strike again, so he got up, ran a little

way, and began to pick up stones. However, I did not wait to be pelted, but shut myself in my room and lay down on the bed, only sorry that I had not choked the villain outright.

As soon as I had rested I looked to my pistols, dressed myself, and went out with the intention of looking for some kind of conveyance to take me back to Gorice. Without knowing it I took a road that led me to the cottage of the poor widow, whom I found looking calm though sad. She told me she had received most of the blows on her shoulders, and was not much hurt. What vexed her was that the affair would become public, as two peasants had seen the count beating her, and our subsequent combat.

I gave her two sequins, begging her to come and see me at Gorice, and to tell me where I could find a conveyance.

Her sister offered to shew me the way to a farm, where I could get what I wanted. On the way she told me that Torriano had been her sister's enemy before the death of her husband because she rejected all his proposals.

I found a good conveyance at the farm, and the man promised to drive me in to Gorice by dinner-time.

I gave him half-a-crown as an earnest, and went away, telling him to come for me.

I returned to the count's, and had scarcely finished getting ready when the conveyance drove up.

I was about to put my luggage in it, when a servant came from the count asking me to give him a moment's conversation.

I wrote a note in French, saying that 'after what had passed we ought not to meet again under his roof.

A minute later he came into my room, and shut the door, saying,—

"As you won't speak to me, I have come to speak to you."

"What have you got to say?"

"If you leave my house in this fashion you will dishonour me, and I will not allow it."

"Excuse me, but I should very much like to see how you are going to prevent me from leaving your house."

"I will not allow you to go by yourself; we must go together."

"Certainly; I understand you perfectly. Get your sword or your pistols, and we will start directly. There is room for two in the carriage."

"That won't do. You must dine with me, and then we can go in my carriage."

"You make a mistake. I should be a fool if I dined with you when our miserable dispute is all over the village; to-morrow it will have reached Gorice."

"If you won't dine with me, I will dine with you, and people may say what they like. We will go after dinner, so send away that conveyance."

I had to give in to him. The wretched count stayed with me till noon, endeavouring to persuade me that he had a perfect right to beat a country-woman in the road, and that I was altogether in the wrong.

I laughed, and said I wondered how he derived his right to beat a free woman anywhere, and that his pretence that I being her lover had no right to protect her was a monstrous one.

"She had just left my arms," I continued, "was I not therefore her natural protector? Only a coward or a monster like yourself would have remained indifferent, though, indeed, I believe that even you would have done the same."

A few minutes before we sat down to dinner he said that neither of us would profit by the adventure, as he meant the duel to be to the death.

"I don't agree with you as far as I am concerned," I replied; "and as to the duel, you can fight or not fight, as you please; for my part I have had satisfaction. If we come to a duel I hope to leave you in the land of the living, though I shall do my best to lay you up for a considerable time, so that you may have leisure to reflect on your folly. On the other hand, if fortune favours you, you may act as you please."

"We will go into the wood by ourselves, and my coachman shall have orders to drive you wherever you like if you come out of the wood by yourself."

“Very good indeed; and which would you prefer—swords or pistols?”

“Swords, I think.”

“Then I promise to unload my pistols as^o soon as we get into the carriage.”

I was astonished to find the usually brutal count become quite polite at the prospect of a duel. I felt perfectly confident myself, as I was sure of flooring him at the first stroke by a peculiar lunge. Then I could escape through Venetian territory where I was not known. But I had good reasons for supposing that the duel would end in smoke, as so many other duels when one of the parties is a coward, and a coward I believed the count to be.

We started after an excellent dinner; the count having no luggage, and mine being strapped behind the carriage.

I took care to draw the charges of my pistols before the count.

I had heard him tell the coachman to drive towards Gorice, but every moment I expected to hear him order the man to drive up this or that turning that we might settle our differences.

I asked no questions, feeling that the initiative lay with him; but we drove on till we were at the gates of Gorice, and I burst out laughing when I heard the count order the coachman to drive to the posting inn.

As soon as we got there he said,—

“You were in the right; we must remain friends.

Promise me not to tell anyone of what has happened.'

I gave him the promise; we shook hands, and everything was over.

The next day I took up my abode in one of the quietest streets to finish my second volume on the Polish troubles, but I still managed to enjoy myself during my stay at Gorice. At last I resolved on returning to Trieste, where I had more chances of serving and pleasing the State Inquisitors.

I stayed at Gorice till the end of the year 1773, and passed an extremely pleasant six weeks.

My adventure at Spessa had become public property. At first everybody addressed me on the subject, but as I laughed and treated the whole thing as a joke it would soon be forgotten. Torriano took care to be most polite whenever we met; but I had stamped him as a dangerous character, and whenever he asked me to dinner or supper I had always other engagements.

During the carnival he married the young lady of whom he had spoken to me, and as long as he lived her life was misery. Fortunately he died a madman thirteen or fourteen years after.

Whilst I was at Gorice Count Charles Coronini contributed greatly to my enjoyment. He died four years later, and a month before his death he sent me his will in octosyllabic Italian verses—a specimen of philosophic mirth which I still preserve.

It is full of jest and wit, though I believe if he had guessed the near approach of death he would not have been so cheerful, for the prospect of imminent destruction can only enliven the heart of a mafiac.

During my stay at Gorice a certain M. Richard Lorrain came there. He was a bachelor of forty, who had done good financial service under the Viennese Government, and had now retired with a comfortable pension. He was a fine man, and his agreeable manners and excellent education procured him admission into the best company in the town.

I met him at the house of Count Torres, and soon after he was married to the young countess.

In October the new Council of Ten and the new Inquisitors took office, and my protectors wrote to me that if they could not obtain my pardon in the course of the next twelve months they would be inclined to despair. The first of the Inquisitors was Sagredo, an intimate friend of the Procurator Morosini's, the second, Grimani, the friend of my good Dandolo; and M. Zaguri wrote to me that he would answer for the third, who, according to law, was one of the six councillors who assist the Council of Ten.

It may not be generally known that the Council of Ten is really a council of seventeen, as the Doge has always a right to be present.

I returned to Trieste determined to do my best for the Tribunal, for I longed to return to Venice after nineteen years' wanderings.

I was then forty-nine, and I expected no more of Fortune's gifts, for the deity despises those of ripe age. I thought, however, that I might live comfortably and independently at Venice.

I had talents and experience, I hoped to make use of them, and I thought the Inquisitors would feel bound to give me some sufficient employment.

I was writing the history of the Polish troubles, the first volume was printed, the second was in preparation, and I thought of concluding the work in seven volumes. Afterwards I had a translation of the "Iliad" in view, and other literary projects would no doubt present themselves.

In fine, I thought myself sure of a living in Venice, where many persons who would be beggars elsewhere continue to live at their ease.

I left Gorice on the last day of December, 1773, and on January 1st I took up my abode at Trieste.

I could not have received a warmer welcome. Baron Pittoni, the Venetian consul, all the town councillors, and the members of the club, seemed delighted to see me again. My carnival was a pleasant one, and in the beginning of Lent I published the second volume of my work on Poland.

The chief object of interest to me at Trieste was an actress in a company that was playing there. She was no other than the daughter of the so-called Count Rinaldi, and my readers may remember her under the name of Irene. I had loved her at Milan, and neglected her at Genoa on

account of her father's misdeeds, and at Avignon I had rescued her at Marcoline's request. Eleven years had passed by since I had heard of her.

I was astonished to see her, and I think more sorry than glad, for she was still beautiful, and I might fall in love again; and being no longer in a position to give her assistance, the issue might be unfortunate for me. However, I called on her the next day, and was greeted with a shriek of delight. She told me she had seen me at the theatre, and felt sure I would come and see her.

She introduced me to her husband, who played parts like Scapin, and to her nine-years-old daughter, who had a talent for dancing.

She gave me an abridged account of her life since we had met. In the year I had seen her at Avignon she had gone to Turin with her father. At Turin she fell in love with her present husband, and left her parents to join her lot to his.

"Since that," she said, "I have heard of my father's death, but I do not know what has become of my mother."

After some further conversation she told me she was a faithful wife, though she did not push fidelity so far as to drive a rich lover to despair.

"I have no lovers here," she added, "but I give little suppers to a few friends. I don't mind the expense, as I win some money at faro."

She was the banker, and she begged me to join the party now and then.

"I will come after the play to-night," I replied, "but you must not expect any high play of me."

I kept the appointment and supped with a number of silly young tradesmen, who were all in love with her.

After supper she held a bank, and I was greatly astonished when I saw her cheating with great dexterity. It made me want to laugh; however, I lost my florins with a good grace and left. However, I did not mean to let Irene think she was duping me, and I went to see her next morning at rehearsal, and complimented her on her dealing. She pretended not to understand what I meant, and on my explaining myself she had the impudence to tell me that I was mistaken.

In my anger I turned my back on her, saying, "You will be sorry for this some day."

At this she began to laugh, and said, "Well, well, I confess! and if you tell me how much you lost you shall have it back, and if you like you shall be a partner in the game."

"No, thank you, Irene, I will not be present at any more of your suppers. But I warn you to be cautious; games of chance are strictly forbidden."

"I know that, but all the young men have promised strict secrecy."

"Come and breakfast with me whenever you like."

A few days later she came, bringing her

daughter with her. The girl was pretty, and allowed me to caress her.

One day Baron Pittoni met them at my lodgings, and as he liked young girls as well, as I he begged Irene to make her daughter include him in her list of favoured lovers.

I advised her not to reject the offer, and the baron fell in love with her, which was a piece of luck for Irene, as she was accused of playing unlawful games, and would have been severely treated if the baron had not given her warning. When the police pounced on her, they found no gaming and no gamesters, and nothing could be done.

Irene left Trieste at the beginning of Lent with the company to which she belonged. Three years later I saw her again at Padua. Her daughter had become a charming girl, and our acquaintance was renewed in the tenderest manner.

APPENDIX.

THUS abruptly end the MEMOIRS OF GIACOMO CASANOVA, Chevalier de Seingalt, Knight of the Golden Spur, Prothonotary Apostolic, and Scoundrel Cosmopolitic.

Whether the author died before the work was complete, whether the concluding volumes were destroyed by himself or his literary executors, or whether the MS. fell into bad hands, seems a matter of uncertainty, and the materials available towards a continuation of the Memoirs are extremely fragmentary. We know, however, that Casanova at last succeeded in obtaining his pardon from the authorities of the Republic, and he returned to Venice, where he exercised the honourable office of secret agent of the State Inquisitors—in plain language, he became a spy. It seems that the Knight of the Golden Spur made a rather indifferent “agent;” not surely, as a French writer suggests, because the dirty work was too dirty for his fingers, but probably because he was getting old and stupid

and out-of-date, and failed to keep in touch with new forms of turpitude. He left Venice again and paid a visit to Vienna, saw beloved Paris once more, and there met Count Wallenstein, or Waldstein. The conversation turned on magic and the occult sciences, in which Casanova was an adept, as the reader of the Memoirs will remember, and the count took a fancy to the charlatan. In short Casanova became librarian at the count's Castle of Dux, near Teplitz, and there he spent the fourteen remaining years of his life.

As the Prince de Ligne (from whose Memoirs we learn these particulars) remarks, Casanova's life had been a stormy and adventurous one, and it might have been expected that he would have found his patron's library a pleasant refuge after so many toils and travels. But the man carried rough weather and storm in his own heart, and found daily opportunities of mortification and resentment. The coffee was ill made, the macaroni not cooked in the true Italian style, the dogs had bayed during the night, he had been made to dine at a small table, the parish priest had tried to convert him, the soup had been served too hot on purpose to annoy him, he had not been introduced to a distinguished guest, the count had lent a book without telling him, a groom had not taken off his hat; such were his complaints. The fact is Casanova felt his dependent position and his utter poverty, and was all the more determined

to stand to his dignity as a man who had talked with all the crowned heads of Europe, and had fought a duel with the Polish general. And he had another reason for finding life bitter—he had lived beyond his time. Louis XV. was dead, and Louis XVI. had been guillotined; the Revolution had come; and Casanova, his dress, and his manners, appeared as odd and antique as some “blood” of the Regency would appear to us of these days. Sixty years before, Marcel, the famous dancing-master, had taught young Casanova how to enter a room with a lowly and ceremonious bow; and still, though the eighteenth century is drawing to a close, old Casanova enters the rooms of Dux with the same stately bow, but now everyone laughs. Old Casanova treads the grave measures of the minuet; they applauded his dancing once, but now everyone laughs. Young Casanova was always dressed in the height of the fashion; but the age of powder, wigs, velvets, and silks has departed, and old Casanova’s attempts at elegance (“Strass” diamonds have replaced the genuine stones with him) are likewise greeted with laughter. No wonder the old adventurer denounces the whole house as Jacobins and *canaille*, the world, he feels, is permanently out of joint for him; everything is cross, and everyone is in a conspiracy to drive the iron into his soul.

At last these persecutions, real or imaginary,

drive him away from Dux ; he considers his genius bids him go, and, as before, he obeys. Casanova has but little pleasure or profit out of this his last journey ; he has to dance attendance in ante-chambers ; no one will give him any office, whether as tutor, librarian, or chamberlain. In one quarter only is he well received—namely, by the famous Duke of Weimar ; but in a few days he becomes madly jealous of the duke's more famous *protégés*, Goethe and Wieland, and goes off declaiming against them and German literature generally — with which literature he was wholly unacquainted. From Weimar to Berlin ; where there are Jews to whom he has introductions. Casanova thinks them ignorant, superstitious, and knavish ; but they lend him money, and he gives bills on Count Wallenstein, which are paid. In six weeks the wanderer returns to Dux, and is welcomed with open arms ; his journeys are over at last.

But not his troubles. A week after his return there are strawberries at dessert ; everyone is served before himself, and when the plate comes round to him it is empty. Worse still : his portrait is missing from his room, and is discovered *salement placardé à la porte des lieux d'aisance !*

Five more years of life remained to him. They were passed in such petty mortifications as we have narrated, in grieving over his *affreuse vieillesse*, and in laments over the conquest of his native land Venice,

once so splendid and powerful. His appetite began to fail, and with it failed his last source of pleasure, so death came to him somewhat as a release. He received the sacraments with devotion, exclaimed,—

“Grand Dieu, et vous tous temoins de ma mort, j’ai vécu en philosophe, et je meurs en Chrétien,” and so died.

It was a quiet ending to a wonderfully brilliant and entirely useless career. It has been suggested that if the age in which Casanova lived had been less corrupt, he himself might have used his all but universal talents to some advantage, but to our mind Casanova would always have remained Casanova. He came of a family of adventurers, and the reader of his Memoirs will remark how he continually ruined his prospects by his ineradicable love for disreputable company. His “Bohemianism” was in his blood, and in his old age he regrets—not his past follies, but his inability to commit folly any longer. Now and again we are inclined to pronounce Casanova to be an amiable man ; and if to his generosity and good nature he had added some elementary knowledge of the distinction between right and wrong, he might certainly have laid some claim to the character. The Prince de Ligne draws the following portrait of him under the name of Aventuros :

“He would be a handsome man if he were not ugly ; he is tall and strongly built, but his dark complexion and his glittering eyes give him a fierce

expression. He is easier to annoy than amuse ; he laughs little but makes others laugh by the peculiar turn he gives to his conversation. He knows everything except those matters on the knowledge of which he chiefly prides himself, namely, dancing, the French language, good taste, and knowledge of the world. Everything about him is comic, except his comedies, and all his writings are philosophical, saving those which treat of philosophy. He is a perfect well of knowledge, but he quotes Homer and Horace *ad nauseam*."

