

TEVERINO:  
A  
ROMANCE BY GEORGE SAND

TRANSLATED BY A LADY.

PRECEDED BY A  
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE  
DISTINGUISHED AUTHORESS.

BY OLIVER S. LELAND.

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A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
OF  
GEORGE SAND.

ONE fine morning, in the first years of the Restoration, the aristocratic convent of the "*Dames Anglaises*," which at that period monopolized the education of the daughters of all the patrician families of Paris, opened its doors to a new, young, and most interesting *pensionnaire*.

The new-comer, who was scarcely fourteen years old, had just arrived from Berry: her religious education seemed to have been much neglected, for the good sisters remarked with a holy horror, that she made the sign of the cross with a philosophical awkwardness, denoting a total want of practice. She was, nevertheless, a fine and noble-looking-girl: her features, very decided and strongly marked, breathed an air of native pride: she bore, without the least embarrassment, those glances, which, at the convent as at the college, are never spared to freshly arrived provincials, and in her every movement there was such an impress of rustic *brusquerie*, that in a few days her noble companions, sportively, but unanimously had given her the nickname of "the little boy." But this young girl, in point of birth, was the peer of the most illustrious heiresses of France; for if, on her father's side, she was related only to a wealthy financial family, Amantine-Aurore Dupin, afterwards Madame Dudevant, but now known by her pen and by her genius as "George Sand," is a descendant of Augustus II., king of Poland.

She was born in the year of the coronation of Napoleon, the twelfth year of the French Republic (1804). Her name is not Marie-Aurore de Saxe, Marchioness of Dudevant, as several of her biographers have discovered: but Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin, and her husband, M. Francois Dudevant, bears no title: he is only a sub-lieutenant of infantry, and at the time of his marriage was but twenty-seven years old. In making him an old Colonel of the Empire, he has perhaps been confounded with M. Delmare, a character of one of the romances of his wife: for it is, in truth, only too easy to write the biography of a novelist by supposing the fiction of her works the reality of her existence. It requires no great outlay of imagination.

Her birth, which has so often and so singularly been made the subject of reproach, by both branches of her family, is a fact in itself most curious, and one that affords much food for reflection upon the question of genealogy.

We are not alone the children of our fathers: we are, I think, fully as much the children of our mothers. I even believe that we are a little more so, and to her who has borne us we hold a more immediate, a more powerful, and a more sacred relation. Though, therefore, the father of George Sand was the great-grandson of Augustus II. King of

Poland, and though thus she was, illegitimately, perhaps, but still most nearly related to Charles X. and Louis XVIII., it is no less true that she was connected as nearly and as directly with the people; perhaps even more so, for on this side there was no bastardy.

Her mother was a poor girl of the old Paris, whose father, Antoine Delaborde, was a master bird-seller, that is, he sold wrens and canary-birds on the *Quai des Oiseaux*, after having kept a little billiard-room in some out-of-the-way corner of Paris, where, indeed, he did not pay his expenses. Her mother's godfather, it is true, stood high in the bird-trade; he was named Barra, and this name may still be seen on the *Boulevard du Temple*, over a store where bird-cages of all sizes are for sale, and where a crowd of feathered songsters are ever warbling. These little birds George Sand, to quote her own words, "has ever regarded as so many godfathers and godmothers, mysterious patrons with whom I have ever had a particular affinity. . . . I have even written a romance wherein the birds play an important part, and wherein I have endeavored to say something on this affinity and this occult influence. This is *Teverino*, to which I refer my readers. I know well that I do not write for the world at large; mankind, in general, has far more important occupations than reading a collection of romances, or caring for the history of an individual, a stranger to the busy world. People of my profession write only for a certain class, placed in situations or lost in reveries analogous to those with which they are occupied.

"Thus, in *Teverino*, I have imagined a young girl possessing power, like the first Eve, over the birds of creation, and I wish to observe here, that it is not purely a fictitious creation; no more than the wonders told of the poetic and admirable impostor, Apollonius of Tyana, are fables contrary to the spirit of Christianity. We live in an age in which the natural causes, which have heretofore passed for miracles, are not as yet wholly explained, but in which it is already undeniably established that on earth there are no miracles, and that the laws of the universe, though not all as yet fathomed and defined, are not, on that account, less conformable to eternal order." But it is time to return to the chapter of her birth.

Augustus, King of Poland, after having conquered Stanislaus, and secured himself in the possession of the throne, reposed from the toil and torments of politics in the arms of love. By the beautiful Countess of Koenigsmark he had one son who under the name of Maurice, Count de Saxe, was destined to rival the Duke de Richelieu in gallant adventures, and to surpass him in warlike heroism. He was the acknowledged lover of a celebrated actress, and by her he had one daughter, Marie Aurore, recognized as legitimate by a decree of parliament, and who married, in 1793, the Count de Horn, formerly President of the Diet of Sweden. At the end of three years of married life, the Countess de Horn was left a widow, and retiring to the *Abbaye-aux-Bois*, in that sanctuary destined in after years to shelter a

glory of beauty, immortalized by grace and goodness, she presided over one of the most distinguished of those *bureaux d'esprit*, so famous in the French history of the eighteenth century. Young and remarkably beautiful, it was not long ere the beautiful widow inspired M. Dupin de Franceuil with a most ardent passion, and accepting the offer of his hand, she went with him to reside at Châteauroux, from whence they afterwards removed to the Château de Nohant. One son, Maurice Dupin, was the offspring of this union, who, marrying at an early age, was the father of the celebrated woman whose biography we are writing.

We have mentioned that Antoine Delaborde, the maternal grandfather of George Sand, finding the proprietorship of a small billiard-room inadequate to his support, took to the sale of birds. George Sand's knowledge of this relative is very vague, for it seems that her mother herself knew very little of him. But more definite recollections are entertained, by the mother of George Sand, of a good and pious grandmother, who brought up her and her sister. It appears that this venerable lady was a staunch royalist, and instilled into the minds of her grandchildren a proper sentiment of abhorrence for the Revolution. When the eldest, who was named Sophie-Victoire-Antoinette, (the latter name being in honor of the unfortunate Marie-Antoinette) was fifteen or sixteen years of age, her grandmother, dressing her in white, and garnishing her head with powder and roses, conducted her to the Hôtel-de-Ville, where, having previously been taught a pretty speech in verse, by the actor Collot-d'Herbois, she was instructed to deliver it to the citizens Bailly and Lafayette, a task which she accomplished with great *éclat* and self-gratification at being the only one among a bevy of pretty girls present on the occasion, selected for the honor.

She was accompanied by the good dame Cloquart, and her sister Lucille, and after having delivered her poetic compliment, and presented the crown of flowers to the citizen Lafayette, all delighted at the honor the distinguished man conferred upon her by placing the garland upon her head, the young girl, with her sister and grandmother, proceeded to participate in the banquet that was prepared. But the press of the crowd was so great that the worthy dame Cloquart and Lucille became separated from Sophie-Victoire, and, being alarmed, left the scene, to wait for her without. After a long and anxious waiting, as the young girl did not return, her sister and grandmother were fain to return home without her. The rest of the day was spent in much sorrow and anxiety, happily dispelled at night-fall by the appearance of the young girl, escorted in triumph by a band of patriots of both sexes, who, such was their respect for their protégée, had not suffered even her robe to be rumpled by the profane contact of the multitude. Although much doubt existed in the family relative to the precise nature of this political event, we are inclined to believe that it must have been the occasion of Lafayette announcing that the

king had decided to return once more to his good city of Paris. This event probably gave the young girl a taste for the Revolution, though it may be imagined that her enthusiasm was somewhat damped when subsequently she beheld the lovely features and beautiful blond hair of the Princess de Lamballe paraded through the streets upon the point of a pike-staff. They were at this period so poor that Lucie took in needle-work, and Victoire helped to eke out their scanty subsistence by her duties as a supernumerary at a small theatre. Lucie denied this latter fact, but George Sand states that it was true, for her mother frequently mentioned the circumstance to her, in certain connections which fixed the truth of the matter and stamped it indelibly upon her memory.

From this period, all trace of the mother of George Sand is lost for a long time, nor is it known with certainty how the young and wealthy patrician, Maurice Dupin, became acquainted with the poor and humble daughter of the people. But the chapter of their loves is all a romance. It seems most probable that in some way they had first met at Milan, where Maurice had loved her, and afterwards at Asola, where his passion became most ardent, and where his love was returned. In a letter written to his mother at this time he says:

“You know that at Milan I have been in love. You have guessed it because I have *not* told you. Sometimes I thought that I was loved in return, and again I saw, or thought I saw, that I was not. I sought to forget her. I went away, striving to think of her no more.

“But this charming woman is here: we had scarcely spoken, scarcely looked at each other, for I was vexed at I know not what, and she seemed to have for me an air of pride and coolness, though her heart is most tender and passionate. But this morning at breakfast we heard afar off the firing of cannon. The general ordered me to go and seek the cause. I arose, and in two bounds had descended the stairs and ran to the stable. As I mounted my horse, I cast one glance behind me, and saw this dear girl blushing, embarrassed, regarding me with eyes expressing fear, interest, love. I could have pressed her to my heart, but then it was impossible. When I returned, she was still there. Ah! how I was received, and how gay and pleasant was that dinner! How many little delicate attentions she had for me!

“In the evening, by an unhoped-for chance, I found myself alone with her. Everybody, tired out with the excessive labors of the day, had retired. I lost no time in telling her how much I loved her, and she, bursting into tears, threw herself into my arms. Then, disengaging herself from my embrace, she ran and locked herself in her chamber. I wished to follow her. She begged, prayed, and conjured me to leave her to herself, and, like a submissive lover, I obeyed. Ah! how sweet it is to be loved!”

For the first time Maurice Dupin had experienced a true passion. This charming woman, of whom he speaks with a mingled enthusiasm and levity, this fascinating amour which he thought to forget as

he had forgotten so many others, was henceforth to take possession of his soul, and to involve him in a strife against himself, which was all the happiness, all the despair, all the grandeur of the last years of his life. Yes, this lovely woman, whom he had sighed for at Milan, and conquered at Asola, was no other than the pretty daughter of the people, whom we have seen presenting to Lafayette her garland of flowers, and who was destined to be the mother of George Sand.

But as the course of true love never did run smooth, so Maurice Dupin met with the most violent opposition on the part of his mother, a mother whom he dearly loved, and whose slightest wish he had ever been accustomed to regard as law. By all sorts of endearments, and by the most touching letters, she sought to recall her son to herself, to separate him from this love which she regarded as a rival to her own. Great, indeed, was the torture, many were the hours of anguish and suffering that poor Maurice was fated to experience; but true love overcomes all obstacles, breaks down all barriers. Maurice acted like a true and loyal gentleman, and though it cost him much to disobey his mother's wish, yet he owed a higher duty to her who had sacrificed all for him, and where he had given his heart, there he hesitated not to give his hand. And Sophie Delaborde, though she was but the child of the people, and though her youth had been given up, by force of circumstances, to the most frightful hazards, from which she had perchance not come forth all undefiled, still was a noble woman and made a fond, a loving and devoted wife. She had even strength of mind to urge Maurice not to disobey his mother's wishes, though she knew her own shame must be the consequence of such obedience, and, at the last moment, clad in a little muslin dress, and having only a little fillet of gold upon her finger, for their finances did not allow the extravagance of a real wedding-ring, Sophie, happy and trembling, most interesting from her approaching confinement, and careless of her own future, offered to forego the marriage-rite, which, she said, could, in no way, add to or change their loves. But Maurice was resolute, and when they had returned home after the performance of the ceremony, he buried his face in his hands, and gave an hour to his sorrow for having disobeyed the best of mothers. He tried to write to her, but was able to pen only a few lines, which express his grief and his remorse. Then, asking pardon of his wife for this moment given to nature, pressing her fondly to his heart, and swearing that he would ever love her, he departed for Nohant, intending to avow all, and hoping that all would be forgiven. But his resolution and his hopes were all in vain; and he returned to Paris without having dared to betray his secret. His wife's sister Lucie was on the eve of marriage with an officer, the friend of Maurice, and in his quiet and retired house some friends of the family were one day assembled in honor of the approaching nuptials. As Maurice was playing on his violin a contradance for the amusement of the guests, Sophie, who, on that day, wore a pretty rose-colored dress, feeling a little unwell, left the dance,

and passed into her chamber. As her figure was not perceptibly altered, and as she went out very quietly, the dancing was continued. At the last *chassez-all* Lucie entered her chamber, and immediately exclaimed: "Come, come Maurice; you have a daughter!"

"She shall be named Aurore, for my poor mother; who is not here to bless her, but who will one day bless her," said Maurice, taking the babe in his arms.

It was the 5th of July, 1804, the last year of the Republic, the first year of the Empire.

"She was born *among the roses, to the sound of music*; she will be fortunate," said Lucie.

The old violin to the sound of which she came into the world, George Sand still possesses, a most precious relic.

On the 5th of July 1804, George Sand came thus into the world, her father playing on the violin, and her mother wearing a pretty rose-colored dress. She came into the world a legitimate daughter, thanks to her father's resolution in not yielding to the prejudices of his family; and though his mother was for a long time much incensed at his act of filial disobedience, she at length relented, and, at the death of Maurice, Amantine-Aurore was entrusted to her care.

This child, who was destined to become the famous George Sand, was at first brought up after the manner of Jean-Jacques. She was a little *Emile*, sporting all the day on the banks of the Indre, chasing the butterflies along the winding ravines of the "*Dark Valley*," and who, returning at night-fall from her poetic wanderings, listened to marvelous tales, told of the pomps of Versailles, the pleasures of Trianon, the mysteries of the Parc-aux-Cerfs, the *roués* and the philosophers of the olden time. These recitals were not lost, and by the aid of reminiscences of this kind, we may perhaps explain how a talent so original, so subdued in style, and ordinarily so profoundly impassioned, has sometimes been able, in such charming sketches as "The Marchioness," for instance, to go back, and to reproduce in all their truth the elegant customs, the flowery passions, and the sparkling language of the eighteenth century.

At the age of fifteen, Aurore was perfect in the use of the gun and the sword, and danced and rode with an irresistible grace. She was an adorable and petulant little amazon, a charming little feminine demon, who, like her beautiful grandmother, could have well borne her part in a hunt in the woods of Marly, but who knew not how to make the sign of the cross. But the religious reaction which followed the Restoration having rendered the doctrines of Jean-Jacques most unpopular, Madame Dupin thought it time to sacrifice her philosophical method of education to the new and more wholesome system of ideas which was then received with favor, and to give to her grand-daughter an education analogous to the situation which both her birth and her wealth called her to occupy in the world. Then it was that the beautiful child of the country was forced to leave her "*Dark Valley*" for the



convent “*Des Anglaises*” at Paris, where we have already seen her enter, there to receive her religious education, of which as yet she had not the least knowledge.

This separation from her grandmother was most painful, and the contrast to her former life very great—that life in which she was so free, and which she has so charmingly described, when, after a day spent in the fields, she is suddenly overtaken by the shadows of night and must return.

“Yes, it is so. The lambs are bleating, the flocks have returned to the fold, the cricket is chirping in the fields: you must return.

“The way is stony, the stepping-stones are wet and slippery, the hill-side is rough.

“You are covered with perspiration; but all in vain: you will arrive too late; supper has been served.

“In vain the old servant who loves you has kept it back as long as possible: you will have the humiliation to enter the last, and the good grandmother, inexorable on all points of etiquette, with a voice at once sweet and sad, will reproach you very lightly, very tenderly—a reproach which you will feel more than the most severe punishment.

“But when in the evening she will demand how and where you have passed the day, and when you, all blushing, shall confess that you have been absorbed in reading in some meadow, and when you shall be summoned to produce the book, you shall, all trembling, draw from your pocket, what? *Estelle and Nemorin!*

“Oh! then, grandmother smiles.

“Calm yourself: your treasure will be restored to you; but you must not again forget the supper-hour.

“Oh, happy time! oh, my Dark Valley! oh, *Corinne!* oh, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre! oh, *Atala!* oh, willows by the river’s bank! oh, my past youth! oh, my old dog, who did not forget the supper-hour, and who answered to the sound of the distant village cock, by a mournful howl of mingled regret and gluttony!”

Truly these little details are delicious, and, in comparison, the convent life was indeed gloomy. Yet, scarce had a month elapsed ere the young girl was no longer recognizable: that ardent and mobile imagination which will afterwards shine through the most abrupt eccentricities of the great authoress, began to develop itself in all its power. The pomp and majesty of the Catholic ceremonies, the uniform life, the pious and peaceable atmosphere of the cloister, produced a complete revolution in her soul. Like Saint Theresa, she passed whole hours in ecstasy, at the foot of the altar; the rules did not appear to her sufficiently severe, and the superior was often obliged to moderate her religious exaltation through consideration for her health.

Six years later, in the Château de Nohant, there was a woman who was dying of sadness and *ennui*: it was the pious *pensionnaire* of the convent “*des Anglaises*” weeping over her lost liberty, and deploring a yoke which she was soon to break. Scarcely had she bade farewell

to convent life, when she was called to mourn the loss of that dear grandmother whom she had so much loved: and then, alone, without a guide, without a counsellor, young, rich, and an orphan, she had been forced to marry a man whom she did not love. Lively and impressionable as *Indiana*, candid and enthusiastic as *Valentine*, haughty and indomitable as *Lélia*, she found herself united to M. Francois Dudevant, a gentleman farmer, like the many others with which old Aquitaine is full, considering the refinements of the heart as so much folly and nonsense, taking life for what it is worth, not too learned, but well versed in the raising of cattle. Never, indeed, could a marriage be more discordant with a nature at once so proud and tender as that of the young wife. But she had a fortune of nearly half a million, and her husband, in touching this dowry, hastened to extend his agricultural operations. He filled his sheep-folds with pure-blooded merinos, bought magnificent bulls, doubled the number of his ploughs, and occupied himself with every thing except his wife, and did not appear to perceive that Aurore, with her seventeen years, her delicate soul, and her extreme sensibility, was dying by inches in the midst of this prosaic existence.

But the first few years of her married life, if not happy, were at least peaceable. Madame Dudevant supported her sorrows with the resignation of an angel: two beauteous children stretched out to her their arms, and consoled her by their smiles. But soon, says the author of a sketch, traced some fifteen years since in the *Galerie de la Presse*, she found herself forestalled in the affections of her children. Then she could endure no longer, she became seriously ill, and her physicians prescribed a journey to the springs of the Pyrenees. M. Dudevant, wholly engaged with his merinos and his ploughs, could not accompany his wife.

At Bordeaux, where she first stopped, and where she was eagerly welcomed by the old friends of her family, Madame Dudevant could at last know the world. She was overwhelmed with attentions, the praises of the rare qualities with which she was endowed, were heard on every side. A thousand homages, a thousand adorations, unceasingly surrounded her. One of the first shipping merchants of Bordeaux, a young man of merit and distinction, fell desperately in love with the young wife: but she had sufficient power over her heart not to yield to this passion. In the valley of Argelès, at the foot of the lofty Pyrenees, in the presence of a magnificent nature which elevated their souls to the sublimity of the sacrifice, they bade each other an eternal farewell.

Returning home, Madame Dudevant, thanks to the negative amiability of her husband, resumed the old monotonous and weary life: but the impressions of this journey, the aspect of a wild and romantic nature, and that first illusion of love, in awakening the imagination of the artist and the heart of the woman, served on her return only to increase still more the burden of this arid and dreary life. She received

with open arms, as so many saviours, the arts, poetry, and science; but in vain did she combat the rebellious thoughts of which she was no longer the mistress; and at last, after many struggles, after many a grievous scene, of which the bitter memory may be traced in more than one page of George Sand, the wife violently freed herself, the poetess took her flight, and one day the Châtelaine of Nohaut was sought in vain; she had disappeared. What had become of her? whither had she gone?—None could tell.

Here, I find in notes which I have every reason to believe correct, a fact which clearly shows the fluctuations of a noble and ardent soul in its state of unrest.

In 1828, the father-confessor of the convent of the "*Anglaises*" who had formerly directed the conscience of Mademoiselle Dupin, came one day to beg the Lady Superior to grant him a favor. He related to her how one of his penitents, a former boarder at the convent, being in a most painful and difficult situation, desired in the bosom of her old home to find a pious retreat. The Lady Superior at first refused, alleging the custom and the rule; but the good priest insisted, at last obtained his demand, and the fugitive of Nohant recrossed the threshold of that peaceful refuge, where, all pure and untroubled, the days of her youth had flown so quickly by. But her destiny called her elsewhere, genius reclaimed its due, and in a few days she boldly re-entered the world, to give herself up henceforth to all the hazards, to all the passions, to all the joys, and to all the sorrows of the irregular life of the artiste.

The period on which we are now entering is a delicate one, and one difficult of access. A biographer may indeed be destitute of all wit or talent; but there is imperiously demanded of him dignity and good faith, especially when there is question of a genius that he may pity, blame, or praise, but which has a double title to his respect. But for those who are never contented without facts, I will here transcribe this touching page from George Sand's "*Lettres d'un Voyageur*."

"I care but little that I am growing old: I care far more that I am growing old *alone*, but have never yet met with the being with whom I would have wished to live and die: or, if I have met with such a one, I have not been able to keep him. Listen to a story, and weep. There was a good artist named Watelet, who was a better aqua-fortis engraver than any man of his time. He loved Marguerite Lecomte, and taught her to engrave as well as himself. She left her husband, her property, and her country, to go and live with Watelet: the world blamed them, but they were poor and humble, so they were soon forgotten. Forty years afterwards, there were found in the outskirts of Paris, in a little house called the 'Pretty-Mil,' an old man who was an aqua-fortis engraver and an old woman who worked with him, seated at the same table. . . . The last design that they engraved together, represented the 'Pretty-Mill,' the house of Marguerite with this device, '*Cur valle permutem Sabina divitias operosiores?*' It is hung in my

chamber above a portrait, the original of which no person here has seen. For a whole year, he who gave me this portrait, was seated with me every night at a little table, and he has lived by the same labor as I have done. At daybreak we consulted together about our little work, and we supped at the same table, talking of art and of the future. The future has not kept its promises to us—oh! Marguerite Lecomte, pray for me!”

This page, written with the tears of George Sand, is the finest eulogy on her old friend and collaborateur, Jules Sandeau. Here is another story more or less connected with the first.

Some time after the Revolution of July, there appeared a little book entitled “*Rose and Blanche, or The Actress and the Nun*” This book, which at first attracted but little notice, fell by chance into the hands of a publisher, who, on reading it, struck by the descriptive richness of certain scenes, and by the novelty of the situations, sought out the residence of the author. He was directed to a modest little house, and ascending to the attic, he there found a young man who was writing at a little table, and a young woman who was coloring flowers by his side. They were Watelet and Marguerite Lecomte—in other words, Madame Dudevant and Jules Sandeau. He spoke of the book, and he found that Marguerite, who knew how to write even better than Watelet, had written a good part of this one; but as books did not sell very well, to her literary employments she added the more lucrative one of painting. Encouraged by the praise of the publisher, she drew forth a manuscript written wholly in her own hand: the publisher examined it, and bought it; it was the manuscript of *Indiana*, Madame Dudevant wished it to be published under the same signature as *Rose and Blanche*, namely, *Jules Sand*, but Sandeau, who had had not written a line of this book, refused. She insisted, but he was resolute. In the dilemma they had recourse to the publisher. “*Sand*” said he, “is common property. All you have to do is to choose another prænomen. Hold, here is the calendar: it is the 23d of April, Saint George’s day. Call yourself George Sand, and it is done.” Such was the origin of this name, which to-day shines so brightly among the greatest and most glorious names of France.

In less than ten years, George Sand produced more than thirty volumes, which provoked nearly four times as many volumes of criticism, offensive and defensive. To me it seems that all this time criticism was battling against nothing; it began by supposing what did not exist, and, as George Sand has somewhere said, “it mistook bladders for lanterns, that is, passions for reasoning, eloquent laments for systems, and the cries of the heart for conclusions.”

Repulse, as much as you please, the sterile theories of art as art, blame the artist for not arriving at conclusions, or rather for speaking when there are no conclusions to arrive at: but do not transform him, do not force him to come to a conclusion in spite of himself, do not elevate a brilliant poetical individuality into a social power, either to

attack or to defend it. Let conviction operate with the poet in his own sphere, you will gain nothing by forcing it. In truth, we now-a-days look upon our poets too practically: the geometrician who asked of them "what does all that prove?" was hardly more ridiculous than we who endeavor to find in them the proof of every thing. This is in fact the result of a general waywardness of the age:—a word of explanation may not be here out of place.

French society and literature, at the time that George Sand first appeared as a writer, was in a confused, peculiar state. Nations, as they grow old, are subject to all the infirmities and manias of old men. The ancients took near-sighted views of things; punctilious analysts, they exhausted their faculties in minute speculations: we, on the contrary, wander in the vague, peer into the infinite; we moderns leave history for narrow minds, while we ourselves investigate the philosophy of history. With a dozen stupendous substantives and two or three classifications of universal adaptation, the first-comer will describe *à priori* the vicissitudes of the Chinese or the Mongolese Empire, of which he knows, in reality, absolutely nothing. In religion, there are no more Catholics or Protestants, nor Atheists or Theists, but only Pantheists, which, indeed, is very grand and high-sounding, but which is not at all perspicuous. In politics, individual and national interests are lost sight of in our solicitude for Humanity in general. Once, the simple-minded wrote poetry and music, and cultivated the arts; in our days, we make social poetry, apocalyptic music, and metaphysical painting. We have discovered the Iliad to be a myth, the *Aeneid* a symbol; and if Dante and Shakspeare were to return to us in this age, I fancy they would be surprised at having said so many sage things, of which they had not the least idea. I once considered Raphael a great painter; but now we read in learned books that he was the greatest theologian of his time.

When this period of confusion was at its height, a woman appeared upon the scene with all the qualities and defects that constitute the poet. She was wanting in nothing, neither in impetuosity of imagination, nor in flexible and passionate organization, warmth of inspiration, or richness of language; even the precarious and exceptional life of the artist was there. Unfortunate in her married state, she discarded marriage; rich, she left behind her her whole fortune, sacrificing all for Liberty, that household god which always graces the barren fireside of bohemians and poets. She must live. Ignorant of her own powers, she was counselled to write, and she wrote; and the profoundly philosophic, or perverse idea which gave birth to her first book was, as she herself has in many places said, simply to gain her daily bread. The book was prodigiously successful: it was a story of the heart, burning with passion, grief, and anger. The plot was by no means new: it was of a wife, a husband, and a lover. The portrait of the husband was anything but flattered: how could it have been otherwise? The lover himself—and this seems a first deception—the lover,

which a writer has called, why, I know not, the king of the books of George Sand, presented, in this as in other works, a very odious and pitiable appearance; the fine character, very naturally, was the woman. Criticism, which is surprised at everything, wondered at such a success achieved without its aid, and got over the affair, by declaring that all women have a romance in their hearts, and that when once this secret is revealed, there is nothing more to be told. Six months later, *Valentine* palpably gave criticism the lie. Here again, in sooth, was the same basis: a woman, a husband and a lover. The author, having but little experience, had but one string to her bow; but the arrow that she hurled was of a novel kind. From brutal and ignorant, the husband had become coldly polished, and a profound egotist; the lover had improved in every respect: he was noble, generous, and handsome; with certain minute differences, the woman had remained substantially the same. In *Jacques*, the third novel, written before *Lélia*, although it appeared subsequently, the principal characters are still the wife, the husband, and the lover, only in this case it is the husband that has the fine part. Jacques has all the qualities requisite to insure the happiness of a woman: he is great and good; and, although his heart has lost its freshness, he has so much nobleness of soul, that it is impossible not to love him: the indispensable rival is not equal to the competition: Octave is a common vaudeville lover, and yet Fernande falls. It is generally allowed that this novel is the most immoral of all of George Sand's productions. It is said to set forth an absolute denial of love in the married state. I do not know what may have been the primitive idea of the author, but it seems to me that the true morality of the work, and the impression left in the mind of the unprejudiced reader is, that Fernande is a little simpleton, who loves her husband without understanding him, ceases to love without knowing why, and whose act of deceit is unpardonable. Far from considering this work dangerous in its tendency. I am convinced, on the contrary, that there is no woman, have she never so little delicacy, who is not mentally disgusted with the denouement.

After *Jacques*, came *Lélia*, Since *Indiana* the authoress had lived; she had loved, and, by turns, had ceased to love or to be loved; she had suffered, and, after having despaired of love in marriage, she had despaired of love, of life, of God, of everything; and, one fine day, in a paroxysm of intermittent fever, between the burning and the chill, *Lélia* was written.

When this book appeared, the mingled emotions of enthusiasm and repulsion excited around the name of George Sand reached their height. While the philosophical phalanx stretched forth to her their arms, crying: "Welcome! oh, prophetess!" the moralists shook their clenched hands at her, stigmatizing her as "Poisoner!" But, in truth, she was neither a Pythoness nor a Borgia: she was but a poet, all whose faculties had been over-excited by a species of delirium, to the detriment of the principal one: the reason.

After this great cry of suffering, the soul of George Sand appeared to grow more calm, and little by little, to resume its serenity. Her social position became fixed. She legally separated herself from her husband, regained the possession of her fortune, and went to seek, from the mountains of Switzerland, from the beautiful skies of Florence and of Venice, less sombre thoughts, more smiling inspirations. She wrote two or three charming novels, as *Léone Léonie*, in which the invariable types of her former works are laid aside. Her thoughts became less bitter and more purely artistic, and this soothing, quieting influence, gradually increased. Then, she wrote *André*, that delicious little book, which would be the worthy brother of "*Paul et Virginie*," were it not for a certain coarseness, humiliating and most grievous, but happily false and impossible in the plan of the character of André. George Sand has herself said: "Angels are less pure than the heart of a young man of twenty, when he loves with passion." And that is not only well said, but most true; for all corrupted, all vicious, as we are, there is perhaps not one among us all who does not cherish in some secret corner of his heart the holy memory of some first mystery of pure love, of chaste abandon, and of, alas! too easy a renunciation.

After *André*, appeared *Simon, Mauprat*, the *Lettres d'un Voyageur*, &c., &c. The period of passion was gradually losing itself in one of calmness, poetry, and truth. The religious phase was about to appear. A noble friendship grew up between two souls, bearing in different spheres an equal talent and an equal freedom of poetic flexibility. M. de Lamennais assumed the direction of "*Le Monde*," and in this journal George Sand published those five letters to Marcia, which bear the impress of a purely Christian resignation, and which gave the lie to all those social consequences that philosophy was endeavoring to draw from the individual sorrows of *Lélia*.

However, this period of Christian resignation was but short: the adventurous and turbulent poetess had merely passed through this peaceful country on her way to join the camp of pantheism. *Spiridion* was published. This book, composed under the refreshing shades of Palma, was a veritable recantation, for it boldly reproduced in the religious sphere all the moral contradictions of *Lélia*. The edifice scarcely delineated in the letters to Marcia was utterly overthrown, and the progressive Christianity of M. de Lamennais was dropped as impotent. From this time forward the social ideas of George Sand acquired a tinge of radicalism which, if not more perspicuous, was at least more boldly defined.

Space does not permit us to follow George Sand throughout all her works, and trace therein the workings and the progress of her mind: to do this, would require a volume, and our sketch is limited to a few pages. But ere we close this hasty notice, we ought perhaps to trace the portrait of this most remarkable woman, and for this purpose we will translate from a sketch published some few years since, in Paris. "I beheld," says the author, "a plump little woman, in no

respect resembling the *Dantesque*. She wore a simple robe-de-chambre of a somewhat masculine cut; her beautiful hair still perfectly black, in spite of slanderous tongues, parted upon her broad and polished brow, fell gracefully upon her cheek, as in the portrait of Raphael; a silk handkerchief was loosely tied about her neck; her eyes, which some painters persist in representing as most piercing, had, on the contrary, a remarkable expression of soft melancholy; the sound of her voice was melodious and subdued; her mouth was singularly graceful, and in her every attitude there was a striking character of simplicity, of nobleness, and of calmness. From the breadth of the temples, and from the rich development of the brow, Gall would have divined the existence of genius. In the frankness of her glance, in the graceful contour, and in the pure though somewhat weary expression of the face, Lavater would have read an unfortunate past, a barren present, an extreme propensity to enthusiasm, and, consequently, to discouragement; but he would have read neither instability, nor bitterness, nor hatred, for of them there was no trace on this face at once so sad and so serene. The *Lélia* of my imagination disappeared before the reality, and it was simply a good, sweet, melancholy, intelligent, and beautiful face that I saw before me.”

At present George Sand passes nearly all the year at her Château of Nohant. Here she has constructed a little theatre where her plays are all studied and tried, act by act, and scene by scene, before they receive the honor of a Parisian representation. Her life in this retirement is most pleasant, though somewhat patriarchal: her revenue, amounting to ten or twelve thousand francs per annum, she spends in deeds of charity: for all the neighboring villagers she has ever a kindly word of welcome. She receives them at her table, listens to them, encourages and consoles them in their troubles, and when they are ill dispenses to them medicines for themselves and for their children. To her they apply as to a kind Providence, ever sure of aid and comfort.

Her house is by no means a lordly mansion: in it there reigns an almost vulgar simplicity, and the furniture bears witness to the filial piety of the châtelaine, rather than to her taste in matters of ornament: drawings, sketches, and needle-work, souvenirs of the happy triumphs of a petted childhood, form nearly all the adornments of the apartments—for George Sand clings to all that recalls to her the love of her relations.

She sleeps but little, five or six hours at the most: the rest of her time being consecrated to her literary labors. At eleven o'clock the bell rings for breakfast. She does not appear at first (in her absence her son Maurice presides) but about the middle of the repast she enters, embraces her son, presses the hand of each guest, and takes her usual seat. Her table is sumptuously and delicately provided. She eats but little, and takes coffee morning and evening. She is silent and reserved, but she loves to listen to the conversation, and in her you ever



find a smiling and attentive listener.

After breakfast Madame Sand takes the arm of one of her guests, and goes to walk in the park. A little wood, bordering on a beautiful meadow, is the promenade that she most loves, and here in the midst of the spring flowers, the gay butterflies, and the singing birds, she gives herself up to charming botanical digressions, which her guests are never weary of hearing; but at the end of half an hour, she returns to the house, and leaves each one master of his time and of his actions.

Dinner is served at six o'clock. The blouses and other loose morning garments are not here admissible, and the ladies appear more elaborately attired, than at the breakfast-table. We do not mean that there is the least restraint, or that a strict decorum is observed: that would be too much in disaccordance with the known principles of the châtelaine. But in the house of the grand-daughter of a king, of the cousin of Marie Antoinette, we must not be astonished to find some vestiges of aristocratic manners. After dinner comes another walk in the park, singing under the trees, playing with the dogs, or some rustic game. If it rains, the drawing-room is opened, Madame Sand places herself at the piano, where she improvises like Liszt, her friend and teacher, or executes some of Mozart's choicest gems. Sometimes she gives the manuscript of a new work, a romance, or a comedy, to her guests to read, and such days are always looked upon as holy-days.

At eleven o'clock the books are closed, the papers are laid aside, and all join eagerly in a game of dominos. This finishes the evening, and thus, except Sundays, is each day passed.

But on Sundays a public performance is given, and the hall is filled with a crowd of honest peasants, whose artless joy and candid criticism are not the least part of the evening's pleasures. When the piece is over, the dining-room is thrown open, and the audience is admitted to supper with the performers, after which they quietly disperse.

Perchance you may find this simple and unostentatious life of the Château de Nohant but little in accordance with the idea that certain of her brilliant works give of the character of her who inhabits it. If so, there is only one word to be said, and that is, if George Sand writes with her imagination, she lives according to her judgment.

One word now as to the influence of her books, and we have done. This influence has been often called baneful and pernicious; but we think most unjustly. If there are passions and faults, there is, too, much sorrow and remorse, and their tendency is by no means vicious; they may torture and bewilder our souls, but they do not degrade, neither do they corrupt. In the perusal of these pages, where the most opposite sentiments speak the same language, a language almost divine, we feel a painful kind of admiration, and when we close the book more than ever do we aspire to the truth: we comprehend

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that all that is not life, that the imagination is not the reason, and that poets will always be poets, that is, in the words of one of the greatest and wisest of their number, “melodious birds whom every noise causes to sing.” Whether this noise comes from without or from within, whether it charms or terrifies, attracts or repulses, whether it be an innate desire or a murmuring brook, a nation in a state of unrest, or the roaring of the ocean, a falling throne or a fading illusion, the bird sings, sings at all times, in all places, and in every tone: do not ask the reason of its song—it sings because it is a bird.

## PREFACE.

TEVERINO is a pure fantasy, from which each reader must draw his own conclusion. It was begun in Paris, in 1845, and finished in the country, without any plan, and with no other end in view, than that of painting an original character, a strange destiny, improbable to people of rank, but well known to those who have mingled freely with the various classes of artists. These natures, so admirably endowed, which cannot or will not employ to advantage the rich faculties of their minds in the drudgery of official society, are not rare; and this independence, this idleness, this exaggerated disinterestedness, is even the proper tendency of minds so peculiarly the recipients of the gifts of Providence. Men of special aptitudes discover and pursue, in face of all obstacles, the path of life marked out for them. My hero is of a different type: his is one of those rich natures, which, feeling itself capable of equal development in every direction, never undertakes or accomplishes anything. In Teverino, I have taken the liberty of slightly poetising the excessive candor and delicacy of sentiment found in a soul struggling with the expedients of misery. Of course, the paradoxes which seduce his imagination are not to be taken literally, nor must the reader believe that the author aims at the absurdity of attempting to prove that the soul's perfection is to be found in a liberty bordering on license. A fantasy proves nothing, and the artist who gives himself up to a pure fantasy should make no such pretension. Can it, then, be necessary, before appealing to the imagination of the reader by a work of the imagination, to warn him that a certain exceptional type is not proposed as a model? That would be to give him little credit for penetration, strength of mind, or self-control; and should any individual really need this caution, it might be better to advise him to abstain from reading any romances whatever, for all such reading is pernicious, nay, almost fatal to weak and ill-regulated minds.

I have been sometimes accused of portraying dangerous, sometimes unnatural characters; in both cases, it is apparent that I have relied too much on the good sense and judgment of my readers. I have no other excuse to make.

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I maintain here only the possibility, not the reality of such a character as Teverino. Many persons, by consulting their own memories, can attest its possibility for themselves. Most persons have known a sort of Teverino, male or female, at some period of their lives. It is true, that for one of these privileged souls, who, in this life of vagabondage, remains great and noble, there are hundreds who contract incurable vices, especially in the career of the arts. They oftener degrade than elevate it. But, having faith in the dignity and progress of the race, I believe that a man never falls so low as to be unable to rise again, if he do not lack courage and a true heart. This is my firm faith for all humanity, in all its errors, for all its misfortune, and in all conditions of life. If this doctrine be true, will it do harm to preach it?

GEORGE SAND

Nohant, May, 1852

## TEVERINO

### I

#### COME WHAT MAY.

PUNCTUAL to the hour of rendezvous, Léonce left the *Hôtel des Etrangers* before day-light, and the sun had not yet risen, as he entered the winding and shady alley leading to the villa.

The light wheels of his beautiful German britzska left scarcely an impression on the fine white sand, which, covering the path, deadened the resounding steps of his superb horses, as they flew rapidly over the ground. A profound silence reigned in the residence of the elegant lady, and perceiving no indication that any carriage had preceded his own, he feared to have committed the blunder of being too early.

Alighting in front of a rustic porch, over which were trained beautiful, flowering vines, he directed his servant to drive to the stables, and then ascertaining that the glass doors, opening from the piazza into the ordinary reception-room, were still closed, he approached the window of Sabina's chamber, and hummed, in a low tone, the air from the *Barbier*,

“Ecco ridente il cielo  
Già spunta la bella aurora. . .  
. . . E puvì dormir così!”

Presently the window was opened, and Sabina, enveloped in a *bourous* of white cashmere, raised a corner of the curtain, and addressing him with affectionate nonchalance, said:

“I perceive, my friend, that my note of last evening has not reached you, and that you are unaware of what has happened. The Duchess has the vapors, and will not allow her lovers to drive out without her. The Marchioness must have had a family quarrel, for she sends word that she is ill. The Count is really unwell. The Doctor has business. So you see that everybody fails me, and begs me to postpone until next week our contemplated excursion.”

“Thus, in consequence of not having received your intelligence, I arrive most *mal à propos*,” said Léonce, “and have behaved like a clown, in coming to disturb your slumbers. I am so much annoyed at my awkwardness, as to find not a word to say in extenuation.”

“Oh! give yourself no uneasiness on that score; I have been awake a long time. The caprice of these women so enraged me last night that I threw their notes into the fire, and, early as it was, retired to bed, and slept soundly. I am truly glad to see you. I was just longing for some one with whom I could abuse all projects of amusement, country parties, men of the world, and handsome women.”

“You will abuse them alone, then; for at this moment I bless them with all my heart.”

And Léonce inclining over the edge of the window upon which Sabina leaned, was tempted to clasp one of those beautiful white hands—but her quietly bantering manner restrained him, and he was fain to content himself with casting a most significant glance upon her lovely arm, left partially uncovered by the *bourous*.

“Léonce,” said she—gathering up the folds of the *bourous* with a disdainful grace—“If you pay me insipid compliments, I shall shut the window in your face, and go to bed again. Nothing makes me so sleepy as *ennui*. It has for a long time been my most serious trouble, and if it is to continue, I believe I shall finally be compelled to devote all my energies to taking care of my health and good looks, after the example of the Duchess. But listen: call up all your amiability, and apply your mind to the task of entertaining me with your usual wit and good taste. Promise to observe my conditions, and we can pass the morning more agreeably, *tête-à-tête* together, than in the midst of all that brilliant society.”

“With all my heart! Come then out of your sanctuary, and let us stroll into the park, to see the sun rise.”

“Oh, the Park! It is beautiful, I admit; but that is a resource I wish to keep for the days when I have to entertain tiresome visitors. I show my guests the grounds, and take a great deal of quiet enjoyment by myself, while apparently listening to their stupid conversation. Therefore, I wish to use the attractions of this residence moderately, lest I wear them out too soon. Do you know that I regret extremely having hired it for three months. I have been only a week here, yet I find myself already tired of both the country and the neighborhood.”

“Thank you! Shall I withdraw?”

“Nonsense! Why feign this susceptibility? You know perfectly

well that you are not included in my anathema against the human race. We are old friends, and shall always remain so, I trust, if we have the wisdom to persist in loving each other moderately, as you have promised me.”

“Yes, the old proverb, ‘Love little, if you would love long.’ But see here, you promise me a pleasant morning, and then threaten to shut your window at the first word I utter which may displease you. Really, I do not find my position particularly agreeable, and shall only breathe at my ease, when you are out of that formidable fortress.”

“Well, give me an hour for my toilet arrangements; meantime, your breakfast shall be served in the arbor. I will come and take a cup of tea with you, and then we can invent some cheerful amusement, wherewith to beguile the morning.”

“First listen to my proposition, Sabina. Leave to me alone all the morning arrangements, for if you have anything to do with them, we shall pass the day, I, in proposing all sorts of amusements, and you, in proving to me that each plan is more stupid and tiresome than the others. Have faith in my inventive genius; take half an hour for your toilet, postpone the breakfast, and then, let me lead you where I choose.”

“Ah! you touch the magic chord, the Unknown! I see, Léonce, that you alone understand me. Well, I accept Let us go!”

Lady G— pronounced these last words with a smile and a glance which made Léonce tremble.

“Oh! coldest of women!” he cried, in a tone of mingled raillery and bitterness. “I know you well, and know that your ruling passion is to escape indeed all human passions. Well, I yield to your coldness, and banish from my memory all that might distract me from this fantasy which we have arranged together.”

“You assure me, then, that I shall not experience *ennui* to-day while with you? You are indeed, the best of men. I feel already the effect of your promise, just as invalids feel their sufferings mitigated by the sight of a physician, and are cured in advance, by the certainty that he intends to cure them. I obey you, then, doctor improvise, skilful, admirable doctor. I will dress quickly, let us set out before breakfast, and then go—wherever you direct What carriage shall I order?”

“None. You are to interfere in nothing—you are to know nothing. It is for me to provide and direct, since it is I who invent”

“Ah! that is something like! That is charming,” cried she; and, shutting her window, she rang for her maid, who lowered the heavy damask curtain between her and Léonce. He went away to give some orders, then returning, he threw himself down on the ground, at the foot of a statue, not far from Sabina’s window, and was soon lost in a revery.

“Is this the way you prepare for our departure? You promise me marvellous inventions, unheard of surprises, and there you are, dreaming over the statue, like a man without an idea.”

"All is ready," said Léonce rising and passing Sabina's arm within his own. "My britzska awaits you, and I have hit upon some admirable inventions."

"Are we going *tête-à-tête*?" observed Lady G—.

"That is a coquettish movement of which I did not believe her capable," thought Léonce. "Well, I shall not take advantage of it."

"We will take the negress," he replied.

"Why take the negress?" said Sabina.

"Because my jockey likes her. At his age, all women are white, and it is important that our travelling companions should be pleased with each other, otherwise they will be troublesome to us."

In an instant, the jockey had received his instructions, unperceived by Sabina. The negress, armed with a large white parasol, her face radiant with smiles, was seated on the front seat with the jockey. Lady G— reclined listlessly on the back seat of the britzska, and Léonce placed respectfully opposite, silently regarded the country through, which they were flying with the speed of the wind.

It was the first time that Sabina had ventured on so long and uninterrupted a *tête-à-tête* with Léonce as this promised to be, and for a few moments, she was embarrassed. True, she had merely gone out to ride with Léonce; moreover, the presence of the two young domestics, (who, by the way, with their backs to the lady and gentleman, were too well pleased with each other, to occupy themselves with any one else) gave an air of propriety to the adventure. Yet she felt that she was too young for it to be viewed from the world's point of view in any other light than that of an indiscretion.

But Léonce seemed so little disposed to profit by his good fortune, he was so serious, and so absorbed by the splendors of the rising sun, just then gilding the edge of the horizon, that she dared not show any embarrassment; on the contrary, she endeavored to conceal it, and appear as tranquil as he.

They followed a steep road, whence could be seen the whole extent of the surrounding valley, the course of the torrents, the summits of mountains covered with eternal snow, beautifully tinted by the rays of the rising sun, in hues of purple and gold.

"Sublime!" said Sabina at last, in reply to an exclamation from Léonce. "But do you know, apropos of the sun, that in spite of myself, I am at this moment thinking of my husband."

"Apropos, indeed!" said Léonce "where is he?"

"At the villa, asleep."

"Does he wake early?"

"That depends on circumstances. Lord G— is more or less matutinal in his habits, according to the quantity of wine he drinks at supper. And how can I know anything about that, compelled as I am to submit to that barbarous English custom, which seems to have been expressly invented to prevent wives from moderating the intemperance of their husbands."

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“But what is his average hour?”

“Noon. We shall be at home before that, shall we not?”

“I do not know, madam. That does not depend on your will.”

“Really, it is very agreeable to hear you joke thus. It gratifies my thirst for the unknown. But seriously, Léonce?”

“Very seriously, Sabina. I don’t know at what hour you will return. You have authorized me to regulate the employment of your day.”

“Not at all. Of the morning only.”

“Pardon me. You have not limited the period of our excursion; and as regards my projects, I shall only waive the right of invention when inspiration fails me. If you put a curb to my genius, I will no longer be responsible for anything.”

“That is to say?”

“I will abandon you to your mortal enemy, *ennui*.”

“What tyranny! But if by a strange chance, Lord G— should have been sober last night?”

“Who were his companions at supper?”

“Lord H—, M. D—, Sir I—; in short, half a dozen of his dear fellow countrymen.”

“In that case, give yourself no uneasiness. He will sleep until night.”

“But, if you should be deceived?”

“Ah, Madam, if you already mistrust Providence; that is to say, if you mistrust me, who watch over your destiny to-day in the place of Providence; if you have no faith, but look behind and before, the present moment escapes us, and with it all my power.”

“You are right, Léonce. I destroy my imagination by these memories of real life.”

“First of all, he is not jealous of me.”

“He is jealous of no one. But his sense of propriety—his British prudery!”

“What is the worst he will do?”

“He will curse the day on which he took it into his head to espouse a French woman, and for three hours, at least, will occupy himself with extolling the charms of the great English dolls. He will murmur between his teeth that England is the first nation in the universe—that our country is a lunatic asylum—that Lord Wellington is Superior to Napoleon, and that the London docks are better built than the palaces of Venice.”

“Is that all?”

“Pray is not that enough? To be compelled to hear him say such things, without ridiculing or contradicting him?”

“And what is the consequence, if you break this disdainful silence?”

“He sups with Lord H—, Sir I—, and M. D—; after which he sleeps twenty-four hours.”

“Did you provoke him yesterday?”

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"Dreadfully. I told him that his English horse was a stupid beast."

"Be easy then. He will sleep until this evening."

"You answer for it?"

"I order it."

"That is glorious! Huzza! May his soul repose in peace, and may marriage weigh lightly on his slumbers. Do you know, Léonce, that I find it a fearful yoke, this marriage?"

"Yes, some husbands beat their wives."

"That is nothing. Others kill them with *ennui*."

"Is that, then, the cause of your spleen? I think not, milady."

"I beg you will not address me as milady. It always makes me fancy myself an English woman. It is bad enough to have them try to persuade me when I am in England, that my husband has denationalized me."

"But you do not reply to my question, Sabina?"

"And what can I reply? Do I know the cause of my unhappiness?"

"Do you wish me to tell you?"

"You have already told it to me a hundred times—it is useless to renew the subject."

"Your pardon, madam. You regard me as a skilful, admirable doctor—you have invested me with the right to cure you, though the cure last but for one day—"

"Oh! To cure me by amusing me—and what you are going to say will, I know, weary me."

"Useless evasion of a modesty which a tender lover would doubtless find charming: your grave doctor, however, thinks it superlatively childish."

"Well. If you are severe and brutal, I shall like you better. Speak on, then."

"The absence of love exasperates you. Your *ennui* is an impatience, not a disgust of life. Your exaggerated pride betrays an incredible weakness. You must love, Sabina."

"You speak of loving as you would speak of drinking a glass of water. Is it my fault that no one pleases me?"

"Yes, it is your fault. Your mind has taken a false turn—your temper has become soured—you have pampered your self-love; and, consequently, you estimate yourself so high, that nobody seems worthy of you. Very rude in me to say these things, is it not? Do you prefer insipid compliments?"

"On the contrary, I find you perfectly charming to-day," replied Lady G—, with a laugh—notwithstanding which, a faint flush of anger passed over her beautiful countenance. "Permit me, however, to offer a word in my own justification, and then show me one human being who blames me. I find all the men by whom I am surrounded, either vain and stupid, or intellectual and cold. I pity the former, I fear the latter."

"You are not to blame. But why not seek beyond the world?"



“And can a woman seek? For shame!”

“But she may sometimes travel, may encounter a friend unexpectedly, and then she must not always fly away.”

“No, we cannot go out of the world. The world follows us everywhere, when we are in the great world. And then, what is there beyond the world? There are the bourgeoisie, vulgar and insolent—the people, brutalized and filthy—artists, ambitious and profoundly egotistical. All these are no better than we, Léonce. Moreover, to be entirely candid with you, I must confess that I believe a little in the superiority of our patrician blood. If all is not degenerated and corrupt in the human race, it is there, only, we can hope to find elevated types and refined natures. I do not deny the possibility of transformations in the future, but, up to the present time, I see the stamp of vassalage on the foreheads of the recently enfranchised. I neither hate nor despise, still less do I fear this race, that comes, we are told, to turn us out, and take our places. It may be so. I acquiesce. I might have esteem, respect and friendship for certain plebeians—but my love is a delicate flower, that will not flourish in every soil. I have the nerves of a marchioness, and cannot change or control them. The more I incline to accept the idea of future equality, the less do I feel myself capable of accepting that which inequality has defiled in the past. That is my theory, Léonce, and, certainly, you have no right to preach to me. Would you have me become a ‘Sister of Charity?’ I ask nothing better than to overcome my fastidiousness, for the very sake of charity; but shall I seek the happiness of my soul where I see no other prospect than a life of penitence and sacrifice?”

“I do not intend to preach to you, Sabina; I am neither better nor worse than you; only I believe that my instincts are warmer than yours, and that I have a more ardent faith in the true dignity of man, and this ardor was born in me the day on which I found myself an artist. Since that day, the human race has appeared to me, not divided into castes, but disseminated over the earth, the superior types by themselves. I believe that no habit can have so great an influence over the soul, can be so destructive of the Divine Power, as to be able to brand forever the posterity of slaves. If God pleases that the Fornarina should be beautiful, and that Raphael should have genius, they love each other, without demanding the name of their ancestors. Beauty of soul and body! Behold there what is noble and respectable. The flower of the eglantine is none the less fragrant and charming, because plucked from a brier.”

“Yes, but in order to inhale its sweet perfume, one must run the risk of being torn to pieces by the savage bushes; and then, Léonce, you and I cannot see the same ideal beauty. You are a man and an artist; that is to say, you have a perception of form, at once more material and exalted than I. Your art is materialistic. It is the divine Raphael, enamored of the robust Fornarina. Well, yes! Titian’s mistress also appears to me as a beautiful, gross, sensual woman, not in the

least ideal. Now, we patricians, we do not conceive—But, good heavens! here comes an equipage, which looks very much like that of the marchioness.”

“And it is she herself with the young doctor.”

“Look, Léonce there is a woman more easily satisfied than I. We are about to surprise an intrigue. She represented herself as an invalid, and behold her, riding out with—”

“With her physician, and you with yours, madam. She amuses herself according to prescription.”

“Yes, but you are only the physician of my soul.”

“You are cruel, Sabina. How do you know that this fine young man does not rather address himself to her heart than to her senses? And if she should think as badly of you, would she not be profoundly unjust? For I, although *tête-à-tête* with you, neither address your heart nor—”

“Just heavens, Léonce! You make me think of my own position. She is malicious, and has great need to justify herself by the example of others—we shall meet her—she possesses great assurance; instead of concealing herself, she will observe us, will recognize me—perhaps she has already done so.”

“No, Madam,” replied Léonce, “your veil is down, and she is yet at some distance; besides—turn to the left, the road to St. Apollinaire!” calling to the jockey, who acted as coachman, and drove with great skill.

The britzska plunged immediately into a narrow road, where it was screened from observation, and in a few moments, the *calèche* of the marchioness flew along on the highway.

“You see now, madam,” said Léonce, “that Providence watches over you to-day, and that it is incarnated in me. It is often necessary to travel a long distance among these mountains, in order to find a road fit for carriages, and here is one opened as if by miracle, at the moment your convenience makes it desirable.”

“Really, this is so marvellous,” smilingly replied Lady G—, “that I am compelled to attribute it to a stroke of your magic wand. Oh! what a delicious enchantment! What beautiful flowering hedges! What rich foliage! And how astonishing it is, that you should have thought of every thing, even to supplying us with cool shade and flowers, of which we were sadly in want on the highway. These centennial chestnut trees, which you have planted, are truly magnificent. There is no disputing the fact, Léonce that you are a great artist, and do your work thoroughly.”

“It is very pleasant to hear you say these charming things, Sabina, but you are pale as death. How dreadfully afraid you are of public opinion. This adventure, and the consequent danger of suspicion, has filled your heart with terror. I never should have suspected that a woman as strong and as proud as you are, could be at the same time, so timid.”

“The world says that it is only in the country that we learn to know each other. For the word ‘country,’ substitute *tête-à-tête*, and you have the idea. Thus, Léonce, we shall reveal to each other this morning, many imperfections as well as virtues, of which we have hitherto remained ignorant. My timidity, for instance, is either a virtue or a weakness. I do not know which.”

“It is a weakness.”

“And you despise it?”

“I shall censure it, perhaps. I shall find in it an explanation of that extreme refinement of taste and that habit of exquisite disdain, of which you were just now speaking. You, perhaps, do not know yourself so thoroughly as you imagine you do. It is possible that you too often attribute to the exaggerated delicacy of your aristocratic perception, what is in reality, only the fear of raillery and censure from your equals.”

“My equals are yours also, Léonce; are you, then, entirely indifferent to the opinions of others? Would you have me make a choice for which I should be compelled to blush? That would be singular.”

“It would indeed be too singular, and I do not dream of such a thing. But a more decided, courageous independence would be, I think, a most invaluable resource for you, and I see that you lack it. There is no question here of choice, neither in one sphere nor in another. I only say that in general, whatever choice you may make, you will be more occupied with the opinions of the world, than with the happiness you are personally to derive from it.”

“I do not believe it; and now, Léonce, you are going beyond the limits of plain truth. This is malicious teasing; a system of ill-natured accusations.”

“See now, we are beginning to quarrel,” said Léonce. “All will go well, if I succeed in irritating you against me. I shall have at least dispelled your *ennui*.”

“If the marchioness could hear our conversation,” said Sabina, resuming her gaiety, “I think she would scarcely find anything to carp at.”

“But, as she does not hear it, and as it is possible we may meet other parties, it is best perhaps to break our *tête-à-tête*, and surround ourselves with some travelling companions.”

“And is it your turn to be out of humor, Léonce?”

“By no means; but it is a part of my plan that you should be provided with a chaperon more respectable than I. Here he is coming to meet me. Destiny or my magic power leads him hither.”

Obedient to a sign from his master, the jockey checked his horses. Léonce leaped lightly to the ground, and ran forward to meet the Curé of St. Apollinaire, who, with a breviary in his hand, was slowly approaching the entrance of the village.

## II.

## HAPPEN WHAT WILL.

“MONSIEUR LE CURE,” said Léonce, “I sincerely regret the necessity which compels me to break in upon your studies, knowing full well as I do, that when a priest is interrupted in reading his breviary, he is obliged to begin it again, even though he were at the last page. I observe, however, that you are fortunately only at the second, and as the motive which leads me to you, is of great urgency, I trust your charitable heart will kindly excuse the indiscretion.”

The Curé sighed, closed his breviary, took off his spectacles, and, turning upon Léonce a pair of large blue eyes, not devoid of intelligence—“To whom have I the honor of speaking?” said he.

“To an honorable and sincere young man,” gravely replied Léonce, “who comes to submit to your judgment, a very delicate question. This morning, I very innocently persuaded the young lady whom you perceive in the open carriage, just below there, to ride out with me among your beautiful mountains. We are both strangers to the usages of the country; our sentiments for each other are those of a fraternal friendship; the lady merits all consideration and respect; but a scruple concerning the propriety of her situation has entered her head on the road hither, and I deem it my duty to acquiesce. She says that her driving about the country, alone with a young man, may possibly excite the curiosity of its inhabitants, and the fear of being the cause of scandal, has become so strong in her mind, as to make me regard the happy accident of meeting you, in the light of a Providential occurrence. I have therefore decided to solicit the favor of your society, while we prolong our ride for an hour or two, or at least, while I reconduct her to her residence. You are so good, that you would not certainly deprive an amiable lady of a pleasure truly edifying, for the soul never more earnestly glorifies the Eternal, than when contemplating his work, beautiful nature.”

“But sir,” said the Curé, evincing a little distrust, and attentively regarding the carriage, “you are not alone; you have two other persons with you.”

“These are domestics, whom an instinctive sentiment of propriety induced us to bring along.”

“Well, then, I see no reason why you should fear slanderous tongues. One is not apt to behave very improperly before domestics.”

“The presence of domestics counts for nothing in the eyes of the world.”

“That shows too much contempt, for those who are our brothers.”

“You speak justly, Monsieur Curé, and I am of your opinion. But you will agree with me, that, placed as they are upon the front seat of the carriage, I might easily hold too tender a conversation with this

lady, might kiss her hand by stealth—”

The Curé gave a start as though he were shocked, but this was merely for form's sake. His countenance betrayed no emotion whatever. He had passed the age in which burning thoughts torment the priest. Or, very possibly, he had never carried his abstemiousness to the point of hating life and condemning happiness. Léonce was amused to see how puerile and frivolous his pretended scruples appeared to the good man.

“If that is all,” resumed the Curé, you can place the negress in the carriage between you and milady. Her presence will surely put to flight the demon of scandal.”

“Such an arrangement is not according to custom,” said the young man, embarrassed by the judgment of the old priest. “It would appear affected. The malicious would say the danger must be great indeed, since they are forced to put an ugly negress between them. Now, in place of this, the presence of a priest sanctifies everything. A worthy pastor like you is the natural friend of the faithful, and everybody must easily comprehend why we should seek your society.”

“You are very kind, my dear sir, and I should ask nothing better than to oblige you,” replied the Curé, upon whose unsuspecting nature flattery was gradually producing its effect. “But I have not yet offered mass, and the bell is just ringing. Wait twenty minutes, or rather, come and attend mass with me. It is not obligatory upon you during the week, but it can do you no harm: afterwards, permit me to take my breakfast, and then I will be at your service.”

“We will attend mass,” replied Léonce; “but immediately after it is finished, we propose to carry you off to breakfast with us in the woods.”

“Then you will get a very poor breakfast,” hastily observed the Curé—to whom this proposition appeared of more serious consequence than any before made. “You will find nothing to tempt the appetite in this country, which is as poor as it is picturesque.”

“We have some substantial provisions and excellent wine in the carriage box,” returned Léonce. “We had made an appointment with several friends for a picnic excursion to-day, and each one was to contribute a portion of the feast. All, however, have failed in their engagement but I; and, therefore, I find myself sufficiently well provided with food for our small party.”

“Very good,” said the Curé, quite decided. “I see the prospect of a pleasant excursion, and that if I do not join your party you will be troubled and embarrassed by this dangerous *tête-à-tête*. I do not wish to mar the anticipated pleasure, and will, therefore, go with you, provided it is not too far; for I have a great deal of business to occupy me at home, and cannot spare much time. It pleases one to be born and another to die; and every day these duties are to be done over again. Now then, go and inform your lady, while I proceed to the church.”

“Oh! here you come at last!” exclaimed Sabina—who, while waiting the return of Léonce, had taken a book from the pocket of the carriage, entitled “*Wilhelm Meister*”—“I thought you had forgotten me, and I was consoling myself with this delightful story.”

“It was brought expressly for you,” said Léonce. “I knew you had not yet read it, and it is just the sort of reading to interest you for the time.”

“Your attentions are really charming. But what are we to do now?”

“We are going to mass.”

“What a strange idea! Is it in looking after the salvation of my soul that you expect to amuse me?”

“You are prohibited from scrutinizing my thoughts or divining my intentions. From the moment you are able to divine all that is passing in my brain, in reference to your at present unknown future, my power will cease, and I shall not be able to finish what I have undertaken.”

“That is true. Let us go to mass, then. But what are you going to do with this Curé?”

“What! more questions—when you know that the oracle should be dumb?”

“Your oddities begin to interest me. And am I not to be permitted even to try to comprehend?”

“Certainly you are. I run no risk of being found out.”

The britzska traversed the hamlet, and stopped before the rustic church. Ordinarily, the celebration of mass, on week days, was very thinly attended, but this morning the church was filled with women and children, attracted thither by the presence of the two noble travellers. The greater number, however, soon came out again under the porch, to admire the horses, touch the carriage, and particularly to look at the negress, whom they regarded with a mixture of astonishment, terror, and contempt.

The sacristan conducted Sabina and Léonce to the seat of honor, which, by the way, they were not long compelled to occupy; for the keen and invigorating air of the mountains had so stimulated the Curé’s appetite as to cause him to make unusual haste in the discharge of his duty.

Lady G— picked up a respectable looking missal from the midst of a number of old books of devotion scattered over the prie-Dieu. She appeared wholly intent on the service, but Léonce presently observed that she held *Wilhelm Meister*, concealed beneath her shawl, and that she gradually slipped it over the missal before her, and was entirely absorbed in reading it, during the whole of the *confiteor*.

Kneeling at her side, he whispered in her ear, “I would pledge my word that this simple pastor and these good people are greatly edified by your piety, Sabina! But it is very evident to me, that you respect only the externals of a religion in which you no longer believe.”

She replied only by pointing with her finger to the word *pedant*,

which is often made use of in *Wilhelm Meister*, in reference to one of the members of a troop of vagabonds.

“You know perfectly well that I am not a bigot,” said she, resuming the conversation, as after the conclusion of the service they strolled leisurely down the nave, on the sides of which, were a number of small chapels. “I have the religion of my time.”

“That is to say, you have none at all.”

“On the contrary, I think that no epoch has been more religious than this, if viewed in reference to the vast amount of lofty intellect struggling with the Past, and aspiring towards the Future. But the Present can shelter itself under no temple. Why have you made me enter this?”

“Do you not attend mass every Sunday?”

“That is merely in obedience to the conventional laws of society; and I have no ambition to be thought a latitudinarian. Sunday is a day of religious obligation, sanctioned by the world generally.”

“Alas! you are a hypocrite.”

“In religion! Not at all. I conceal from none that I obey only a custom.”

“You make to yourself, then, a god of this profane world, and him you find it easier to worship, than the God of the universe.”

“Léonce, could you be a bigot?” said she, looking at him earnestly.

“I am an artist,” replied he. “I everywhere feel the presence of God, even while surrounded by these rude images, relics of the Middle Ages, which give to this place the air of some barbarous pagoda.”

“You are more impious than I. These frightful fetiches, these *ex voto* cynics fill me with terror.”

“I see. The Past is your fear. It spoils your Present. Oh! why can you not comprehend the Future? You would then be in the ideal.”

“Stay, Artist, look there!” exclaimed Sabina, calling his attention to a figure kneeling upon the pavement, in the gloomy darkness of a funereal chapel.

It was a young girl, almost a child, poorly, but neatly dressed. She was not handsome, but her countenance was touchingly expressive, and her attitude betokened a singular nobility of soul. A ray of sun, streaming into the damp cave she had selected for her devotions, fell upon her dewy neck and upon a magnificent tress of pale blond, almost white hair, which was gathered up by a band of scarlet velvet, embroidered with tarnished gold, and trimmed with black lace, after the fashion of the country. Her skin was dark, notwithstanding the pale tint of her hair, and her soft, blue eye was rendered almost daz- zlingly brilliant, by the long and heavy golden lashes, edged with silver. Her profile was rather too short, but its curves indicated an extraordinary degree of energy and shrewdness.

“Come, Léonce. Pray do not entirely lose yourself in admiration,” said Sabina to her companion who remained as if petrified, before

the young villager. "It is I alone who am to occupy your thoughts to-day. If any thing takes your attention from me, then I am lost. My enemy, *ennui*, will resume his sway."

"I think only of you while looking at her. Look at her also, I entreat you. You should be able to understand that?"

"That? That is blind and stupid faith. It is the past which yet lives. It is the people. It may be curious for the artist, but I am a poet, and I require something more than what is merely strange; I seek the beautiful. This little creature is ugly."

"That is because you know nothing about it. She is beautiful according to the rare type to which she belongs."

"Type of Albinos."

"No! It is the coloring of Rubens with the austere expression of the virgins of the Lower Empire. And the attitude!"

"Is as stiff as the drawings of the Old Masters. Do you like that?"

"It has a grace of its own, because it is naive and unpremeditated. The position of Canova's Madeleine is studied, and all the virgins of the Renaissance know that they are beautiful. The primitive models are all of one cast, of one piece; it might be said of one growth, like the thought which gave them birth."

"And which petrifies them. Stay, she has finished her prayer; speak to her. You will find out that she is stupid, although her countenance is so expressive."

"My child," said Léonce, addressing the young girl, "you seem to be very pious. Is there any particular kind of devotion attached to this chapel?"

"No, sir," replied the young girl, with a low reverence. "I come here to pray in order to conceal myself from the Curé."

"And why should you fear the observation of the Curé?" demanded Lady G—.

"I am afraid he will drive me away," answered the mountaineer. "He does not wish me to come into the church any more, because he says I am in a state of mortal sin."

She made this response with so much self-possession, and with an air so ingenuous and decided, that Sabina could not help laughing.

"And is that true?" she asked.

"I think the Curé is mistaken, and that God sees more clearly into my heart than he can," replied the young girl.

Hereupon, she made another low reverence, and ran away, for the Curé having finished disrobing himself of his priestly garments, appeared at the end of the nave.

Interrogated by our two travellers, the Curé cast a glance upon the flying sinner, shrugged his shoulders, and said in an angry tone, "Pay no attention to that miserable creature, she is a lost soul."

"That is very strange," said Sabina. "One would not believe it from looking at her face."

"Now, sir," said the Curé, "I am at your orders."



They resumed their places in the carriage. After a few words of general conversation, the Curé demanded permission to read his breviary, and soon became so absorbed in this devotion, that Léonce and Sabina were, once more, as it were, *tête-à-tête*. The old gentleman not appearing to understand English, they carried on their conversation in that language, in order not to distract his attention from his book.

“This intolerant priest, the slave of his paternosters, does not promise to afford us much pleasure,” said Sabina. “I suspect you have recruited him as a punishment for the ill-nature I displayed on meeting the Marchioness.”

“Perhaps my motive was more serious,” replied Léonce. “Do you not guess it?”

“I do not.”

“I have no objection to tell it; but on condition that you listen to me very seriously.”

“You make me uneasy.”

“That is already something gained. You must know, then, that I have added this third person to our party, from a motive of self-preservation.”

“Preservation from what, may it please you?”

“From the danger concealed in all conversations between young people founded on love.”

“Speak for yourself, Léonce. As far as I am concerned. I am not conscious of any danger. You promised that *ennui* should not come near me to-day; I relied on your word, and was tranquil.”

“You are jesting. That is too weak. You promised me to be serious.”

“Come, then, I am very grave, grave as this Curé. What would you say?”

“That, alone with you, I am in danger of experiencing emotions which might deprive me of that calmness on which depends my power over you to-day. My office is to magnetize, and allay your habitual irritation. Now, you know that the first condition of magnetic power is an absolute phlegm; it is an application of the will to the idea of immaterial domination. It demands the absence of all emotion foreign to the mysterious influence. I might allow myself to be disturbed and affected by the glance of your eye, by the sound of your voice, or, in one word, by your magnetic fluid, and then, our parts would have become inverted.”

“Is this a declaration, Léonce?” said Sabina, with ironical hauteur.

“No, madam; just the contrary,” he replied very quietly.

“An impertinence, perhaps?”

“By no means. I have been your friend a long time, and a true friend, as you very well know, although you are a strange, and sometimes, an unjust woman. We have been intimate from childhood; our affection has always been loyal and tender. You have cultivated it with

frankness, I, with devotion. Very few men are as much my friends as you are, and the society of none of them attracts me so strongly as yours; yet you some times cause me an indescribable suffering. This is not the moment to seek its cause; that is an internal problem, which as yet I have not tried to solve. One thing, however, is certain, that I am not in love with you now, and never have been. Without entering into explanations, which, after this declaration, might, perhaps, be rather too plain, I think that you now understand why I have not chosen to run the danger of being moved by so beautiful a woman as you, and why the rotund and peaceful countenance before us was necessary to prevent my regarding you with too tender an admiration."

"That is enough, Léonce," replied Sabina, affecting to arrange her ruffles, in order to conceal the blushes which mantled her cheeks. "It is even too much. There is something in your thoughts humiliating to me."

"I defy you to prove it."

"I shall not make the attempt. Your conscience should accuse you."

"Not at all. I cannot give you a stronger evidence of my respect, than by driving love from my thoughts."

"Love, indeed! It is very far from your heart That you believe you have reason to fear it, flatters me but little. I am not an old coquette, to pride myself on such triumphs."

"Nevertheless, if it were love, love of the heart as you understand it, you would be still more irritated."

"Afflicted, perhaps, because I could not respond to it, but much less irritated than I am now, by the avowal of your indescribable suffering."

"Be frank, my friend, you would not even be afflicted. You would laugh at it, that is all."

"Do you accuse me of coquetry? You have no right. And how can you know any thing about it, since you have not loved me, and you have never seen me in love with any one?"

"Listen, Sabina. I have certainly never tried to please you. So many others have been foiled in the attempt. Do I even know if any man has ever succeeded in winning your love? I remember, however, that one day, when you were unusually sad and communicative, you acknowledged to have felt the power of the wily god, but I am not sure that your enthusiasm did not deceive you. If I had shown to you that I am capable of loving ardently, you might have admitted that I merited something more than your friendship merely. But to have made you comprehend that, it would have been necessary for me to love you thus, which I did not, or to feign it, and to intoxicate myself with my own asseverations. That would have been unworthy of the nobility of my attachment for you, and I cannot stoop to such artifices; or, worse yet, I should have been obliged to reveal to you the secrets of my life, to paint my true character, in one word, to sound my own

trumpet of self-praise. And then, not to be understood—to be laughed at! Just punishment of a childish vanity! Far be it from me to suffer disgrace like that!”

“From what are you vindicating yourself, Léonce? Do I complain that you give me only your friendship? Have I ever asked for anything more?”

“No; but because I watch myself so scrupulously, you might very naturally think me a brute, if you did not understand my motives.”

“Of what use is it to watch yourself so closely, since there is nothing to fear. Love is spontaneous. It surprises and invades; it never reasons; it has no need to interrogate itself, to surround itself with defences, plans of attack and projects of retreat. It betrays itself, and then only is it restrained.”

“A good lesson,” thought Léonce, “and it is she who gives it to me.” He felt the necessity of concealing his annoyance, and taking Lady G—’s hand, and pressing it affectionately, he said to her—“You see, dear Sabina, that love between you and me is entirely out of the question. There is nothing of the new or mysterious in our hearts for each other. We know each other too well; we are like brother and sister.”

“You utter a falsehood and a blasphemy,” replied the proud lady, withdrawing her hand. “Brothers and sisters never know each other, since the most vital and profound emotions of their souls are never in contact, and never revealed to each other. Above all, do not say that you and I know each other too well. I assert, on the contrary, that you do not comprehend me at all, and never will. Therefore, all the rude and disagreeable things you have said to me this morning, instead of exciting my anger only cause me to smile. Even more, I prefer likewise not to comprehend you any better. If you would preserve your ‘magnetic fluid,’ leave me to believe that there are in your heart treasures of passion and tenderness, of which our peaceful friendship is only the shadow.”

“And if you believed it, you would love me, Sabina! I am very certain, then, that you do not believe it.”

“I may say as much as that. But must, then, the conclusion inevitably follow, that, being only friends, we cannot have a high opinion of each other?”

“She is piqued,” thought Léonce, “and now we are at the point of hating or loving.”

“In my opinion,” said the Curé, closing his breviary, “we had better now break our fast, if agreeable to Madam and Monsieur.”

“I agree with you,” replied Léonce, “and all the more readily, that there is a few steps from here a plateau of rocks, with plenty of shade, where we may obtain a charming view.”

“What, above there?” cried the Curé, who was somewhat inclined to corpulency. “Would you climb up the *Roche Vert*? We shall be altogether more comfortable in this thicket of firs, just on the edge of

the road.”

“But we shall have no view,” said Lady G—, playfully passing her arm within that of the old priest. “And can we get along without a view of these beautiful mountains?”

“I think we can very well, while eating,” replied the Curé—submitting, however, meekly to her guidance.

The jockey conducted the britzska into the shady thicket, and in a few moments numerous servitors presented themselves, to assist in feeding the horses and driving away the flies. These were the little herdsmen, who, stationed at various points among the mountains, had, in the twinkling of an eye, surrounded our travellers, like a flight of curious and hungry birds. One took the cushions of the carriage, and placed them on the rocks, as seats for the guests; another charged himself with the game pies; a third, with the wines: each striving to be useful in his own way, either by carrying or breaking something. The “*dejeuner champêtre*” was quickly installed on the *Roche Vert*, and the Curé, seeing how splendid and substantial it was, wiped his forehead, while his almost breathless body gave utterance to a sigh of rejoicing. Everybody partook of the repast, including the domestics and the little ragged pages, for there was an ample supply. Léonce had not done things by halves. One might have thought that he had foreseen for what an enormous priestly stomach he should be called upon to provide. Sabina was very merry and cheerful, and admitted, that for a long time her appetite had not been so good as at the present moment. Léonce, having at last served every one else, was just preparing to help himself, when the children, seated in a group near by, all at once began to make a great commotion, to leap up, to motion with their arms, as if beckoning to some one in the ravine, and to cry—  
 ”The bird-tamer! The bird-tamer! ”

### III.

#### ENLEVONS HERMIONE.

“HOLD your tongues, senseless brood,” said the Curé. “Don’t call that foolish girl this way. We want nothing to do with her jugglery.”

The children, however, paid no attention to his commands, but continued to call and gesticulate; whereupon Sabina, stooping down and looking over the edge of the rock, saw a most extraordinary spectacle. A young mountaineer was climbing the steep bank leading to the *Roche Vert*—and this child moved, literally, through a dense cloud of birds, who fluttered around her—some pecking at her hair, some planting themselves on her shoulders, and others, very young ones, hopping along at her feet, in the sand. All seemed to dispute the pleasure of touching or the advantage of imploring her, and filled the air with their cries of joy and impatience. When the young girl was near

enough to be distinguished through her whirling crowd of attendants, Léonce and Sabina recognized the blonde, with vermillion cheeks and golden hair, whom they had seen in the church, an hour previous.

At this moment, the Curé, also leaning over the side of the rock which commanded a view of the ravine, began gesticulating to her most vehemently his displeasure at her presence, and his positive orders that she should instantly leave the spot. The priest's large full face produced upon her an effect like that of the head of Medusa. She remained transfixed and motionless, while the birds, alarmed at the abrupt halt, flew off to the neighboring trees for refuge.

The entreaties, however of Lady G—, and perhaps the sight of his glass filled with excellent Grecian wine, she had just poured out for him, calmed the ire of the holy man, and he at last consented to call back the child.

“Here, now, come perform your pasquinades before the lady and gentleman, vagabond that you are.”

The young girl held concealed in her hand a quantity of grain, which at these words she threw behind her as far as possible, and so skilfully, that it appeared as if she were only making an imperative gesture to the little birds, who were again beginning to surround her. They immediately alighted in the thicket which she pretended to point out to them, and there remained, apparently in obedience to her commands, but, in reality, occupied in picking up the grain scattered on the ground. The other children were not duped by this manoeuvre, but Sabina experienced that pleasure in its fullest extent.

“Well, indeed! Very well done, my hardened little sinner,” said Léonce, extending his hand to the mountaineer, to aid her in reaching the plateau, which was particularly steep and difficult of access on this side. But his assistance was not required, for she bounded up the rock like a young chamois, and placing both hands on her forehead, asked permission to work.

“Let us see. Let us see quickly, idle child,” said the Curé, “what it is you are pleased to call your work.”

Availing herself of the permission thus ungraciously accorded, she turned to the children, and requested them to keep their dogs close at their side, and also to remain perfectly quiet themselves. She then took from her shoulders a small red, woollen mantle, and climbing a neighboring rock, higher than the “*Roche Vert*” she waved it like a flag in the air above her head. At the same instant, a throng of birds of every species—sparrows, fauvets, linnets, bullfinches, black-birds, ring-doves, and even swallows, with forked tails and large black wings, flew out from all the surrounding bushes, precipitating themselves upon her. She played with them a few minutes, repulsed them, gesticulated to them, shook the mantle as if to frighten them, caught some flying and threw them back again into the air—all without succeeding in disgusting them with their amorous pursuit. Then, when

she had shown to what extent she was the adored and absolute sovereign of this [free] people, she covered her head with the mantle, threw herself upon the ground, and pretended to be asleep. Whereupon, these little winged creatures instantly alighted on her body, each struggling for a hiding place in the plaits of her garments, and appearing as if magnetized by her slumber. Finally, she rose, repeated her stratagem, and, with the aid of more grain, sent them back to the bushes, where they disappeared, and ceased their chattering.

The whole pantomime was at once so graceful and poetic, her power over the inhabitants of the air seemed so truly marvellous, as to cause our travellers unmitigated sensations of delight at the little scene. The negress had no hesitation in attributing it to enchantment, and even the Curé himself could not help smiling at the charming tricks of the pupils, although he forebore to applaud their instructress.

“She is really a little fairy,” said Sabina, drawing the bird-tamer towards her; “and I acknowledge, Léonce, that I am reconciled to her amber eye-lashes. Mignon had done her injustice in my imagination. I should have preferred her as a brunette and playing the guitar, but now I accept this rustic and blonde *Mignon* and I like this magic scene as well as the “*Egg Dance*.” Tell me first, dear child, what is your name?”

“I am called Madeleine Méléze.” said the bird-tamer, “at your ladyship’s service.”

“What beautiful names! and in harmony with yourself. Come, take a seat here by me, and breakfast with us; provided, however, that your subjects, the birds, do not appear, like the plagues of Egypt, and devour our repast.”

“Oh! have no fear, Madam. My children never approach me when other people are near.”

“In that case,” said the Curé, in a tone of rebuke, “if you wish to retain this foolish business, by which you get your living, I advise you not to be so often accompanied in your walks by the vagabonds whom you meet; for you will soon discover, that, although their presence is respected by these birds of passage, the birds of the country will no longer know you, Madeleine.”

“But M. le Curé, you have been deceived,” replied the bird-tamer. “I have never had but one companion in my rambles, and that is only lately; we two are always alone, never have any one else with us, and whoever has told you the contrary, has told you a falsehood.”

The serious air with which she accompanied this response, amused Léonce but excited the Curé’s anger.

“See there, what a beautiful reply to make!” said he. “Was there ever a more brazen-faced sinner than this little girl!”

“It seems to me that you do not understand the child,” said Sabina to the Curé: “Her surprise and boldness are the effect of a candor and serenity of soul, whose harmony your evil thoughts may disturb. Permit me to tell you, my dear Curé, that, good as your intentions

doubtless are, you are nevertheless doing all in your power to deprive her of the innocence and purity of her mind.”

“And is it you, Madam, who thus speak!” replied the Curé, in a low tone. “You, who, from motives of prudence and virtue, objected to a *tête-à-tête* drive with this noble gentleman, notwithstanding the propriety of his conduct and the presence of your domestics?”

Sabina regarded the Curé with astonishment; then darting upon Léonce a glance full of reproach and derision, she added, in a spirit of noble self-renunciation:

“If you thus interpret the motive which led us to seek your society, M. le Curé, you should find in it the confirmation of my opinion regarding this child: it is, that her thoughts are more pure than ours.”

“Pure as you will, Madam,” resumed the Curé, whom Sabina had already mentally surnamed the *Growler*, occupied as she was in tracing resemblances between her companions in the adventures of the morning, and the characters in *Wilhelm Meister*—“but let me tell you, that with girls of her condition, living as they do, a life of hazard and unrestraint, the excess of innocence is the worst of dangers. The first comer abuses it; and this will be the case with her, if she is not already a victim.”

“Ah! If it were so, she would be confused at your suspicions, whereas she is only frightened at your menaces. You priests, learned as you are, yet know nothing of the nature of woman. You pitilessly wound her youthful modesty.”

“I maintain,” interrupted the Curé, “that what is true for people of your class, is not applicable to the lower orders of society. The modesty of such children as Madeleine is no more nor less than stupidity and thoughtlessness. They do wrong without knowing what it is they do.”

“In that case, perhaps it is not wrong for them, and I can verily believe that God will not hold them guilty!”

“That is heresy, Madam.”

“As you will, M. le Curé. If you wish to argue the question, I have no objection. I am well convinced, however, that you are better than you would appear; and that, at the bottom of your heart, you don’t dislike my morality.”

“Well. Yes. We will argue the question after breakfast,” answered the Curé.

“Meantime,” said Sabina, gracefully filling his glass, and bestowing upon him one of her sweetest glances, the malice of which he did not comprehend, “you are going to accord me a favor, are you not, my dear Curé?”

“How can I refuse you anything!” he replied, carrying the glass to his lips, and swallowing the bumper of Cyprus wine—“especially if it be a reasonable and Christian demand.”

“You are to make a conditional peace with the bird-tamer,” resumed Lady G—. “I take her under my protection; you must not put

her to flight, nor speak harshly to her; you will leave to me the care of gently confessing her; and then, after hearing the account I shall render to you concerning her, you are at liberty to be indulgent or severe, according to the merits of the case.”

“Granted!” exclaimed the Curé, becoming amiable and yielding, in proportion as he satisfied his robust appetite. “See here, now,” said he, addressing Madeleine, who was talking with Léonce, “I pardon you for to-day, and will allow you to come to confession to-morrow, on condition that from this moment you submit yourself to all the commands of this noble and virtuous lady, who has kindly interested herself in your behalf, and wishes to assist you in forsaking your paths of sin.”

The word sin produced on Madeleine, the same effect of astonishment and doubt as at first; but convinced of the friendly disposition of her pastor, and particularly of the interest evinced for her by the noble lady, she made a reverence to the one, and kissed the hand of the other.

Interrogated by Léonce, respecting the means she employed to gain the love and obedience of her birds, she refused to explain them to him, and pretended that she was possessed of a great secret.

“Come, Madeleine, this is not right,” said the Curé. “If you would have me pardon everything, you must begin by divorcing yourself from falsehood. To seek to keep alive superstition is a grave fault, especially when the object is to profit by it. Here, moreover, it will not serve you. At the fairs you are in the habit of attending to exhibit your talent, (very much against my judgment—for this life of vagabondage is not such as a pious maiden should lead,) you may be able to persuade silly people that you possess a charm, whereby you can attract to you any bird that comes in your way, and keep it near you as long as you please. But your little comrades here well know that in these mountains, where birds are scarce, you make it the business of your life to run all over, seeking out the nests they build, seizing upon the young brood as soon as it is hatched; thus compelling the parents to come to you, and feed their little ones upon your knees. Everybody knows the patience with which you remain standing for hours, immovable as a statue or a tree, in order to accustom these little creatures to regard you without fear. Everybody knows that as soon as they become tame, they follow you all over, to receive their accustomed food at your hands, and that they bring with them their family, as it increases; thus following an admirable instinct of memory and attachment, with which many species of birds seem to be endowed. All this is not sorcery. Each one of us, if, like you, we were enemies of useful and reasonable labor, could do as much. I entreat you, therefore, no longer to assume the role of magician, pretending that you are inspired, like certain celebrated impostors of antiquity—among others, the miserable Apollonius of Thyane, who claimed to understand the language of sparrows, and whom the Church condemns as false



prophets. As to these noble persons, do not hope to make fools of them. Their intelligence and their education make it impossible for them to believe that a child like you can be invested with supernatural power."

"Indeed, M. le Curé," said Lady G—, "you could not have chosen a less agreeable subject of conversation. Your sermon on superstition is most *mal-à-propos*. The explanation you give is death to poetry, and I would, a hundred times prefer to believe that poor Madeleine is endowed with some mysterious gift, miraculous even, if you will, than to chill my imagination by accepting your common-place realities. Console yourself," said she, turning to the bird-tamer, who, shedding tears of vexation, regarded the Curé with a sort of naive and proud indignation, "we still look upon you as a fairy, and submit ourselves to your enchantments."

"Besides," said Léonce, "the explanations of M. le Curé, in reality, explain nothing. They state facts, but do not develop the causes. In order to be able thus to tame these beings, naturally wild and free, a particular kind of intelligence, a sort of secret magnetism, entirely exceptional, is necessary. Each one of us might consecrate ourselves in vain, to an education which the mysterious fatality of instinct has unveiled to this young girl."

"Yes, yes!" cried Madeleine, her eyes sparkling with intelligence, as if she perfectly comprehended the argument of Léonce. "I challenge M. le Curé to tame even a chicken in his yard, and I, I tame the eagles on the mountains."

"The eagles! You!" exclaimed the Curé, stung to the quick as he saw Sabina convulsed with laughter. "I challenge you to do it. Eagles cannot be tamed like the larks. See now, then, what is gained by foolish practices and ridiculous pretensions. Those who assume them become liars, and that is exactly your case, shameless child."

"Pardon, Monsieur le Curé," said a young goatherd, who had separated himself from the group of children, to listen to the conversation of the gentle folks, "Madeleine does tame the eagles; she has done it for a long time; I have seen her do it. Her power increases continually, and I have no doubt but that she will soon succeed in taming the bears."

"No, no, never!" replied the bird-tamer, with a mixture of terror and disgust painted on her countenance, "my mind accords only with that which flies in the air."

"Indeed! What did I tell you!" cried Léonce, struck by her words. "She feels, although she cannot account for it to herself or others, that there are indefinable affinities which attract certain beings to her. These intimate relations are marvellous to us, because we are ignorant of their natural laws: but the world of physical facts is full of such miracles, although they escape our cognizance. And be assured of one thing, M. le Curé, the devil has nothing to do in the matter; God alone possesses the secrets of all enigmas, and presides over all mysteries."

“Very good!” said the Curé, pleased with this explanation. “It is your belief, then, that there are unknown relations existing between certain different organizations. Perhaps this child exhales a bird odor, perceptible only to the subtle sense of these winged creatures.”

“She certainly has the profile of a bird,” said Sabina, laughing. “The small hooked nose, the prominent and piercing eye, together with the lightness of her movements, the grace with which she moves her arms, buoyant as wings; her limbs delicate and firm as the claws of a bird; and you see her resemblance to a young eagle.”

“As you please,” said Madeleine, who appeared endowed with a quick intelligence, and comprehended all that was said in relation to her. “But besides the gift of making myself loved, I have also that of making myself understood. It is a science with me, and I defy any one else to discover my secret. Which of you can tell at what hour birds will obey you, and what hour they will not; what cry can be heard the farthest; in what places to station yourselves; what influences to avoid; what weather is propitious? Ah! Monsieur le Curé, if you knew how to persuade human beings as I know how to attract the brute creation, your churches would be better filled, and your saints have more influence.”

“She does not lack wit,” said the clerical *growler*, who was at heart a kind and jovial churchman, especially after drinking; “but it is a diabolical sort of wit, and some day I must exorcise it. Meanwhile, Madeleine, call your eagles to you.”

“And where shall I find them at this hour?” she said maliciously. “Do you know where they are, Monsieur le Curé? If you know, tell me. I will go and seek them for you.”

“Go, then, since you pretend to know.”

“They are where I cannot go now. I see plainly, Monsieur le Curé, that you do not know. But if you are not afraid, and will come with me this evening at sunset, I will show you something that shall astonish you.”

The Curé shrugged his shoulders, but Sabina’s ardent imagination seized hold of the fantasy. “I will go there,” she exclaimed; “I wish to be afraid and astonished. I wish to believe in the devil and see him if possible.”

“Gently,” whispered Léonce in her ear. “You have not yet my permission, dear invalid.”

“I demand it. I will extort it from you, amiable doctor.”

“Well, we shall see. I will interrogate the magician, and decide according to my judgment.”

“I count, then, upon your desire, your promise to amuse me. And now, is it not time to return to the villa, to see how my Lord G— has slept.”

“If you have a decided will, I give in my resignation.”

“God forbid! During the whole morning, until this moment, I have not experienced an instant of *ennui*. Do, then, whatever you may

judge expedient; but wherever you conduct me, I beg you will allow me to take the bird-tamer."

"That was, in truth, my intention. Do you believe, then, that we find her here by accident?"

"You are acquainted with her, then? You had arranged to meet her here?"

"Ask me no questions."

"I forgot. Keep your secrets: I hope, however, that you have other surprises in store for me."

"Certainly, I have others, and I announce to you, madam, that the day will not pass without your experiencing emotions which shall trouble your slumbers to-night."

"Emotions! Ah! what happiness!" cried Sabina. "And shall I long preserve the remembrance of them?"

"All your life," said Léonce so seriously as to indicate that he no longer jested.

"You are a very singular man," she resumed.

"One might really suppose that you believe in your power over me, as Madeleine believes in hers over the eagles."

"You have the pride and ferocity of these kings of the air, and I have, perhaps, Madeleine's delicacy of observation, as well as her patience and cunning."

"Cunning! You inspire me with fear."

"Precisely what I wish. Hitherto, you have laughed at me, merely because you have not known me."

"I!" said she, a little excited and disturbed by the singular turn the mind of Léonce was taking. "I, not know the friend of my childhood, my loyal knight-errant? That, in truth, is about as reasonable as to tell me that I dream of laughing at you."

"You have nevertheless said, madam, that brothers and sisters are eternally unknown to each other, because the most interesting and vital points of their souls, are never in contact. A mystery, profound as this abyss, separates us. But, madam, I now claim to know you, remaining myself unknown. That is to say," he added, seeing mistrust and terror depicted in Sabina's face, "I resign myself to love you more than is my will, having no claim to be loved by you."

"Provided we remain friends, Léonce," said Lady G—, suddenly overpowered by an anguish she could not explain to herself, "I consent to let you continue this badinage; otherwise, it is my wish to return immediately to the villa, and place myself under the leaden weight of conjugal love."

"If you exact it, I obey; I am again the man of the world, and abandon the marvellous cure that you have permitted me to undertake."

"But for which you are, however, answerable. That would be too bad."

"I can answer for it yet, if you do not resist A complete, unheard

of revolution may to-day take place in your moral and intellectual life, if you will consent to abjure until this evening, the empire of your will."

"But what confidence I must have in your honor, to submit so unreservedly to your control!"

"Do you then believe me capable of abusing it? If so, the Curé will accompany you back to the villa. I will go through the mountains in search of the eagles, less prudent and suspicious than you."

"With Madeleine, doubtless?"

"Why not?"

"Friendship has its jealousies as well as love. You shall not go without me."

"Come, then!"

"Come!"

Lady G— rose impetuously, seized the arm of the bird-tamer, as if clutching her prey, and drew it within her own. In the twinkling of an eye, the children had carried back to the carriage the whole of the breakfast paraphernalia. Every thing was washed, ranged and packed as if by magic. The negress presided over the operation with the air of a busy sybil; the liberality of Léonce gave wings to the idlest, and skill to the awkwardest.

"It seems to me," remarked Sabina to him, as she watched the little creatures running about in every direction, "that I am at the fantastical wedding, in the story of *Gracieuse* and *Percinet*. When the wandering princess opens the box in the enchanted forest, out comes an army of miniature scullions and all sorts of servants—who turn the spit, cook, and serve up a wonderful feast to the joyous band of Lilliputians—all singing and dancing at the same time, like these little rustic pages."

"The apologue is truer than you think," replied Léonce. "Recall well to your mind the story, that charming fantasy, which Hoffman has never surpassed. It is at the moment when the Princess Gracieuse, punished for her restless curiosity, by the force even of the charm she could not dispel, saw all her little enchanted world take flight, and disperse themselves among the bushes. The cooks carry the fuming spit, the musicians their violins, the bridegroom drags away his bride, the parents scold, the guests laugh, the servants swear, and all mock at Gracieuse, who, with her beautiful hands, seeks in vain to catch them, and collect them together in the box again. Like nimble ants, they escape, running across her fingers, dispersing and disappearing under the moss and violets, which are to them a protecting forest of impenetrable wood. The casket remains empty, and the terrified Gracieuse is on the point of falling again into the power of her bad genius, when—"

"When the amiable Léonce—I should say, the all-powerful Prince Percinet," resumed Sabina, "the protégé of good fairies, comes to her assistance, and with a stroke of his wand, causes parents and lovers,

scullions and spits, musicians and violins, all to re-enter the box.”

“Then he said to her,” continued Léonce, “Know, dear Princess Gracieuse, that you are not wise enough to govern the world of your fantasies. You sow them by handfuls on the barren soil of reality, and then, more agile and cunning than you, they escape and betray you. Without me, they would lose themselves like the insect which the eye vainly pursues into its mysterious retreats of turf and leaves; and then you would find yourself alone, with fear and regret, in this solitary and disenchanted place. No more cool shadows, no more murmuring cascades, no more fragrant flowers, no more singing and dancing, or laughing, on this verdant carpet: no more of anything but the wind whistling through the leafless trees, and the distant voices of savage beasts, mounting in the air with the bloody Star of night. But thanks to me, whom you shall never implore in vain, your treasures are all once more in your magic box, and we may follow our route, certain of finding them whenever we wish, and wherever we may halt in the kingdom of dreams.”

#### IV.

##### FALSE ROUTE.

“What a beautiful story! I must try to remember it, so as to repeat it this evening,” said the bird-tamer, whose arm Sabina still retained.

“Prince Percinet,” cried Lady G—, passing her other arm within that of Léonce, and moving with him towards the carriage awaiting them—“you are my good genius, and I surrender to your admirable wisdom.”

“I hope that we are going to take the road leading to Saint Apollinaire,” said the Curé, placing himself in the britzska, at the side of Sabina, while Léonce and Madeleine were seated opposite. “I am sure that my parishioners are already in want of me to perform some sacrament.”

“May your will be done, dear pastor,” replied Léonce, giving orders to the jockey.

“What!” exclaimed Sabina, after a few minutes, “must we retrace our steps, and see the same places over again?”

“Give yourself no uneasiness,” replied Léonce, pointing to the Curé, whom two or three turns of the wheels had thrown into a profound slumber. “We will go wherever it pleases us. Turn to the right,” said he to the young charioteer, “and take the road I first spoke of.”

The boy obeyed, and the Curé snored!

“This is indeed perfectly delightful,” said Sabina, laughing heartily. “To carry off a grumbling old Curé; what a new idea! At last, I begin to perceive how much pleasure his presence may procure for us. How surprised he will be, and how he will growl when he wakes

up, and finds himself two leagues from this place!"

"Neither you nor our good Curé are at the end of your impressions of travel," replied Léonce.

"Come, little one, tell me your history, and confess your sin," said Sabina—taking with irresistible grace the two hands of the bird-tamer, as they were seated face to face. "Léonce, you must not listen—these are women's secrets."

"Oh! His lordship may listen to everything," replied Madeleine, with perfect self-possession. "My sin is not so-heavy, nor are my secrets so great, that I cannot easily speak of them. If M. le Curé were not in the habit of interrupting me at every word of my confession with his scoldings, but would listen to it, he would not be so displeased with me; or at least, he would perhaps make me understand in what respect I give him cause for so much anger. I have a good friend, your highness," she added, addressing Sabina, "and that is the whole story."

"I find it more difficult to preserve my gravity than one might suppose," said Lady G— to Léonce. "So much candor renders questions embarrassing."

"Not as embarrassing as you may think," he replied. "See here, Madeleine, does he love you much?"

"He loves me as much as I love him."

"And do you not love him too much?" demanded Lady G—.

"Too much? That is a droll question! I love him as much as I can. I do not know if it is too much or not enough."

"How old is he?" said Léonce.

"I do not know. He has told me, but I do not remember. But wait a moment. . .! He is at least ten years older than I. I am fourteen years old, and that would make twenty-four or twenty-five years; would it not?"

"Then there is great danger for you. You are too young to be married, Madeleine."

"Too young by a year or two. That fault will soon be remedied."

"But your lover may become impatient?"

"No. He does not speak of it."

"So much the worse! And you, are you also as indifferent?"

"I must be. I cannot make time travel as I can make the birds fly."

"And you both intend to be married to each other?"

"I do not know. We have never spoken of it."

"But do you not yourself wish it."

"Not yet, for I am too young."

"And if he does not marry you?" said Lady G—.

"Oh! That is impossible. He loves me."

"Has he loved you long?" resumed Sabina.

"A week."

"*Oime!*" said Léonce. "And you already have so much confidence in him?"

TEVERINO

“Doubtless, since he has told me that he loves me.”

“And do you thus believe everybody who speaks to you of love?”

“No one has ever yet spoken to me of love but he: and he is the only one I shall believe as long as I live, because he is the only one I love.”

“Ah! Curé,” said Sabina, casting a glance upon the sleeping *growler*; “here is something you can not comprehend! It is faith, it is love.”

“No, madam,” resumed the bird-tamer, “he cannot comprehend it. He said at the beginning, that no one knew my lover, and that he must be a bad fellow. Now, the truth is very simple. He is a stranger here, and chanced to stop at our cabin; he has neither relations nor friends to speak a good word for him; and he has remained with us ever since, because he saw me and was pleased with me. Thus I am the only person who knows him, and who can say that he is an honest man. M. le Curé wants him to leave the country, and threatens to send the *gens d’armes* after him to drive him away. I do all in my power to conceal him, and certainly that is not strange.”

“Where do you conceal him?”

“In my cabin.”

“Have you parents?”

“I have a brother, who is—with your permission, a smuggler—but you must not mention it, even to M. le Curé.”

“And, therefore, he passes the nights out in the mountains, and takes his rest during the day; is it not so?” said Léonce.

“Nearly; but he knows that my good friend sleeps in his bed when he is absent from home.”

“And is he not displeased at that?”

“No; he has a good heart.”

“And is he not uneasy?”

“For what should he be uneasy?”

“Does your brother love you much?”

“Oh! he is too good to me; we have been orphans a long time, and he has been both father and mother to me.”

“I think we may be perfectly easy regarding her,” said Lady G—to her friend.

“For the present, yes,” he replied; “but for the future? I fear, Madeline, that your good friend will, some day, take his departure, either from compulsion or inclination, and leave you to weep.”

“If he goes, I will follow him.”

“And your birds?”

“They will go with me. I sometimes travel ten leagues with them.”

“Do they follow you now?”

“You do not see them, then, flying from tree to tree, the whole length of the road? They do not come near me, because I am not alone, and the carriage scares them; but I see them very, plainly, and they see me, poor little creatures.”

TEVERINO

“The world covers more than ten leagues; suppose your good friend should carry you more than a hundred leagues from here?”

“Wherever I shall go, there will be birds, and I will make them know me.”

“But will you not regret those you have brought up?”

“Oh! certainly I shall. There are two or three that have as much intelligence as M. le Curé himself. My good friend is the only one I know, who has more. But I assure you that all my birds will follow me, as I shall follow my good friend. They begin to know him, and do not fly away when he is with me.”

“Provided your good friend is not more volatile than the birds!” said Sabina. “Is he then very handsome, this good friend?”

“I think he is; I do not know.”

“You dare not, then, look at him?” said Léonce.

“Yes, indeed! I look at him when he is asleep, and he seems to me as beautiful as the sun, but I do not know that others would think so.”

“When he is asleep! You enter into his chamber, then?”

“I have not the trouble of entering it, since I sleep there myself. We are not rich, your highness; we have but one room for us all, including my goat and my brother’s horse.”

“That is really primitive life. But it seems you do not sleep much, since you pass the night in contemplating your good friend.”

“Oh! that only occupies a quarter of an hour or so after he is asleep. He goes to bed and falls asleep, while I, with my back to him, recite my prayers at the other end of the room. Sometimes, however, I forget myself, and look at him longer than I am aware of. But sleep soon overtakes me, and I seem to sleep better afterwards.”

“From which it results, nevertheless, that he sleeps more than you?”

“But he sleeps very well, and why should he not? Our house is clean, though poor, and I always take great pains in making his bed.”

“He never wakes, then, to look at you while you are asleep?”

“It may be; I do not think he does; I sleep as lightly as a bird.”

“He loves you, then, less than you love him?”

“It is possible,” tranquilly replied the bird-tamer, after a moment’s reflection; “and that may very well be, since I am too young to marry.”

“In short, you feel certain that he will one day love you enough to marry you?”

“He has never promised me that he would, but he says to me every day, “Madeleine, you are good as an angel, and I never wish to leave you. It makes me very unhappy to think that soon, perhaps, I shall be obliged to go away.” I never make him any answer, but I am determined to follow him, so that he shall not be unhappy; and, since he finds me good, and desires never to leave me, it is certain he will marry me when I am of the proper age.”



“Oh, Léonce!” said Sabina in English, to her friend, “let us admire, and be careful not to disturb the holy faith with which this child’s soul overflows. It is possible that her lover will seduce and abandon her; it is possible that she will be crushed by shame and grief; but yet, in her disaster, there would still be an existence worthy of envy. I would give all that I have ever lived, all that I shall yet live, for one day of this boundless love, without reservation, without hesitation, blindly sublime, penetrating every pore of my being.”

“She certainly lives in an ecstasy, and her passion transfigures her,” said Léonce. “See how charming she is when speaking of him she loves, although nature has bestowed upon her none of those attractions which render you the most beautiful of women. Indeed, she is at this moment handsomer than you. Do you not think so, yourself?”

“You have a strange way of saying rude things, but you cannot wound me to-day, do what you will. Your friendship is, nevertheless, most pitiless in its demonstrations. Surely, my misfortune in not having hitherto known this ecstatic love, is already sufficiently great, without the addition of your reproaches, just at the moment in which I fathom the extent of my misery. If I thought to revenge myself on you, might I not say that you are as miserable as I, fully as incapable of blind confidence and boundless love? that, in fact, the same abyss of knowledge and experience separates both of us from the condition of soul in which we find this child?”

“Of that you know nothing, nothing whatever,” replied Léonce, with an energy which rendered it impossible to interpret the almost imperceptible emotion of his voice: his eyes wandered over the landscape.

“What a frightful country we are passing through,” said Lady G—, breaking a long silence. “These naked rocks, this angry torrent, this narrow patch of sky walled in by mountains, this oppressive heat, and the heavy slumber of this churchman, all combine to give me a wofully gloomy and terror-stricken feeling.”

“A little patience,” said Léonce. “We shall soon be indemnified.”

And in truth, the contracted and sterile gorge suddenly expanded as they ascended the hill, and a delicious valley, cast like an oasis in a desert, met Sabina’s charmed gaze. Other mountainous defiles, as deep and narrow, opened into this verdant amphitheatre, and mingled their calm and smooth waters with those of the principal course.

Their greenish torrents were clear as crystal; carpets of emeralds covered each bank, and the silence of this solitude was only disturbed by the noise of murmuring streams and the distant tinkling of cow-bells. Far up the opening made by these granite gorges, the eye took in long vistas of blue perspective, while, at the base of the mountains, meandered sparkling, silver waters. It was an enchanting spot, where everything invited to repose, and where also the imagination continually soared into mysterious regions of the unknown.

“What a ravishing surprise!” said Sabina, stepping from the carriage upon the fine sand that covered the bank. “Here is a charming asylum against the noonday heat, which is becoming intolerable. Suppose, Léonce, that we leave our equipage and quit the beaten track. Here are some nice, well-trodden paths, this tree thrown across the torrent may serve as a bridge; farther beyond, there are plenty of flowers to gather, and a thicket of firs, which promises a delightful shade and fragrant odors. The absence of cultivation, and the remoteness of every thing appertaining to civilized life, gives the spot a peculiar fascination.”

“Yes, you are really in the heart of the mountains. Here, we begin to find the homes of the nomadic shepherds; who live after the manner of primitive ages, conducting their flocks from one pasturage to another, exploring deserts that belong only to him who discovers and takes possession, inhabiting temporary cabins built by their own hands, which they transport from one place to another on the back of an ass, and set up on the first convenient rock. Look up there towards the clouds, and you will see several of them. They are never found in the lower regions of the mountains. One stormy day would so swell the torrents as to wash them all away. This is the hour of siesta, and the herdsmen are sleeping beneath their verdant roofs. Behold yourself, then, in a desert, with perfect liberty to choose the spot where it shall please you to taste an hour or two of sleep, while the horses are resting from their toils and gathering fresh strength. I have it! the thicket so attractive to you is the very spot. Lélé shall suspend your hammock there.”

“My hammock! And is it possible you should have thought to bring that?”

“Is it not my duty to think of everything?”

The negress Lélé followed them, carrying the net-work hammock, made of the fibre of the palm tree, bordered with fringes, and tassels, and feathers, of a thousand hues, artistically intermingled.

Madeleine, enraptured with this specimen of Indian workmanship, ran alongside of the negress, asking her innumerable questions about the marvellous birds that had furnished these brilliant feathers, trying to form some idea of the parrots and humming-birds, which Lélé, in her mysterious and almost unintelligible jargon, attempted to describe.

Every one had forgotten the Curé, who, no longer rocked by the swinging and regular motion of the carriage, at last awoke.

“*Corpo di Bacco!*” (This was the only oath he allowed himself)—cried he, rubbing his eyes, “where are we, and what bad joke is this?”

“Alas! Monsieur l’Abbé,” said the jockey, who was as malicious as a page, and fully appreciated the facetious caprices of his master. “We are lost in the mountains, and we none of us know where we are, any more than you do. My horses are tired, and it is absolutely necessary that we should stop here.”

“Really,” said the Curé, “we cannot be far from Saint Apollinaire; I have been asleep only a few minutes.”

“Your pardon, Monsieur l’Abbé, “you have been asleep four hours.”

“No, no! You are mistaken, my lad. The sun is new perpendicularly over our heads, and it cannot be later than twelve o’clock, that is, if he has not stopped in his course, as happened to him once before. You must, then, have travelled like the wind, for we are more than four leagues distant from the *Roche Vert*. I am certain of it; here is the neck of *La Forquette*, for I recognize Saint Basil’s Cross. It is only two steps to the frontier. Stay! On the other side of these high mountains is Italy, beautiful Italy, on whose soil it has never yet been my happiness to tread! But, *Corpo di Bacco!* if you are going to stop here, if your beasts are tired, I shall not be able to return to my parish before night”

“And how angry your housekeeper will be!” said the malicious groom, in a dolorous tone.

“Uneasy, surely,” replied the Curé, “very uneasy, poor Barbara! Well, she must bear her misfortune patiently. Where are their excellencies?”

“Below there, on the other side of the stream. Do you not see them?”

“What caprice has impelled them to cross that frail plank I I am not anxious to risk my weight upon it. Now, if I had at least a line with me, I might catch some trout. This place is celebrated for them.”

The Curé, herewith, began to search his pockets, and, to his great satisfaction, found several lines with hooks attached. The jockey assisted him to cut a pole and find bait, and maliciously offered a book with which to beguile the time. The good man used no ceremony; but took *Wilhelm Meister* as much from curiosity to know the principles of his companions, as to divert himself, and re-ascending the course of the stream, he seated himself among rocks, with his attention divided between the artifices of the trout, and those of *Philine*. He was just at the place of *les petits souliers* when the first trout nibbled. History does not inform us whether he closed the book or lost the fish.

Meantime the black Lélé and the blond bird-tamer had firmly attached the hammock to the branches of the fir trees. The beautiful Sabina, gracefully reclining upon this aerial couch, presented herself to the gaze of Léonce, in an attitude of chaste voluptuousness. Her large silk sleeves were turned back to the elbow, and the tip of her small foot, just peeping out below her dress, hung down amid the fringe of feathers, less delicate and light than it.

Léonce had thrown his cloak upon the grass, and seated on it at the feet of the handsome woman, he slightly pulled the cord attached to the hammock, so as to give it a gently undulating motion. Lélé also arranged herself comfortably for a siesta on the grass, while Madeleine penetrated into the thickest of the woods, followed at every step

by the cries of birds, like a flourish of trumpets in celebration of the march of a sovereign.

Sabina and Léonce thus found themselves placed in rather an exciting tête-à-tête, for burning ideas, clothed as they were in freezing terms, had been agitated between them. Léonce remained profoundly silent, and fixed upon Lady G— a penetrating gaze, which, although it expressed nothing tender, she found extremely embarrassing.

“Why don’t you answer me?” said she, after having vainly endeavored to engage him in light conversation. “You certainly hear me, for you look at my eyes with an obstinacy that must be very tiresome to you.”

“I!” said he. “I am not looking at your eyes. They are stars which shine only for the purpose of shining, without communicating any of their glow and warmth to the eyes of men. I am looking at your arm and the folds of your robe outlined by the wind.”

“Yes; sleeves and drapery, that is the only ideal for you artists.”

“Does it displease you to be regarded as a fine model?”

“Provided I am only such to you, I am satisfied,” said she haughtily, for the eyes of Léonce no longer expressed the cold contemplation of the statuary. At these disdainful words, they resumed their indifference.

“You would make a superb Sybil,” he remarked, pretending not to have heard her.

“No. I have not dishevelled hair, nor a wild, passionate nature.

“The Sybils of the *Renaissance* are grand and severe. Have you not seen those of Raphael? they combine the grandeur and majesty of the antique with the movement and thought of another age.”

“Alas! I have never been in Italy. Once we touched its borders, but Lord G—, seized by a ferocious caprice, was pleased to install himself on the frontier, as if on purpose to tantalize me into a fever, and then prevented my going any farther, under pretext that it was too hot for me.”

“While, on the contrary, it was too cold for you. Certainly, your husband is the man who comprehends you least of any one.”

“It is the eternal order of things.”

“Whence it follows, that you ought to adore your husband, since he is the indefatigable adulator of your assertion that you are not comprehended.”

“And you—you claim to comprehend me better than my husband does. To tell me so, does not prove to me that you are right.”

“And if I prove it to you this very instant?” said Léonce, rising, and stopping the hammock so rudely as to draw forth a cry of terror from Lady G—. “If I should say to you, that there is nothing to comprehend where nothing exists, and that this marble breast conceals a marble heart?”

“Ah, what terrible words!” said Lady G—, putting her feet to the

## TEVERINO

ground, as if to take flight. "I will never forgive you, Léonce, for having brought me hither. Your conduct is the refinement of perfidy and cruelty. You rescue me from my sad indifference, you surround me with delicate cares and attentions, you wander with me 'mid the beauties of nature, you delight me with the poetry of your thoughts, you flatter my foolish imagination—all this you do merely to tell me, after fifteen years of friendship without a cloud, that you no longer esteem—nay! you actually hate me!"

"Of what do you complain, Madam? You are a woman of the world, and you wish, beyond everything else, to be respected as a virtuous woman of that very world. Well, I declare you invulnerable, I, who have known you fifteen years, and yet your pride is not satisfied!"

"Virtuous from insensibility! Virtuous, because heartless! What a strange eulogy! Well may I take pride in it!"

"And, indeed, you possess an immense pride, allied to an immense vanity," replied Léonce, with increasing irritation. "You wish it to be understood that you are impeccable, and that the purest crystal is dim by the side of your glory. But that does not suffice. You desire to have it believed that your soul is ardent, and that there is nothing so powerful as your love, excepting, perhaps, your strength. If a man is calm and self-possessed in presence of your wisdom, you are uneasy and discontented. You would have him torment himself to divine the mystery of love which you pretend is concealed in your bosom. You would have him believe that you hold the key to a paradise of voluptuousness and ineffable tenderness, which nothing can penetrate; in short, you would have him experience all the paroxysms of love, jealousy, and disappointment, with their intolerable sufferings. Avow this, and you will have proclaimed the secret of your *ennui*, for there is no role more tiresome to play, or more bitter in its results, than that to which you have sacrificed all the hopes of your youth, and all the advantages of our beauty."

"It is beneath me to attempt my justification," replied Sabina, pale and trembling with indignation; "but you have given me the right, in my turn, to judge you. This portrait which you have drawn of me, is your own; it requires only to be adapted to the size of a man, and I am going to do it."

## V.

### THE FAWN.

"Speak, Madam," said Léonce. "I shall be only too happy to see myself through your eyes."

"You will not be, I assure you," continued Sabina, greatly provoked, but externally calm. "Man and artist, intelligent and handsome, rich and patrician, you know yourself to be a privileged being.

Nature and society having thus generously endowed you, you have ardently seconded them, stimulated as you have been from earliest childhood by the desire to be an accomplished man. You have so well cultivated your brilliant talents, and so nobly governed your fortune, as to have become a most exquisite artist and a most liberal rich man. If you had been born poor and obscure, you would have had more difficulty and more merit in conquering the palm of glory. You would also have had more endurance and more fire, less science and more genius. In place of a talent of the first order, always correct and often cold, you would have had an unequal but a glowing inspiration."

"Ah! Madam," said Léonce, interrupting her, "you have but little invention, for you are only repeating what I myself have said a hundred times. But, at the same time, you do me justice concerning another point, that the man of the people is equal to, and in many respects surpasses, the man of the world."

"You think to prove a noble heart and a great mind by saying such things? It is a fashion, a most refined and elegant fashion, which is given to but few individuals to wear gracefully. You never carry it to excess, because at the bottom of your heart, you are not less aristocratic than I. I should, therefore, utterly distrust the possibility of your being seriously in love with the bird-tamer, notwithstanding all your theories of God's direct paternity to the slave. But let me finish my comparison, and you will see that you have not always been able to preserve your emphatic incognito with me. Jealously anxious for admiration, you have not wasted your youth in frivolity, and you clearly comprehend that a man is not long the ideal of an intelligent woman, if he is intimately associated with her, every hour of his life. Therefore, you have never loved, and it has always been your aim to affect the minds of our curious sex, without allowing us to influence your own will. You have passions and indulge them, I know, but that does not prove my assertions unfounded. That which makes the essential difference between you and me is, the privilege of your sex; it also makes my pride more meritorious than yours. You have not sacrificed vulgar pleasures to the cultivation of your dignity. Your models have been models of choice, maidens, young and supremely beautiful, so that you would have no cause to blush before the eyes of the world for having made them your mistresses. These divine children of the people! You persuaded yourself that you loved them, and, to pique the self-love of women of the world, you affected to say that physical beauty involved moral beauty, and that, in the simplicity of these uncultivated minds, was to be found the temple of true love. They are truths, perhaps, I know not, but they are truths in which you have never believed, even while proclaiming them, for none of these plebeian divinities have ever completely captivated or fixed you for any length of time. Statuary—you have regarded them only as statues—and as for women of your own class, you have never really sought those of intellect. With them, you play precisely the same role you

attribute to me, spreading out before them, with consummate art and poetic eloquence, the power of the Byronic passions, and yet permitting no one to approach near enough your heart to pluck thence the moth of vanity which destroys its life."

Léonce remained silent a long while after Sabina had ceased speaking. He appeared profoundly cast down, and this sadness, offering no resistance to the whip of his censor, rendered him at that moment superior to the vindictive woman who lashed him. Sabina herself perceived it, and fully comprehended that penchant for, or rather, irresistible submission to truth so thoroughly pervading the male character, but which the education and habits of women aim, too victoriously, to combat. She felt remorse for having given way to her passion, as she saw how Léonce reproached himself for his own conduct, and with what dismay he probed his heart. She would have given much to console him for the pain her words had inflicted, but the suspicion that his thoughtfulness concealed only some project of deep hatred or refined vengeance, kept her silent. This fear struck her to the heart, for she, as well as Léonce, was better than her portrait, and the sources of affection were not dried up within her. She tried in vain to repress her tears; Léonce heard her sobs, and kneeling at her feet, took her hand within his own and said,

"Why do you weep?"

"I weep our lost friendship," she replied, leaning towards him, and letting fall her tears on his beautiful hair. "We have mortally wounded each other, Léonce; there is no more love between us. But now that it is all over; now that there is no longer danger that love will spoil the Past, let me weep over that Past, so pure and beautiful. Let me confess to you, what you have apparently not comprehended, since in the lightness of your heart, you have dared to enter upon this deadly struggle. I have loved you with a tender and earnest friendship; I have reposed on your heart as upon that of a brother; and I have thought to seek of you counsel and protection as long as my life shall last. Your faults have appeared to me insignificant, your talents and virtues great. But now, adieu, Léonce. Take me back to my husband. With reason did you predict that I should this day experience unforeseen emotions; unforeseen, indeed, and so terrible, that their remembrance will never leave me. I could have anticipated nothing so bitter, and I do not understand why you should have wished to give me so painful an experience. Nevertheless, at this moment, when I feel that all is ended between us, I feel also that grief surpasses anger, and that our last adieu must not be a malediction."

Sabina touched with her lips the forehead of Léonce and this chaste and mournful kiss, the first she had ever bestowed upon him, renewed the bond she had thought broken.

"No, my dear Sabina," said he, covering her hands with passionate kisses; "this is not an adieu; the tie that bound us together is not broken. You are more dear to me than ever, and it shall be the aim

of my life to win back the affection I have risked losing to-day. With patience I shall persevere in the struggle, until at last you must be touched by my devotion, whether you will or not. Compose yourself there, noble friend; your tears fall refreshingly upon my heart, as the generous dew falls upon a plant ready to die. There is truth in what we have mutually said to each other; much truth, but it is relative, not abstract truth. Understand well this distinction. We are both artists; neither of us can treat a subject spiritedly without viewing it from a logical, a plastic point of view, if you please, so that we are carried from consequence to consequence, until we have formed an admirable synthesis. But this synthesis is, I am certain, a fiction for both you and me. We possess the faults with which we have reproached each other; but these are the accidents of our character and the result of circumstances. In looking at them passionately we have been inspired to transform them into essential vices of our nature, into shameless habits of conduct. All this is nothing, however, since here we are, heart to heart, weeping over the idea of separation, and feeling that it is impossible."

"Indeed, Léonce, you are right," said Lady G—, brushing away a tear, and passing her beautiful hands across his eyes, moved, perhaps, by unaffected tenderness, and perhaps, also, by a wish to convince herself that the drops she saw glistening on his cheeks were veritable tears. "We have done with art, have we not? and now it only remains for us to decide which has been the most skilful; that is to say, the most deceitful."

"It is I, for I began the play, and I claim the prize. What shall it be?"

"Your pardon."

"And a long kiss on this beautiful arm, which has already caused me so much terror."

"See, now, you are an artist again."

"Well, why not?"

"No kisses, Léonce—better than that. Let us pass the remainder of the day together; you may resume your role of doctor, provided you treat me to weaker doses."

"We will try Homeopathy," said Léonce, kissing the arm which she seemed to abandon to him mechanically, but which she instantly withdrew, on observing that the negress was awake. "Lie down again in your hammock, and try to get some sleep. I will rock you very gently; these tears have wearied you, the heat is extreme, and we must wait until the shadows are longer before we leave the woods."

The singularity and variableness of the impressions of Léonce disturbed Lady G—. His eyes wore an expression she had never before discovered in them, and it was easy for her to perceive by the unsteady motion of the hammock, that he held the cord with a trembling and agitated hand. It was with delight, then, that she welcomed the reappearance of Madeleine, who, after having teased the negress to her



heart's content, by tickling her lips and eye-lids with a blade of grass, approached them to admire the hammock and relieve Léonce, against his will, in his employment.

"She is entirely too familiar; you have already spoiled her," said Léonce, in English to Sabina. "Let me drive away this importunate bird."

"No, let her swing me," replied Lady G—, with evident uneasiness. "Her movements are more gentle than yours; moreover, you are too intellectual for me to go to sleep easily, while you are near. I am tired of being served on the bended knee."

Whereupon she closed her eyes, and pretended to sleep. Léonce withdrew, more vexed than ever. He forsook the wood, and wandered about for some time, at random. Presently, he perceived the Curé fishing, and the jockey bearing him company; the carriage was drawn up in the shade of a clump of trees, while the horses grazed at liberty in an adjoining meadow. Certain of finding them all when wanted, Léonce plunged into a savage gorge and walked as rapidly as possible, in order to calm his over-excited and troubled mind. The silent influences of beautiful nature soon dissipated his ill-humor. After winding round numerous craggy rocks, he found himself on the borders of a microscopic lake, or rather pool of water, embosomed in a granite basin. Deep and brilliant as the sky, whose golden clouds and heavenly azure were reflected on its surface, it presented an image of happiness in repose. Léonce seated himself on the bank in the cleft of a rock, which there formed itself into a natural staircase, as if to invite the traveler to ascend to the margin of these tranquil waters.

For a time, he was interested in watching the insects with bodies of turquoise and rubies, skimming the surface of the aquatic plants; then, his attention was diverted by a flock of pigeons, which, reflected in the mirror of the lake, attracted his eye as it flew through the air with the rapidity of thought, and disappeared like a vision. Léonce said to himself, that the pleasures of life passed as rapidly and as indistinctly away from us, and that like this reflection of the flying image, they were only shadows. The next moment, it seemed to him supremely ridiculous, to waste time in tracing these metaphorical relations, and he could not refrain from envying the tranquillity of the Curé, who would have merely looked upon this beautiful lake as a fine reservoir for trout.

Hearing a light noise above his head, he thought for an instant that Sabina had come to join him, but the quick beating of his heart at the anticipation, subsided as he caught a glimpse of the individual descending the rocky stairs, at the foot of which he was sitting.

It was a tall young fellow, miserably clad, and carrying a small bundle tied in a red and blue handkerchief, and fastened to the end of a stick, which was thrown across his shoulders. His rags, his long hair, falling in masses over pale and strongly marked features, his thick beard, black as ink, his careless gait and a sort of indescribable air of

contempt, which characterizes the manners of a vagabond when he meets a gentleman face to face, air gave him the aspect of a real scape-grace.

The thought occurred to Léonce that the spot was very lonely, and that the stranger had all the advantage of position; the path being too narrow for two, but an instant would be required to dispute its passage, and throw into the silent and mysterious depths of the lake, the one who had not the best fists and the best place.

With this contingency in view, which, however, gave Léonce but little uneasiness, he assumed an indifferent manner, and awaited with philosophical calmness the encounter with the Unknown. Nevertheless, it was with some little impatience that he counted the steps as they sounded on the rock, until he heard the last, and found the vagabond at his side.

“Pardon me, sir, if I disturb you,” said the stranger, in a sonorous voice, and with a strongly marked southern accent, “but would you have the courtesy to stand aside, so that I may take a drink!”

“With pleasure,” replied Léonce, allowing him to pass, and stepping up so as to place himself directly behind him.

The Unknown took off his tattered straw hat, and kneeling upon the rock, he plunged his unkempt beard and the half of his face into the water. Léonce could hear him swallow like a horse, and was seized with the mischievous desire to whistle a tune, as is often done to soothe this impatient and skittish animal, when he is drinking. He abstained, however, from this pleasantry, but envied the sublime confidence with which the fellow placed himself, as it were, at the feet of an utter stranger, with head to the ground and body exposed, in a *tête-à-tête*, whose termination might have been disastrous, in case of a misunderstanding.

“Herein consists the only happiness of the poor man,” thought Léonce, continuing his mental speculations. “He feels perfect security in such encounters. Here we are, two men, about equal in strength. One can hardly drink under the eye of the other, without looking carefully behind him, and he who can quench his thirst gratis, with such evident enjoyment, is not the rich man!”

When the fellow had done drinking, he straightened himself up, and resting a moment on his heels. “This water,” said he, “is rather warm to drink, it quenches thirst better by entering the pores of the body, than by passing down the throat. What does your lordship think of it?”

“Have you a fancy to take a bath?” said Léonce uncertain if this remark were not intended as a menace.

“Yes, sir. I have such a fancy,” replied the other. Whereupon, he quietly commenced to disrobe himself, a work, which, by the way, occupied but an instant, for he was not encumbered with a superfluous toilet, and scarcely a buttonhole in all his dress was unbroken.

“You know how to swim, at least?” demanded Léonce. “This is a

large well; you will find no foothold on the side where we are, for the rock apparently descends perpendicularly to a great depth.”

“Oh! sir, trust confidently to the skill of an ex-professor of swimming in the Gulf of Baja,” replied the stranger, and nimbly discarding the rag that served him as a shirt, he darted into the water with the freedom of an amphibious bird.

Léonce was amused and delighted with his antics, his evolutions, his various feats of dexterity and skill, all of which he accomplished with ease, vigor, and natural grace. Presently, he returned to the foot of the rock, and as the side was really very steep, he asked Léonce to reach out a hand to help him up. Léonce assisted him with a good grace, at the same time, keeping on his guard against unfair play and awkward surprises. When the fellow had attained the bank, he went and seated himself on a rock in the sunshine, displaying as he did so, the wonderful strength and beauty of his body, whose whiteness presented a strong contrast to the bronzed color of his face and hands.

“The water is colder than I thought,” said the swimmer. “It is warm only on the surface, and I have no wish to plunge into it a second time. Now I think of it, here is an opportunity to make a slight toilet.”

Saying this, he drew from his scanty bundle, a large shell, evidently intended to serve as a cup, but of which he had disdained to make use in drinking. He filled the shell several times with water and dashed it over his head and beard, washing and rubbing with extreme care and minute voluptuousness, this black fleece, which, all dripping as it was, made him look like some savage river god. Then, as the rays of the sun, falling directly on his head and neck, became troublesome, he pulled up great tufts of the wild *fleur de lis*, and rolling them together, made a hat or rather crown of leaves and flowers. Either from accident or from a certain natural taste, he arranged this head-dress so artistically as to make himself the complete ideal of an antique Neptune.

A second time he bounded into the lake, swam across it, reached the opposite bank, and running up its gentle slope, covered with vegetation, he gathered some splendid flowers of the white *nymphaea* which he placed in his crown. Finally, as if divining the intense admiration with which Léonce regarded him, he made a sort of garment, with a girdle of reeds and aquatic leaves, and then, free, proud, and beautiful as the first man, he extended himself on a sand bank, in an attitude of majestic repose.

Struck with the perfection of the model before him, Léonce opened his album, and attempted to sketch this strange creature, who, with the reflection on the water, presented an exquisite tableau such as an artist has rarely the happiness to study, set in a natural frame work of sombre rocks, brilliant foliage, and silver sands, marvellously appropriate to the subject.

## TEVERINO

All at once he shut his album, and throwing it from him, "Presumptuous that I am," said he, to himself, "for essaying to trace a scene that Raphael or Veronese, Giorgion, Rubens, and Poussin, might have envied me the contemplation! Yes; the great masters of painting were alone worthy to reproduce an image, upon which I have stumbled, as it were by stealth, and owe to the kindness of chance. Enough for me, who have no skill with the pencil, to see it, to feel it, and to engrave it on the tablet of my memory."

The vagabond seemed intuitively to divine his thoughts, for, to his great surprise, he called out in Italian, after inquiring if Léonce understood that language, "This is the antique, is it not, Signor? Will you have Michel Angelo? Behold him!" and he assumed a more singular attitude, but still beautiful, although constrained. "Now for Raphael," he resumed, changing his posture. "It is more graceful and natural; but whatever may be said about it, the muscle yet plays a part rather too conspicuous. Jules Romain has also something of this stiffness, but he is not to be despised." When he had represented *Jules Romain*, he threw himself again into his first position, adding, "This is the best; it is that of Phidias, and one may seek in vain to find anything superior."

"You follow, then, the occupation of a model?" said Léonce, slightly disenchanted with what had at first appeared naive and un-studied in the man.

"Yes, sir, that and many others," replied the swimmer, who at that moment was to be seen standing erect, like a statue on a pedestal, upon a rocky island in the middle of the lake. "If I had an old pitcher, I could with my reeds, here represent to you a group after the taste of Versailles, although I have never been there. We have, however, many things in this style at Naples. If I had a tambourine, I would show you various Neapolitan figures, which have more intellect and grace in their little finger than all the blocks of marble and bronze of your great age. But, since I can do nothing more to charm your eyes, I will at least delight your ears. If you are Apollo, treat me not, I pray you, as you treated Marsyas: if you are a renowned master, you must admit that the voice is fine. I feel that this cold water and these vigorous postures have expanded my chest, and now I am seized with a foolish desire to sing."

"Sing, then, comrade," said Léonce. "If your warbling correspond to your plumage, you have no cause to fear my judgment."

## VI.

### AUDACES FORTUNA JUVAT.

THE Italian then sang three strophes, marked by the hyperbolic genius of his nation, and of which we here give the free translation.

He adapted them to one of those airs of Southern Italy, concerning which we cannot tell whether they are *chefs d'oeuvres* of unknown masters, or casual manly inspirations of the popular muse.

“Pass on, noble lords, in your parti-colored gondolas. You urge in vain the speed of your intrepid oarsmen. My arms, pliant as the wave, and white as the foam, shall excel you in swiftmess. Covered with my rags, I am one of the lowest on earth; but naked and free, I am king of the wave, and your master in every thing!

“Fly, noble ladies, in your barks adorned with flags. In vain do you turn away your heads, in vain does the fan conceal your chaste countenances; my features continually attract your gaze, and your eyes furtively pursue my black hair floating upon the water. With my rags, I make you recoil in, disgust, but naked and free, I am king of the world, and master of your hearts!

“Swim, birds of the sea and the river. Divide with your feet of coral, the briny wave on which you poise. With my chest as strong as a vessel’s prow, with my arms as flexible as your shining necks, I will follow you to your nests of sea-weed and of shells. Covered with my rags, I frighten you; but naked and free, I am king of the wave, and you take me for one of yourselves!”

The voice of the singer was magnificent, and the most famous artists could not have surpassed him in purity of accent, in naïveté of manner, or in the power of exalted sentiment. Léonce imagined himself transported to the Gulf of Salerno or Tarento, under the sky of inspiration and of poetry.

“By Amphytrion!” cried he, “thou art a great poet and a great singer, noble young man! and I know not how to recompense thee for the pleasure thou hast just given me. What is this admirable song? What strange words are these?”

“The song is by some god, bewildered on the summit of the Apennines; he confided it to the echoes, and they, in their turn, murmured it to the ears of shepherds and fishermen. But the words are mine, Signor, for, with your permission, I am improvisator, when it pleases me to be. Our melodious language is at everybody’s service, and when we have an idea, we, natural poets, children of the sun, we have not long to wait for its expression.”

“Will you repeat these words for me! I wish to write them down.”

“If I repeat them, they will be different. My songs fly away from me like the flame from the hearth. I can renew, but not retain them. You find them, perhaps, too much of the braggadocio style; that is the poet’s privilege. Take from him his vain-glory, and you take away his genius.”

“You have the right to boast of yourself, for yours is a privileged nature,” replied Léonce, “and whatever may be your condition, you deserve to take an exalted place among men. You have charmed me. Come here, and tell me your misery; it may be in my power to relieve it.”

The unknown returned to the bank. "Alas!" said he, "You have seen the antique fawn in all his liberty, the man of nature in all his poetry. Now, you are about to see the bearer of rags in all his deformity, and in all his misery; for necessity compels me to resume this sad livery, which, I trust in Providence, may of itself leave me, or that my genius may find some occupation whereby to renew my wardrobe. You seem surprised? Your looks plainly indicated, when I first approached you, that my appearance filled you with disgust. You found me ugly, frightful, perhaps. But when I have laid aside my beggar's robes, and this limpid water has purified my skin from the dust of the roads; when you have seen this body, which has often served as a model to the first sculptors of my country; this countenance, which has never yet been degraded by debauch, and from which fatigue and privation have not yet stolen its youth and beauty; these limbs, upon which nature has been luxuriously lavish, and this sentiment of the beautiful, the impress of which the intelligent man bears stamped on his forehead and in all his habits; when you have seen all this, Signor, you are at last convinced, that naked, I am the equal and perhaps the superior of men more sumptuously clothed, and you have tried to enrol me among your artistic impressions. But you have not succeeded, I am sure, for the works of art are nothing, when they attempt to surpass the works of God. If you are a true artist, my image will be laid away in the store-house of your memory, to be brought forth again in some future moment of inspiration. Today, you cannot reproduce me, inasmuch as the performance is over, and my divinity is about to disappear, under the withering blight of indigence."

The man spoke with an extraordinary facility and purity of accent. His countenance, now lighted up by a ray of enthusiasm, and now, quickly veiled by a profound sentiment of woe, was of an unearthly beauty. Never had the eyes of Léonce dwelt upon more noble features, with so refined and intelligent an expression.

"Sir," said he, impelled by an involuntary emotion of respect, "you are certainly above the miserable condition in which you appear. It may be that you are some unfortunate artist. Accept of my assistance, I entreat you, as a slight testimonial of my gratitude for the pleasure you have been the means of procuring me."

But the unknown appeared not to hear the words of Léonce. Bending down over the margin of the lake, he picked up with visible repugnance the worthless clothes he was obliged to resume, in order to cover his nakedness.

"This," said he, letting the rags fall again upon the ground—"this is a punishment I hope you may never experience. The Italian loves finery, the artist loves comfort, luxury, odors, cleanliness; that exquisite indolence which renews both mind and body, after manly and healthful exercises. No human being can comprehend how much it costs me to show myself to the world, to women especially, with a torn blouse and threadbare pantaloons."

“I both understand and pity you,” replied Léonce, “and God be praised, I can help you out of your trouble this very instant. If you will remain here and warm yourself in the sun, I promise you to return in a quarter of an hour, with a wardrobe that shall satisfy your honest and legitimate fancy. Wait for me.”

And before the Italian could utter a word, either of assent or remonstrance, Léonce darted up the path, ran to the carriage, drew from it a light and elegant valise, and carried it with him to the lake. He found his Italian in the water, occupied in tastefully arranging a sheaf of the most beautiful aquatic flowers, which he brought triumphantly to shore, and presented to Léonce with touching grace.

“I can give you nothing else in exchange for what you bring me,” said he. “I possess nothing in the world; but thanks to my address and courage, I can appropriate to my use the rarest treasures of nature; the most beautiful flowers, the most valuable mineralogical specimens, crystals, petrifications and mountainous plants. I can give you all these, if you would like me to accompany you in your excursions; or, if you have a gun with you, I can bring down the eagle and the chamois, and deposit them at the feet of your mistress; for I am the most skilful hunter you have ever met, as well as the most hardy pedestrian and the most active swimmer.”

Notwithstanding the self-glorification contained in this speech, (a great feature, by the way, in the Italian character) the loquacity of the young man was by no means displeasing to Léonce. His countenance, lighted up by joy and gratitude, was radiant with a sympathetic frankness that appeals irresistibly to the affections. In ten minutes, the ragged vagabond was transformed into a young man of the highest fashion, in traveling costume. Léonce’s valise contained only *des habits du matin*, but there was a full supply of everything wherewith to make a charming toilet in the country: light and well-fitting vests, cravats of choice colors and the latest style, magnificent linen, summer pantaloons of fancy stuffs, patent leather shoes, and light cassimere gaiters, with mother-of-pearl buttons. The Italian used no ceremony in choosing the best and most elegant articles, and even did not forget to furnish himself with a pair of gloves, whose delicate perfume he inhaled with evident pleasure. He was about the same height as Léonce, and everything fitted him wonderfully. When he beheld himself thus attired and renovated from head to foot, he threw himself into the arms of his new friend, exclaiming, that he owed to him the greatest happiness he had ever experienced. Then, with the point of his foot, he pushed the rags that gave him so much horror, into the lake, untied his small bundle, the envelope of which he also threw into the water, and drew from it, to the great surprise of Léonce, the portrait of a woman, set in brilliants, a heavy gold chain, and two fine cambric handkerchiefs, trimmed with lace. These made up the entire contents of his traveling knapsack.

“You are astonished that a man, apparently a beggar, should have

preserved these articles of luxury," said he, putting on the chain, and so arranging it as to produce the best effect over his white waistcoat. "They are all that remains to me of my former splendor, and I shall never part with them except at the last extremity. *Che volete, Signor mio? pazzia!*"

"You have then been rich?" asked Léonce, remarking the ease with which he wore his new costume.

"Rich for eight days, I have been a hundred times. Would you like to know my history? I will tell it you with pleasure."

"I shall certainly be glad to hear it. We will go together and replace this valise in my carriage, and you can relate your history on the way."

"Are you traveling, Signor?"

"No, merely out on an excursion, which may perhaps last several days. Will you make one of the party?"

"Ah! with great pleasure, and all the more, since I can be both useful and agreeable. I have various small talents, and I am already familiar with every nook and crevice in these mountains, through which I have been wandering during the past week. My head is incessantly carrying off my legs, to revenge itself upon my heart, which is every moment running away with my head. But in order that you may comprehend my manner of traveling, that is, my mode of life, it is necessary that I should first make you thoroughly acquainted with myself.

"I am ignorant of the place of my birth, and know not whether I am indebted for the light to some guilty woman of quality, or to some poor, unfortunate girl. The wife of a fisherman picked me up one morning on the banks of the Tiber, in the vicinity of Rome, and gave me the name of Teverino or Tiberinus. I was about two years old, but could not speak to tell whence I had come, or the name of my parents. This good creature took care of me and brought me up, notwithstanding her poverty. She had no son, and relied on me to assist in supporting her, when I should be old enough to work. Unfortunately, I was not born with a taste for work: nature bestowed on me an inclination for princely indolence, and for that reason, I have always believed myself of illustrious blood, although in spirit I am with the people. I am certain that one of the two authors of my being must have belonged to the race of poor devils who are destined to conquer obstacles by and for themselves; and in my problematical origin, that is the side for which I am least inclined to blush. Even when, as a little child, I liked to fish, it was rather as an art than a business. Yes, even then, I felt myself born for the creations of the intellect. Ardent in the pursuit of violent and perilous exercises, I had no taste for lucre. I experienced great delight in watching, surprising, and conquering my prey, but I was unskilful in bargaining for its sale. I frequently lost the money I had earned, or lent it to the first applicant, for I was too generous to refuse any thing to my little comrades, and often aided them in arranging their merchandize to advantage, so that they might



obtain the best prices. In short, my poor adopted mother was in utter despair at my disinterestedness and liberality, complaining bitterly of my stupidity and ill-behavior.

“In proportion as age gave me strength, it took hers away; at last, not being strong enough to beat me, her only consolation until then for all my delinquencies, she one day turned me out of doors. With her malediction and two *carlini*.

“I was ten years old, and as beautiful as a young Cupid. A painter of merit, who had noticed me in the street, took me into his house to serve as a model. He painted from me a holy John the Baptist child, a Giotto, and a Jesus teaching in the temple; and when he had done with my face, he sent me away with twenty pieces of gold and the advice to dress myself better if I wished to obtain an honest living. I felt the taste for luxury already born within me; nevertheless, I comprehended that this was not the moment for its indulgence. Accordingly I ran to the house of my adopted mother, and gave her all the money I had received. My generosity appeared to touch her heart, and she urged me to remain with her; but I replied, that having tasted the pleasures of independence, they were too sweet to resign, and I must be perfectly free to choose my profession.

“This profession was soon found; that is to say, a hundred presented themselves, and I devoted myself to none exclusively. I had a love of change, a passion for liberty, and an ungovernable curiosity for every thing noble and beautiful. My voice was already fine, my countenance and intellect recommended themselves. Sure of charming the eye and the ear, I had no care to take on this point: my only study was to cultivate my natural faculties. In turn, model, boatman, jockey, chorist, ballet-dancer at the theatre, street-singer, shell-merchant, waiter in a Café, cicerone—Ah! sir, this last occupation and that of model, were the most profitable, if not to my purse, at least to my mind. The conversation of artists, and the daily study of *chefs d'oeuvres* of art so developed my ideas, that I soon found myself superior in my conceptions and judgment, to the painters and sculptors who endeavored to reproduce my figure, as well as to all the tourists whom I initiated in a knowledge of the wonders of Rome. The more I perceived the ignorance and poverty of intellect of those with whom business brought me in contact, the stronger grew my desire to cultivate my nature to its utmost capacity. I was not fond of reading. Instruction by means of books is a work too cold and tedious for the rapidity of my comprehension.

“I endeavored, therefore, to associate as much as possible with truly intelligent men, and almost always sacrificing my interests to this object, I instructed myself by listening to their conversation. Boatman or jockey, I observed and was familiar with the manners and habits of people of the world; chorist in the church or at the opera, I became initiated in the sentiment of music and in theatrical art. I surprised the secrets of the priest and those of the comedian, who, by the way,

strongly resemble each other. Singing on the market-place, exhibiting puppets, or selling knick-knacks, I studied all classes of men, and knew at a glance the impressions of the public and their causes. Acute and penetrating, audacious and modest, easy to persuade, and disdainful to deceive, I had friends everywhere, and protectors nowhere. To accept protection, is to place one's self in dependence; all sorts of yokes are odious to me. Endowed with a talent for imitation without example, certain of amusing, affecting, astonishing, or interesting, whomsoever I would, there was not an hour of my life in which I could not rely on some one of my infinite resources.

"In proportion as I approached manhood, these resources, far from diminishing, increased tenfold. When old enough to please women, I had great success, Signor, and I did not abuse it. The same regal indolence that had kept me from wasting my talents in the employment of a fishmonger, and which was in fact only an instinctive respect for the preservation of my power, accompanied me in my relations with the fair sex. Judicious and discreet, vice could not long attract, nor selfish pleasures hold me; I desired to live by the heart, that I might rest complete and invincible in my pride. It cost me no effort to forgive a wrong, therefore was I often betrayed, but never deceived. I supplanted many rivals, but never vilified them. I formed many ties, yet knew how to break them without anger or bitterness. Here, sir, I have the portrait of a princess, who so tormented me by her jealousy as to compel me to abandon her; but I preserve her image in remembrance of the pleasure she has given me. I do not show it to any one, nor do I sell the diamonds, although I have lived for a week on black bread and goat's milk."

"But what then is the cause of your present misery?" demanded Léonce.

"The love of traveling is one cause, and love, pure love, is the other, *Signor mio!* Hardly had I gained some money, than, quitting the employment which had procured it, for I had exhausted all its pleasure, I set out to travel over Italy. I visited all its provinces, partaking the sweets of ease When I could procure them, submitting philosophically to privations when my purse was empty; Often even, resting with a sort of voluptuousness in this state of destitution which made me feel the pride of the wealth I had wasted, and proudly waiting for the return of desire strong enough to shake off this delicious apathy. Sometimes I disdained to accept offered business, feeling that my inspirations as artist were not arrived at their apogee, and preferring to fast rather than declaim or sing unworthily. Ah! Signor, it is a great enjoyment to feel one's genius carried captive by the respect one bears it! At other times, love controlled me, and I pleased myself in wasting my gold upon my idol. Still more happy was I, and intoxicated beyond expression, when ruined, I saw her attach herself to my misery, and cherish me all the more tenderly, that I had no longer anything but love to bestow upon her! Oh! yes; and thus I have let many

days pass away before putting such affection to the proof of again trying the wheel of fortune; for noble hearts are most irresistibly drawn to each other, when most unfortunate."

"Teverino, your language penetrates my very soul," said Léonce. "If you draw a true picture of yourself, you possess one of the noblest hearts, joined to one of the most original characters I have ever met. When you began your history, I thought of this title of a chapter in Rabelais, with which you are doubtless familiar, since you know everything?"

"*How Pantagruel met Panurge?*" said the Italian, laughing.

"Even so," replied Léonce; "and now I will finish the phrase—*'whom had loved all his life'*"

"This chapter has often been quoted to me, for all who have loved me have found me under their feet. But I soon came up to the level of their hearts, even above the heads of some, and in this respect I am a Panurge of a better type than the hero of Rabelais. I have neither his dastardliness, his impudence, his gluttony, his boastfulness, nor his egotism, but I have, in common with him, delicacy of wit and the chances of fortune. If you were to take me with you for a few days, you would see, that, in partaking of the luxuries appertaining to your life, I should not for an instant abuse them. When I had had enough of them—and I should probably weary of your society before you would of mine—you would regret our separation, and feel that you owed me a debt of gratitude."

"That is very possible," smilingly replied Léonce; "although I find in you a resemblance to Panurge, which you deny! boastfulness."

"Not so, sir. He is a boaster who promises what he does not perform. Be not piqued at my assertion; but it is true that I shall be the first to tire of our familiarity. You will not be the cause of it, for I perceive that you possess both genius and greatness of soul; but exterior circumstances, independent of our own wills: the world that amuses me an instant and then disgusts me, the constraint of any custom to which I find it impossible to submit longer than a few hours, any individual who may please you, but is antipathetic to me; in fine, any caprice of my versatile mind, which may in some measure draw me towards a new aspect of things, this or that will oblige me to leave you. But you will not be ashamed of having known me, and I swear to you, that the name of Teverino shall never be odious in your ears."

"I am assured that you do not deceive me," replied Léonce, "although your inconstancy terrifies me. See now! can you engage to live twenty-four hours my life, and transform yourself, morally speaking, from head to foot, into the man of the world, which you already are, materially."

"Nothing more easy. I shall have as fine manners and as noble a bearing as yourself, for I understand you thoroughly, although but an hour in your society. Moreover, have I not lived as peer and compan-

ion to the nobility, when my talents have caused me to be sought after? Do you think that if I had desired to adopt an uniform mode of life, if I had been willing to deprive myself of vivid emotions, such for instance, as abstaining from ruining myself in one day, and forsaking a marchioness to run after a gipsy; in short, if I had chosen to reform myself, as it is called, submit myself to circumstances, give myself up to the tortures of ambition, or to the torments of a jealous vanity, bear with the caprices of the great, or injure my competitors to the advantage of my fortune and reputation, do you think I should not have succeeded as well as many others, who entering the world through the small door for artists, have become lords in their turn, and have seen open before them, the folding doors of the great? Nothing would have been more easy, and it is this facility even, which disgusts me. Rely then upon my sentiment of propriety as long as your conventionalisms shall suit me, that is to say, twenty-four hours, the term for which I agree."

"Be it so. You will pass for one of my friends, whom I have just met boatnizing or philosophizing among the mountains, and I shall present you as such to a beautiful lady, whom we are about to rejoin, and with whom I expect you to maintain your incognito as long as it may be my pleasure."

"I cannot enter into any engagement stated in such terms; I should be at the mercy of your caprice and that would chill my genius. We will agree upon twenty-four hours, neither more nor less, and the engagement must be reciprocal. I will go no further with you now, unless you give me your word of honor that I may be permitted to unmask to-morrow, at two o'clock in the afternoon—I see by the sun that it is now about that hour—and, on my part, I authorise you to throw the naked into the lake where you found me, if I betray myself before the expiration of the contract."

"I agree, upon honor," said Léonce.

So saying, they turned into the thicket which sheltered the carriage; they succeeded in replacing the valise under the box in front, without being perceived.

"Let me go forward and reconnoitre while you wait here," said Léonce; and, as with this object in view, he was advancing along the path, he saw Madeleine coming towards him, breathless and carrying the hammock.

"Her highness is waiting very impatiently for you," said she. "She sent me to find your lordship, and to tell you that she's very tired. Bless me! there she is now, crossing the stream, I will run on and put this in the carriage."

Léonce hastened to offer his hand to Sabina, without giving himself any anxiety in regard to the chance of Madeleine's meeting with Teverino, or the possibility of her having already seen the fellow strolling about the country. Chance appeared to serve his projects, for hardly had he announced to Sabina, that he had a friend to present

to her, than he saw Teverino come out of the thicket, followed at a respectful distance by the bird-tamer, who looked at him curiously, as if she now beheld him for the first time.

## VII

## OVER HEDGE AND DITCH.

“I PRESENT to you the Marquis Tiberino de Montefiore,” said Léonce, “a faithful friend, whom I was sure of meeting in the pursuit of flowers for his magnificent herbarium of the Alps, and a delightful traveling companion, kindly sent to us by Providence. I trust he will receive your welcome and the honor of admission into your cortége.”

The fine face and graceful bearing of the Marquis Tiberino dispelled the anger which clouded the brow of Lady G—.

“I am compelled to obey you in everything,” she said in an undertone to Léonce. “You are my doctor and master to-day; consequently, I must accept your prescriptions without examining them too closely.”

“In this instance your submission will not be very meritorious,” said Léonce, “and by-and-by I will appeal to your own experience, as regards the truth of my assertion. Marquis, give your arm to Milady. I will endeavor to fish up our Curé and his trout.”

The Curé had done wonders; and in the excitement of his numerous conquests, he forgot the hour, his parishioners, his office, even his housekeeper. As he beheld the silver trout, their stomachs sprinkled with rubies, wriggling upon the grass, he, himself, leaped about like a frog, and his large, round eyes shone with the innocent joy of the churchman who finds in orthodox amusements a vent for his ardent passions. Léonce assisted in making a basket of rushes and osiers, in which to carry his fish, and thus imprisoned, they replaced them alive in the water, taking care to fasten the verdant cord to some large stones.

“I invite you to sup this evening at my parsonage,” cried the Curé. “They will be delicious, especially if you have any of that good wine left, wherewith to wash them down.”

“I have something better yet;” said Léonce. “I have just seen in an oak coppice a quantity of superb mushrooms of every variety, and have come to ask you assistance in gathering them.”

“Oh! Sir,” exclaimed the Curé, reddening with enthusiasm, “let us go there immediately, before the herdsmen come down after their cows. Those ignoramuses would crush beneath their feet the splendid mushrooms, the whole of which we must absolutely gather. You have done well to wait for me: I am familiar with all the varieties suitable for food, and the ‘bollet,’ especially, requires great delicacy of observation, because of the great number of cousins german found in the class of poisons.”

“Panurge may get out of it as he can!” said Léonce to himself, as he saw Teverino and Sabina seated at a little distance, on a group of rocks. “If he perpetrates any foolishness, I shall not suffer the mortification of listening to it, and I much prefer to submit to the results of the experiment than to face them.”

He took the Curé off with him, and called Madeleine to join their party, but the latter seemed unwilling to go, and said, by way of excuse, that all the mushrooms were poisonous, and of no use, but to kill flies.

“This is a prejudice of many peasants,” said the Curé, “even in the regions where a knowledge of the eatable kinds might furnish them a healthy and nutritious food.”

Léonce passed sufficiently near to Sabina to give her an opportunity of recalling him, if the *tête-à-tête* were displeasing to her; but she gave no indication of discontent, and did not even appear to see him.

Lost in the oak coppice, Léonce found himself separated from the Curé, whom the ardor of search led into the thickest of the bushes, and whose locality was only betrayed from time to time by exclamations of enthusiasm, as new groups of mushrooms presented themselves before him. Madeleine quietly followed the young man and offered him her large straw hat to serve as a basket; but Léonce put in it only the flowers of the gentian and balm leaves. The bird-tamer was pre-occupied, and, once, he thought he saw some furtive tears dropping from her blond eyelashes.

“What ails you, dear child?” said he, drawing her arm within his own, “What internal trouble can you have?”

“It is of no consequence, kind sir,” replied the young girl. “It is only a little foolishness passing through my mind.”

“What is it, then?” said Léonce, pressing her little arm against his breast.

“It is, you see, sir,” she replied ingenuously, “that my good friend set out this morning before daylight for the frontier.”

“Has he left you?”

“Oh! no, God forbid! I do not think that. He has gone to reconnoitre a pass he has seen, which my brother thinks impracticable. He believes, on the contrary, that this will be the best mode of passing contraband goods; he does not wish to live at our charge, and as the business looks tempting to him, he intends to aid my brother in making a profitable hit, and has promised to return this evening with good news. But I fear that he may not return, and I do nothing but pray to God all the time. This is what makes me cry.”

“The pass is probably dangerous, and you fear that he will be too venturesome?”

“The pass is dangerous; for my brother thinks it impossible, but my friend is adroit and prudent enough to get out of it.”

“What then do you fear?”

“I do not know. Don’t ask me; I cannot tell you.”

"Then I will tell you. You fear that he no longer loves you. What has become of the confidence you felt this morning?"

"I am wrong, am I not?"

"I do not know. But can you not console yourself, my poor child?"

"I do not know," returned Madeleine, with eyes raised towards heaven, and in a tone that expressed no doubt of her lover's constancy, but rather the dismay of an inexperienced heart facing grief.

"You do not know, indeed," resumed Léonce, observing her countenance, "and you feel that if it be possible, it is at least very difficult."

"It does not seem possible to me at all. But God alone knows the miracles he can perform, and it is said, that when we pray to him in the sincerity of our hearts, he will refuse us nothing."

"Your first movement would be, then, to pray to him to deliver you from your love? and that is your prayer now, is it not?"

"No, sir. I would do that only when certain of being no longer loved; for if I were to pray now to become wicked towards one who is good to me, I should ask something that God could not grant, even if he would."

"You think, then, that it is our duty to love those who love us?"

"Yes; when God permits us to love them, he does not wish us to cease loving from motives of caprice. I believe even that such fickleness displeases him."

"But if there be a reason for it, that would be different?"

"Then it would become a duty. To love him, who no longer loves us, is to offend and annoy him. God does not wish us to torment our neighbor, especially for the good he has done us."

"You are a great philosopher, Madeleine."

"Philosopher, sir! I do not understand that word."

"But we sometimes love, in spite of ourselves, and refrain from confessing our love, thus causing suffering to those who leave us?"

"Yes; and that must make a great deal of trouble," said Madeleine, the color forsaking her cheeks at the very idea.

"But you pray, my child, and God will deliver you."

"It is very difficult to pray, I am sure. We ought always to think to ask for something besides what we wish to obtain."

"That is to say, that in asking to be cured, we desire, in spite of ourselves, to be loved as much as ever."

I really, believe that is just it, sir. But we must not despair of the mercy of God."

"God then permits us to be loved by some other person, and to return that love?"

"I do not know. When one is not handsome, and is nm love with one person, it is not easy to please any other."

"But the miracles of Providence! If your countenance should appear beautiful to some other than your friend, and if your love and

grief, instead of displeasing him, should render you more beautiful in his eyes?"

"You speak with great gentleness and goodness, sir. It is very easy to see that you believe in God, and that you understand his mercy better than M. le Curé. You wish also to console me, in showing me things like that; but I am so sad that I cannot yet even see them, I am constantly thinking of what I should suffer, if my good friend were to cease loving me; were I not afraid that it is impious, I imagine I should wish to die."

"Reflect that if you were to die and he knew it, he would be eternally unhappy."

"And perhaps the good God would punish him for having caused my death. Oh! no. Then I should not wish to die."

"You are good and generous; I predict that you will not be unhappy beyond the power of consolation, and that God will not abandon a heart like yours."

"What you tell me, sir, does me good, and I wish that you were my confessor in place of M. le Curé. I feel that you would find consolation for me, and that I should have faith in you as in God."

"Well, Madeleine, let me at least be your counsellor and your friend. If misfortune happen to you, confide in me. I can do something for you, perhaps, if only to speak of religion and encourage you."

"Alas! you are right; but you are of the people who pass through our country, without remaining with us. In three days, perhaps, you will be more than a thousand leagues from this spot."

"Take this little pocket-book, and do not lose it. Can you read?"

"Yes, sir, and write a little also; thanks to my brother, who has taught me all that he knows."

"Well, in it you will find an address, and some papers which will be of use in causing me to return, or in guiding you to me, wherever I may be."

"Thank you, sir. I am very grateful for your kindness," said Madeleine, putting the pocket-book into her pocket. "I shall never forget you, for I see that you know a great deal about religion, and your heart inclines to those who are in trouble. Now I know what I shall do. If my good friend should prove ungrateful to me, I will send him to you, for I am sure you will speak to him so wisely that he will no longer wish to afflict me."

"I have, then, your confidence and friendship?"

"Indeed you have," said the bird-tamer, naively pressing the arm of Léonce to her heart.

"Halloa, there!" cried the Curé, emerging from the thicket, so loaded down with mushrooms that he could scarcely stagger under them. "Here are you two, linked arm in arm, as though you were friends and equals. Gently, Madeleine, gently. You have a head, but no brains, my child. This will turn out badly for you."



“Do not scold her, Monsieur le Curé,” interposed Léonce. “She will do very well, if you will let her alone.”

“Hum! hum!” returned the Curé, shaking his head. “You, with your virtuous airs do not reassure me very much; perhaps you are playing the fool with me to-day. Come, now, let go the arm of that child, and come with me to see my harvest.”

“We will go and deposit it at the feet of Lady G—,” proposed Léonce.

“And where then is yours? What! weeds and flowers! Pray, what are you going to do with them? They have not even a medicinal value.”

“The marquis will find them of use for his herbarium,” returned Léonce. “And apropos of the marquis,” thought he. “I am curious to know if the ass has yet shown the tip of his ear.”

They found Teverino and Sabina in the spot where they had left them; but the negress and the jockey had rambled off some distance. Both the Marquis and Lady G— seemed to enjoy their consultation. They were seated side by side; his air and manners betokened confidence and satisfaction, while she, with sparkling eye and glowing cheek, seemed equally contented.

“What have you there?” said Lady G—, as she saw the Curé ostentatiously spread out his cryptogamous plants upon the moss. “Ah! what beautiful *pommes d’or*! What charming *decoupures d’ambre*! What enormous *chapeaux de prêtre*! These certainly are very singular and magnificent plants.”

“Singular! magnificent!” cried the Curé, grossly scandalized. “Say exquisite, Madam; say fragrant, fresh, nutritious! God has not made such things as these to please the eye, but to delight the stomach of man.”

“Ah! Pardon, Monsieur le Curé,” said Teverino, throwing away a suspicious-looking individual, “here is a false mushroom.”

“Very likely, very likely,” replied the Curé. “It is easy to make a mistake, in the haste of gathering them.”

“You seem to be possessed of universal knowledge,” remarked Sabina, glancing tenderly at the *Marquis*. “What is it you do not know?”

“Well, what do you think of my Marquis?” asked Léonce, drawing her aside.

“Can I think him otherwise than charming? Is it possible there should be two opinions concerning him? If he were not what he appears to be, you would certainly have been most imprudent, dear doctor, in presenting to me so attractive a man.”

Sabina uttered these words in a tone of raillery, but there was, in spite of herself, a sort of watery mist in her eyes, that betrayed a secret intoxication.

“By all that is good! what have I done?” thought Léonce, dismayed, and he was about to inform her of what a foolish jest she was

the dupe, when an anxious and piercing glance from Teverino recalled to mind his promise and shut his mouth.

“No, it is impossible,” he said to himself; “this proud and cold woman could not be so grossly deceived. She could not be so enamoured at first sight, with a marquis of my creation. Nevertheless,” he added, directing a scrutinizing glance towards Teverino, at that moment more brilliant than ever, “to notice only the marvellous beauty of this fellow, the ease of his manners, his air, truly distingue, to listen to that melodious voice, that language, sparkling with poetry and wit! Who can be more fascinating, who can attract more sympathy? Does he not stand there, an Italian Marquis, peerless, perhaps, in all the aristocracy of the universe? Is there a woman in the world so blind as not to be dazzled by his charms?”

Léonce became so absorbed by his anxiety, that Sabina was compelled to shake him to rouse him from his revery. The sun was getting low, the weather was propitious for returning. The Curé, still more impatient to cook his trout and mushrooms, than to allay the uneasiness of his housekeeper and sacristan, invited his companions to return with him to his parsonage. Madeleine, seated apart from the rest of the party, was completely dumb, and apparently indifferent to every thing going on around her.

“Seigneur Léontio” said the vagabond in Italian to Léonce, as they were about to take their places in the britzka, “Are you in love with the Lady Sabina?”

“You are very curious, Signor Marchese replied Léonce, with ironical tartness.

“No, but I am your friend, a royal friend, and I ought to know your sentiments, so that I may not oppose them.”

“You are a coxcomb, my dear sir.”

“Indeed, already irritated? Well, what did I tell you? that twenty-four hours between us would be the end of the world. No matter. I have divined your secret, and will not insist. You shall acknowledge, Léonce, that Teverino is a gallant man.”

And springing upon the box, he called out, “I am to be coachman. Dame Erebus, you must sit inside of the carriage, for I drive. I have a passion for horses!”

“That is unkind,” said Lady G—, evidently displeased at this arrangement. “Our society, then, has no more attraction for you, Marquis?”

“Besides, you are not familiar with the country,” objected the Curé. “We have already lost our way, and I fear that under your guidance we shall have to sup on the evening dew, and sleep under the canopy of the stars.”

“Leave the Marquis to do as he feels disposed,” said Léonce, “and if you speak of the stars, trust yourself to his. Do you know how to drive?” he asked Teverino.

“Perhaps!” replied the latter, “although I have never tried.”

“Good heavens!” cried the *Growler*. “You will surely overturn us all and break our bones. It will not do to joke with these precipices and narrow roads. Sir! Sir! Give up the reins to this young lad, who understands driving.”

“Don’t be fool-hardy,” said Léonce in an under tone to Teverino. “If you have never handled the reins, you had better not meddle with them.”

“The knowledge will come to me intuitively,” replied the Marquis. “I feel myself inspired to conduct these horses of the sun.”

Whereupon he cracked his whip and the horses started off at full gallop.

“Not this way, not this way!” cried the Curé, swearing in spite of himself. “Where the devil are you going? Saint Apollinaire is upon the left.”

“You are mistaken, Abbé,” returned the Phaeton, “I know these mountains better than you.”

And leaning back towards Léonce, who was seated directly behind him, “where shall we go?” he whispered in his ear.

“Everywhere, no where—to the devil, if you choose,” replied Léonce, in the same tone.

“Then, to all the devils,” responded Teverino, and again cracking his whip, he paid no further attention to the rage of the Curé, who was soon rendered pale and speechless with terror.

His fear was only too well grounded. Teverino was more adroit than experienced. Naturally rash, and endowed with presence of mind, agility, and physical strength superior to that of the majority of men, he despised danger, and did not always comprehend what moral or material obstacles he could overcome or avoid. In this persuasion, and enchanted with the spirit and velocity of the horses of Léonce, he guided them along the edge of precipices, disdainingly to hold them in when the road became so frightfully narrow as to cause them to graze the trunks of trees and masses of rocks at its side, urging them up steep acclivities, descending them at full speed, and finally bringing up the burning wheels of the vehicle upon the extreme verge of a perpendicular ravine, at the bottom of which roared an angry torrent. At first, Sabina was seriously afraid; his jests appeared to her in very bad taste, and she began to fear, that, after all, this Italian marquis was only a specimen of that class of ill-bred individuals, who derive a foolish pleasure from the sufferings of a timid woman. She presented, however, no external indication of annoyance or displeasure, thoroughly comprehending that the only vengeance permitted to the weak, under these circumstances, is to give no opportunity for brutal audacity to enjoy the torments it inflicts. Sabina’s pride was so great, as to make her prefer death itself, rather than betray her terror even by a frown. Therefore, apparently calm and self-possessed, she rallied the Curé, and laughed at the idea of danger, although, at heart, far less tranquil than he.

## TEVERINO

But soon, her fear gave place to a sort of exalted courage; for she saw that Léonce was jealous of the incredible address of the marquis, and as, after all, the danger was vanquished as soon as met, she continually found new occasions to admire Teverino, who often turned towards her, as if to gain new strength from her approbation.

“He drives like a fool,” said Léonce, measuring the abyss with his eye, “and we shall be lucky if we always escape thus. Are you not afraid, milady? Shall I not try to bring him to reason?”

“Of what would you have me afraid?” she replied, regarding the abyss, in her turn, with a superb indifference. “Is not your friend a magician! We are carried along by a miracle, and we might follow him even upon the water, if you all possessed my faith in his power.”

“It is sheer fanaticism, madam, this feeling you have for the marquis!”

“And you have it no less than I, since you confide to him your own destiny as well as ours.”

“I must acknowledge that he is much more rash in his movements than I had foreseen. He seems drunk with the furious pleasure which so much success has caused him.”

“He has an energetic nature, the courage of a lion,” said Sabina, piqued at this tacit reproach. “This danger is exciting, and of all that you have invented to-day, it pleases me the most.”

“In that case, we will double the dose. Wake up, there, marquis, are you asleep?”

Teverino gave such a spring as to send the Curé, three quarters fainting with fear, into the bottom of the britzka, and with one only remaining idea, that of saying his *In manus*.

Sabina shrieked with laughter, the negress made the sign of the cross. As for Madeleine, she was truly the only member of the party thoroughly brave, and indifferent to danger. She watched the tranquil golden clouds, where the vultures hovered to and fro, agitated by the approach of evening.

## VIII.

### ITALY! ITALY!

THE horses having become somewhat subdued and quieted in dragging their load up a long and difficult hill, the Curé recovered the use of his senses. The precipice had disappeared, and the carriage followed a narrow cut in the rocks, in very bad condition, but from which a fall could have no such grave consequences as from the steep acclivity they had just passed.

“Where are we now?” cried the holy man, slightly relieved. “The country is no longer familiar to me. The view is limited on every side, but from what I can discover, I am convinced that we are not on the

side of my parish."

"Never mind, Abbé," said Teverino. "All roads lead to Rome, and in following this crossroad, a little rough, I admit, we avoid a long *détour* of the mountain."

"If we can cross the torrent," quietly objected Madeleine.

"Who speaks of the torrent?" cried the Marquis. "Is it you, little one?"

"It is I," responded the young girl. "If the waters are low, we can cross them. If not. . . ."

"If not, we will cross the bridge."

"A bridge for foot-passengers?"

"We will cross it; I swear by Mahomet."

"Well, then, I am willing," said the indifferent Madeleine.

"And I swear by the holy cross that I will not remain in the carriage, and I will be the last one to cross," thought the Curé to himself.

The torrent did not appear much swollen, and Teverino was on the point of driving into it, when Madeleine, who was bending forward, calmly on the alert, violently jerked his arm.

"The water is not clear," said she. "A large avalanche of snow must have fallen into it, not two hours since. You will not be able to pass."

"Milady, will you trust yourself to me?" said Teverino. "We will go through, I answer for it. Those who are afraid had better alight."

"I certainly shall get out," cried the Curé, climbing over the foot-board. The negress followed him, and the jockey, hesitating between a sense of honor and the fear of drowning, placed himself in front of the horses, waiting to see which side should carry the day.

"Sabina, descend from the carriage," said Léonce, in an authoritative tone.

"I shall remain where I am," she replied. "For the first time, I experience the pleasure of being in peril, and I wish to enjoy the emotion."

"I will not suffer it," said Léonce, forcibly seizing her arm. "It is an act of insanity."

"You have no right over my life, Léonce, and the Marquis, moreover, answers for it."

"The Marquis is a fool!" cried Léonce, exasperated beyond control to see Lady G—'s sudden passion betray itself so ridiculously.

"The Marquis turned and regarded Léonce with flaming eyes.

"You might say that you are two fools," said Sabina, trying to conceal the agitation this quarrel caused her. "I yield to your solicitations, Léonce; Marquis, I hope that you also will alight. The jockey, who swims like a fish, can risk himself alone with the carriage."

"I swim better than all the jockeys and fish in the world," answered Teverino. "Moreover, I do not see why this boy's life should be exposed rather than mine. In my opinion, Madam, one man's life is worth as much as another's; and if I am willing to risk the passage, it

is I alone who should submit to the consequences. How much are your horses worth, Léonce?" he added, with an air of blustering opulence.

"I make you a present of them," said Léonce. "Drown them, if you will. But I have two words to say to you on the other bank," he continued, dropping his voice.

"You will say nothing whatever to me; but to-morrow at two o'clock, it is I who will speak to you," returned Teverino. "You are the aggressor. I have the right to choose the time, and in exchange, I leave to you the choice of weapons. Meanwhile, since you have introduced me to this lady, I ask you, out of respect to yourself, to assume for the time being, an intimate friendship towards me, which shall explain your rudeness."

"A duel! A duel with you? Well, be it so," replied Léonce. "Then speaking aloud, he added, "If we do not fight, Marquis, after the interchange of such tender compliments, there is at least no reason to charge us with cowardice, and to prove it, I propose that we cross the water together. Upon my word, what are you doing there?" he exclaimed, as he saw Madeleine swiftly climb upon the box, and seat herself at the side of the Marquis.

"Oh! there's no danger for me, and it is best that I should be here, in order to direct your course. To the right, M. le Marquis, and then to the left. Proceed!"

The other travelers, having arrived at the centre of the bridge, stood there in a sort of stupor, to see them effect this perilous passage. They had gained in safety the middle of the stream, when the violence of the current raised the carriage, and it began to float like a wherry, drawing the horses with it towards the sharp arches of the pointed bridge.

"Yield to the current, and return," said Madeleine, as calmly as though it were an easy thing to do.

The horses, energetically stimulated, and, strong enough, fortunately, to resist the action of this light vehicle, made several bounds, lost their foothold, began to swim, recovered their footing on a rock, then stumbled, but reined up by the powerful hand of the adventurer, gained, without any painful accident, a spot less deep, whence they easily reached the bank, and all without having broken a particle of the harness, or wetting their conductors, except with some splashes of mud.

"You see, Signora, that you might have accompanied us," said Teverino to Lady G—, as she ran forward to congratulate him upon his victory.

"Not at all!" said the Curé, greatly affected by the danger he had avoided. "You would have been carried away if the carriage had been more heavily laden. I, surely, who am not very small, would have exposed every one of you in exposing myself. I was very sensible of that."

They all re-entered the carriage. The jockey took the seat behind, and the bird-tamer remained on the box, at the side of Teverino, with whom she apparently kept up an animated conversation. But they spoke in an undertone, with their heads close together, whereupon Sabina carelessly remarked that Madeleine's *good friend* might, perhaps, be supplanted, if she did not take care.

"No danger of that," answered Madeleine, whose organ of hearing was as delicate as a bird's, and who, without seeming to listen, had lost none of Sabina's words. "I shall not be the first to change."

"He will not! I swear by my eternal salvation," gaily exclaimed the marquis. "I cannot comprehend that any human being could betray so good and lovely a child as you."

"This is the way," said the Curé, "that these fine gentlemen, with their compliments, turn the head of this little girl. One offers to her his arm in walking, just as he would to a fine lady; the other tells her she is lovely, and she is so foolish as not to perceive that they are both laughing at her."

"It is you, then, Léonce, who offer her your arm!" said Sabina, sarcastically.

"Why not! Have you not also taken her arm, Madam? From the moment we invited her to become our companion and our guest, ought we not treat her as an equal! Why should M. le Curé blame us for practising the law of fraternity! It is one of the innocent and romantic pleasures of our excursion."

"I am not fond of romantic things," said the *growler*; "they are too evanescent, and exist only in the brain. You, young people of quality, amuse yourselves an instant with the simplicity of your inferiors; and then, when you have paid for it, as you say, you think no more about them. Suppose Madeleine does listen to you, gentlemen, we shall soon see who are her true friends; whether the great lord, who will refuse her even a place in his memory, or the old priest, who, by means of reproving her faults as she deserves, will lead her to repentance, and make peace for her with God."

"The good Curé really frightens me," said Sabina, addressing Léonce. "I hope, my friend, that Madeleine is not on the road to perdition?"

"I can answer for myself," replied Léonce.

"But not for the marquis?"

"I confess to you that I do not answer for the marquis. He is handsome, eloquent, impassioned; all the women please him, and he pleases all the women. Is not that your opinion, Sabina?"

"How should I know? Perhaps it would be best to make this little creature come into the carriage with us."

"All the more," said the Curé, "that the road is getting very bad, the day is departing, and if the attention of the marquis is diverted from his horses, our safety is at stake. Better give him the negress in exchange for the society of the bird-tamer."

“I cannot vouch for his not being as much taken up with the black as with the blond,” responded Léonce. “The surest way will be to place him *tête-à-tête* with you, Curé.”

This counsel prevailed, and Madeleine resumed her seat in the carriage, without evincing either ill-humor, shame or regret. Her melancholy had vanished, and the reflection from the rays of the setting sun, illuminated her animated cheeks with the sparkling glow of youth and life.

“Look, now,” said Léonce, addressing Lady G—, in English, “and observe how beautiful this plain little creature again appears. The burning breath of Teverino has transfigured her.”

Sabina tried to answer him in the same light tone of badinage, but the unutterably sad expression of her eyes, contradicted the language of her tongue. Jealousy, under the form of disdain, was kindled in her heart, and all that Léonce had insinuated of the good fortune of the marquis, filled her with shame. She, therefore, endeavored to persuade herself, that, unlike Madeleine, she had not felt the burning breath, as the cloud that heralds the storm, pass over her head.

More than half an hour elapsed before she could succeed in dispelling her chagrin and resume her proud tranquillity. At last, she began to feel herself victorious, and the charm seemed to lose its magical dominion over her.

Teverino, in order to divert the Curé, who, flattering himself that he was on the road to the village, became more and more astonished that he could not recognize the country, entered with him upon a grave discussion of theological questions. In his life of adventure, he had rubbed against all classes of people and all sorts of things. He had associated intimately with prelates and educated monks, and his was a mind to take in and remember, without any effort on his own part. His memory was stored with numerous fragments of citations, commentaries and objections which he had heard debated, perhaps while passing the dishes to a table-full of apostolical gourmands, or while dusting the stalls for a chapter of regular theologians. He was not nearly so well instructed as the good Curé, but he could appear, for the time being, much stronger in metaphysical quibbles. The Curé was astonished and scandalized at this medley of subtlety and ignorance, and the vagabond, more skilful in this, than Moliere’s “*Mèdecin malgré lui*,” feeling that he had the advantage in argument, succeeded in confusing the priest by evading his direct questions, and by overwhelming him with inquiries, pedantically trifling. Finally, the growler began seriously to question with himself, whether his opponent were a rude heretic, armed at all points, or an ignorant jester, who was laughing at him in his beard.

From time to time, detached sentences of their dispute, reached the ears of their companions.

“That is a heresy, a condemned heresy,” cried, the Curé, who no longer paid attention to the roughness and difficulties of their route.



"I know it, M. l'Abbé," replied Teverino, "and it should be refuted. How do you set about it? I bet that you don't know."

"I should rely upon grace, sir, nothing but grace."

"That is to evade the difficulty. A learned theologian disdains to make use of a subterfuge."

"A subterfuge, sir! Do you call that a subterfuge?"

"In this instance, M. l'Abbé, yes. For you have the Council of Trent with you, and you certainly do not doubt that?"

"The Council of Trent has given no interpretation of that point. You are going to bring up some far-fetched decree: I see what you are about. That is your custom."

"Our *growler* seems beside himself," said Sabina to Léonce. "Your friend is truly learned. I regret not being able to hear the whole conversation."

"The marquis knows a little of every thing," replied Léonce.

"Only a little? I might believe it on his assurance. Many Italians are thus; it is the meridional character."

"It is a character that has its charm and its caprice, the one, so puerile as to force us to laugh at it; the other, so powerful as to compel us to submit to it."

"My dear Léonce," said Sabina, comprehending the epigram concealed in the melancholy intonations of his voice, "to perceive, is, at the most, only to remark, it surely does not imply submission. Allow me to speak to you of your friend as a stranger, and to say, that he is a statue of clay, veined with gold."

"Very possibly," he resumed, "but gold is a thing so precious and tempting, that it is sometimes sought even in the mire."

"That is a word which makes me shudder."

"We will use the word clay then, as an emblem of fragility; but, I advise you to make no application of it to the character of the marquis. Study him for yourself, Sabina. He is the most remarkable subject of observation I can offer you, and it is not done without design on my part. But do not allow yourself to be dazzled, if you would see clearly. I confess, that I myself, having for a long time past lost sight of this friend, who, like all other powerful organizations, is peculiarly impressed by surrounding circumstances, I, to say the least, hardly know him. It is necessary for me to study him anew, and I cannot answer for him, beyond a certain point. Be warned, therefore, and be wary."

"What do you mean by those last words? Do you think me in danger of enthusiasm?"

"You know very well that you have just run this danger, to the point of being willing to cross the torrent with him, at the peril of your life, in order to prove to him your confidence and submission."

"Spare me the pain of hearing such improper and offensive words. One might say you are malicious."

"Do you not see that I am angry?"

## TEVERINO

“Indeed, you speak like a jealous man.”

“Friendship has its jealousies as well as love. These were your own words, this very morning.”

“I admit it. Jealousy gives grace and life to friendship,” said Sabina, with an irresistible movement of coquetry. She was alarmed at having come so near loving Teverino, and forced herself to stimulate the affection of Léonce, as a preservative against future danger. She succeeded only too well. He took her hand, and held it clasped between his own burning palms, until she withdrew it. Madeleine, who had appeared to be in a tranquil slumber, awoke at this movement, and gazed upon Lady G— with such evident astonishment as to confuse her. Sabina bestowed a gentle caress upon the bird-tamer, to drive all hostility from her thoughts, but Madeleine seemed to divine that it was not heartfelt, and smiled, apparently with more malice than one could have believed her capable of.

“Zounds! where are we?” suddenly cried the Curé, looking around him.

“At Saint Jérôme,” replied Teverino.

“The question is no longer concerning Saint Jérôme, sir, but the direction you are taking us. What valley is this? Where does this road lead? In short, where the devil have you brought us?”

They had succeeded in reaching the summit of a long and painful acclivity, when, turning a point of the rock, which, for the last hour, had completely hemmed them in, they beheld an immense valley spread out at their feet, at an astounding depth below. From the plateau on which our travelers found themselves, gigantic rocks, crowned with snow, raised their peaks to the sky; nature, there, was barren, fantastic and fearfully romantic; but, in front, the path again sloped rapidly down, leading, by a thousand picturesque windings, to the plains below, which presented all the smiling and richly colored aspects of a fertile country. What can be more beautiful than such a spectacle at sunset, when, beyond the angular outline of Alpine nature, the eye takes in the splendor of fruitful lands, the green slopes of intermediate hills, glowing with the brilliant hues of the western sky, unfathomable depths of verdure unrolled in space, rivers and burning lakes scattered over this vast tableau, like mirrors of liquid fire, and still beyond, bluish zones, mingling, without confounding, the violet horizon, and the heavens above, sublime with light and transparency.

Sabina uttered a cry of admiration. “Ah Léonce!” said she, again taking his hand, “how I thank you for having brought me hither! May God be praised for this journey!”

“And I also, I thank you very much,” said the Curé, with an accent of despair. “We have nothing left but to recommend ourselves to God; supper and lodging are out of the question. Here we are, ten leagues from home, and traveling in a straight line towards Venice or Milan, instead of seeking our polar star, the cock of our church steeple.”

“In place of such blasphemy as this, Curé,” said Teverino, “you ought to throw yourself on your knees, and bless the eternal creator and preserver of these great works. You make me thoroughly dissatisfied with your faith, and did I not love you, I should forthwith denounce you to my uncle, the holy father. Is it thus, senseless and unprincipled Abbé, that you hail the soil of Italy, and the road which conducts to the Eternal City?”

“Do I then behold Italy?” cried Sabina, springing to the ground. “Dear Italy! the dream of my childhood, but of which my traitor husband will scarcely allow me to look upon a picture! But what, marquis! have you really brought us into Italy?”

“*O cava patria!*” sang Teverino, his beautiful voice striking up the noble recitative from TANCREDI, *‘Terra degli avi miei, ti bacio?’*

Shut your ears,” whispered Léonce to Sabina. “This is a new fascination against which I had not warned you. The marquis sings like Orpheus.”

“Ah! it is the voice of Italy. It matters little to me from whose mouth it gushes. My fancy whispers to me that the earth and sky are singing this canticle of love, and causing it to penetrate my heart. Italy! Oh, my God! shall I at last be able to say that I have greeted the horizon of Italy! It is to your ingenious will, Léonce, and to the intrepidity of our guide that I owe this supreme delight! Let me bless you both!”

Thus speaking, Sabina presented a hand to each, and proceeded with them towards a cabin, built of rough boards, at the door of which stood a custom-house official, a fierce old soldier, in a uniform of a pale green color, like the foliage of young spruce trees, and whose moustache was white as the snow on the mountain tops.

“Guardian of Italy!” laughingly spoke the Marquis. “Cerberus, chained at the entrance of Tartarus! Open to us the door of Eden, so that we may pass from earth to heaven.”

The officer regarded with an air of surprise and doubt, the countenance of the vagabond, whom, only a week previous, he had with great hesitation permitted to cross the line, although his passport was regularly made out. This encounter plainly showed to Teverino, that fine clothes and a good appearance are the best letters of credit, for scarcely had Léonce exhibited his papers and answered for all the members of his party, than the vagabond was allowed to go on his way, unquestioned. The carriage was stopped a moment and visited for form’s sake. A piece of gold, carelessly thrown by Léonce at the officer’s feet, cleared away all difficulties.

“And now,” said Sabina, continuing to walk in front of Léonce and the Marquis, “it is really, not metaphorically true, that my feet press the soil of Italy! It is her fragrance that I breathe, and her sky that illumines mine eyes!”

“Stop here, Signora,” said Madeleine, seizing hold of Sabina’s robe. “I have promised to show you marvellous things at sunset, and M. le Curé will not sleep to-night, if I break my word.”

“Provided I sleep anywhere, I shall only consider myself too happy,” replied the Curé, out of breath with the exertion he was making to keep up with Sabina. And seeing her seat herself on the roadside, resolved to witness the accomplishments of the bird-tamer, he sank down on the grass, and fanned himself with his large hat. He had no longer strength for resistance or complaint.

“This is the hour,” said the bird-tamer, leaping upon the rocks that marked the culminating point of this Alpine crest. With the agility of a cat, she clambered from plateau to plateau, until arrived at the last, where, standing with her profile painted against the crimson background of the sky, she began to wave her scarlet flag. At the same time, she beckoned to the spectators to look in the direction of her finger; then, with uplifted arms, she traced a magic circle, to indicate the region in which she saw the eagles whirling about.

But Sabina looked in vain; the birds were lost in such an immensity of space, as to be discerned only by the phenomenal vision of the bird-tamer.

At last, she perceived some indefinite black points, swimming about, as it were, beyond the clouds; then they seemed to come nearer, their number visibly augmented, as well as their size. Finally, the great extent of their wings attracted attention, and their wild cries could be heard like a diabolical concert in the region of the tempests.

For some time they whirled round and round, describing great circles in the air, which gradually diminished until they formed a compact group, perpendicularly over the head of the bird-tamer. Here they balanced themselves on their wings, descending and ascending like balloons, seemingly paralyzed by an invincible mistrust.

Then it was that Madeleine, covering her head, hiding her hands in her cloak, and gathering up her feet under her petticoat, sank down upon the rock like a corpse; at the same instant the cloud of carnivorous birds pounced upon her, as if to seize their prey.

“That play is more dangerous than she thinks,” said Teverino, taking Léonce’s gun from the carriage and springing upon the rock. “Perhaps the little creature does not see with how many enemies she has to deal.”

Madeleine, as if to show her courage, raised herself and agitated her cloak—the eagles dispersed, but regarding this light movement as convulsions of agony, they remained close at hand, filling the air with their sinister clamors: as soon as the bird-tamer resumed her position, they returned to the charge. Several times she lured them to her, and then frightened them away; after a while, she uncovered her head, extended her arms, and rising, stood motionless. At this moment, Teverino raised the barrel of his gun, in order to quiet these sanguinary beasts of passage, if necessary. Madeleine, however, made a sign for him to fear nothing: during several minutes she held the enemy in respect by the fire of her eye, then, she slowly quitted the rock, leaving behind her a dead bird, enveloped in a rag, with which she had silently

provided herself! The eagles precipitated themselves upon this prey, and disputed its possession with furious cries.

“Look,” said Madeleine, rejoining the spectators, “how angry they are up there at my handkerchief, which I forgot and left behind me! How insolent they are, now that I am no longer with them! Well, let them sing to their victory! These are cowardly, wicked animals, who obey without loving. I am sure that my poor little birds heard them, and are dying with fear. If I were often so unfaithful to them, I have no doubt they would abandon me.”

“But I do not think your birds have followed you hither?” said Léonce.

“No,” she replied, “they would have followed me, if I had willed it, but I knew they would be in the way, and therefore sent them to sleep in a wood that we left behind us, on the other side of the torrent.”

“And where will you find them to-morrow?”

“That does not trouble me,” she answered proudly, “It is for them to find me wherever I may please to be. They see at a distance and from high places, and while I travel one league, they can fly twenty.”

“If we could only go two or three leagues to find a shelter,” remonstrated the Curé, who had taken no interest whatever in the scene of the eagles, “we should have cause to thank Providence.”

Never mind, Abbé,” said Teverino, “I will be responsible for a good supper, a good fire to dry the dampness of the evening, which begins to penetrate, and a warm bed, whereupon to rest your weary limbs—that is, if you are not bent on returning to sleep at Saint Apollinaire; in which case, if milady condescends to grant you your liberty, you will be able to travel there on foot, and arrive at home by sunrise.”

“Vastly obliged for such liberty,” said the Curé. “But since I have fallen into your power, it is useless for me to try to extricate myself; therefore, do your best to lodge us supportably to-night, and I will endeavor to forget the terror of my poor Barbe, and the astonishment of my parishioners when they hear no summons to mass to-morrow morning.”

“To-morrow is not Sunday, and your absence is involuntary,” said Teverino. “Come, let us proceed on our journey. God will conduct us.”

“And I?” said Sabina, somewhat alarmed, to Léonce. “And my husband, who is probably awake by this time, and making his toilet, preparatory to breakfasting, that is to say, supping in my apartment”

“Speak lower, madam, lest the Curé overhear you. He is the only person in the party, who would be scandalised at such an occurrence.”

“What! Are we going to pass the night away from home? I shall be the table-talk of the country.”

“No. Quite the contrary, be assured. The society of the Curé makes all right, and nothing is more natural than to lose one’s way among the mountains, to be overtaken by night, and prevented from

returning home until the next day. The Curé will make noise enough about this terrible adventure, so that no one will for a moment question the fact of his being with us."

"But if your marquis, for whom you do not answer, should be a coxcomb, he will blaze abroad impertinences in regard to me."

"I will at least promise to make him keep silence, should he be so inclined. Now, really, Sabina, are you going to plunge again into sad realities? Where has flown that enthusiasm with which the burning soil of Italy just now inspired you? Poetry dies at the remembrance of worldly conventionalities, and if you are wanting in faith, my power will abandon me."

"Well, then, Léonce. *Come what may!*

"The air freshens. Permit me to envelop you in my cloak," said Léonce. "Keep a corner of it for this little one, who is thinly clad," seeking at her side for Madeleine.

"Oh, thank you, madam, I am not cold," said the bird-tamer, who had glided unobserved upon the seat with Teverino.

"I fear that the Curé's suspicions are but too well grounded," resumed Sabina, in English, "and that after all, she is a dissolute girl. What a madcap your Italian is!"

"Indeed, and what matters it to you?" inquired Léonce.

The horses, although covered with sweat and foam, were still full of spirit and trembled with eagerness. Teverino urged them to the descent, and these generous animals soon accomplished a perilous, and what would have been with less swift winged coursers, a tedious journey. The road was in many parts extremely crooked and wound along the edge of frightful chasms, but, fortunately, the darkness of the coming evening concealed from the Curé a view of his position, which would have given him the vertigo. As for Madeleine, she was thinking of something else.

"Look, Signora!" at last exclaimed the marquis, pointing with his finger to the lights penetrating the gloom beyond. "Behold a town—a town of Italy!"

## IX.

### ON THE VERGE OF AN ABYSS.

"PRAY don't tell me the name of this town," said Sabina. "I shall learn it soon enough. Sufficient for me to know that it is a town of Italy; my imagination already runs riot among its marvellous wonders. "See, dear Curé, does it not resemble an enchanted palace?"

"In truth, madam, I see only some lighted candles."

"Oh! you are no poet. What! does it not appear to you that these lights are more brilliant than other lights? that their mysterious radi-

ance in the midst of this profound darkness, promises us some unheard of surprise, some new adventure?"

"We have had enough of such adventures for today," growled the Curé, "and I ask for no more."

It was a modest little frontier town, whose name we shall not repeat to our readers, for fear it may no longer be poetical in his eyes, if, by chance, he should have happened there on a rainy day, and in ill-humor. Be that as it may, Sabina was struck by its Italian character. Beautifully situated in an amphitheatre formed by the mountains, and sheltered from the cold winds of the north, heated by the rays of a meridional sun, and watered by running streams, it presented all the aspects of comfort, neatness and luxuriant vegetation.

The rising moon shone upon white walls, vine-covered slopes and terraces decorated with marble vases, from which the aloe launched its luxuriant leaves. She silvered the rounded roofs of numberless miniature churches, and disclosed whole avenues of shops, filled with huge vegetables, delicious fruits, and lighted with colored paper lanterns that shed over all the richest and most delicate hues. Rude arcades lined the edges of the streets, thronged with joyous crowds of the inhabitants, a jovial race, for whom every summer's day was a festival, and who now greeted the arrival of an elegant vehicle with shouts of merriment and joy. Troops of half naked children and inquisitive girls, in whose hair natural flowers were thickly twined, followed the carriage, and assisted at the disembarkation of the travelers before the *Hôtel del Lion Bianco* on the *Place du Marché Neuf*.

The inn was comfortable, and the sight of an ample piece of beef, roasting before the fire, caused the countenance of the Curé to brighten. While the best chambers were being prepared for these unexpected guests, they, themselves, attended to the arrangement of the table in a lower room, which was painted in fresco, in accordance with that taste for ornament and delightful harmony of color, so generally found, even in the most miserable houses of northern Italy. The Curé did not forget his trout and mushrooms. They had remained to him in all his troubles, as a bit of consolation, and he constantly repeated to himself that with this foundation of good cheer and feasting, provided a fire could be had, there would be no reason to despair. Teverino assumed the apron and white cap of the scullion, and, affecting to possess some wonderful secrets in the culinary art, he facetiously set himself to work with the Abbé in the kitchen. Madeleine assisted the negress to arrange the sleeping apartment, while Lady G—and Léonce, leaning over the balcony adjoining the dining room, amused themselves in observing the children playing and dancing on the square.

As soon as the candles were lighted and the table spread out with simple but excellent food, the guests gathered round the board. Léonce went in search of the bird-tamer, in order, as he said, to gratify the marquis; but this persistence in the blessings of equality was by no

means agreeable Sabina. The landlord could not restrain his astonishment.

“What!” said he, as he served out the soup, “the bird-tamer in the society of your illustrious highnesses! I am very well acquainted with her, and have more than once given her a dinner gratis, for the sake of the pretty tricks she can perform. But are you going to bring all your little friends with you, Madeleine? I give you notice that if you expect shelter and lodging for them, I have neither plates nor pillows enough in my house for so many guests. Listen, my child: you must go and eat with their highnesses’ domestics in the kitchen. Without joking, I will really find you a nice little corner in the hay-loft where you may sleep.”

“In the hay-loft, with the grooms and muleteers, doubtless!” said the Curé. “If that is the sort of life you follow, Madeleine, I am not wrong in saying that your vagabondage will lead you astray.”

“Bah! bah! she is a little child, my lord abbé,” answered the landlord, “and no one pays any attention to her.”

“Sir landlord,” said Sabina, “I beg you will have a bed placed for her in the chamber with my negress; Madeleine shall sleep there. I invited Madeleine to come with me, in order that I might derive amusement from her peculiar talent, and I will be answerable for her safety.”

“Since your highness deigns to interest yourself in this matter,” replied the landlord, “all shall be done as you command. She is a favorite with every one here, the dear little creature! She is three quarters magician. Shall I also place a cover for her at this table?”

“By all means,” replied Lady G—, curious to observe for herself the progress of the intimacy between the marquis and the bird-tamer.. Her expectations were, however, not realised: they seemed to have again become strangers to each other. Madeleine was modestly familiar with Léonce, and respectfully calm in her bearing towards Teverino. The latter, who performed the honors of the table with marvellous ease, treated her with a sort of paternal kindness, which strikingly displayed the benevolence of his character, without infringing upon the conventionalities of society. Sabina began to think she was deceived, and even the Curé found nothing to reprove in the manners of the handsome marquis. But a new cause for fear seemed to spring up in his mind, as he witnessed the attentions that Léonce paid to the foolish child, who was extremely merry with him, and charmed him by her innocent gayety. But the appetite of the *growler* was so tremendous, and the delicious viands so absorbing, that he lost the proper moment for administering his usual clear-sighted and judicious reproof. Long before he had finished his repast, Madeleine, with the thoughtlessness of her age, had fallen asleep on the large couch which decorates the travelers hall in all the country inns of Italy. From time to time, Léonce approached the couch, and admiringly contemplated this repose of innocence, this graceful posture and angelic expression



which belongs only to youth.

They were at dessert, and the marquis, exclusively occupied with Lady G—, conversed on every subject with superior intelligence; at least, it was a sort of superiority, most highly appreciated by women; great poetical originality, an exalted sensibility, and more imagination than science. The charm of his words and looks again resumed its influence over Sabina. The Curé played the part of contradictor, as if he had it at heart to bring out all the shining eloquence of the young man, and to furnish him arms against the dogmatical coldness and narrow prejudices of the official world.

Léonce, irritated at the animation and evident delight of his friend, declined all part in the conversation, and opening his album, began to sketch the figure of the bird-tamer.

Every woman of the world is born jealous, and Sabina had received such merited adulation for her incomparable beauty and brilliant wit, as to cause her invariably to regard the attentions accorded to any others of the sex, in her presence, as a sort of outrage to herself. Skilful in dissimulation, her internal emotions were seldom expressed, except in the form of pleasantry. But they created in her bosom, the desire for immediate vengeance, and the vengeance of coquetry in such cases, is to seek homage elsewhere, and to derive from it a pleasure in proportion to the affront. She therefore abandoned herself entirely to the fascinations of Teverino, and forgetful of the shame she had experienced when the Marquis had appeared occupied with Madeleine, she could not resist the temptation of making Léonce a witness of his power over her.

Léonce, who perfectly comprehended this cruel sport, but who, nevertheless, had the weakness to allow it to touch his feelings, summoned all his strength to despise it. Unfortunately, in making use of the same weapons, he exposed himself to the danger of being vanquished. He affected such great admiration for his model and such enthusiastic attention to his work, as to appear deaf and blind to everything beside.

“Léonce” said Sabina. “Your work will certainly be a *chef d’oeuvre*, for never have I seen you so inspired.”

“Never have I beheld anything more lovely than this sleeper of fourteen years,” he replied. “What a beautiful age! what softness and delicacy in her movements! What serenity in her placid features! Admire her, you who are artists of sentiment as well as of intellect, and agree with me that no conventional beauty, no woman of the world could ever appear so sweet or pure in slumber.”

“I fully agree with you,” said Sabina, in a charming tone of disinterestedness, “and I doubt that the marquis does also.”

“No. God forbid that I should unite with you in such blasphemy!” responded Teverino. “Beauty is what it is, and when we lose ourselves in comparisons, all is up with the critic; that is to say, it is throwing ice upon burning impressions. This is the malady of artists in our age.

They dedicate themselves to certain types, and pretend to assign limits to beauty, which are forged in their own brains. They no longer discover beauty by instinct, nor is it ever revealed to them, except through the medium of their arbitrary theory. The one, seeks in beauty something stout and florid, like the ideal of Rubens; a second, would have it lean and lank, like the phantoms of the German ballads; a third, distorted and masculine, after the manner of Albert Durer; and a fourth, makes it cold and stiff, in the style of the primitive masters. Nevertheless, all these old masters, all these noble schools followed a naive and generous instinct: therefore, their works are original and please, although they bear no resemblance to each other. The true artist is he, who has a consciousness of life, who enjoys everything, who obeys his inspirations without reasoning upon them, and who loves all that is beautiful, without endeavoring to classify it. What signify to him the name, the dress, or the habits of the beauty whom he worships. To his eyes, the divine seal may appear stamped on an abject frame, and the flower of rustic innocence bloom on the forehead of a queen of the earth. It is for him, Creator that he is, to make of her who charms him, a shepherdess or an empress, according to the inclination of his soul and the wants of his heart. You, Léonce, are artist enough to transform this blond mountaineer into a Saint Elizabeth of Hungary (*Ed io anche son pittore*) and I, since I feel, and think, and love, I can see Dante's Beatrice under the brown tresses of milady."

"It seems to me, Léonce," said Sabina, flattered by this last touch, "that the marquis coincides with you in your ideas of art, and that you only differ in the expression of them. But what is that exquisite drawing just fallen from your album? Permit me to examine it?"

"Pardon me, madam. I warn you that it is a study from a nude figure. However, if you wish to see it, my 'Fawn' is well enough clothed with leaves to satisfy the scruples of M. le Curé, and prevent the necessity of his taking it out of your hands; his church contains many saints less austere."

"The outline is superb," said Sabina, regarding the sketch Léonce had made of Teverino on the margin of the lake. "Here we have a charming fantasy, a noble attitude, and an enchanting landscape."

"It appears to me," said the Curé, "that this countenance and that of the marquis are as much alike as two drops of water. If the dress were similar, it might very well pass for his portrait; but, after all, it is not the coat that makes the man, and the likeness is perhaps quite accidental."

"That beautiful face is so deeply engraven on my memory," said Léonce, glancing significantly at his marquis, "that it comes naturally to the point of my pencil whenever I endeavor to realize perfection."

"And this scenery is of our country," added the Curé. "I recognize our little lakes, our high mountains, our fir trees and our rocks. It is drawn to the life. Look at it, M. le marquis."

“The position is good, and the composition fine,” tranquilly observed Teverino; “but the design is weak.. This is not the best thing our friend can do.”

“Oh! I think it very beautiful,” said Sabina, who could not withdraw her eyes from the picture.

“Indeed! I beg, then, you will allow me to present it to you,” said Léonce, ironically. “If you do not consider this effort unworthy a place in your album, it will at least recall to mind a happy day and vivid emotions.”

“I prefer the drawing you have just finished,” replied Lady G—, annoyed at the tone of Léonce. “It seems to me that you have put in that more of *impegnio e d’amore*.”

“No, no; I shall not give you this,” returned Léonce, placing the sketch of Madeleine in his album, and thrusting the other upon the table.

“What superb weather,” said the marquis, carelessly approaching the window. “The moon makes it light as day. What say you all to a walk round the town? To-morrow, every thing will be less beautiful, and will have lost its prestige.”

“Come, let us go,” said Sabina, starting up.

“As for me,” said the Curé, “I must rather ask permission to look after my bed. I am broken down with fatigue.”

“What! From merely riding seven or eight leagues in a good and comfortable carriage?” exclaimed Sabina.

“No; but from having been first hot, then hungry, then cold, and then hungry again; in short, from not having taken my meals at the usual hour. Besides, it is nine o’clock, and I see nothing unnatural in my wish to retire. Heaven grant that my poor housekeeper may not spend the night in watching for my return.”

“*Felicissima notte* M. l’Abbé,” said Teverino. Are you coming, Léonce?”

“Not yet,” he replied; “I want to make another sketch of this little sleeper.”

“The little sleeper must sleep elsewhere,” said the Curé, sharply. “Is she going to lie around on the sofas all night, like a lost sheep. Come, *sans souci*, wake up.” So -saying, he waved his broad brimmed hat over Madeleine’s face; she made a motion as if to drive away an importunate bird, and fell asleep again, looking more beautiful than ever.

“Let her alone, Cure; you are pitiless,” said Léonce, preparing to seat himself on the sofa, by the side of Madeleine.

“This child ought not remain here thus exposed to the observation of every body in the house,” said Sabina.

“Pardon me, dear Léonce,” cried Teverino, joining in the conversation. “We must obey the wishes of Milady and M. l’Abbé.” And, lifting the young girl in his arms like a child, he carried her into an adjoining chamber, where, a few minutes previously, he had observed

the negress arranging her bed.

“Listen, queen of Tartarus! Your noble mistress, the white Phoebé, confides this object to your care, with the strict injunction to guard it as you would the apple of your eye.” He deposited Madeleine gently on the bed, and said in a low tone to the negress as he left the room. “Lock your door, ’tis the command of your mistress.”

Léonce affected great indifference to what was passing around him, and slowly followed Sabina, who, after having vainly waited for him to offer her his arm, accepted that of the marquis. The latter appeared familiar with the town, although he was a stranger to every body in it, even to the landlord of the *Hôtel del Lion Bianco*. He conducted Sabina to take an ice in a cafe, which stood in the vicinity of some old walls, ruins of ancient fortifications, bearing the trace of the bullets of republican France. They partook of their refreshments in the open air, on a platform that overlooked the moat and a confused pile of massive, antique constructions, covered with moss and ivy.

At a short distance from them, rose a dilapidated tower, whose slender outline, rendered almost dazzlingly brilliant by the silver rays of the moon, presented a strong contrast to the surrounding landscape, veiled in a cloudy vapor.

Léonce wandered off by himself among the ruins, apparently absorbed in admiration of the romantic spot and heavenly night.

“I really believe,” said Teverino, trying the strength of his fingers upon a piece of cement which he picked up from under his feet, “that this construction is of Roman origin.”

“I have no wish to know any thing about it,” replied Sabina. “I find it far more pleasant to take every thing for granted, and to dream over the splendor of past ages, than to waste time in archeological researches. All the enjoyment is lost, in striving to arrive at facts.”

“Ah, indeed! Then you have the true poetic instinct, charming *Française*, said Teverino, taking a seat opposite to her, “and I will gladly lose myself with you in this intellectual paradise, to which the divine Alighieri was introduced by the divine Beatrice. When this comparison has now and then risen to my lips, I have not taken into account the justice of my inspiration. Yes, you combine the light of intellect with a perception of ideal beauty, and until this moment, I have never met so extraordinary a woman as you. I have never been in France before, and the French women whom I have met in Italy, are much more like our women than you are. The woman of the south has many poetical and artistic instincts, but they belong rather to the character than to the intellect. Moreover, her limited education, her idle and lascivious life, does not give her a chance to analyze her emotions, as you so well know how to do, madam. Then, how clearly you express your thoughts, even in our language, to which you give a new form, always noble and striking. Your sentiments are born of ideas, and in talking with you, it seems to me that I am you, in a region

unknown to other beings. You judge everything; nothing is strange to you, and your learning does not hinder you from experiencing the emotions and passions of the human soul as fully as those poor creatures, who love and admire without discrimination. Yet your imagination is rich as though you were not possessed of all the secrets of humanity, and the ideal continually transports you beyond your marvellous wisdom towards the infinite. In truth, my brain ignites at the hearthstone of yours, and in listening to you, I seem to become exalted above myself.”

It was by a deluge of eulogistic phrases like these, that Teverino poured the poison of flattery into the soul of the proud lady. What a marked difference between the philosophical system of teasing adopted by Léonce, and this boundless admiration, expressed with that Italian ardor which closely resembles emotion. And what lent to it an irresistible charm, was that Teverino himself, almost believed what he said. He had never before come in contact with a woman so extensively cultivated; to a character like his, full of eager inquiry and incessant observation, such a novelty was wonderfully fascinating. It was his object to put this feminine superiority at ease, in order to see it manifested in all its brilliancy, and therefore, comprehending perfectly, that these gifts are always united to a proud spirit, he caressed it with ingenious adulation. It was very difficult, not to say impossible, for Lady G— to distinguish this passion of knowledge from the passion of loving. She had never seen a man so blasé, and, at the same time, so unaffected, as Teverino. Léonce had less intellectual curiosity and less tranquillity of soul in her presence. Thus, she saw only half, of the character of this Italian, a veritable diletante in intellectual enjoyment, who, without endangering the calmness of his own heart, vigorously attacked hers, merely to observe it as a new type of his experience.

She talked a long time with him, and of what, between a handsome young man and a lovely young woman, if not of love? There is no theory so inexhaustible in a moonlight *tête-à-tête* of this sort. The woman complains of life, weeps over its illusions, traces the ideal of love and foreshadows the transports that she veils under a transparent mystery of bashfulness and reserve. The man exalts himself, abjures prejudice and condemns the crimes of his fellows. In his own person, he would become the champion of the male sex. By a thousand adroit insinuations, he offers to expiate and repair the original sin, while by a thousand subterfuges yet more adroit, the woman eludes his homage, and stimulates him to renewed fervor. This is the usual summing up of all such conversations between civilized beings. It is the summing up of the conversation which took place between Sabina and Léonce, only the morning before, and which was conducted with still more art and dissimulation. But with Teverino, Sabina had less fear and more gentleness. In place of reproach and angry recrimination, she respired only the tranquil odor of incense; but she also incurred

the danger of giving tenderness to him who demanded only imagination.

As the voice of the adventurer, in the height of his dithyrambics, echoed 'mid the stillness of the night, Sabina was somewhat startled to see Léonce reappear at the base of the rampart.

"Here is Léonce," said she, with a hope of repressing his eloquence.

"Poor Léonce! He is very anxious and thoughtful this evening," said Teverino, lowering his voice.

"I have never seen him so disagreeable," she replied. "I am almost inclined to think that he is tired of us."

"No, madam. He is in love, and jealous."

"In love with the bird-tamer, doubtless," said she, disdainfully.

"No, with you. You know it perfectly well."

"You are mistaken, marquis. We have known each other fifteen years, and he has never dreamed of being in love with me."

"Well, madam, I swear to you that he thinks seriously of it to-day."

"Cease this jesting. It is painful to me."

"Is he not a gallant man, a brave artist, and a clever fellow? His love is yours of right, and you ought not to be offended by it."

"On the contrary, it would grieve me terribly, for I could not reciprocate it."

"That is dreadful, madam. I am convinced, then, that there is no chance for any other man, for no other man can flatter himself that he is the equal of Léonce."

"You are wrong, marquis; he has all sorts of perfections, with which I would cheerfully dispense, did he not lack one small quality that I may hope to find elsewhere."

"What is that?"

"The faculty of loving ingenuously, without pride and without mistrust."

Saying these words, she rose from her seat to go and meet Léonce, and the easy confidence with which she leaned on the arm of Teverino, induced the latter to say to himself, "After all, it is not so difficult as I thought, to conquer this strong heart."

Sabina fancied that she spoke very low, but she forgot to take into consideration the clearness of the surrounding atmosphere, and consequent facility with which sound was here transmitted, and, of course, did not for an instant suspect that Léonce had heard every thing. He was, in truth, so deeply wounded and overcome by her last words, as to be scarcely able to conceal his emotion and maintain the calmness of his role. He succeeded, however, so wonderfully as to deceive Teverino himself; and, to confirm Lady G— in her belief of his extreme coldness. He proposed that they should ascend to the summit of the dismantled tower, promising them a magnificent view from it, and an atmosphere yet more pure than that of the ramparts.

They, therefore, made the attempt, Léonce leading the way, to point out the path which he had just explored alone, and to warn them of the decayed or slippery steps in the worn out spiral staircase.

Notwithstanding these precautions, the ascent was very painful and even dangerous for a woman as delicate and as little inured to vertigo as Lady G—; but the strength and address of the marquis inspired her with a singular confidence, and what, in cooler moments, she would never have dared to undertake, she accomplished by enthusiasm; now leaning on his shoulder, now her hands clasped in his, and now carried in his vigorous arms.

During the progress of this perilous adventure, more than once their cheeks grazed each other, more than once their breaths mingled, more than once Teverino felt beating against his breast, panting with exertion, a heart moved with shame and tenderness. The moon, penetrating the large, broken arches of the tower, threw a vivid light on the stairway, interrupted from time to time by the massive walls. In these intervals of light and darkness, sometimes they were very near to, and then again quite distant from Léonce who, feigning to pay no attention to his companions, lost, however, not one shade of their growing emotion. At last, they found themselves at the summit of the edifice. A circular wall, eight feet in breadth, without any balustrade, formed its crown. Léonce tranquilly walked round and round it, measuring with his eyes this slippery rampart, whose cyclopeian base seemed to lose itself in the moat, more than a hundred feet below. But Sabina was seized with an insurmountable terror, both for herself and Teverino, who, standing at her side, essayed in vain to reassure her. She sat down upon the last step, and could not breathe freely until the marquis was also seated at her side, and had encircled her with his two arms, forming as it were an impregnable barrier between her and danger. The frightened owls flew into the air, uttering plaintive cries of distress. Léonce, under pretext of seeking out their nests and carrying their young to the bird-tamer, to see how she would manage their education, descended the stairs, and went rummaging in the lower stories, where the noise of his steps on the gravel soon ceased to be heard.

Teverino was no longer master of himself, as he had been only a quarter of an hour before, while taking an ice with Sabina, in an isolation less complete. Moreover, Léonce appeared so indifferent to the possible consequences of the adventure, that he began to look upon it as a less serious case of conscience. But the astonishing loyalty of this singular being still struggled against the attractions of beauty and the pride of making such a conquest. He succeeded in dissipating Sabina's terrors, and, to divert her thoughts, he proposed that she should listen to a hymn to the night, the words his own improvisation, which he felt an irresistible desire to sing on this magnificent spot. Sabina had already heard a slight specimen of his voice, sufficient to make her wish for another. She, therefore, readily consented, at the

## TEVERINO

same time telling him that as long as she should see him standing on this gigantic pedestal, she could not restrain the terrible beating of her heart.

“Well, then,” said he, “I am certain of being listened to with emotion, and that would be enough to make many professional singers long for such a theatre.”

The facility and even the originality of his lyrical improvisation, the happy choice of the air, the incomparable beauty of his voice, and this natural musical gift, in which taste, power and sweetness supplied the place of method, all these acted upon Sabina, and moved her to the very depths of her soul. Torrents of tears escaped from her eyes, and when Teverino returned to his seat beside her, he found her so excited and overcome, as to make him feel that he himself was also vanquished. Throwing his arms around her, he asked if she were still afraid. She fell upon his neck, and, with a voice broken by sobs, responded: “No, no! I have no longer fear for you!”

At this moment their lips met; but, at the same instant, the steps of Léonce, resounding under the arch of the staircase and approaching them, recalled them abruptly to themselves. Far off in the distance, could be heard clapping of hands and shouts of applause from some persons, who, walking along the borders of the ramparts, had listened to this admirable hymn, still hovering in the air, as if 'twere the voice of the genius of the ruins. They cheered enthusiastically the unknown artist-dispenser of an enjoyment so dear to Italian ears; but their applause caused Sabina to tremble yet more than the approach of Léonce. It seemed to her like an ironical flourish of trumpets at her impending defeat, and she had need to assure herself that her presence there was invisible to curious eyes, even at a distance, before she could recover from the sense of her weakness.

## X.

### LO QUE PUEDE UN SASTRE.

OUR travelers made the circuit of the walls surrounding the town, and by the time they had again arrived at the *Hôtel del Leon Bianco*, which they entered by a small door overlooking the gardens, the clock sounded the hour of eleven. A mob of citizens and laboring men was gathered before the main entrance of the inn, and the landlord appeared to be carrying on an animated discussion with them.

“What am I to do, gentlemen?” he replied to the interrogatories of Léonce and Teverino, and pushing to the door in the face of the eager populace. “The town’s people insist that a great vocalist is lodged in my house; that it is, at least, Signor Rubini, who, in order to avoid the importunities of our diletanti, conceals his name and presence: they say, also, that I am the accomplice of his incognito. Some,



absolutely demand that he shall show himself on the balcony to receive the felicitations of the public, many of whom heard him sing not more than half an hour since, over by the ramparts; others have been running through every street of the town, entering into every house, screaming at the top of their voices for the Signor Rubini. The fact is, I am puzzled what to do. I have several times been honored with the presence of Signor Rubini in my house; I know him very well, and am positive that he is not here."

This incident, together with his wish to put Sabina to the test, suggested to Teverino the idea of a practical joke.

"Listen," said he to the landlord. "I sing tolerably well, and I am the person who was just now exercising his voice on the side of the high tower. I am the marquis of Montefiore. Is it possible that you have not yet recognized me?"

"I recognized you the instant you alighted from the carriage," replied the landlord, incapable of avowing that he did not remember of ever having before seen the face of Teverino. "If I did not address you by name, it was because I feared to betray the incognito that persons of quality sometimes take a fancy to preserve."

"That is right," answered the pretended marquis. "Persevere in your laudable discretion until I shall have left the town, and, in recompense, I will promise never to pass by your house, without giving you a call. The idea has just entered my head to play off an innocent joke on these music-mad inhabitants of your noble city. It is my wish, therefore, that you cause lights to be placed in the gallery, and announce to the people that the artist whose voice they have heard, is about to accede to the entreaties of the generous public."

"What are you about to do?" demanded Léonce, as the host disappeared to execute his orders. "Pass yourself off as Rubini?"

"He can!" exclaimed Sabina with enthusiasm.

"Signora," replied the adventurer, pressing the hand of Lady G— to his lips, in token of gratitude for this encomium, "I have no such pretension, but I wish to give a small lesson to this foolish multitude, for having made so great a mistake; besides, it is my fancy to terminate the pleasures of the day by a comedy, which you may perhaps find amusing. All our chambers open upon this gallery, which extends round the house. If you remain in yours, you will be able to observe everything that is going on through the crevices of the door. And you, Léonce, take care not to give any evidence of recognition; that would betray me."

Sabina and Léonce concealed themselves behind a curtain, and when everything was arranged as Teverino had directed, a miserable figure, with dishevelled hair, untrimmed whiskers, haggard eye, languid step, and clothed in wretched garments, much too small for him, made his appearance in the illuminated gallery. Several minutes elapsed before our friends could penetrate this ridiculous disguise, and recognize the elegant "Tiberino de Montefiore." He was entirely

changed, and everything in his air and person, indicated the most abject wretchedness and squalid poverty. The vest of the landlord's youngest son scarcely spanned his waist; short and narrow pantaloons gave an absurd length to his legs; his hands hung awkwardly at his sides. A cap that had evidently served to stuff a broken windowpane, a wretched guitar, slung cross-wise over his shoulder, a large pilgrim's staff, all combined to give him the aspect of a miserable strolling player. Sabina tried to laugh, but her heart swelled within her, without her comprehending the cause; and Léonce, confounded at this defiance thus thrown at his indiscretion, in vain asked himself, what could mean this daring freak of his accomplice?

On the first approach of this sorry personage, the crowd assembled in front of the gallery, greeted him by cheers and clapping of hands; but all at once, their cries of admiration changed to groans and hisses. They threatened to break down the doors and thrash the landlord, in order to teach him better than to thus play the fool with his honorable fellow-citizens.

"One little moment, gracious public," said Teverino, stilling the clamor by mingled gestures of impertinence and humility. "Take pity on a poor artist who has dared to profit by circumstances and exhibit his humble talents. If he does not succeed in amusing you, he will deliver himself up to your just displeasure, and offer his back to the showers of silver with which it shall please you to overwhelm him."

Every public is capricious and variable. Teverino's buffoonery soon softened the heart of his village audience, and, in default of the great singer whom they had expected, they consented to hear the miserable mountebank. He demanded a subject of improvisation, and delivered several hundred inflated verses, with an emphasis truly burlesque, after which he gave imitations of the cries of various animals, commencing with the cat. He whistled variations on a popular street air, and mimicked the voice of the *Pulcinella* all with marvellous facility, at the same time accompanying himself with a monotonous and discordant scraping of the guitar. When he had finished, a shower of half-pence resounded on the floor of the gallery, and the audience, overwhelming him with ironical applause, renewed their clamor for the famous singer. It was a confused mixture of hisses, laughter and stamps of impatience. Some wags even demanded the head of the landlord of the *Hôtel del Leon Bianco*.

"Well, gentlemen," said Teverino, "you shall be satisfied; the great vocalist promised me to permit you to listen to him, provided I could succeed for a few moments in diverting your attention. My wager is won, and it now becomes my duty to bear to him the expression of your ardent homage."

Whereupon Teverino reentered his chamber, from which he presently came out again, dressed like a gentleman, in a neat and well appointed toilet. During the interval, however, he had taken the precaution to have some of the candles adroitly extinguished, so that

there would not be sufficient light for the audience to recognize his features. He commenced with a prelude on the guitar, which gave evidence of very rare talent; this was followed by a barcarole so delightfully sung as to rouse all the enthusiasm of the crowd, who, in a perfect phrensy of excitement, loudly called for an encore. He consented to sing it again, and when this was finished, leaning over the balustrade, he regarded with an air of aristocratic condescension the mad assemblage below. Their cries of enthusiasm instantly gave place to a profound silence.

“Friends,” said he, with distinguished elegance of enunciation, from which the vulgar bo bombast of the itinerant had wholly disappeared. “I have consented to sing for you, although, by position, I am entirely independent of the caprices of a village public, as well as of all other publics. The uproar which you made under my windows rendered it impossible for me to sleep, so that, in a measure, I have been forced to compromise with you; but, in punishment for your having been so unreasonable, I will sing no more, and if you do not immediately withdraw to your houses, I warn you that you will be inundated by fire-engines, which I have had brought to the hotel, and which will be put in operation on the first symptom of rebellion.”

The terrified multitude dispersed instantaneously, persuaded that they had provoked the wrath of some distinguished personage, and they could be heard clapping their hands as they retired, in humble gratitude for having escaped so easily.

In half an hour, the town was wrapped in silence, and all the inmates of the hotel had gone to bed, except Sabina and Teverino, who leaning together over the balustrade, were still engaged in conversation, commenting on this last adventure, and laughing cautiously, for fear of awaking their traveling companions.

“See how far prejudice goes,” said the vagabond. “That foolish mob had not the faintest suspicion that they applauded and hissed the same man.”

“I cannot help admitting to you, marquis,” replied Sabina, “that I should have been as much deceived as they, if you had not prepared me beforehand.”

“Indeed, Signora? I am happy, then, to have procured you a little amusement.”

“I am not sure that I can thank you for the intention. The scene was fantastical, ludicrous, perhaps; nevertheless, it affected me unpleasantly.”

“We are there, are we?” thought Teverino, and he begged Lady G— to explain herself.

“What! you do not comprehend?” said she, her voice full of emotion, “how painful it is to see beauty and nobleness so travestied?”

“I was, then, very ugly in those villainous rags?” he replied, less touched by the compliment than Sabina might have expected, after what had passed between them.

"I do not say that," she resumed, less tenderly. "But all the elegance of your manners and bearing having disappeared, all the dignity of your character having given place to an indescribable shamefaced impudence, it was unpleasant for me to see you thus disguised, and I could not realize that it was you."

"It was I, nevertheless. It was I, myself."

"No, marquis. It was the individual whom you chose to personate, and this individual possessed no attribute in common with you."

"I admit that the manners and language were assumed, but surely, it was always my countenance, my voice, my mind, my heart, my person; in one word, my being, concealed under these disguises. I had then entirely disappeared to your eyes? That is strange."

"I find it strange that you should be astonished at my stupidity. Manners and language are the expression of the mind and character, and the moral being appears transformed when the exterior being becomes distorted."

"Clothes also go for much," said Teverino, with philosophical irony.

"Clothes, say you? I think not"

"Indeed, it is so. Think well of it, Signora. Suppose, now, that I present myself before you in the shabby and threadbare wardrobe of our landlord's son; suppose, even, that I am this son, whose occupation is, I think, that of forester or exciseman. . . ."

"Well, what then? Finish."

"I suppose, then, that preserving my countenance, heart, and mind, such as God has made them, I appear to you, for the first time, miserably clad, and actually belonging to a very humble condition of life. . . ."

"Your supposition is not founded on common sense. The stamp of nobility, which distinguishes you, is seldom or never found in those obscure races."

"Seldom, it is possible; but, after all, it is sometimes found. There are some natural gifts, which God has dispensed to these poor devils, as if to ridicule the pretensions of the aristocracy."

"Your ideas are just those of Léonce, I will not discuss them; but I may say to you, in answer, that such gifts have a rapid influence on the existence and condition of their possessor. A poor devil, as you say, when he feels himself endowed with beauty and intellect, sets himself actively at work to modify the unpleasant circumstances into which the caprice of fate has thrown him. He carves out for himself a new path; he continually aspires to the elegances of life, to noble occupations, to the enjoyments of intellect, to the privileges of beauty, and soon places himself in the rank for which he was apparently created."

"It is very true that he ardently aspires," replied Teverino, "and also very true that he sometimes arrives at the goal of his aspirations;

but it is yet more true, that he is generally foiled, because society refuses to assist him; because he is repulsed by its prejudices; because, in fact, not having in youth learned the habit of submitting to its restraints, his early education predisposes him to recklessness of its opinion, the great enemy of struggle and slavery.”

“But this contradicts your first assertion. Clothes, then, go for nothing; but habits, that is to say, language, manners.”

“Clothes, language, and manners, all make a part of the habits of life; they are the expression. The external condition of the poor and obscure man, has most significance to vulgar minds; but these are, so to speak, exterior habits; the moral and interior being has not less value in the eyes of God.”

“I understand nothing of such distinctions, marquis. In your mouth, such language is generous and disinterested reasoning, but in the mouth of the personage, whom, a little while since, you amused us by representing, it would be vain and insolent pretension. Your philanthropy misleads you; the moral being cannot thus detach itself from the exterior being. There, where the language is ridiculous, the habits gross, disorder habitual, the bearing impertinent, and the calling ignoble, can you hope to discover a great intellect and a noble heart?”

“It is possible, madam; I persist in believing it, in spite of your contempt for misery.”

“Do not misrepresent me. It is a misery which I both pity and respect. It is that of the infirm, the ignorant, the weak, of all those beings whom the misfortunes of life throw half-dead, either physically or morally, into the combat of life. Enfeebled in body and mind before they are able to develop themselves, these unfortunates are truly the victims of chance, and we owe it to ourselves to pity and respect them. But he who has the power to struggle, and will not, is culpable; justly does society abandon him.”

“Be it so,” said Teverino, with a mixture of haughtiness and good nature. “None but God can read his heart and know whether he does not find within his own breast, consolations which are ignored by the world, and whether between the Supreme Being and his soul, there is not established an intercourse far purer and sweeter than all human sympathy or social protection. I believe that the gifts of God are always bestowed for some good purpose, and that those who are lowest on earth, will not be lowest in his kingdom. Some one formerly said to me. . . . But I perceive that I am beginning to preach, which is to encroach on the rights of our good Curé. I ought to content myself with showing you that I can play at comedy. I have been often told that I was born a comedian; nevertheless, I have an honest heart, that has always impelled me contrary to the dictates of prudence.”

“Indeed, you are a wonderful mimic,” said Sabina, “and you have conducted this Italian farce like a gay young student in his holidays. I admire the vivacity and youthfulness of your character, but I must

confess it rather frightens me.”

“You think me frivolous?”

“No; but inconstant and indifferent, perhaps.”

“Then, you do not regard me as perfidious and insincere, notwithstanding the facility with which I can metamorphose myself?”

“No, certainly not.”

“Well, I prefer your opinion as it is, than that you should take me for a hypocrite.”

“You are, then, indifferent as to whether you inspire any other sort of mistrust?”

“I am indifferent, because I can easily overcome this mistrust. But as no one will put me to the proof, I have no occasion to exculpate myself, is it not so, beautiful Sabina? I should be a great coxcomb if I endeavored to make myself appreciated.”

“Do you not wish for esteem and friendship?”

“Esteem and friendship! French words that we Italians do not comprehend, when applied to the relation existing between a handsome woman and a young man. Less subtle and more passionate than you, we go direct to the fact of the true sentiment we experience. I own to you that I do not envy your esteem and friendship for Léonce, and that I would vastly prefer your hatred and disdain.”

“Explain yourself.”

“How and why do you not love Léonce, that excellent and clever fellow, who adores you?”

“He is not the least in love with me, and that is the secret of my indifference to him. Now, would you have me disdain and hate a man as accomplished as he, because he does not happen to be in love with me! Is it not my duty to put aside my vanity as a woman, and render justice to his noble character and great mind, by dedicating to him an affection more tranquil, more durable than love?”

“Judging from the manner in which you speak of love, Signora, one might say you have never felt it. An Italian woman would not have so much delicacy and generosity; she would simply despise it all, and regard as her greatest enemy the man capable of living with her in this species of gross and offensive intimacy that you name friendship. Ah! Signora! of whatever race she may be, a woman is always a woman before every thing else. The instinct of truth is more powerful with her than good taste or conventionalities. Your friendship, or rather your disdain for my noble friend, reposes only on an error. You do not perceive his love, and you punish his silence by according to him your esteem. If you read his heart, you would respond to his feelings.”

“Marquis, I consider it very strange that you should charge yourself with the declarations of Léonce.”

“I swear to you upon my honor, Signora, that I am not charged by him with declarations, and that he distrusts me as much as you do.”

“Thus you make love to me for him, on your own responsibility, and charge yourself gratuitously, with his cause. It is very noble and

generous in you, marquis, and recalls to my mind the fraternity of ancient chivalry. Certainly, nothing can be more worthy of esteem, and from this moment, you have acquired a just title to my friendship."

Uttering these words with an accent of bitterness, Sabina arose, bade the marquis good night, and retired to her chamber. We have already said that the rooms of our party were all situated on the gallery, which formed the roof to a large pent house, after the fashion of Alpine constructions, and ran along the front of the hotel, facing the square. Léonce and Teverino occupied the same chamber, and when the latter entered, he found his friend still up and dressed, walking about the room in great agitation.

"Young man," said Léonce, advancing to meet him with extended hand, "your sentiments are noble, and you are worthy of an exalted destiny. I grossly insulted you at the passage of the torrent; will you forget it?"

"With all my heart, Léonce, if you will admit that jealousy, or, in other words, love was the cause of your involuntary passion?"

"Otherwise you will not forget it?"

"Otherwise I shall persist in demanding an explanation. The more abject my condition appears to you, the more am I entitled to your consideration, particularly as you invited me to join your company; and if the difference in our fortunes makes you hesitate to give me satisfaction, I would add, by way of a stimulant, that I have no superior in the skill with which I handle every kind of weapon, and that this is not my first duel with a man of quality."

"I have no cowardly prejudice on this point. I belong to the age in which we live, and I know that one man is worth as much as another. Neither am I unskilful in the use of arms, and I might find pleasure in measuring swords with you, were my cause a good one; but I feel it to be bad, and I suffer all the more for having insulted you, now that I behold in you the pride of an honest man."

"Your excuses are also those of an honest man," said Teverino, pressing his hand with noble dignity. "But, to put my susceptibility at rest, you ought to admit that love and jealousy are alone to blame."

"You wish for my confidence, Teverino? Well, you shall have it, Jealousy? yes, Love? no."

"Ah! more French subtleties. A woman does or does not please us. Where there is no love, there can be no jealousy."

"That is the language of naïveté and uprightness; but admitting (I have no objection) that the civilization of French manners and the refinement of our ideas produce this strange contradiction, can you comprehend only that which your own heart can experience? You who have seen so much of life, who have studied so many diversities of human nature, do you not know that self-love, as well as the veritable passion, is a cause of ill-humor and jealousy?"

Teverino seated himself on the edge of his bed, maintained a

thoughtful silence for several minutes, then rising, resumed: "Yes; these are the maladies of the soul produced by satiety. Those who desire not to know them, must be like me, visited by misery, that is to say, by the frequent impossibility of satisfying all their wants. Dear Poverty! thou art a good instructress of hearts. When the abuse of enjoyments threatens to corrupt us, thou bringest us back to the primitive simplicity of sentiments and ideas. Thou givest us so many simple lessons, as to compel us to remain simple under thy austere law."

"What relation then do you establish between your misery and the uprightness of your heart?"

"Misery, sir, is one form of philosophy. It is stoicism, and the stoic soul is made entirely of one piece. Should my mistress be taken away from me by a powerful man (the power of this age is riches) I bow my head, but my pride is untouched. That heart, for which my heart was not sufficient, seems to me unworthy of regret or anger. Were I able to sustain the struggle and give to my unfaithful love the enjoyments of life, I might, in that case, experience jealousy and be indignant at my defeat. But where my rival prevails in consequence of attractions which fortune denies to me, I can only blame my destiny. I no longer regard its instruments as culpable."

"I congratulate you on your philosophy. But this cannot apply to the feeling of jealousy with which you have inspired me. You have nothing, and yet you are preferred to me who am rich. Thus, I have reason for being doubly humiliated."

"Yes; to be furious if you are in love. Otherwise, your feeling is only a delirium of vanity, and I cannot comprehend how a man whose intellect is as clear as yours, can allow himself to be affected by such a trifle. If you were in the habit of being every moment supplanted by the fatal law of destiny, you would become inured to these little reverses. You ought to know that woman is the most impressible being in creation, and consequently the one to give us the greatest pleasure, the fewest rights, the most intoxication, the least security."

"That is a vagabond's philosophy," said Léonce, "and I am incapable of loving thus. You are all tenderness and tolerance, Teverino, but you do not carry into love matters the instinct of dignity which you assert on the score of honor."

"I do not place honor where it is not, and I seek in love, only love."

"Thus you are often loved, but you never love; you know only pleasure."

"Nevertheless, I often sacrifice pleasure to ideas of honor. Be not in haste to judge me, Léonce. You cannot tell what is at this moment passing in my breast."

"I do know I" cried Léonce, with the fury of a madman. "You struggle with desires that you might, even this instant, satisfy. It is but a step from this chamber to that of a certain noble lady, proud and weak, like all the rest of her race, and I am perfectly well aware that



you have only to sing a romance under her window, or turn her a compliment of irresistible flattery, in order to animate this pretended statue of Carrara marble, and embrace those disdainful lips. . . .”

“Stop there, Léonce. I have no such confidence; do not attribute to me this power.”

“Is this dissimulation, modesty, or loyalty? Throw aside all scruple. I have seen everything, heard everything. I know that you were at first curious, then tempted, but finally conqueror over yourself out of generosity for me. I am grateful to you; but the esteem with which you inspire me augments the contempt I have conceived for this woman, and I am willing that she should bear the pain of her hypocritical coldness. I wish you to deliver yourself up to the passion of your youth, and to grant her those pleasures which her moistened eye continually solicits. Go, child of fortune and sovereign of the occasion, the hour is propitious. You have already plucked the first kiss, the kiss of love, after which, a woman can refuse nothing. You will render me a great service, you will deliver me from a mortal agony, a fatal attraction, too long combatted in vain. I exact from you nothing but discretion; besides, your life shall answer to me for your silence. Be happy this night—to-morrow you shall die—if you speak!”

“A duel unto death would be a celestial stimulant, if I were truly tempted,” replied Teverino, calmly. “But I am not, because I see that you are irretrievably in love, poor Léonce. Your fury and injustice reveal your whole heart, in spite of yourself. Come, be composed; this beautiful creature is neither false nor guilty. She is only distrustful and irresolute, and if she has not yet loved you, Léonce, it is your own fault..”

“No, no; it is hers. Can she be ignorant that I am deeply in love with her, and that my respectful friendship is only a timid game?”

“At last, you admit it.”

“I do admit that I have been a long time in love with her, and that this morning even, I was near declaring myself. Well! and have I not been so a hundred times since this morning, madman that I am! My fits of passion, my bitter raillery, my sadness, uneasiness, jealous cares, my efforts to appear in love with Madeleine, are not these so many avowals, rather too simple for a man of the world?”

“Léonce! Léonce! you have been understood.”

“Yes, and that makes it still more odious in her, still more humiliating for me. She feigned to observe nothing. She persisted in her superb indifference; she sought every means in her power to dishearten me; and, when she saw that I really suffered, she shamelessly threw herself into the arms of a man utterly unknown to her.”

“Hush, blasphemer! You scandalize me,” cried Teverino. “Your passion renders you blind and indecent. What! do you not see that this woman loves you, and is it for me to teach you the tenderness of your heart? Do you not see that it is from spite that she listens to me, and that her soul, agitated by passion, seeks refuge in the intoxication

of some fatal catastrophe? You choose to win her by a thorny road, and the pleasures you prepare for her are mingled with gall; you irritate her by tempestuous desires, and then fling yourself out from her presence, haughty, supercilious, sarcastic, offended that she does not make you advances, contrary to the modesty of the sex! You wish her to avow her passion, to reassure you against all hazard, to promise you days whose web shall be spun in silk and gold, to excuse and justify herself for having been so long insensible to your fascinations, to demand pardon for her tardy submission; in fine, in exchange for the bitter beverage of truth you present to her, to pour out floods of ambrosia and loving adulation. You are absurd, Léonce, you do not comprehend the spirit of such a woman. You think yourself degraded in prostrating yourself in the dust under her feet, and in confessing yourself unworthy of her tenderness; but can you not see that these are precisely the expression of a true love, the naive gratitude of an exalted happiness?"

"Italian! Italian! river overflowing and rolling at hazard, you only wait for enthusiasm to penetrate your soul, to find its expression, and your transports outstrip the happiness that gives them birth! Familiar with all the ruses of seduction, you yet speak of *naïveté!*"

"Yes, I am naive in working for victory. Desire and hope render me eloquent, and uncertainty does not prevent me from being venturesome. What, then, is there humiliating in a checkmate of this sort?"

"And can you not imagine? A refusal from a woman is worse than a blow from a man."

"Foolish prejudice!"

"No! The woman who refuses considers herself insulted by the declaration."

"False virtue! With what intricacy and cunning all such matters are managed in your country. Huzza for fervid Italy!"

"Nevertheless, you despised your ancient idols, when on the ramparts, an hour since, you said: Our women love without discrimination, but your sentiments are born of ideas."

"I believed myself on the road to discover perfection; but I perceive with chagrin that the intellect stifles the heart; therefore, repentant and contrite, I return to my remembrances."

"Perhaps you are right, in the main!" said Léonce, rousing himself from a profound revery. "This absence of delicacy comes from the very richness of your organization, and I am not astonished that Lady G—, after having so long breathed an atmosphere of freezing subtleties, should have been attracted by the overflowing enthusiasm of a genial soul. We understand, perhaps, nothing of love, and I acknowledge on my part that I deserve what has happened. It is too late, however, to profit by it; the charm is destroyed, and you have spoiled every thing, Teverino, in thinking to serve and enlighten me."

"Say not so, Léonce. You know nothing about it. Sleep brings

## TEVERINO

counsel, and to-morrow you will be calm. To-morrow, at two o'clock in the afternoon, a grand revolution will have taken place among us all. Wait until then to judge for yourself."

"What do you mean?"

"Nothing; I am going to sleep," said Teverino, extinguishing the light. "I commission you to awake me in the morning, for I delight in the bed as much as a cardinal."

In a few moments, he seemed to be in a profound slumber, and Léonce, reduced to the extremity of disputing with himself, endeavored in vain to imitate him. His mind was over-excited, and the bed, one of those pallets usually found in country inns, was as uncomfortable and disagreeable to him as that of Teverino seemed delightful; so that, notwithstanding all his efforts to the contrary, he remained awake and keenly attentive to external noises. A vague uneasiness devoured him. He expected every moment to see Sabina's shadow fall on the curtain of his moonlit window, as she passed along the gallery, seeking an opportunity of reconciliation with Teverino.

At last, he was just beginning to feel drowsy, when the noise of stealthy steps, creaking lightly on the gallery floor, and then dying away, roused every nerve in his body. Léonce remained motionless, his ears open, his eyes fixed on Teverino, whose bed stood facing his own. Presently, he distinctly saw the vagabond get out of bed, half open the door, as if to assure himself that some person had passed by, and then approach the bed of Léonce, to ascertain if he were asleep. Léonce feigned to be in a deep slumber, and not to notice the hand that Teverino waved before his eyes; whereupon the latter dressed himself noiselessly, and left the chamber.

"Miserable wretch! you have deceived me," thought Léonce. "No matter! I will discover your artifice in spite of you, and cover this unchaste woman with shame." He again rose out of bed, put on his clothes quickly, and followed the steps of the imprudent marquis. The moon was setting, and the town was wrapt in silence.

## XI.

### VADE RETRO, SATANAS.

LÉONCE had been careful to note down in his memory the number marked over the door of Sabina's chamber; but he was in too great trouble to pay any attention to it, and stopped before the first open door that presented itself before him. The small chamber, the interior of which he took in at a glance, contained two beds and was lighted by a lamp. One of these beds had just been vacated; it was that of the negress, the mysterious individual who had crossed the gallery. The other was a low cot, on which Madeleine was tranquilly reposing. Teverino, standing in the centre of the room, was looking anxiously

around; in a moment, Léonce saw him advance towards the pallet of the bird-tamer and regard her attentively. The child slept the sleep of angels: the lamp, placed on a table, shed a glow over her beautiful countenance as well as over the agitated features of the vagabond. The partially closed door concealed Léonce from the inmates of the room, while he could observe everything going forward.

“Madeleine,” thought he, changing his suspicions. “Ah! that would be still more infamous. I will save her. Why does this cursed negress thus abandon her?”

He was about to make a noise to put the seducer to flight, when he was arrested by seeing Teverino kneel down at the side of the radiant countenance of the child. The expression of his face had changed; its anxiety had given place to a deep tenderness, and a sort of religious respect. He remained some instants as if plunged in sweet meditation. One might have thought that he was praying, for never had his beauty appeared more ideal. Presently, he leaned over the little girl, and bestowed a silent kiss upon the chaplet of flowers that she still held in her hand, hanging down from the bed. Notwithstanding the precautions of the vagabond, she was partially awakened, and doubtless thinking herself in her hut.

“Oh! my good friend,” she said a low voice, “is it already day? Has my brother returned?”

“No, no, Madeleine; go to sleep again, my angel,” replied Teverino. “I am going out to meet Joseph.”

“Oh, very well, go,” she muttered in a voice overcome by sleep. “I will get up when you are gone.” And as if habit had measured her hours of repose, she fell asleep again, after having thus unconsciously spoken. As Teverino left the chamber, he found himself face to face with Léonce, who sought not to avoid him. All at once, he became greatly agitated, and turning abruptly, he locked Madeleine’s door, taking out the key. Then, laying his hand on the young man’s arm, “Sir,” said he, his voice trembling with emotion, “you shall not enjoy this diversion. Go, if you will, and trouble the sleep of the great ladies, but the child of the mountain is not destined to serve as your pastime.”

“If I had had that infernal idea,” replied Léonce, whose calm and truthful air reassured the clear-sighted vagabond. “I should be greatly ashamed of it in your presence, brave young man! I have surprised the secret of your heart, and I am already acquainted with that of Madeleine. The pre-occupation of my own mind has, until now, prevented me from recognizing in you the good friend of whom she has spoken to me, and I accused you of a crime, when you were only obeying a paternal solicitude.”

“Paternal solicitude!” said Teverino, as together they left the chamber of the bird-tamer. “Yes, that is the word, the true word, Léonce. Hearing steps on the gallery, I feared danger for the defenceless and unsuspecting child; some base valet, how do I know? or even

your brazen-faced jockey? I am responsible for Madeleine to that brave contrabandist, who, a week since, confided to me, in sacred charge, the guardianship of his sister and his cabin. Oh! loyalty of the Golden Age! thou art found again in the midst of a desert, in the hearts of a vagabond, a bandit and a young girl! You see, Léonce, what your crabbed Curé terms a state of mortal sin, and what your noble lady, she, who so much despises a life of misery and irregularity, will never comprehend. Alas! that she were able to comprehend the heart of Madeleine! That holy ingenuousness, which knows not even that she is a treasure, and that sublime confidence, which Sabina herself, with all the power of her wit and beauty has not disturbed! Do you not admire, Léonce, the calmness and discretion of this child, who was satisfied with one word from me when she saw me disguised, and whom, my role of flatterer at the side of your mistress, troubled with no foolish paroxysms of jealousy? Ah! if you could have heard her artless questions, as she sat with me on the carriage-box, and her replies, full of magnanimity and goodness, to my queries if she were not in danger of finding you too amiable and handsome! Our love is different from yours, my friend; for we have boundless confidence in each other: we know that we cannot be deceived. And shall I avow it to you? the bird-tamer is far more lovely and charming in my eyes than ever, since I have breathed the atmosphere of a great lady! But what can have become of that cursed negress? She leaves open her door, as if she were in a convent of Carthusian friars. I will stake my word that if Milady had confided a little dog to her keeping, she would have taken more care of the animal, than she takes of this young girl's honor."

And, in fact, where was the negress? We would not, for the world, believe that she had a rendezvous with Léonce's jockey. Perhaps Sabina, tormented by sleeplessness, had rung for her; perhaps she was a somnambulist. All that we know in reference to this, but little interesting portion of our story, is that, in trying to regain her chamber, the door of which she did not expect to find closed, and being entirely ignorant of figures, she pushed open the first that offered the least resistance, and fumbling for the lamp she had left lighted at the bedside, her ebony hands came in contact with the Curé's face. The nose of the holy man, somewhat animated by the excellent Cyprus wine, had induced the illusion that it was the wick of a candle just extinguished and still smoking. In the fear of burning herself, she uttered a cry, to which responded a groan of terror from the Curé, who, thus rudely awakened, started up in bed, and beholding this dark visage, enveloped in a linen turban, strongly outlined on the open door, he thought himself attacked by the devil, and, seizing his breviary, he threw it at his supposed majesty, at the same time thundering forth all the exorcisms which came to his mind.

On hearing the clamor made by the good man, Léonce and Teverino rushed in, and preserved the negress, who, bewildered by

this unexpected encounter, knew not where to fly, in order to avoid the Curé's lamp, which came rolling towards her, with tremendous noise. All was explained. The trembling Lélé accounted in her own way, for her nocturnal promenade. Teverino threatened to denounce her to Milady, if she did not keep herself shut up in her own room, whither he returned to imprison her. The Curé, enchanted at having escaped the claws of Satan, resumed his virtuous slumbers, and enjoyed them undisturbed until day-light.

## XII.

### A CALM.

SABINA had rested no better than her companions. The prediction of Léonce had been realized to an extent which he did not foresee, for in making that random promise, his only idea had been to amuse and excite her a little by the expectation of some adventure, with which, however, he had no thought of meeting. All the strange incidents of the day were continually passing and repassing through the mind of this interesting young creature, making her uncomfortable and unhappy. At first, the eccentricities of Léonce, the violent and bitter declaration of love he had made to her in the wood, with the unlooked for tenderness of their reconciliation; then, his sudden anger as she expressed her desire to hold him to the terms of their former friendship, his disappearance for hours among the mountains, his return with this stranger, so fascinating and whimsical, who, at one moment, seemed to her most nobly impassioned, the next, the most prosaically frivolous of men; now, in love with her to the point of adoration, now, sufficiently indifferent and disinterested to intercede with her for another; now, the model and flower of gentlemen, now, the veritable type of strolling players; passing from a pedantic discussion with the Curé, to heavenly musical inspirations, and from an equivocal whispering with the bird-tamer, to a general conversation full of elevated thought, philosophy and poetical enthusiasm.

These various alternations had confounded Sabina's judgment, and, at last, crushed her spirit. It seemed to her as if she still bore a part in these different scenes and conversations, as if the carriage were still moving forward with the speed of the wind, and, with her closed eyes, she seemed to behold again all the diversity of mountain landscape, in the midst of which she had that day journeyed. She no longer distinguished between illusion and reality, and when, for a moment, she lost herself in sleep, she awoke with a start, imagining herself at the summit of the tower, with the kiss of Teverino still warm upon her lips. Then, mocking applause and contemptuous laughter met her ear, the tower fell to pieces with a crash, she found herself in a dirty street, arm in arm with the mountebank, and face to face with

Léonce, who, throwing to them the alms of pity, turned away in disgust.

The negress, charged to awaken her mistress at an early hour, found her sitting on the bed, with a spiritless eye and a heavy heart. She presented to her the white Cashmere *bournous* which served as her *robe de chambre* at the villa, her elegant dressing-case, and, in short, all the usual luxuries of her toilet. At first, she made use of them mechanically; then, as she reflected a moment, she asked Lélé who it was that had been so delicately thoughtful as to provide all those comforts. On the reply of Lélé that Léonce was the instigator of these minute preparations, she could no longer doubt that, from the first, he had intended to prolong their excursion until the following day; this discovery added food for the numerous reveries in which she indulged while submitting to the process of the toilet.

Judging from Teverino's conduct of the evening previous, it was only too certain that he did not love her. After those passionate compliments and that fatal kiss, how had it been possible for him to throw off so quickly all serious emotion, and voluntarily enact the hero in a ridiculous burlesque? And when again alone with the half-vanquished woman, how was it that, instead of testifying a hypocritical repentance which always asks for more, and which a proud beauty expects either to resist or to yield, he had been able to pursue a philosophical discussion, and above all, to speak to her of Léonce's love rather than his own?

Sabina was profoundly humiliated: she hurried through this painful probing of the wound, in order that she might be able with confidence to resume her usual haughty bearing, and the calm deceitfulness of her pretended invulnerability. But, then, if the marquis were impertinent and dangerous, for what other support could she hope than that of Léonce?

Thus gently and gradually did her thoughts revert to her old champion; certain of the generosity of his soul, she asked herself with remorse at her heart, how she could have been so unjust and inconsiderate as to place herself in a position to need his assistance. When she compared these two men, the one, a tried friend, severe but faithful, the other, a stranger, fascinating and enigmatical; the one, whom a kiss, granted by her, would have chained to her feet forever, the other, accepting it by the way as a mere adventure, and forgetting it on the instant; how vehement were her self-upbraidings, how deep her blushes!

Léonce expected to find her displeased with him; on the contrary, she was pale, sad, and subdued. When he approached to kiss her hand, according to his usual custom, he perceived a tear dropping from her black eyelashes, and was, in turn, involuntarily affected by her emotion.

"You are suffering?" said he; "you have passed a bad night?"

"You predicted it for me, Léonce, and I have to render you an

## TEVERINO

account of those terrible emotions whose remembrance I shall never lose. Make your arrangements so that I may talk tranquilly with you to-day, and pray do not leave me, as you did so cruelly yesterday."

Léonce had not courage to reply that he had thought to please her by so doing. He saw too clearly that Sabina had neither the power nor the wish to justify herself.

On his part, he asked himself if he were not the only one to blame; and full of melancholy and uncertainty, he left the room to preside over the preparations for departure.

Happily, the Curé enlivened the breakfast, otherwise extremely dull, by reciting his terrible encounter with his Satanic Majesty. The marquis was witty and good-humored, Léonce was preoccupied, and Sabina felt grateful for his sympathy. It seemed to her that Teverino manifested the insolence of a successful lover, and she hated him. Nevertheless, nothing was further from the thought of the vagabond; the fault of Lady G— appeared of much less consequence to him than to herself. He found the sin so venial, and his philosophy regarding it was so tolerant, as to derive from it little cause for vain-glory. This arose from the fact that, in a certain sense, he had less respect than Léonce for the virtue of women, while, at the same time, he had more confidence in their moral value. He did not, for yielding to a momentary weakness, condemn them as incapable of a real or permanent affection. His code of virtue was less elevated, but more human. His ideal did not lie in strength, but in tenderness and pardon.

It was only as she was on the point of entering the carriage, that Sabina perceived the absence of Madeleine.

"The little girl set off at day-break for the mountains," said Teverino. "She feared that her brother might be uneasy about her, if she were not at home by the hour he generally returns; she has taken a bee-line across the mountains, escorted by her little friends, whom, with my own eyes, I saw fly to meet her, at the gates of the city. I went with her as far as the walls, lest she should be assailed and detained by the children, always eager to see what they call her tricks of sorcery."

"The marquis is more thoughtful than the rest of us," said Léonce; "we had almost forgotten our little traveling companion, but he was up early to protect her retreat."

"Do you call that protection?" said Sabina in English, and with the utmost bitterness.

"You must not calumniate Teverino," replied Léonce. "You do not know him yet."

"And did you not tell me yesterday, that neither do you know him?"

"True, but I have found him again; henceforth Sabina, I can answer for him."

"Indeed! He is then really a man of honor?"

"Yes, madam, he is a man of soul, although his fortune is not



brilliant.”

“Is his family poor, or has he ruined himself?”

“Of what consequence is that?”

“It is of great consequence. I respect the poverty of a gentleman, but I have a bad opinion of a nobleman who has squandered his patrimony.”

“In that case, you may despise me, for I am in a fair way to squander mine.”

“You have a right to do so, and moreover, I know that you do it nobly and liberally. With you, it does not involve the risk of being reduced to the humiliations of poverty: your talent as an artist secures to you a brilliant future.”

“If I were a capricious, fickle artist, subject to fits of idleness and languor, the idea of working for money might chill my inspiration. And these are the characteristics of all great and true artists; you, yourself, did you not, only yesterday, reproach me for having been born in a station, where success is easily attained, and struggle consequently not meritorious?”

“Recall to my mind nothing of yesterday. I wish to tear that page from the book of my life.”

While thus engaged in conversation, they had rapidly traversed the plain on which the town was situated. In order to regain the frontier, it was necessary to climb the steep acclivity, descended by Teverino the day before with so much audacity and confidence. This occupied nearly an hour, at least. Every body alighted, excepting Sabina, who requested Léonce to remain with her in the carriage. The jockey employed himself in leading the horses, the negress frolicked along the ditches, chasing the butterflies with a sort of savage grace, and displaying to advantage both the delicacy and strength of her voluptuous form. The Curé, who had a decided horror of those thick lips, that Lucifer in petticoats, as he expressed it, walked ahead with Teverino. The latter had determined to reconcile the priest with Madeleine’s good friend, the vagabond, whom the good man had never seen, but whom he promised himself to have seized by the *gens d’armes* on the first opportunity. Without speaking to him of this individual, the marquis, foreseeing the moment when it might be necessary to raise the mask, endeavored to reveal himself under his best aspects, and set himself seriously at work to captivate the benevolence and confidence of the *Growler*. This was no difficult task, for the *Growler* was at heart one of the best of men, when his habits of comfort were not interfered with, or his religious ideas opposed.

“Listen, Léonce,” said Sabina, after several moments of deep thought. “I have a strange confession to make, and if you find me guilty, I must exculpate myself at your expense; for you are the cause of all the trouble I have experienced, and you seem to have contemplated my suffering. Feeling this, that you yourself are so much in fault, I have all the more courage to acknowledge my own infirmities.”

“Ought I not spare you this humiliation?” replied Léonce, taking her hand, and struggling between disdainful pity and fraternal interest. “Yes, it is the duty of a friend, nay, even his right. You have not been able to look upon my marquis with impunity. You have felt his invincible power, you have disowned all your far-fetched theories—in short, you love him.”

A burning blush mantled Sabina’s cheek, and she made a gesture of contempt; but, with an effort to subdue her emotion, she said, “And if it were so, would you blame me? Speak frankly, Léonce, don’t spare me.”

“Certainly I should not blame you; but I should try to put you on your guard against this new-born passion. Teverino is not unworthy, of that, I will take my oath before God, who knoweth all things, and judgeth differently from our judgment. But there are obstacles between this man and you, which you could not and would not surmount, poor woman. A life of hazard, of reverses, of inexplicable eccentricity, chains Teverino down to a sphere whither you cannot follow him. A tie between two such persons as you and he would be deplorable for both.”

“You answer a question which I have not asked. What signifies to me the future—what signifies to me the destiny of this man?”

“Ah! how much you love him!” cried Léonce, bitterly.

“Oh, yes, I love him very much indeed!” she replied with a hollow laugh. “You are a fool, Léonce. That man is completely indifferent to me.”

“What is it then that you ask me? Do you mock at my credulity?”

“God forbid! I asked you, were this love possible, would it seem to you culpable?”

“Culpable, no; I must admit that I should be the guilty one.”

“And it would not diminish your friendship for me!”

“My friendship, no; but my respect. . . .”

“Speak it out. Why should your respect change to pity!”

“Because I should be convinced that you had not been frank with me concerning the Past. What! such an intensity of pride, coldness, disdain for feeble woman, such raillery for the suddenly fallen, such contempt for blind enthusiasm of passion; and yet, all at once, would you unveil yourself as the weakest and blindest of all? For years, you would seem to have surrounded yourself with defences against a love, tender, true, and profound, to yield at last, and in a moment to a passing prestige! Such an event would have deprived your character of all its originality, all its grandeur.”

“How little consistent you are, Léonce! Yesterday, you made desperate, ferocious war upon this odious character; you taxed it with egotism and cold barbarity. You were ready to hate me for having never loved.”

“Then I suppose your honor was piqued to make me see of what you were capable?”

“Be generous and dispassionate. Do not believe me so contemptible as to mark out a *rôle* for myself and tranquilly resolve to make you suffer.”

“Suffer, I? Why should I have suffered?”

“Because, Léonce, you loved me yesterday. Yes; you spoke to me of love, while your actions indicated hatred; you implored even while you Spurned me. I know that to-day the thought humiliates you. I know that to-day you no longer love me.”

“And this,” said Léonce, sadly, “this is what is called reading the heart. I suppose you are as indifferent to-day, when I am cured, as you were yesterday, when I was ill?”

“Know, then, all the perversity of my instinct. I was not more indifferent yesterday than I am today. I almost accepted your love yesterday while refusing it, and to-day, while seeming to implore, I renounce it.”

“You do well, Sabina. It would be a great misfortune for both of us were it to continue after what I have seen and what know.”

“Nevertheless, you do not know everything, and I wish that you should. Yesterday, on the summit of the tower, I was affected unto tears by the voice of this Italian; a vertigo seized me, I felt his lips touch mine, and if I had not heard your steps approaching, perhaps I should not have turned away.”

“It is very easy for you to make this confession to one, who lost nothing of that picturesque tableau. It seemed as if I beheld *Françoise de Rimini* receiving the first kiss of *Lanciotto* You were very beautiful.”

“Ah I Léonce, what means that shudder, that frowning glance, that trembling voice? What matters it to you to-day, since for this fault you have ceased to love me, since you despise me so much as to wish to take from me the merit of confidence and repentance?”

“I have no faith in repentance confessed with so much audacity.”

“Well; call it audacity if you will. I do not pique myself on the contrary, and I am not asking the pardon of a lover, but the absolution of friendship. Listen, Léonce. The humiliating experience of yesterday, made at my expense, has caused me to change my sentiments regarding love, as well as my opinion of myself. I dreamed of something sublime and unheard of; still more, I believed in it and looked upon you as scarcely worthy to guide me to the discovery of that ideal. Now, I have learned to comprehend the nothingness of my dreams, and the shameful infirmity of human nature. A sparkling eye, a flattering word, a beautiful voice, the fatigue and excitement of a day of adventures, the intoxication of a charming night, of a magnificent view, and, above all, a malicious instinct of spite towards you, rendered me as weak at a given moment as I had for years been strong and invincible in the world. An inconceivable trouble weighed upon me, a cloud covered my eyes, a buzzing filled my ears. I felt also that I was a passive being, swayed, hurried away, in one word, a woman!

And from that moment, the mighty scaffolding of my pride has crumbled to pieces. Undeceived in regard to my own heart, lowered in my own estimation, I weep my lost faith in myself; but I thought, at least, to be able to thank God for having placed me near a generous friend, who would preserve me from utter ruin and console me in my grief. Am I, then, deceived, Léonce, and will you not try to close this bleeding wound at the bottom of my heart? Must I, indeed, weep in solitude, and am I to be forever confounded by the voice of my conscience? If this despair is to finish by breaking my heart, if a first false step is to place me on a fatal declivity, if I must still submit to such miserable temptations and feel the magnitude of the dangers I have so much despised, shall I have no friend to hold out a helping hand of protection? Will this friend be my husband, the cold, intemperate Englishman, whose reason is annihilated in the fascination of the wine-cup, and to whom the temptations of love have no reality? Shall I find this friend in my train of perfidious adorers, men of the world, heartless and depraved, who hesitate not at any lie whereby to seduce a woman, but who despise her from the moment she listens to the lies of another? Tell me, where, then, shall I henceforth fly for refuge, if the only man to whose friendship I can disclose the secret of my blushes shall repulse me and answer coldly: ‘Of pity, yes; but of respect, no!’”

Sabina had spoken with energy; her face was deathly pale, with the exception of a light, burning spot in the centre of each cheek. She had really a fever; and the morning breeze, scattering about her magnificent hair in every direction, gave her an unusual aspect of disorder and violent emotion. Léonce thought her more beautiful than ever, and seizing her icy cold hand, he carried it to his lips to reanimate it. A torrent of tears rolled down her cheeks, and leaning upon the shoulder of her friend, she was received in his arms, and pressed passionately to his heart. Léonce remained silent. He could not say one word. The prejudices of his pride struggled with the enthusiasm of his heart. Had the question at stake really been the pardon of friendship, nothing would have been easier for him than to bestow tender consolations; but Léonce was in love, foolishly in love, perhaps, and the duties of friendship no longer presented themselves to his mind. The struggle was with a passion much more exacting and jealous; he suffered dreadful tortures at the thought that, not distant more than two steps from him, was a man who, in one instant, had succeeded in opening a heart, which had for years been closed against him. Notwithstanding this internal combat, Léonce was vanquished without admitting it; for he was born generous, and, moreover, he experienced the sentiment which becomes in us the most generous of all, whenever we succeed in separating its divine essence from the filth of vanity and egotism.

“Do not ask me any questions,” said he to Sabina. “I also suffer—but rest thus on my heart, and let us both endeavor to forget!”

## TEVERINO

He retained her in his arms, and soon she experienced the sweetness of that magnetic fluid, which emanates from a friendly heart, and bears with it more eloquence than words. They both breathed more freely, and as Sabina's eyes closed in enjoyment of this pure delight, he said, drawing her still closer to him, "Sleep, dear invalid, repose from your fatigue." She yielded instinctively to this invitation, and, gently rocked by the slow motion of the carriage, and soothed by the solicitude of her friend, a beneficent sleep soon repaired her strength, bringing back with it to her cheeks that uniformly pale color, which belongs to the type of brunettes.

### XIII.

#### HALT!

SABINA did not awake until they had arrived at the cabin of the custom-house officer; before she could think to disengage herself from the long and silent embrace of Léonce, Teverino's piercing eye had surprised the mystery of this chaste reconciliation. Léonce saw his friendly smile, and faintly responded to it, whereupon the vagabond, pointing to the sky, and resuming the recitative from *TANCREDI*, which he had the night before chanted on the same spot, he sounded this one word '*Ameniäde!*' where, in three notes, Rossini had, with wonderful skill, expressed so much grief and tenderness.

Teverino threw into it an expression so true and touching, that Léonce could not help saying to him, as he alighted from the carriage to speak to the officer: "To hear you pronounce this name and sing these three notes, is enough to convince me that you are a great singer, and understand music like a master."

"I understand love still better than music," replied Teverino, "and it gives me pleasure to see that you also begin to understand it. Believe me, when love speaks to your heart, raise your heart to God, who is all goodness and infinite love. You will then feel that wounded heart become calm and simple again, like that of a child."

"We are then to have you for a driver again," said the Curé, as he saw Teverino mount the box. "I hope, at least, that you will be wiser than you were yesterday."

"Are you dissatisfied with me, my dear Abbé? Have you met with the slightest accident? Why then do you not sit at my side, to moderate my impetuosity, if need be?"

"Nonsense; you manage me just as you please. If Barbara could see how you lead me by the nose, she would be jealous, and reclaim her right to the monopoly. The fact is, I am getting used to your follies, and cannot but admit that you are a clever fellow, (come, whip up, coachee) provided we actually return to Saint Apollinaire to-day, and avoid that cursed torrent, which always seems determined to carry

away the bridge and its passengers.”

“If we avoid the torrent, we take a longer road, dear Abbé, and I ask nothing better.”

“Take the longest road, then,” said the Curé, plunging his great hat over his eyes in a very refractory manner. “*Chi va piano, va sano.*’ An hour more or less in a journey, is no great matter. *Chi va sano, va bene*”

They turned into another road, and Sabina asked Léonce if they were really en route for the villa.

“I hope so,” he replied, “but I am ignorant of our destination. I must own that all my magnetic power seems to have abandoned me, since it has passed into the marquis. He alone must now be our compass.”

“Then I shall openly revolt. I will only be directed by you.”

“I hear, Signora,” said Teverino, “Be assured that I am only the helm, obeying the guiding hand of Léonce. M. le Curé is the compass; his eyes are always turned towards the pole, and the star is Dame Barbe, his venerable housekeeper.”

“Well said! well said!” exclaimed the Curé, laughing heartily.

The road was long, but beautiful. Teverino drove very carefully, pausing at every remarkable site, to give his companions an opportunity of admiring the country. His playfully kind manners and respectful bearing towards Sabina, reassured her, little by little. It seemed as if he were anxious to make her forget a momentary weakness. She felt grateful for this consideration, but her gracious words and tender glances were only for Léonce.

Before long, the heat grew oppressive; Sabina again gently slumbered, while, with persevering solicitude, Léonce held an umbrella over her head. When she awoke, she beheld with surprise that they were in the midst of a Gothic Cloister!

The britzska was standing in a large court, covered with grass, closely trimmed and shaven, and ornamented by a beautifully gushing fountain. Buildings, singularly elegant and of antique construction, surrounded this, the oldest part of the monastery. Beyond and through their vaulted arcades, could be seen on one side, the extensive perspective of a charming valley; on the other, far above the serrated points of the architecture, rose the arid and frowning peaks of mountains. In front, this court was separated from a second enclosure of the convent grounds, by a high grating, through which was visible a parterre of flowers, surrounded by buildings of a more modern date, in better preservation and loaded down with ornament, in the taste of the sixteenth century. The Curé, with his face glued to the grating, pulled the sonorous bell, and figures of monks, startled by the noise, appeared in the shadow of a second vaulted door, opening into a third enclosure.

“I fear, Milady,” said Teverino, “that I may have displeased you in bringing you among these good Fathers. This is the Convent of

*Notre Dame, du Refuge*, and our dear Abbé is of opinion that a little repose and refreshment will embellish this poetic resting-place. It is our intention to ask permission of the prior to introduce you into the heart of the sanctuary, but, to obtain it, we must pass you off for an old Irish lady, an ultra Catholic. Have the goodness, therefore, to lower your veil, and be careful to conceal your features as well as your figure, until after the grating is opened.”

“These monks are ahead of you in shrewdness,” said Léonce. “Here comes already the brother porter to take a nearer view of our young traveler.”

After some parley, the monks consented to admit the women into the second court, but no further; then, with much grace and affability, they gave directions as to the care of the horses and conducted our travelers into a deliciously cool and tastefully decorated apartment, where a dainty collation awaited them.

And now commenced a rolling fire of questions, in which the innocent curiosity of these lazy saints more than once sorely embarrassed our prudential Curé. He was compelled to lend himself to the inventions of Teverino, who boldly introduced Léonce as Lord G—, Sabina’s husband, and asserted that they had come direct from Saint Apollinaire, where M. le Curé had officiated at mass that morning before their departure. The prior was astonished that Lord G— had no English accent, and that they had taken the road across the mountain instead of coming by the valley. Teverino had an answer ready for every emergency; but finally, tired out with this incessant flow of questions, he, in his turn, became the assailant, overwhelming them with praises of their convent, their good looks and liberal hospitality. After the repast was finished, he demanded for the men, at least, permission to visit the chapel and interior cloisters; by this means, procuring for Léonce, another tranquil *tête-à-tête* with Sabina, whom the latter would not leave alone.

“They are newly married,” said Teverino in a low tone to the prior. “Some of your monks here seem to be very young men, and my Lord is jealous even of an innocent and respectful glance towards his noble spouse.”

All monks enjoy little secrets and delicate confidences. Overlooking the taint of worldliness in this remark, the good father smiled and bowed maliciously to the pretended Lord G—, as he invited him to pluck some flowers for Milady.

Léonce and his companion, after admiring the flourishing condition of this garden, cultivated with so much enthusiasm and science, retraced their steps to the first court, where the dilapidated buildings and the tall, neglected weeds had more character and more poetry. This spot was completely deserted, and its antique constructions, bordering upon the open country, were used only as stables and store houses. The mule of the prior, grown white with age, grazed with a

melancholy air; the cooing of pigeons on the moss-covered roofs, accompanied by the uniform murmuring of the fountain, and the ticking of the clock, punctually announcing each moment as it flew, were the only interruptions to the silence of this habitation, where time had no veritable employment, and where life seemed to have paused.

Sabina, seated on a bench near the black marble fountain, resembled the statue of melancholy. Since morning, a complete revolution had taken place in the manners, attitude and expression of this beautiful woman, and Léonce felt, while regarding her, that all was changed between them. She was no longer the disdainful beauty, skeptical of the existence of real love, proudly exalted by the belief in a sort of ideal and impossible love, with which no mortal had yet seemed to her worthy of being associated, even in her dreams. That impetuosity of character, that painful tension of the will which had so much dismayed and irritated Léonce, was superseded by a soft languor, a touching sadness, a profound thoughtfulness, by an ensemble of amiability and tenderness, of which he alone was the object. She was a timid woman, bruised and trembling, and for the first time she possessed an attraction for him, unchilled by distrust or fear. He felt himself at ease with her: he could speak and breathe without dread of that piquant and brilliant raillery, which, although it roused his intellect, kept his heart on the alert against her and against himself. He had no longer need, as yesterday, to affect the role of doctor and mysterious pedagogue, a cold and forced pleasantry, which had concealed such an intensity of emotion. Henceforth, he was her protector, her soul's physician, almost its master; and where man feels that he controls and governs, he pardons every thing, even the infidelity which causes his own self-love to bleed.

He was seated at the feet of his docile penitent; after a long silence, in which, perhaps, he was rather pleased to prolong her timidity and suspense, he asked her if the confidence she had ventured to repose in him had not diminished her affection.

"Perhaps it might," she replied, "if I regarded you otherwise than as a lover who leaves me and a friend who is restored to me. But if the friend cures me of my wounds, I shall see with joy the lover disappear forever. My pride cannot suffer as it does now, for if love be proud and susceptible, if its pardon be humiliating and unacceptable, the forgiveness of friendship is the holiest and sweetest of benefits! Ah! think, Léonce, how much more pure and precious is this divine sentiment than the other, for it neither harrows up the soul, nor diminishes in strength, but it ennobles and purifies! Yesterday, I would have accepted from you neither assistance nor pity: to-day, I should not blush to pray for them on my knees."

"Indeed, my friend, you have not yet arrived at the truth: from one extreme, you fly to the other. Yesterday, you had too much contempt for friendship; to-day, you exalt it beyond measure. You will



not divest yourself of the false notion you have so long held concerning these two sentiments, and you always seem determined to consider them independent of each other; yet, the union of the sexes is only truly ideal and perfect, when they exist together in two noble hearts. What then is true love, if it be not an exalted friendship? Yes, love is friendship carried to enthusiasm. It is said that love, by itself, is blind! But where friendship is clairvoyant, it is ready to die with cold! Believe me, if your fault had appeared grave and unpardonable, if a moment of trouble and weakness had rendered you, in my eyes, unworthy of my love, I should not have been your friend, and you would have done right to repulse my consolations, in place of accepting them. In youth, the man loves not the woman whom he does not desire, and whom he could behold in the arms of another without jealousy. In that case, the word friendship is a mockery, and God preserve me from saying I love you thus. I confess to you that the events of yesterday still cause me excruciating suffering, and the feeling of irritation in my heart against you at this moment, is more nearly akin to hatred than to friendship, such as you define it. Not that I regard you as fallen or unworthy, but you are unjust, cruel, guilty towards me, the man who loves you, and who deserves the happiness you have bestowed upon another."

"You make my fault appear still more hideous to me," said Sabina, trembling with emotion. "Do you believe, then, that I have not thought of this, and that I do not continually reproach myself for this wrong towards you? To God I confess it."

"And why not to me also, to me especially?" cried Léonce, violently seizing her hands. "You know that God has already pardoned you, and do you not wish for my pardon, the pardon of your friend and lover?"

"Spare me this suffering," said Sabina, her pride reduced to the last extremity. "Read my heart, and then understand, if you can, what is the great cause of my grief."

"I accept the sacrifice," said Léonce, with enthusiasm. "It is the greatest proof of love that a woman such as you can give. Tell me that you have sinned against me; raise your haughty head to heaven, and brave God if you will; it signifies to me little. It is not my mission to threaten you with his displeasure; but you have broken my heart, and it is your duty to acknowledge it. If you do not repent of this evil you have done towards me, it is because you have no wish to make reparation."

"Indeed, Léonce, I do implore your pardon. And in proof that you grant it, obliterate forever from your heart, I entreat you, all remembrance of that odious kiss."

"It is no longer there, it never has been!" cried Léonce, pressing her to his bosom. "And now," said he, falling on his knees, "walk over me if you will, I am your slave; and may a red iron brand my lips, if a reproach or an allusion to any other kiss than mine, shall ever escape

them.”

At this moment, the convent clock sounded the hour of two, and the door of the second court opened to let out a young brother, clothed in the white robe worn by novices.

He was alone and advanced slowly, with his head bent down under a cowl, and his hands crossed upon his breast, as if absorbed in humble meditation.

Léonce and Sabina rose to meet him, whereupon he bowed himself reverently to the ground, in testimony of his respect and humility. But, all at once, this tall figure stood upright before them, and throwing back his cowl, revealed the long, black hair, and laughing countenance of Teverino, instead of the shaven crown of the monk.

“What means this new disguise?” exclaimed Léonce.

In answer Teverino raised his hand to the belltower of the convent clock, whose azure dial marked the hours in letters of gold. Then, kneeling down like a penitent, he said, in a hollow voice, “The hour is passed; my confession must now be heard.”

“Not a word,” said Léonce, placing a hand on his shoulder and shaking him with affectionate authority. “Upon your life and soul, brother, be silent Do you believe me cowardly enough to betray you? May your secret die with you; it is yours alone, and you possess too generous a heart to confess it to others.”

“I am not a child, that I cannot understand what I must or must not reveal,” replied the vagabond; “but there are some things that would trouble my conscience if I did not now confess them; and all the more, because in this relation, neither of us present, has anything to conceal from the others. Listen then, noble and generous Signora, to the lament of a poor sinner, who comes to demand absolution from you and Léonce.

“This miserable wretch, attached to your noble friend by the sacred ties of gratitude and affection, had the misfortune to meet one day in the middle of the forest, a lady of illustrious birth and ravishing beauty. He could not see and hear her without becoming fascinated with the charms of her mind and person. While indulging in the supreme happiness of listening to her voice and gazing upon her beauty, he somehow forgot that Léonce was irretrievably in love with her, and that he, himself, had other affections to respect, He had even the foolish vanity to sing in order to divert her thoughts, for this admirable woman was sad. A cloud had risen between her and Léonce, and her heart filled with tears as she thought of him. This unworthy sinner was passionately fond of his art, and he could not sing without being lost in enthusiasm and moved to the depths of his soul. It happened then, that when his romance was finished, he saw that the lady was affected, and then there came over him, as it were, a whirlwind of ridiculous fatuity, a dazzling paroxysm of delirium. Forgetful of his personal duties, his holy friendship for Léonce, and the profound respect he owed to the Signora, he had the audacity to profit by her grievous pre-

occupation, to place himself at her side, and surprise one of those pure caresses which was destined for another. He was about to ravish a kiss, a presumption for which his life would not have been sufficient payment, but the noble lady turned away her head in horror and indignation. Happily, Léonce appeared and protected his friend from the audacity of a villain. Since that moment, the lady has looked upon him only with contempt, and he, his guilty soul penetrated by remorse, and conscious that a great sin demands a great expiation, he has renounced the world, and precipitating himself into the peace of the cloister, he has assumed this penitential garment, wrapped round him by repentance, and only to be replaced by the winding sheet."

"This is a very touching relation," said Léonce "there is no resisting it. Sabina, you cannot refuse your pardon to such perfect contrition. Extend your hand to the culprit, 'tis I who entreat you, and release him from his terrible vow."

Sabina, satisfied with the slightly hypocritical, but infinitely respectful explanation of the marquis, permitted him to kiss her hand, and with a forced smile, promised him forgiveness of a fault she had already forgotten. She dwelt on these last words in a manner to make him feel that she attached no importance to the ridicule incidental to the kiss, and Teverino, with malicious good-nature, silently admired the self-possession of a woman of the world, struggling with delicate appearances.

"I am the more proud of my pardon," said he, "since I see that my crime has only turned to my confusion, and brought about the triumph of true love."

"Now," said Léonce, "be so good as to explain to us, how you have managed to steal from the vigilance of these good monks, this garment of innocence which you wear so proudly."

"This garment belongs to me," replied Teverino, "it is entirely new, it fits me, is convenient, and I intend to wear it while I remain here."

"Nonsense, a truce to jesting. I do not believe that the devil himself could tempt you to become a monk."

"It is a fact! The devil, in suggesting to me this wish, whispered in my ear, that there would be no lack of opportunity to throw off the frock. Guess what has happened! My fortune is not brilliant, and it no longer corresponds to my title of marquis. You might, without indiscretion, have confided this circumstance to Milady. I am, moreover, capricious as an artist, lazy as a monk, dreamy as a poet. I have always had a liking for convents, and a taste for this devout and effeminate life, provided it need not be prolonged beyond the term assigned by my fancy. Now for the opportunity! Not more than an hour since, while I was listening to the novices, as they practised their singing lesson, I made some judicious remarks to the prior concerning the bad method of study they pursued. He informed me that his singing-master was absent on a mission to the holy father, and would not return

from Rome in two months. During his absence, the school was going to ruin, and the advantages of his good method were being lost. Thereupon, I sang a motet in my best style, which had the effect to make the good prior, a desperate melomaniac, almost frantic with delight. 'Ah I sir,' said he, 'how unfortunate for me that you are a rich lord! What a capital singing-master you would have made!' 'Never mind,' I answered, 'I will give a lesson to your novices on the spot.'

"In less than five minutes, I very gently and modestly made them understand that they had no knowledge of the proper management of the voice, and, joining example to precept, I so charmed and enraptured them, as to cause them to exclaim, in emulation of the prior: 'How unfortunate that we cannot secure the services of so good a master.'

"To be brief, I was so affected by their demonstrations, and the life of the musician monk appeared to me in such agreeable colors, that I consented to remain here during the two months that must elapse before the return of the singing-master. My performance on the organ gave equal satisfaction, and you now behold me a monk for the remainder of the summer; that is to say, that, well-fed, well-lodged, clad as you now see me in the interior of the cloister, choosing my own special amusement, devoting six hours of the day to an occupation that pleases me, and the rest of the time to wandering among the mountains, hunting, fishing, composing or sleeping, I am the happiest of men, and identify myself with my patron, Jean Kreysler, who was so contented with his monastic asylum, the fine music and good wine, as to forget his loves and every thing else in this perishable world."

"Bravo!" said Léonce, "I approve your plan, and will often come to see you; I doubt, however, if you stay here two whole months, knowing, as I do, that change is your delight, and that you cannot endure continued occupation!"

"That is true, but when I make an engagement, I scrupulously observe it. You must render me this justice, that I never promise without conditions, and that I carry into these conditions a certain degree of foresight. I know in advance that I shall find it pleasant here for two months. The pupils are amiable and intelligent; there are some fine voices among them, which it will delight me to develop. And then, there are some old musical works in the library, covered with a venerable dust which I promise myself to brush off. It is in such archives that are found the treasures of art, and the fortunes of artists."

"So be it!" said Léonce; "but I have still several questions to put to you, and since here come the prior and the Curé to salute Milady, let us retire to some more secluded spot, where we can converse without interruption."

They sauntered into one of the arcades of the cloister, from which could be seen a fine view of the surrounding country, and there, taking the arm of the adventurer, Léonce said to him:

“See, now; you appear to wish to introduce a little order and industry into your life. Your natural faculties are extraordinary, and I doubt not, that, with these and the knowledge you have rather divined than learned, you will be successful in gaining a reputation, and carve out for yourself a brilliant destiny.”

“I am perfectly well aware of it,” replied Teverino, “but it does not tempt me.”

“You have no vanity, then? You certainly are worthy to be a monk!”

“I have vanity, and I cannot submit to rules; therefore, I shall not be a monk. I will remain a wanderer upon the earth, satisfying my vanity whenever it may please me, and getting rid of it when it would make me a slave; for vanity is the most despotic and iniquitous of masters, and I can never be the slave of my own vices.”

“Can. you not be a true artist without making yourself the slave of the public? Come, listen to me. The beginning is always disheartening to a savage pride like yours. Your patrons, hitherto, must have been unjust or parsimonious, since you have so great a horror of placing yourself under the protection of another. But an enlightened, delicate friendship, one that is worthy of you, I venture to say so, may it not be privileged to offer you the means, wherewith to lay the foundation of a fortune? Money and the assistance of masters are the necessary means. Accept my offers. Come and seek me out in Paris, where I shall be two months hence; I answer for it, that the winter will not pass without your finding a position in the world, suitable to your genius, and agreeable to your taste.”

“Thanks, dear Léonce, thanks,” said Teverino, squeezing his hand. “I know that you speak in the sincerity of your heart, but I cannot accept the smallest service from you, for the reason that we have come in collision on burning ground, and under delicate circumstances. During the last twenty-four hours, I have made myself a model of chivalry, a mirror of loyalty. But, although I am not in love with Milady, the trial has been so severe and perilous, as to leave me no wish to commence it. Do not understand this as a bravado; I am certain that she loves you; I was conscious of it before you were. I am happy that it is so; I congratulate myself on having served as the road to a victory, which, believe me, I desired for you alone. We might, however, meet on the edge of another abyss, and the thought that I was your debtor, that is to say, the creature of your bounty, would compel me to forswear, myself, or it would deprive me of all individuality. I should either be a victim of my virtue or guilty of ingratitude. Then, before long, you would cease to interest yourself in providing for the comfort of your poor vagabond. I should become quickly disgusted with every thing suggested to me. Often, when I met you, I should repent of having yielded to persuasion; I should weary you, in spite of myself, with the inevitable distaste to my career; and you would wear yourself out in trying to reclaim me from my wanderings.

In short, were you personally out of the question, there would be no attraction to me in tranquil glory, or in secured, notarial revenues. In early years, it was my fortune to look at the various scenes of life from behind the curtain. I might have been an actor on the different theatres; but at the door of all, stands an army of critics, rivals and *claqueurs*, ready to take every advantage of a man, and these, I should never be able to deceive, manage, flatter or pay. God has made me the enemy of all serious lies and deliberate hypocrisy; I cannot paint my face, except for amusement, and were I to undertake it, my intense frankness would soon gain the ascendancy; I should need to wipe off the paint and feel myself a man able to extend a hand to the weak and to box the ears of insolence. There are no possible illusions for me; before I began the world for myself, I knew the last word of those who had grown old in the combat. Oh! long live my holy liberty! Blush not for me, wise and noble Léonce! Your path is marked out for you, and you will pursue it with dignity. I can only follow the broken line and the quick jerk of the wing, like my little Madeleine."

"And apropos of Madeleine? It is especially with regard to her, that I look upon your philosophy as dangerous, and your guilt beyond a question. Yesterday, you slept in her cabin; to-day, you shelter yourself under the roof of a convent; to-morrow, you will be wandering through the paved city; and this child's heart will soon be broken, if it is not already."

"Stay," said the vagabond, arresting Léonce before an arcade, "look at the torrent rolling below there at the bottom of the ravine. Let your eyes rest on the point where a rustic bridge unites the path leading from the convent to the one ascending the brow of the mountain."

"I see it, what then?"

"Do you see a small patch of prairie, green as an emerald, about mid-way up among those gray rocks? and the foot-path along the edge beyond?"

"I see the prairie, and then?"

"Then there is a clump of trees, and the path becomes invisible."

"Yes; what more?"

"Beyond the spruce trees, beyond the path, there is a sort of valley covered with heath, and then the naked peak of the mountain."

"And then the sky," said Léonce, impatiently. "What far-fetched metaphor are you preparing?"

"None. You have not observed closely. Between the peak of the mountain and the sky there is a sort of barrack built of spruce boards, fastened to stakes and kept in their places by large stones. Are you far-sighted?"

"I see the hovel very distinctly. I see even some birds flying in the air above it"

"Well, then, if you see the birds, you know whose hovel it is, and why I am so well satisfied to establish myself here, only half an hour's

distance by the road; and who has such good limbs as Madeleine and your humble servant?"

"That then is the residence of the bird-tamer?"

"Look now, and you will see a small scarlet mantle, a red point floating in the sun, and moving round this miserable hovel. That is Madeleine, my little angel, my heart's child, my soul, my life. I can no longer profit by the hospitality which this girl and her heroic, bandit brother offered me one day, when breathless, dusty, overwhelmed with fatigue, at the end of my last farthing, but without care, nay, joyful to greet the horizon of France, I paused at their door to beg a little goat's milk wherewith to quench my thirst. They were pleased with me, they trusted me and gave me a home. I loved them, and had not resolution to quit them, although conscience made it a duty not to add my misery to theirs. But, although I have kept myself carefully in seclusion, so that no one has been able to approach me near enough to see my face, the figure of a vagabond attached to the steps of Madeleine, has been distinguished from a distance; and Madeleine, already compromised in the opinion of the Curé, would soon be compelled to drive me away, or fly with me. This is something for which I am not yet prepared, and therefore, when I met you on the border of the lake, I was on my way to offer my services to the monks of this convent, in order that I might find shelter with them in the neighborhood of my brave friends of the mountain. It is my reason also for bringing you to this place to-day, that I may take leave of you and restore to you your fine clothes, without being under the necessity of returning to the nakedness in which you found me."

"You will keep them, so that you may be able to leave this at your pleasure," said Léonce, "also the gold in your waistcoat pocket. You certainly cannot refuse the means of mitigating in some degree, the misery of Madeleine and her brother."

"There was gold, then, in my pockets?" said Teverino, with indifference. "I had not observed it. Well, if you will not take it back, I must put it in the poor box, and Madeleine shall have her part. I understand none of the duties of a treasurer, and it shall not be said that any other motive than my own pleasure induced me to assume the character of a marquis. Milady has munificently recompensed the child for the amusement she afforded her; Madeleine is then rich at this moment, and as for me, I shall have gained enough in two months, to supply my wants for a long time to come."

"But at the end of two months where will you go? what will you do with Madeleine?"

"We love each other so much, that if she were not too young, I would make her my wife. But I must wait at least two years, and if I should have the misfortune to become too much enamoured before the expiration of that term, she would be in great danger. It will, therefore, be necessary for me to leave her, even before two months have passed away, if my paternal affection should change its nature."

“Astonishing young man,” exclaimed Léonce; “is it possible, such ardor and such calmness, such weakness and such virtue, so much experience with so much simplicity; a life at the same time so tempestuous and so pure, so unrestrained and so valiantly defended against its passions!”

“Do not think me better than I am,” replied Teverino. “I have done wrong in my impetuous youth, and there are errors lying heavy at my heart, for which I can never pardon myself. But this heart has not been utterly perverted, and it has been purified by remorse. I have been the cause of suffering to others, and what I myself have suffered in consequence, is beyond what I can express to you. I love dearly to look upon happiness, and the sight of misfortune caused by me has almost rendered me crazy. Henceforth, I would prefer death rather than defile the objects of my affection, and never again will I seek pleasure of any woman who possesses the treasure of innocence.”

“But you will forget this unfortunate little creature, and when you forsake her, her heart will not be the less torn by grief.”

“If I forget her, then I do not know myself,” said Teverino, earnestly. “I do not believe it, sir, I cannot believe it; and if I did believe it, I should not love, I should not be myself. It is true that I have broken more than one tie, taken back more than one promise; but I do not remember of ever having been the first to change, for by nature and by necessity my soul is constant. If I had not been drawn into those facile adventures, which no one is scrupulous in getting rid of, I should have had but one passion during my life. I have been a libertine, although God created me chaste. Now, that I find myself in relation with a chaste soul, I feel that my ideal is there, and no where else. Let us, then, leave time to take its course, and my life to unfold itself before me. I may not become a prophet or a divinity, but I know that it is not impossible for me to become the husband of Madeleine, if I shall find her faithful when the time comes.”

“And if she is not?”

“I will forgive her and remain her friend; yes, her friend, such as you cannot be to Lady Sabina, you, who love differently, and mingle pride with your love.”

“We are then to separate, without your permitting me to give you any proof of the truly irresistible esteem and friendship with which you inspire me?”

“We shall meet again, doubt it not. If, at that moment, I should have plenty of work, and be able to present a good appearance, I shall meet you with open arms; but if I am as badly clothed as yesterday, when I encountered you on the margin of the lake, be not astonished if I do not seem to recognize you.”

“Ah! how you grieve me!” said Léonce with emotion. “You are determined, then, not to believe in me!”

“I do believe in you, but I am too familiar with stern reality to willingly relinquish the idea of making my life a romance, more or



## TEVERINO

less agreeable and varied.”

The Curé consented to accompany Sabina and Léonce as far as the villa, in order to allay all suspicions on the part of Lord G—. My lord had awoke the evening of the previous day, and was not a little uncomfortable at the absence of his wife; he resorted, however, as usual, to the wine-cup, in which to drown his anxiety, and was again asleep when she returned.

## END OF TEVERINO.

\*In the preparation of this sketch we have had recourse to the best and most reliable French authorities, translating from them freely whatever has seemed suited to our purpose. The facts, therefore, may be relied on as strictly correct, and for them we are especially indebted to the brochure of M. de Mirecourt, to the critical notice of *“Un Homme de Rien,”* and to George Sand’s autobiography now in course of publication. We do not claim any originality for our sketch; we have simply endeavored to give a true idea of the character of the distinguished authoress, making the best use of such facts as the short time allowed us for preparation has enabled us to collect.

O. S. L.